



Peak Performance:
How Your I.T. Network Can Get There.

A GET FIT EBOOK.

How healthy is your I.T. network?



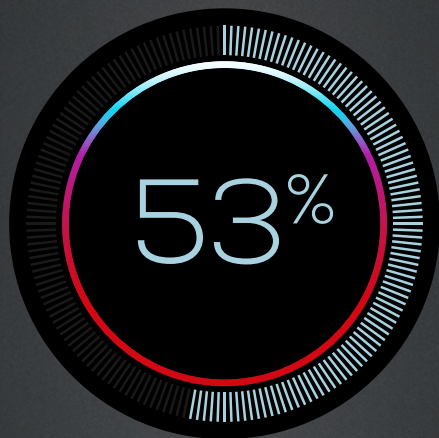
When you're assessing your IT network, there are a few quick questions you should ask yourself to determine if you're running at optimum speed or if you need to make adjustments. In this eBook, we're going to walk you through a few common areas of strength—and opportunity—so you can develop a plan to take your organization's IT to the next level.

It's not as daunting as it sounds: All you need is a good plan, and you'll be a model for other organizations when it comes to your technology's agility, security, and future preparedness.

In some of these areas, maybe you're as good as it gets—and that's fantastic! Keep doing what you're doing. And in the areas where you feel like you might be a little behind, don't worry: We'll point you to resources to help you improve.

READY? **LET'S GET STARTED.**





ONLY HALF (53%) OF HR LEADERS SURVEYED WERE CONFIDENT ABOUT THEIR ORGANIZATION'S FUTURE WORKFORCE PLANNING.¹

1. Can your network scale as the size of your business fluctuates?

You need to make sure you can always adjust your network's bandwidth—which might be easier said than done. Having one that's too constrained for a growing company creates information bottlenecks and security issues, and could even increase the likelihood of an outage or crash. One that's too rigid becomes cumbersome and unwieldy for an organization that's trying to be nimble, mobile, and accessible.

Put the right plans in place to scale your networks as appropriate. Having a defined process for growing, or even getting smaller, makes it easier for you to act when you need to make changes—fast. An acquisition of another company, an internal reorganization, the absorption of a satellite office, or simply a shift in hiring could mean you'll need to be ready to handle a different volume of traffic and technology support. Make sure you're prepared to do so.

NEXT STEPS: We've got tips on how to future-proof your organization, manage multiple sites, make sure your networks are secure, and more. Take a deep dive into information that will help you be a scalability pro.

- + Make sure you've got the right safety precautions in place to keep your business secure. [Download our eBook that deals specifically with security best practices.](#)
- + What if you're managing more than one location—or a remote workforce? [Get tips on what to do when you're responsible for multisite IT infrastructures.](#)
- + Get ready to prepare your business for the future. [And we're not talking immediately—here's where you'll find tips to help when you're looking three to five years down the road.](#)

¹ World Economic Forum, "The Future of Jobs: Employment, Skills and Workforce Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution," January 2016.

2. Is the process to update your I.T. network flexible?

Are you waiting for new software versions to come out with an annual release before you make network updates? Well, don't. Your network updates should be constant and tailored—do what makes most sense for you and your business rather than waiting for someone else to tell you. You know your company best, and you have everything you need to assess your needs. But one thing you should always be doing is constantly evaluating and updating where appropriate, rather than making huge updates at far-apart intervals.

NEXT STEPS: Don't get hung up on outdated processes. Make sure you're taking the nimblest approach possible. Head to our guides to get more information on some of the following topics, which will have you moving as fast as your business does.



- + Connectivity is the price of admission when it comes to building robust networks. **Make sure you're plugged in 24/7, offering your teams, your customers, and your partners fast, responsive tech solutions.**
- + You can't create best-in-class networks by working in a bubble. **When your teams and their technologies interact with each other to share information and ensure peak compatibility, your systems will benefit.**



FLEXIBILITY QUICK TIP:

Keep your ear to the ground. By making sure you're up to speed on what's happening with industry trends and news, you can update your systems in real time.



2 million businesses
still use ISDN CONNECTIONS
to transfer data.²

²MinuteHack, "The BT ISDN Switch Off: How to Future-proof Your Business." January 26, 2018.

3. Outages. Security threats. Natural disasters.

Is your network approach redundant or resilient?

There's no such thing as being too secure, right? Well, that's not entirely true. Think about your approach to security now. Is it just multiple iterations of the same data backups, over and over again? Or is it a strategic, quick solution that allows you to identify, isolate, and eliminate an issue, without shutting down your entire enterprise?

That's the difference between having a redundant network approach and a resilient one. At some point, identical versions of the same data—as helpful as you think they may be—just get in the way, and they slow you down. Tailor the way you prevent against and handle potential issues to ensure your business doesn't slow or stop when something dangerous strikes. Put the right team members in place to build a plan, and come up with solutions that are issue-specific rather than one-size-fits-all.

NEXT STEPS: Whatever the scale of the networks you're managing, you need to be sure they can recover quickly when disaster strikes. Take the right precautions and you'll be prepared when challenges arise.

