
Canam Research
Financial Services Cybersecurity Survey 2021 - Trend Report

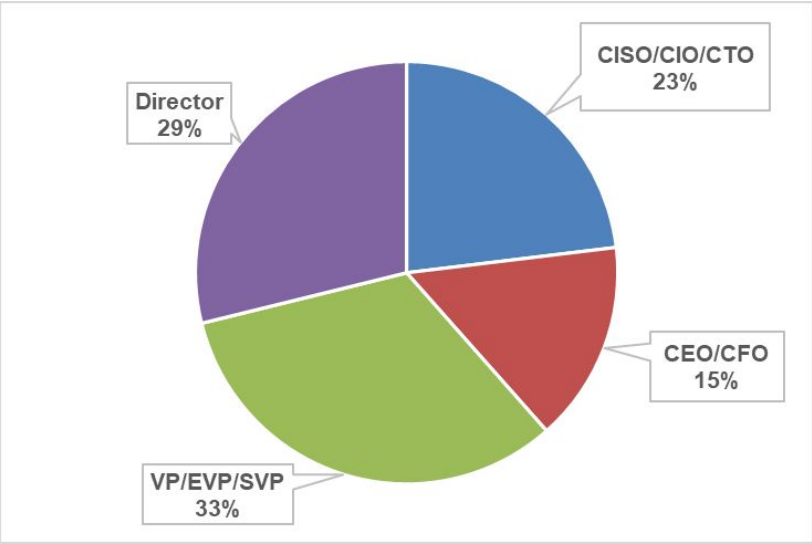
Executive Summary

- Canam Research partnered with Fortinet to research the state of cybersecurity in the financial services sector.
- Responses were collected from Director, VP/EVP/SVP, and across the C-Suite.

Research focused on:

- Biggest security challenges facing financial services organizations
- Impact of work-from-home and scaling WFH
- Confidence in compliance as new technologies are implemented due to digital transformation
- Impact of SolarWinds breach
- Plans for cloud migration and security stance on the Cloud
- Outlook on increasing technology resiliency

Respondents by seniority:



Key Observations

Endpoint security a big issue – 48% indicated that endpoint security is one their biggest challenges.

Work-from-home security – 52% of respondents are confident and 18% are very confident in their employees' work-from-home security measures. However, over 40% reported some difficulty in scaling work-from-home services.

Digital transformation and compliance – Only 16% of respondents are *very confident* in compliance and 32% are *confident*, which means that 52% are less than confident in their regulatory compliance as a result of technologies implemented for digital transformation.

Impact of SolarWinds breach – 25% of survey respondents indicated they will be making a change to their strategy and/or budget due to the SolarWinds breach, and 54% are not going to make changes.

Shortage of qualified security staff – 45% of respondents will invest in retraining, and 38% will invest in consultants, vendor professional services, and MSSPs. Interestingly, 21% plan to invest in automating security functions.

Importance of security in choosing an SD-WAN solution

Security is viewed as an important aspect of the decision to implement SD-WAN; **61%** of survey respondents ranked security as important or very important in their choice to implement this technology.

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Security is a focus for 2021 and 2022

64% of survey respondents will focus on network access control and **57%** on endpoint protection in the next 12 to 18 months.

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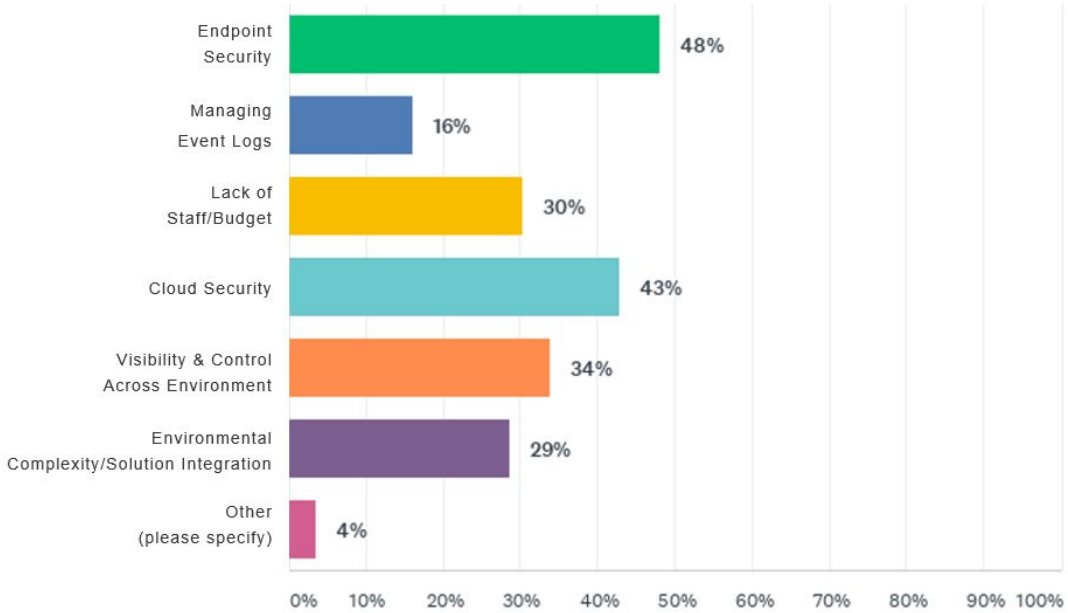
What are your biggest security challenges? (check all that apply)



Endpoint and cloud security are two of the top-of-mind challenges for financial services organizations. This is likely due to the general trend of moving to the Cloud and work-from-home. The responses seem to indicate that the job of managing event logs has been largely mastered in the financial services sector.

