THE STATE OF THE AEC CLOUD STORAGE INDUSTRY
ADOPTION TRENDS, PERSPECTIVES, AND SOLUTIONS

Learn about a new U.S. CAD survey's findings on cloud storage for the AEC industry.

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INTRODUCTION

U.S. CAD recently conducted a survey to gauge the adoption and trends of cloud storage in the AEC industry and to find out how IT decision makers think about cloud storage technology to help establish a baseline perspective on its use across the industry. Our survey findings, for which 43 AEC IT decision makers responded, are shared in this report.
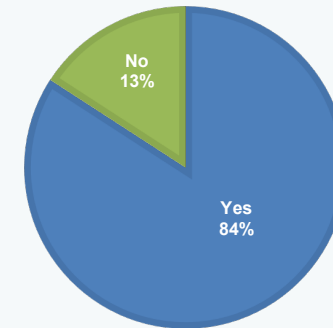
IMPORTANT SURVEY FINDINGS

- There is confusion in the market regarding what are true cloud storage solutions versus other storage and file technology; thus, opportunities exist for increased education by vendors who serve the industry.

- Many organizations have not yet adopted cloud-based storage solutions, do not have a strategy in place, and do not know when they plan to use this type of technology.

- The need for collaboration/sharing content is very high.

- Leveraging best-of-breed technology solutions is an important strategy for attracting and retaining top talent.

- There are a lot of topics top-of-mind about cloud storage and related technologies.

CURRENT CLOUD USAGE

Given the uptick in cloud storage, it is no surprise that the survey found that 69% of respondents cited that they use cloud storage with 31% not yet utilizing a cloud storage solution. At first glance, 69% seems very high. However, upon further analysis of the solution types and vendor solutions cited by respondents, this is not the case. Though many respondents indicated they use a cloud storage solution such as Microsoft Azure or Amazon Web Services, many respondents cited using various file sharing and storage solutions which are not cloud-based. The key takeaway here is that while respondents are levering true cloud storage solutions, many respondents are leveraging non-cloud-based systems to manage storage and file needs.

DO YOU CURRENTLY USE CLOUD STORAGE?
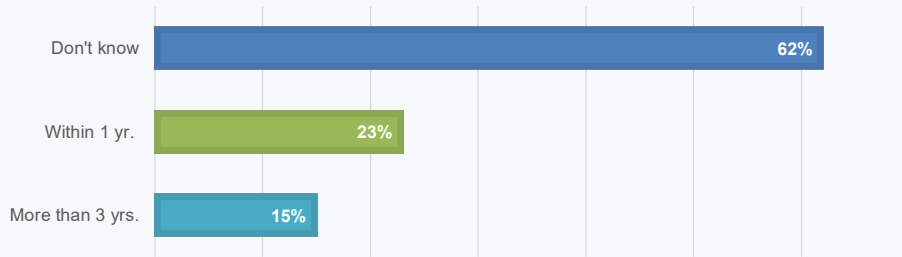

No
13%

Yes
84%

PLANNED CLOUD STORAGE USAGE

For the 31% of respondents who do not currently use cloud storage, uncertainty as to when they will plan to utilize it was the high with 62% indicating they don't know the timeframe they plan to use cloud storage while 23% indicated they plan to use it within one year and 15% stated they plan to use it in more than three years.

The key takeaway here is that over half of the respondents who do not currently use cloud storage do not have a cloud storage strategy or timeframe in place. In the face of growing volumes of data files, rising infrastructure costs, and increased competition for projects places organizations at risk for increased costs, capacity issues, and a competitive disadvantage.

IF YOU CURRENTLY DO NOT USE CLOUD STORAGE, DO YOU PLAN TO USE IT IN ANY OF THE THESE TIMEFRAMES?