- + Keeping your networks, data, and employee information secure is your No. 1 priority. [Learn how to do exactly that—and then some.](#)
- + Multiple locations are great for employee flexibility, but they add a new level of complexity to your job. [Learn more about what it takes to successfully manage more than one workplace at a time.](#)
- + Already doing everything you need to be doing with your network today? Will it be ready to handle your business in three to five years? [By successfully future-proofing your networks, you can feel safe about staying secure for a long time to come.](#)



Average duration of a total
UNPLANNED OUTAGE: 130 minutes.
AVERAGE COST: \$946,788.³

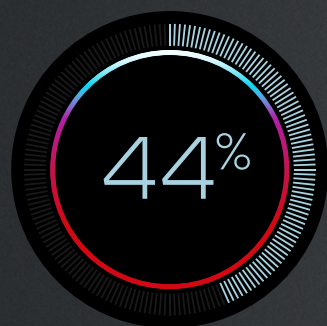
4. What's your confidence level regarding your network contingency plan?

It's okay to feel a little bit shaky when thinking about your preparedness and contingency plans for your network. Sometimes you can't be prepared for something because you don't know what that "something" is. But, you can do your best to prepare for potential issues and have measures in place that will address plenty of unknowns. It just takes a little time and research to figure out what those may be, and how to create a defense against them.

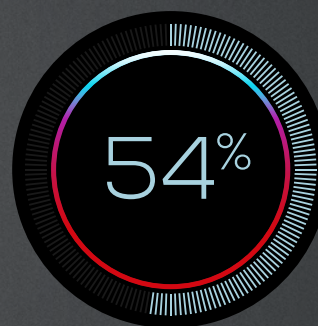
This doesn't mean you have to develop Plan B all the way down to Plan Z. If your organization is already secure and agile, you're probably in great shape to start thinking about all the hypotheticals your business could face down the road. If those need a little work, you should be aware of how to remedy more pressing problems. Either way, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Arm yourself with great preparation plans.

NEXT STEPS: Wherever you are in your contingency planning, we've got resources to make you feel calm and collected. And being prepared is a pretty good feeling, too.

- + Think about what or where you want your organization to be a few years from now. [We have tips for you on how to best future-proof so that your company is just as healthy in the future as it is now.](#)
- + Struggling with making sure networking security basics are in place? Start here. [We've got plenty of tips to get you started, and then some.](#)



44% OF EXECUTIVES SAID THEY DID NOT HAVE AN OVERALL INFORMATION SECURITY STRATEGY.⁴



54% DID NOT HAVE AN INCIDENT RESPONSE PROCESS.⁴

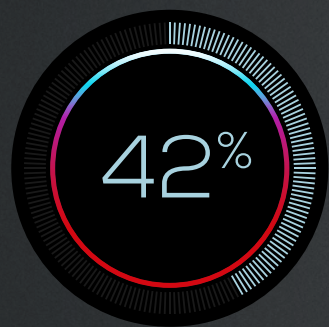
⁴PwC, The Global State of Information Security® Survey 2018.

5. How many office locations does your network cover?



Whether you operate out of one office or all of your workers are remote, you need to effectively manage employees—and technology—that extends beyond the four walls at HQ. While your business might not be traditionally “multisite” in the sense that most people are contained within one physical building, think about how many people check work email from their phones, access your network from home on the weekend, or dial in to a call while on a business trip.

And, if you *do* have a decentralized workforce, you need to prepare for not only all devices and networks employees are using to do their jobs and how to keep them secure—you also need to make sure they have the tools and technologies they need to work efficiently and effectively, from wherever they are. A hotel Wi-Fi network might be open to anyone staying there; make sure your employee who’s working from the road has VPN to keep their, and your, information safe. Someone else might be on a device you don’t currently support—that’s a significant security threat. Make sure you’re arming yourself, and your employees, with the tools they need to keep your information safe.



BY 2020, 42% OF THE GLOBAL WORKFORCE WILL BE MOBILE.⁵



MULTISITE QUICK TIP:

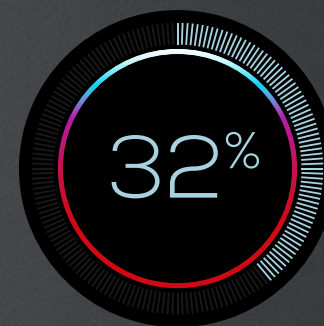
It pays to be conversant in multiple operating systems and platforms. You don’t need to be an expert, but you should have a working **KNOWLEDGE** of all the devices your employees are using.

⁵Strategy Analytics, Global Mobile Workforce Forecast, 2015–2020.



NEXT STEPS: It's uncommon for today's employees to only work from a traditional office and only do so with one device. You need to be on top of your game when it comes to providing your staff with the right tools—and the right support—to ensure not only optimal productivity, but locked-down security.

- + Working from a satellite office, home, coffee shop, or even 30,000 feet in the air presents different and more complex levels of IT security needs. **Make sure all of your employees' devices comply with your rules.**
- + Communication is the foundation of doing great work. **Make sure your staff collaborates with each other, and across devices, in the best ways possible.**
- + More than one office means that security threats are multiplied. **Take a look at your current security measures and implement more stringent ones as necessary to keep your systems safe.**



32% OF EMPLOYEES HAVE LEFT A JOB DUE TO LACK OF FLEXIBILITY.⁶

⁶ Flexjobs' 6th Annual Work Flex Super Survey, August 2017.



Now, start getting your I.T. fit.

Ensuring your networks' peak performance is a big job, but you're up to the challenge. Sometimes all you need are a few tuneups to get your IT infrastructure in tip-top shape, and **we've got the knowledge to help you get there.**

Learn how to start running your business like the finely tuned machine it can be. We can't wait to see the "after" picture.

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YOUR I.T. IS WAITING FOR YOU.