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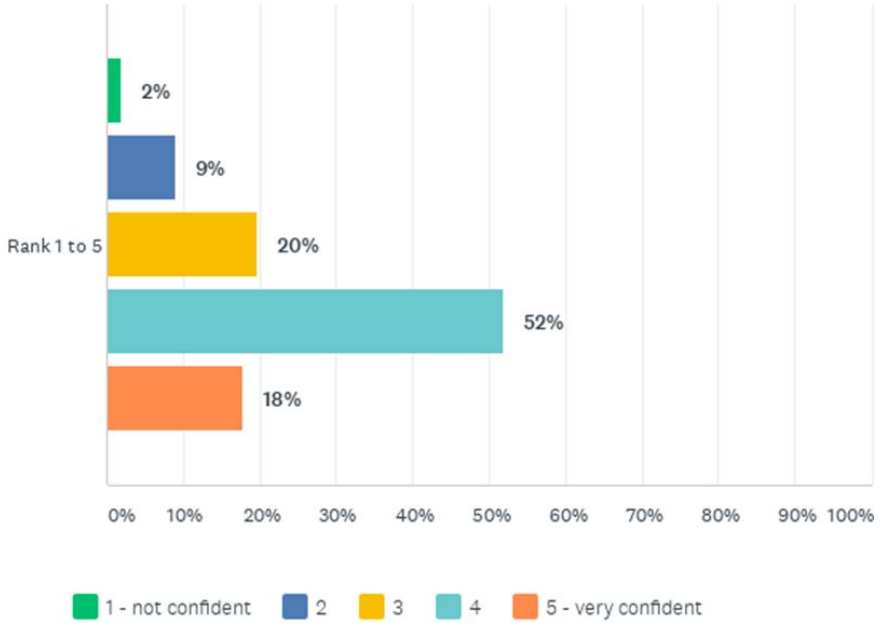
On a scale of 1 to 5, how confident are you in your employees' work-from-home security measures? 1 = not confident and 5 = very confident

Respondents reported a generally high level of confidence in their work-from-home security measures. *We didn't ask why they are confident but would assume that financial services organizations have less BYOD and/or more control over end user devices. They are definitely thinking seriously about endpoint security.*



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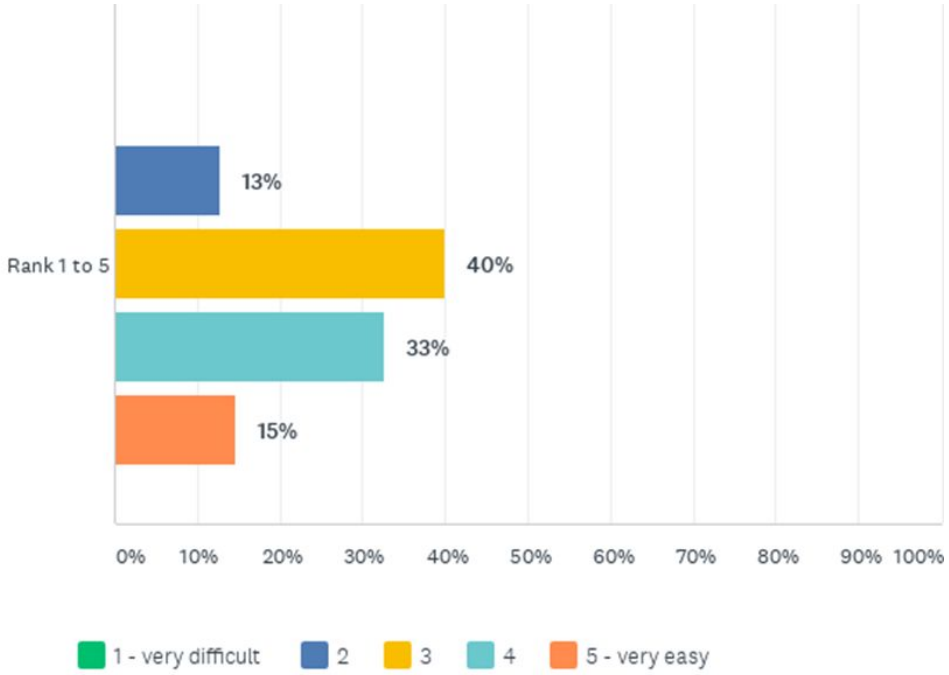
On a scale of 1 to 5, rate the difficulty of scaling work-from-home services. 1 = very difficult and 5 = very easy



Over 50% of respondents reported some degree of difficulty scaling work-from-home services. The compliance and security requirements are significant for the financial services sector and this is likely the reason scaling WFH is more difficult.