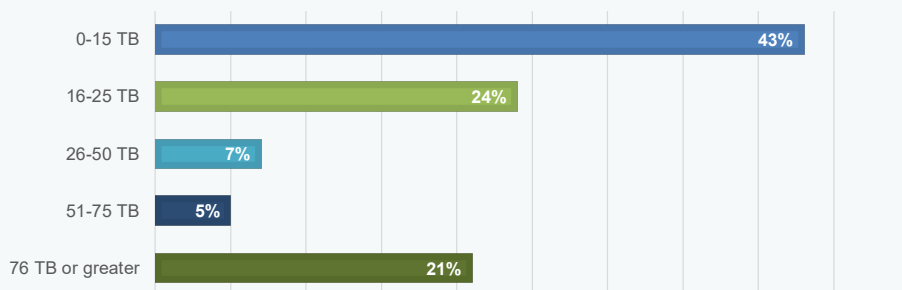|	
Don't know	62%
Within 1 yr.	23%
More than 3 yrs.	15%

DATA MANAGEMENT

The survey also requested that respondents indicate how much data they currently manage. 57% of respondents manage over 15 terabytes of data while 43% of respondents manage less than 15% of terabytes.

With an exponential growth in data continuing to surge, moving to cloud storage can help ensure the right data management capacity to accommodate forecasted data growth in the AEC industry.

HOW MUCH DATA DO YOU CURRENTLY MANAGE?

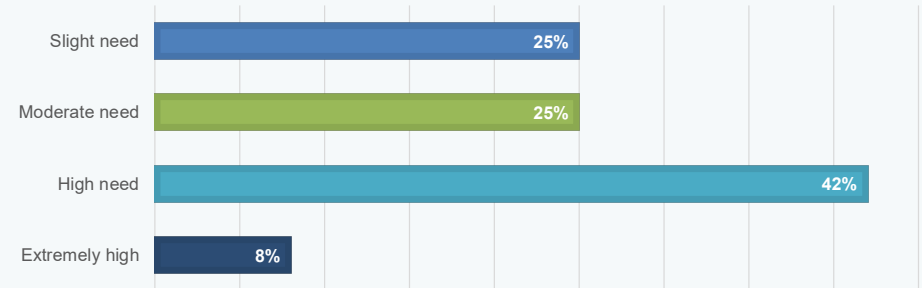|	
0-15 TB	43%
16-25 TB	24%
26-50 TB	7%
51-75 TB	5%
76 TB or greater	21%

COLLABORATION

With the constant demand for collaboration across remote teams and offices, it's no wonder that 50% of respondents cite either an extremely high or high need for collaboration/work sharing. Collaboration is critical
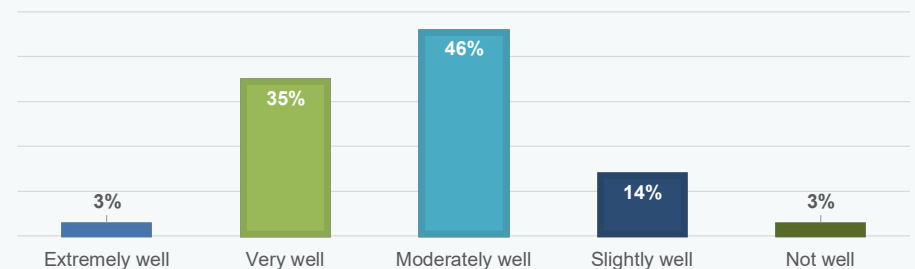
to bring projects to fruition. As such, having access to project work in real-time anytime, anywhere is indispensable.

HOW MUCH OF A NEED DO YOU HAVE FOR COLLABORATION/WORKSHARING?

Slight need	25%
Moderate need	25%
High need	42%
Extremely high	8%

Additionally, the vast majority of respondents - overall 84% - stated they feel collaborating/sharing content is extremely well, very well, or moderately well across their organizations. Just 3% of respondents say that collaborating/sharing content at their firms is not well.
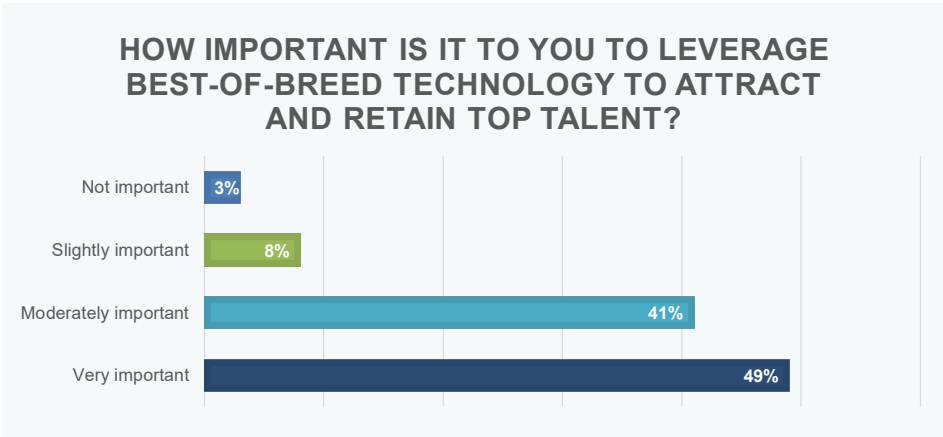
HOW DO YOU FEEL COLLABORATING/SHARING CONTENT ACROSS YOUR ORGANIZATION IS WORKING?

