

# What's on CIO's minds during the coronavirus crisis

As CIOs navigate the COVID-19 crisis, they are managing myriad issues while also needing to act quickly.

*by Isha Gill, Rahil Jogani, Robert Levin, and Ankita Sodani*

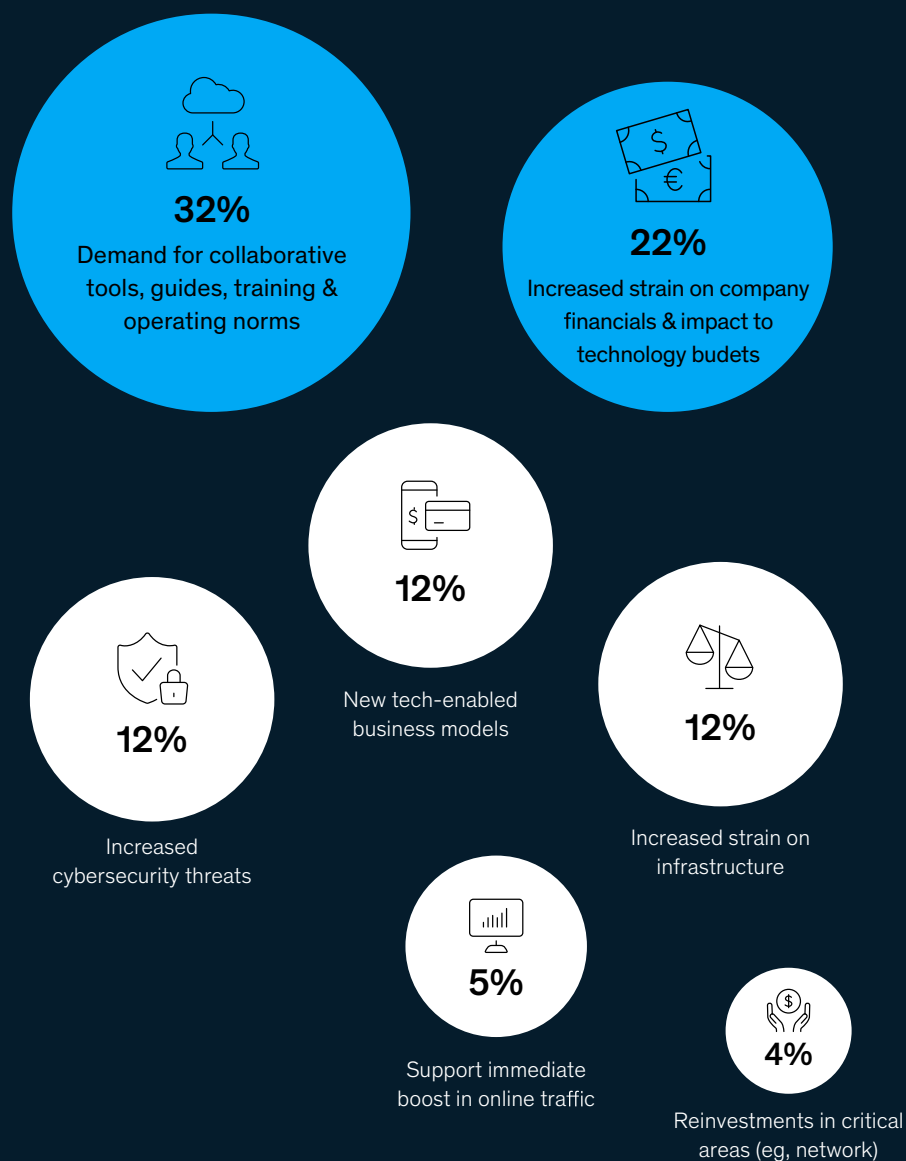


In a series of webinars on technology during the COVID-19 crisis, we heard from about 300 CIOs and technology leaders about what's on their minds now.

## Dual focus on crisis response

# Ramp up of COVID-19 is requiring CIOs to think and act quickly on leadership and technology challenges

Top-of-mind technology priorities for organizations, % as of 03/26/2020  
(COVID-19 ramp-up status: 8 weeks in China, 4 weeks in Italy, 3 weeks in US)



Source: Two McKinsey webinars with 300 CIOs and technology leaders across 25 countries;  
World Health Organization (WHO) for > 100 infections by country

CIOs are seeing record rates of adoption for new technology, such as connectivity tools, and, more broadly, prioritizing technology interventions to support the organization, such as providing digital solutions to enable B2B sales in a remote environment.

CIOs are also evaluating the potential impact of the economic downturn. Many are beginning to rethink their budgets and are prioritizing initiatives that generate savings and cash. In our experience, the best CIOs are also keeping a close eye on what generates value for the business and thinking about how to invest in those initiatives so the business can both weather the downturn and come through it in a strong position.



## Technology organizations are balancing response plans between immediate preparedness and planning for the next normal

Most challenging COVID-19 technology actions to implement,<sup>1</sup> % as of 03/26/2020  
(COVID-19 ramp-up status: 8 weeks in China, 4 weeks in Italy, 3 weeks in US)



### Wave 1

Focus on what matters now

#### Take care of your people

||||| 27

Drive adoption of new ways of working

||||| 15

Communicate consistently, confidently, and reliably

||||| 14

Get beyond the tech to make work from home work

||||| 14

Be proactive with security

||||| 12



### Wave 2

Stabilize critical infrastructure, systems, and processes

#### Enable the shift in business processes

||||| 19

Stabilize critical infrastructure, systems, and processes

||||| 15



### Wave 3

Anticipate and prepare for the new normal

#### Stay the course on key priorities

||||| 16

Understand implications of the new normal

||||| 13

Stay focused on customers

||||| 12

<sup>1</sup>Figures do not sum to 100%, because respondents could select multiple options.

Source: Two McKinsey webinars with 300 CIOs and technology leaders across 25 countries;  
World Health Organization (WHO) for >100 infections by country

Not surprisingly, CIOs are overwhelmingly focused on immediate solutions to support their people and the business. CIOs are moving to provide flexible and secure work arrangements, such as managing flexible shifts and preparing for absences, and putting in place work-safety protocols for those who still must come into work by, for example, establishing zones of work and assessing who really needs to be on the premises. They are also actively shifting resources to support the surge of customers purchasing online, including scaling network capacity and providing support for websites and call centers.

Reassuringly, a substantial number of CIOs are also focused on the longer-term needs of the business by staying the course on important priorities, such as digital and technology enablement, cloud migration, and agile adoption. We know from past crises that companies that thoughtfully invest fare best during and after downturns.

With the implications of the COVID-19 crisis still playing out, CIOs have a crucial role to play in navigating the uncertainty and positioning their businesses to prevail through the downturn and beyond.

**Isha Gill** is an associate partner in McKinsey's Chicago office, where **Rahil Jogani** is a partner and **Ankita Sodani** is an associate; and **Robert Levin** is a partner in the Boston office.

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