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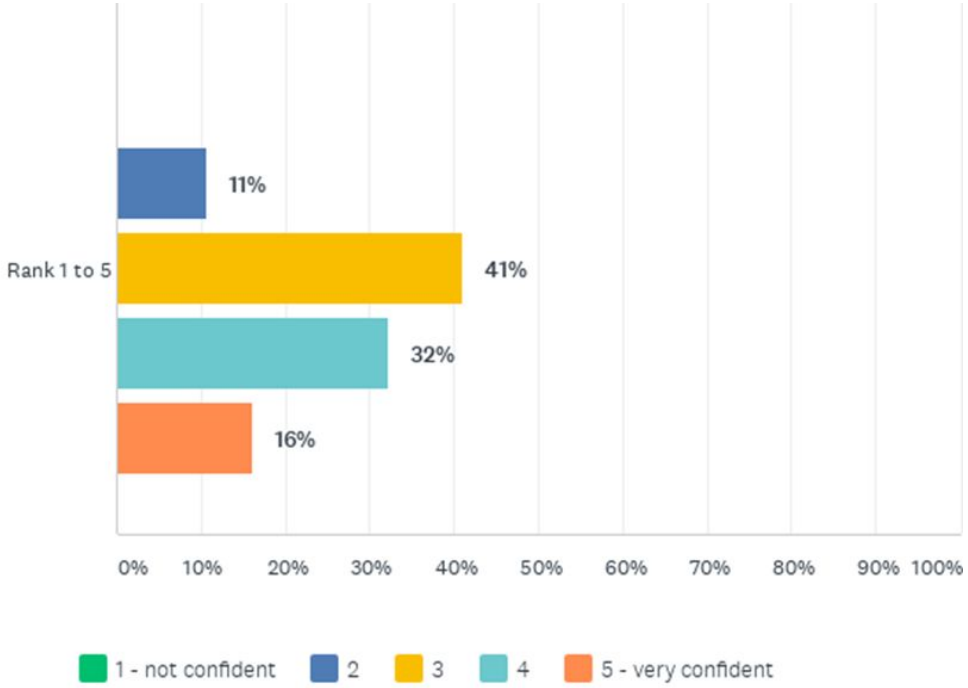
On a scale of 1 to 5, rank how confident you are in your regulatory compliance as a result of new technologies implemented due to digital transformation. 1 = not confident and 5 = very confident

Digital transformation has accelerated in recent years with the advent of mobile banking, big data, automation, and other fast growing technologies. The response to this question, especially considering the number of C-level respondents, would seem to indicate there are concerns about compliance as technological change has increased the attack surface that needs protection.



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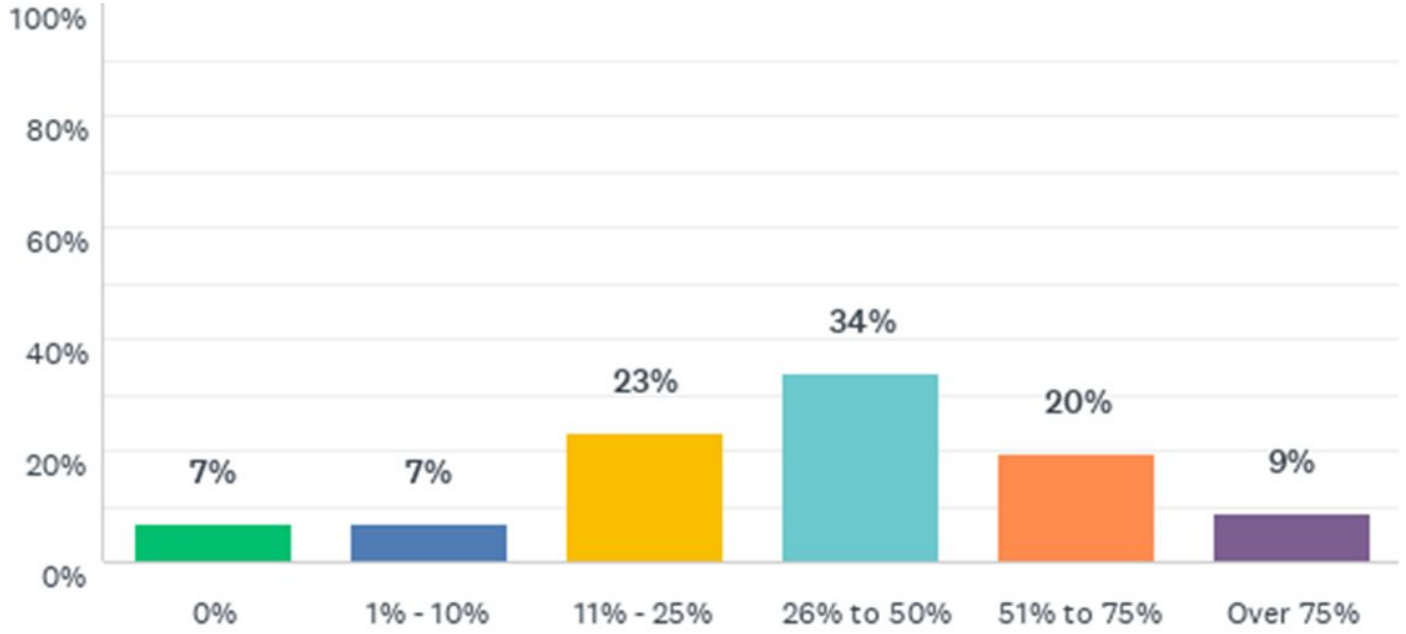
Approximately what percentage of your workforce will remain working remotely post-pandemic?



Work-from-home at scale is here to stay; a significant number or respondents reported that many employees will not be returning to the office.