Extremely well	Very well	Moderately well	Slightly well	Not well
3%	35%	46%	14%	3%

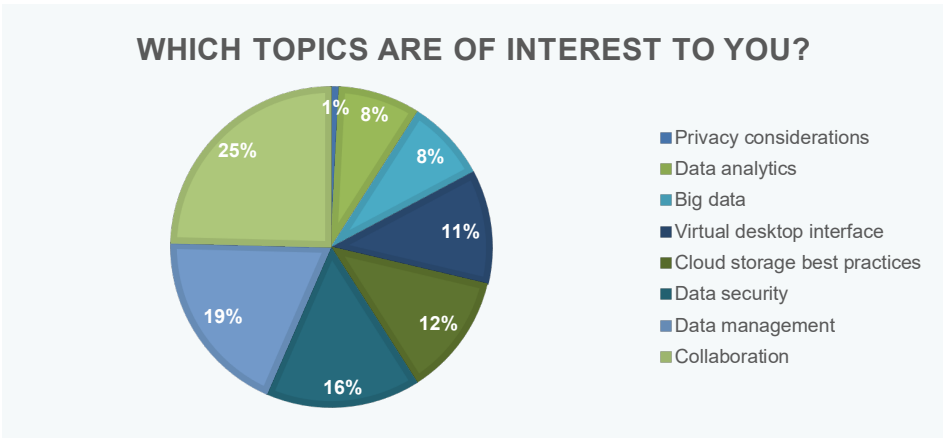## IMPORTANCE OF BEST-OF-BREED TECHNOLOGY FOR ATTRACTING AND RETAINING TOP TALENT

For the purposes of our survey, we wanted to better understand how im-

portant leveraging best-of-breed technology to help attract and retain top talent is. Almost half of the respondents (49%) indicated that leveraging best-of-breed technology is very important. These organizations realize that adopting a technology-driven culture and building it into their hiring strategies can attract valuable resources who will have access to modern technology to deliver great value from the onset of their employment.

HOW IMPORTANT IS IT TO YOU TO LEVERAGE BEST-OF-BREED TECHNOLOGY TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN TOP TALENT?

Not important	3%
Slightly important	8%
Moderately important	41%
Very important	49%

TOPICS OF INTEREST

Respondents were asked to indicate their topics of interest. Collaboration, by far, is the topic of highest interest among respondents at 68%, with data management coming in second at 52% and data security coming in third at 43%. Other topics of interest include cloud strategy best practices, virtual desktop interfaces, big data, data analytics, and privacy

WHICH TOPICS ARE OF INTEREST TO YOU?

1%	8%
25%	8%
19%	11%
16%	12%

- Privacy considerations
- Data analytics
- Big data
- Virtual desktop interface
- Cloud storage best practices
- Data security
- Data management
- Collaboration

considerations. The key takeaway here is that respondents have a lot on their minds when it comes to the cloud and require the right information on these subjects to make informed decisions about cloud and technology strategies.

SUMMARY

Lack of cloud storage adoption and strategy, confusion around what are true cloud solutions are, and the high need to collaborate are the prevailing takeaways of our survey. The fact that cloud storage is here to stay combined with the amount of complex data created and stored, demand for real-time collaboration, and the growing number of projects, there is little room for antiquated or inferior storage solutions. To support data growth and scalability, enable increased collaboration across remote resources and offices, as well as reduce infrastructure costs, IT decision makers - now more than ever - must consider taking the leap into cloud storage.

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