

IBM Canada Survey: Cybercrime and security risks at government level have more than 9 in 10 tech leaders concerned

IBM Canada surveyed government and business IT decisionmakers for their thoughts on the urgency for tech modernization in government. Cybersecurity and obstacles to modernization were revealed as key considerations.

- 93% are concerned about security risks and the impact of cybercrime in Canada

- 81% say the federal government should increase spending on technology / cloud modernization to help overcome the disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic

- 71% feel Canada has the tech capabilities to compete on the global stage

OTTAWA, September 16, 2021: With the federal election a few days away, top-of-mind considerations for Canadian technology leaders appear to be cybersecurity and the protection of personal information, along with the capacity to effectively deliver services to citizens with current technology. This is according to the findings of an IBM Canada survey of business and government IT decisionmakers on the urgency for tech modernization in the Canadian government.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the need for technological innovation in government," said Kim Watson, vice president, federal market, IBM Canada. "We know now more than ever just how critical it is to ensure IT systems are modernized to the point they can scale up in a crisis and deliver services rapidly and securely – be it AI-powered assistants to support citizen requests flooding call centres, the rise of remote work, or the use of hybrid cloud for digital health passes." IBM is delivering these capabilities across Canada, including through its [Cloud Modernization Centre](#) in Gatineau, Quebec.

Cybersecurity and the protection of Canadians' personal information

- Only 65% feel Canada is prepared for a large-scale attack
- Cybersecurity is seen as most critical to reducing government costs and improving services delivery

According to the findings, 93% of the business and government IT decisionmakers polled admit they are concerned about the security risks and potential impact of cybercrime in Canada, with just 65% saying they feel the country is sufficiently prepared to respond to a large-scale attack.

To help mitigate these exposures, nine out of 10 surveyed feel the federal government's IT modernization efforts should be focused on security and data protection, with half of all respondents saying they "strongly agree" it should be a priority. The results also indicate optimism as 85% say they expect the government will be making proactive investments in cybersecurity measures in the future.

COVID-19, dated government IT, and the obstacles to delivering citizen services

- Two-thirds think bureaucracy, party politics and cost are obstructing modernization

- Yet, 71% feel Canada has the tech capabilities to compete on the global stage

The survey results reflect the opinion that dated government IT systems might be an issue, with 83% of respondents saying there is a direct negative impact on the digital experiences of Canadians. Nearly all (94%) think modernizing government technology and cloud infrastructure would achieve improved efficiency and speed, better protection of Canadians' personal data, heightened cybersecurity, and better services to citizens, with 88% also believing that it will result in a reduction of costs.

The challenge? Across the board, two-thirds of those surveyed see the obstacles to modernization being 1) Bureaucracy 2) Party Politics, and 3) Cost.

Even with the national upheaval caused by COVID-19, the survey shows some positive sentiment on the government's efforts during the pandemic. Most feel the pandemic actually helped accelerate digital transformation across the federal government (37% strongly agreed, 46% agreed somewhat), and 71% of those polled say they feel the Canadian government has the technological capabilities to compete on the world stage.

The public sector has a high demand for access to information, operational resiliency, speed and scalability, and we are helping them move their workloads to the cloud and achieve those targets.

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About the IBM Canada urgency for tech modernization survey

This study was conducted by Morning Consult on behalf of IBM from September 2-10, 2021. The study was conducted among 250 IT decision makers in Canada, with 62 responses from current or former government IT decision makers. The study was conducted online. Results from the full survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 6 percentage points.

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