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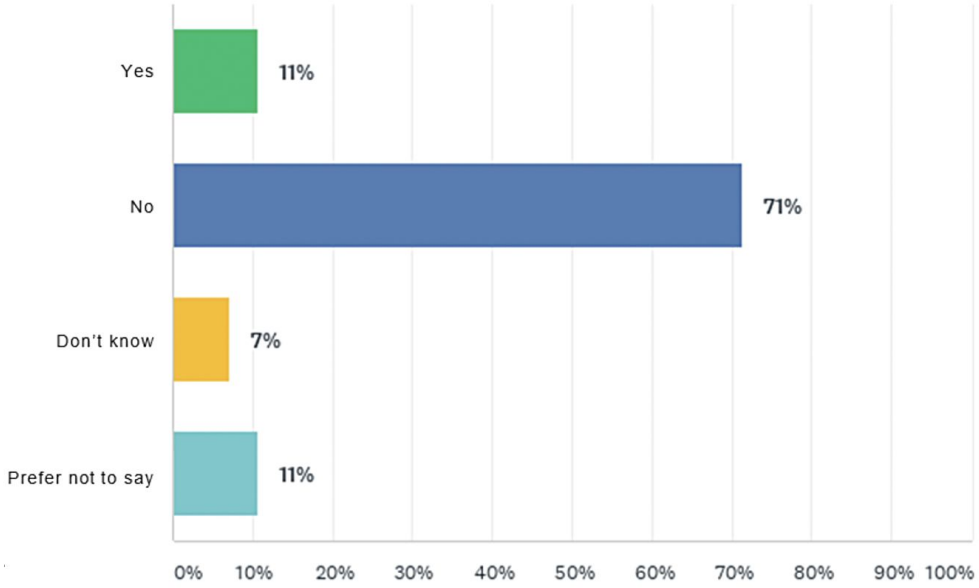
Have you had one or more security breaches in the last 12 months?



The majority of respondents reported no recent security breaches with a small minority of reporting breaches. The financial services sector spends more as an industry on cybersecurity and those investments may be reflected here.

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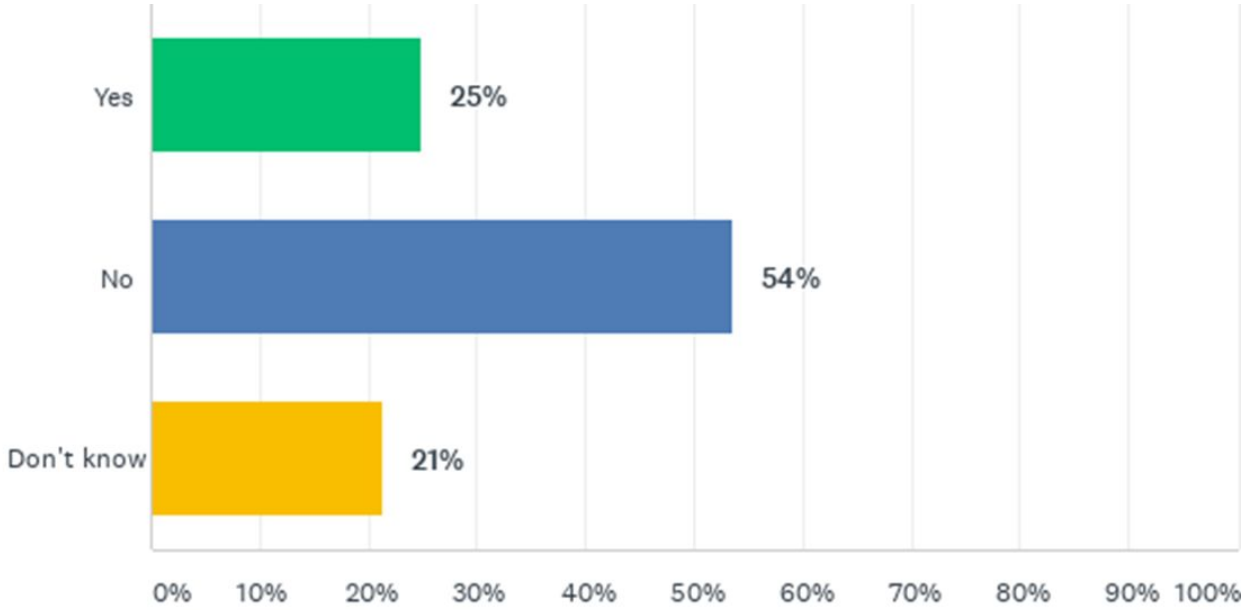
Are you planning to make any changes to your strategy and/or budget in light of the SolarWinds breach?



Responses to this question provide some insight into how widely SolarWinds is used in the financial services sector. We assume many of the “don’t know” responses were impacted by this breach as well.

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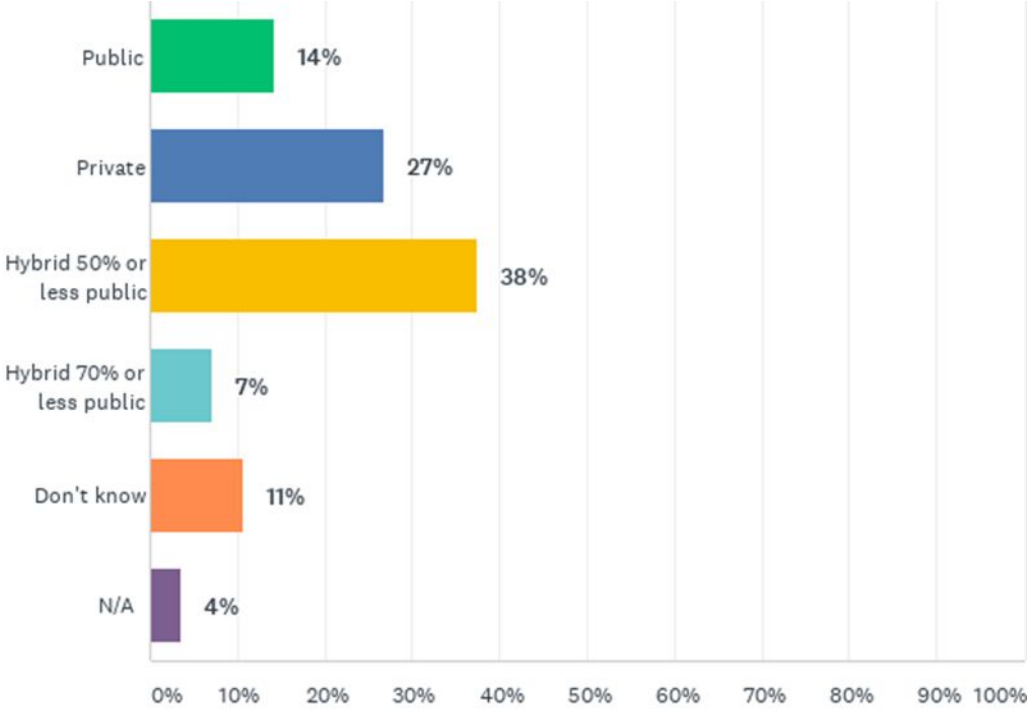
Which best describes your plans for cloud adoption?



Responses to this question provide a more nuanced view into what cloud migration really looks like. Yes, financial services companies are moving to the Cloud, but they're not just opening an account with a cloud provider; many are opting for a hybrid approach.

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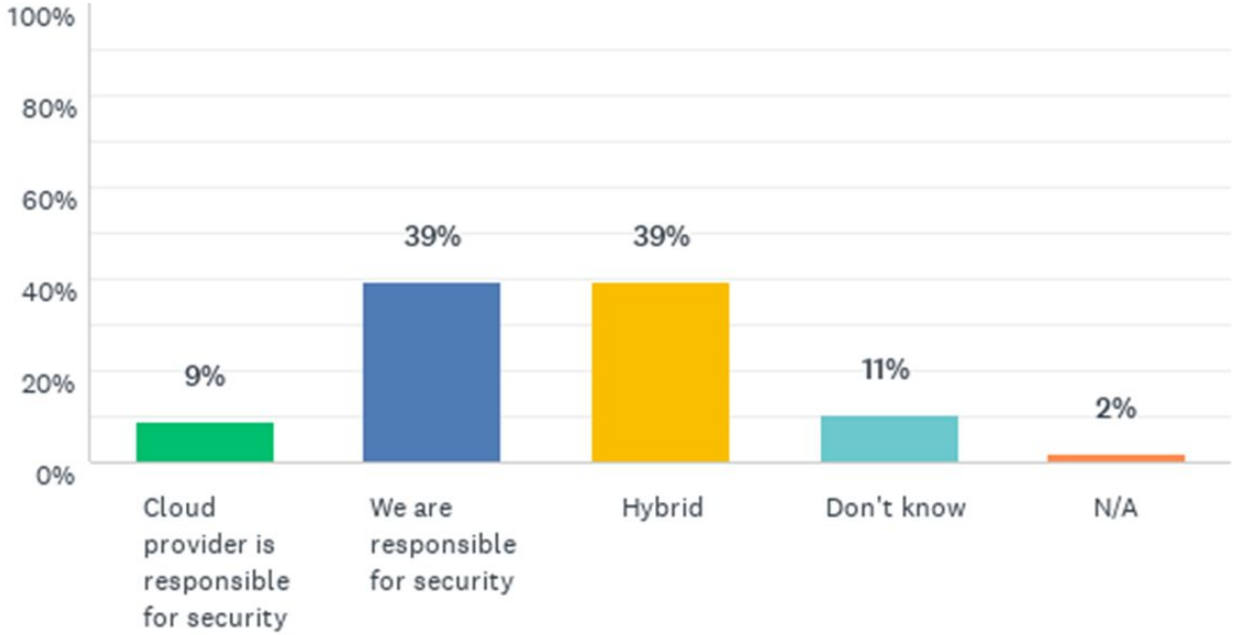
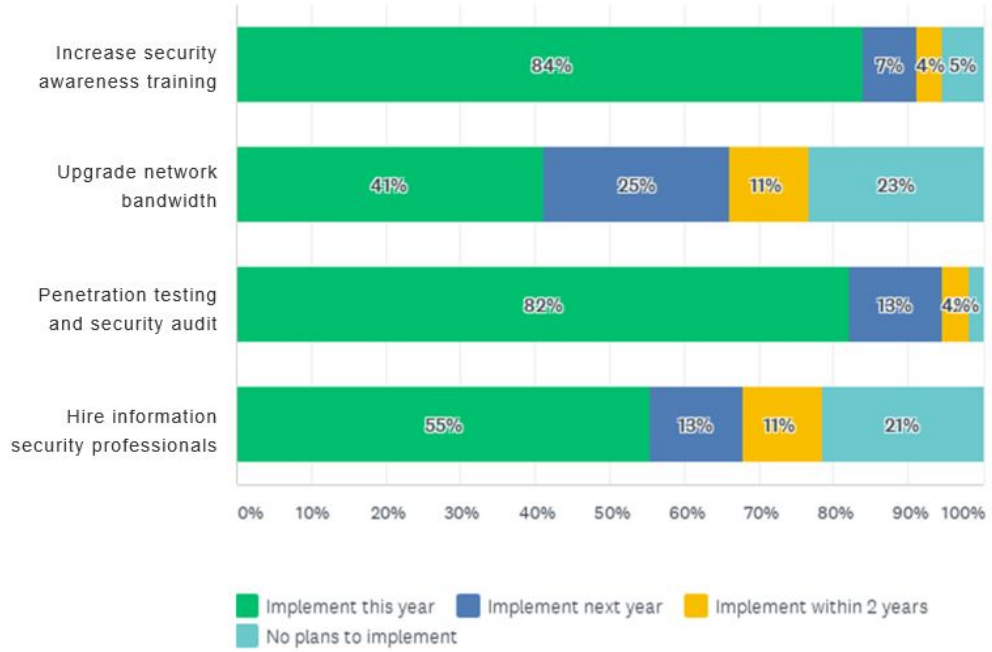
Which of these best describes your stance on cloud security?



The financial services sector is clear on their responsibility for security when it comes to the Cloud and are less likely to believe moving to the Cloud removes security responsibilities.

What are your organization's plans for increasing technology resiliency?



The responses to this question make sense; common causes of security breaches can be traced back to lack of security awareness and more testing can identify where security needs to be improved.

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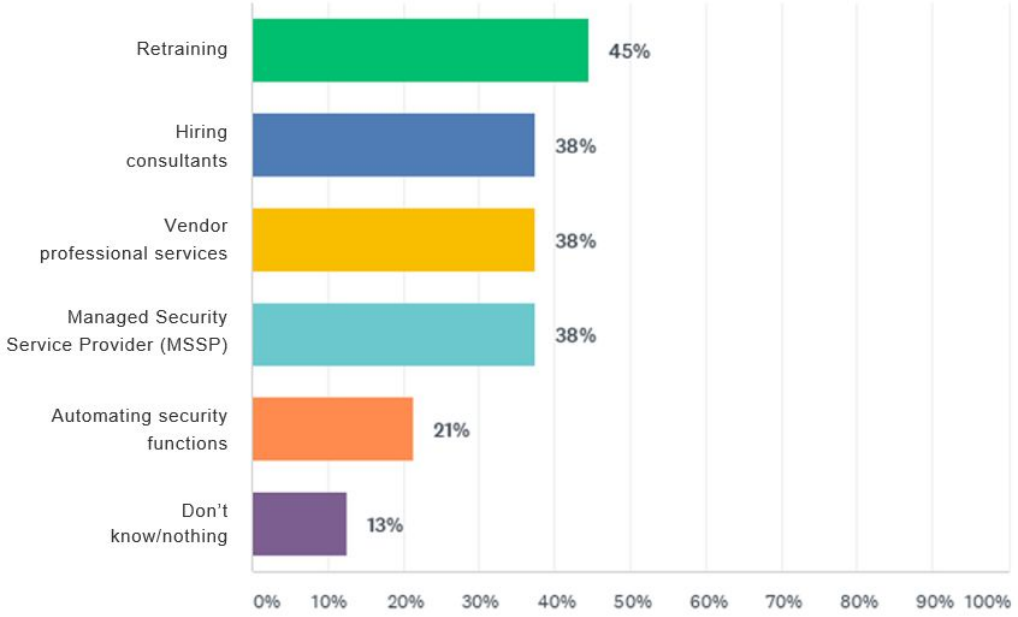
How is your company addressing shortages in qualified security staff? (check all that apply)

The financial services sector is looking at retraining and various types of outsourcing to address the shortage in qualified security staff. And, like other industries, they are deploying automation to increase efficiency.



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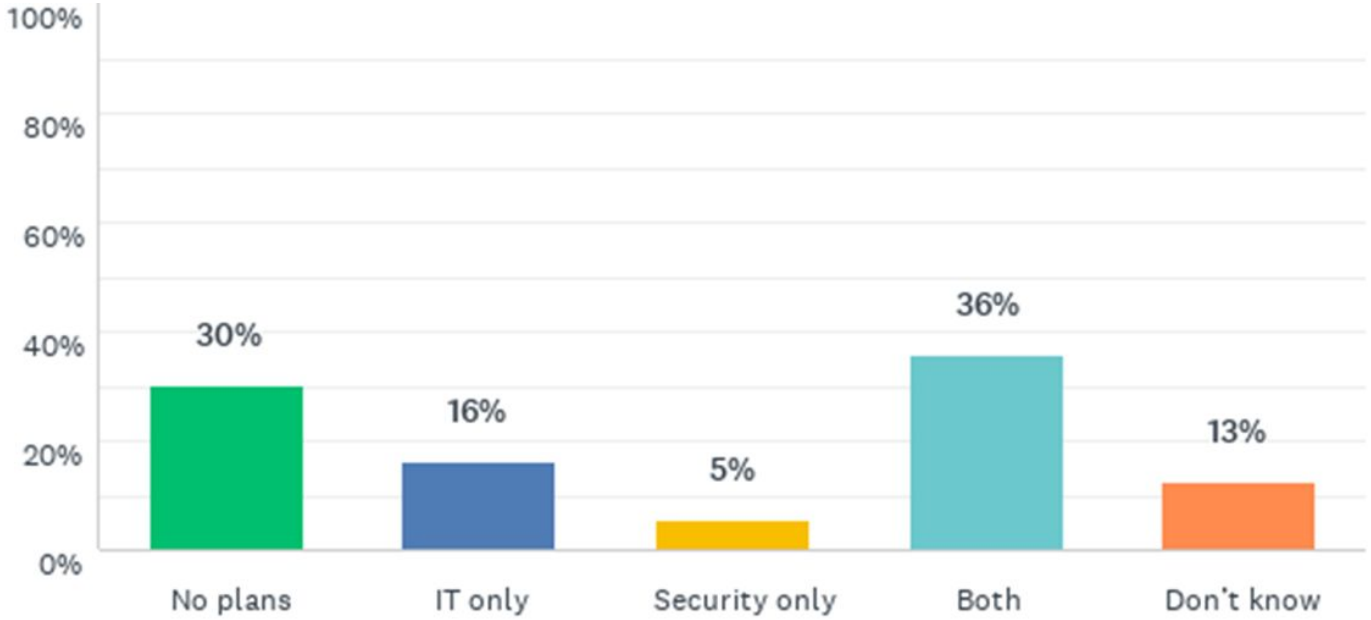
What is your stance on outsourcing IT and/or security needs?



The responses to this question show a preference to outsource both IT and security. In any case, there will continue to be a good deal of outsourcing to meet day-to-day IT needs and emerging security challenges.

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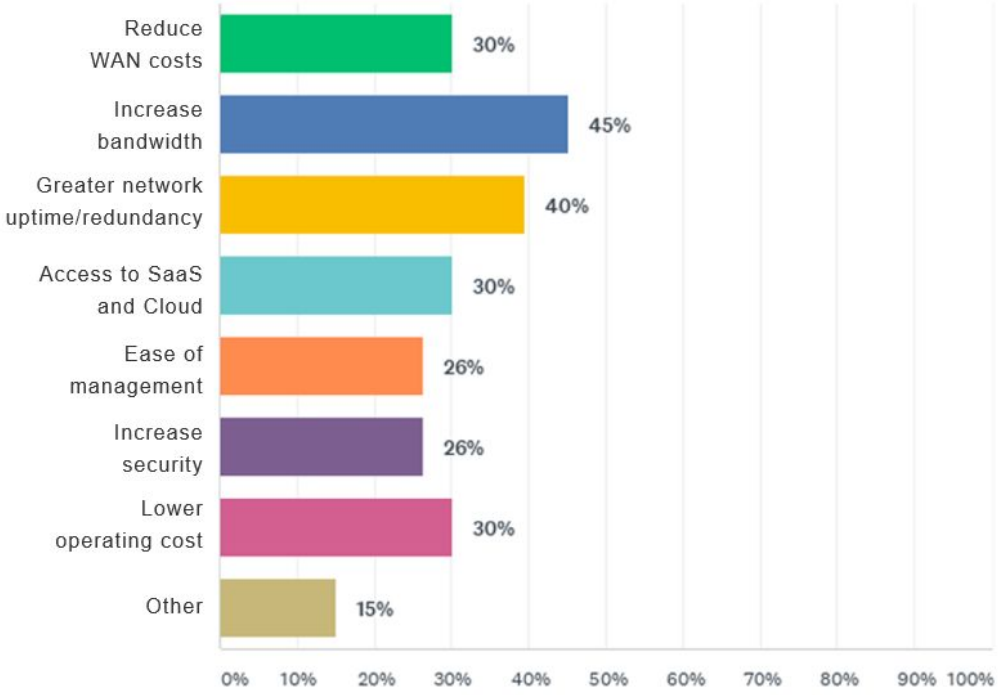
If you are deploying or have deployed an SD-WAN solution, what are the three primary reasons for doing so? (check top 3)



SD-WAN solves a lot of challenges for financial services organizations. A need for more bandwidth, likely driven by digital transformation initiatives, is a key reason for SD-WAN deployment. A desire for improved operations, lower costs, and increased security are also reasons for deploying this technology.

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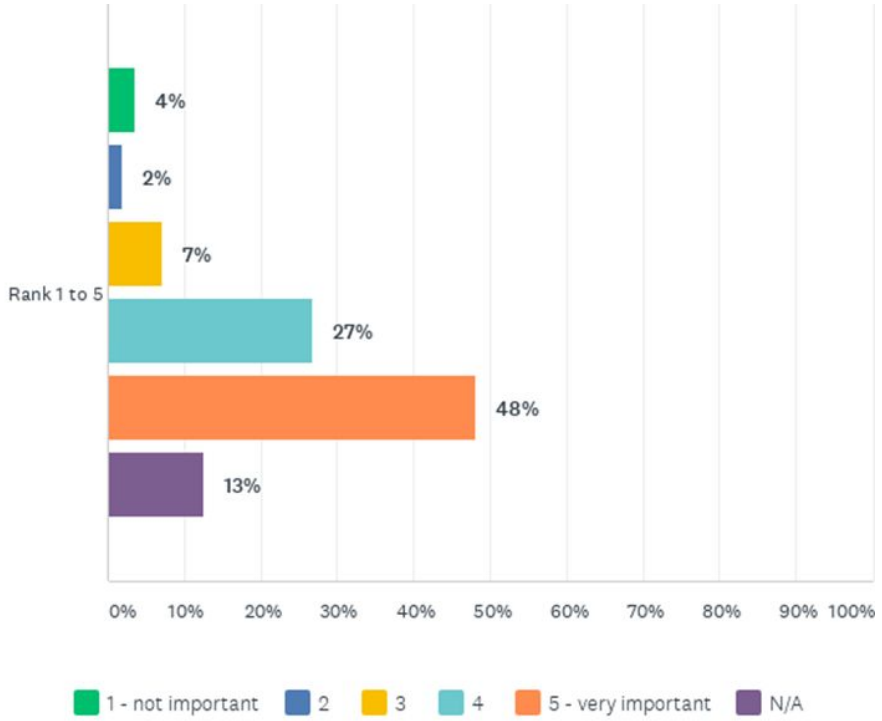
If you chose to deploy an SD-WAN provider, rank the importance of security in choosing an SD-WAN solution. 1 = not important and 5 = very important

While security is not the biggest driver for deploying an SD-WAN, it is ranked as an important benefit of an SD-WAN. Simply put, if you need to upgrade your network, why not go for a solution that improves security?



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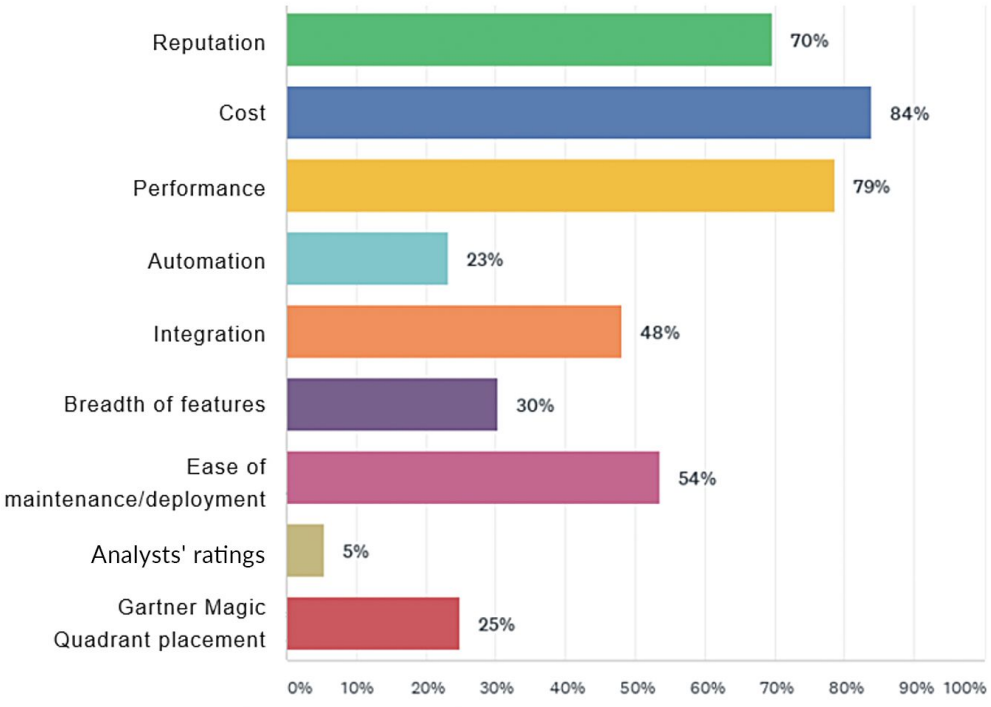
What criteria are most important when looking at technology solutions/vendors? (check all that apply)



No surprise that vendor and solution selection is mostly influenced by reputation, cost, and performance, as well as a second tier of considerations like ease of deployment. It is interesting to see the number of respondents who view the Gartner Magic Quadrant as an important selection criteria.

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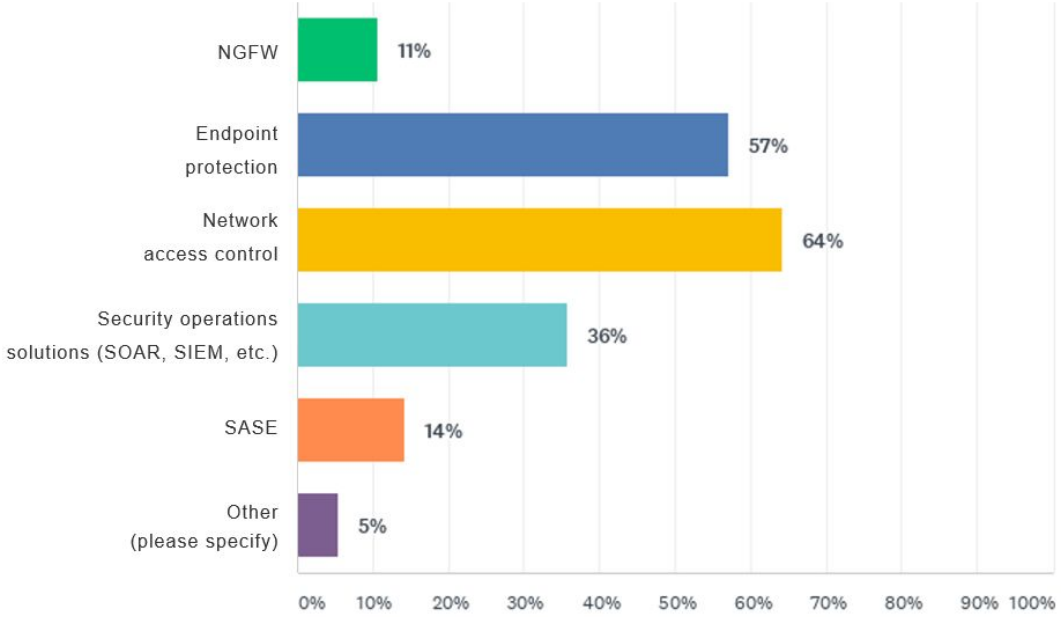
In the next 12-18 months, what will your organization focus on to achieve or improve security? (check top 3)



Respondents indicated that endpoint security is a major concern and upcoming plans show that they plan to take action to address these concerns. Security operations is another logical area of focus for financial services organizations looking to improve security.

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Fortinet ranks number one in the most security appliances shipped worldwide and more than 500,000 customers trust Fortinet to protect their businesses.

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Thank you!

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