

Sustainable IT leads to significant benefits but is currently still not a focus for most organizations

While half of firms have defined an enterprise-wide sustainability approach, less than one in five (18%) have a comprehensive sustainable IT strategy

Paris, May 25, 2021 - According to a new report from the [Capgemini Research Institute](#), entitled "[Sustainable IT: Why it's time for a Green revolution for your organization's IT](#)", the organizations which have built a comprehensive roadmap to accelerate sustainable IT¹ implementation have realized improved ESG scores (61%), seen improved customer satisfaction (56%) and witnessed tax savings (44%) as a direct result of sustainable IT practices. Yet, organizations are still largely unaware of how to implement sustainable IT practices and proactively address the environmental impact of enterprise-IT: only 6% of firms having achieved a high level of sustainable IT maturity.

While tech solutions can help solve environmental issues, IT as a whole has carbon footprint itself. The new report has identified the areas of enterprise IT emissions that are growing most rapidly and lays out a three-stage roadmap for organizations to build and implement their sustainable IT strategies.

However, organizations are not yet viewing sustainable IT as a priority or a tool in their wider sustainability agenda and journey to reduce their carbon footprint: according to the report, only 22% plan to reduce more than one-quarter of their carbon footprint through sustainable IT in the next three years.

Organizations are largely unaware of the environmental impact of IT

A clear awareness gap about the environmental impact of IT has emerged, with 57% of respondents unaware of their own organization's IT carbon footprint. Those in banking and the consumer products sector show the highest levels of awareness (52% and 51% respectively), while the industrial manufacturing sector the lowest (28%). Only 34% know that the production of mobiles and laptops has a higher carbon footprint than the use of these devices over their lifetime.

This awareness gap is compounded by the fact that sustainable IT currently does not get the same attention and resource as other green initiatives. When it comes to strategy, half of firms have defined an enterprise-wide sustainability approach, yet less than one in five (18%) have a comprehensive sustainable IT strategy with well-defined goals and target timelines.

Most organizations do not have adequate tools or shared standards to measure the environmental impact of IT. Only 29% use carbon assessment tools and just 34% say that sustainable IT is part of their board-level agenda. The use of KPIs to track and measure progress for enterprise IT sustainability is also not widespread, with only 23% of organizations measuring greenhouse gas emissions. Overall, just 1% have achieved their targets. Setting a carbon cost against IT operations can help organizations across departments realize the impact of their IT footprint, but only 27% of organizations have standardized the practice.

¹ Sustainable IT is an umbrella term that describes an environment-focused approach to the design, usage and disposal of computer hardware and software applications, and the design of accompanying business processes. The term also extends to activities such as responsible mining of rare metals used to develop IT hardware, water conservation, and the application of circular economy principles across the technology lifecycle. Capgemini's research spans four key areas of enterprise IT including user hardware and devices, networks and communication systems, applications and data, and cloud computing.



High maturity organizations derive more benefits

The technology sector is well placed to play a role influencing and advocating for policy change. Technology firms are taking proactive steps in decarbonizing IT operations, services and products, and multiple players have announced targets to become carbon neutral. As a result, many organizations are looking to shift the onus onto the tech industry to help them establish sustainable IT practices. Some 52% of organizations told the Capgemini Research Institute that technology firms should incorporate a sustainable IT dimension into their products and services, 61% want tech firms to help them measure the environmental impact of their IT, and 45% are willing to pay a premium of up to 5% for sustainable IT products and services.

"Sustainability must be at the core of our global effort for post-pandemic recovery, and IT cannot be neglected. Organizations need to recognize and act on the carbon cost of our digital world by accelerating the move to business models which are supported by sustainable IT capabilities," says Cyril Garcia, CEO of Capgemini Invent and Group Executive Board Member, Executive sponsor of the Group CSR program.

"Organizations must have the diagnostic tools, strategies, and a roadmap in place to accelerate their journey towards decarbonization. Endorsement from all stakeholders in the organization will be critical for success along with sustainable software architecture and change in employee behavior. Beyond the environmental imperative, the business benefits are compelling in terms of bottom line, social status and customer satisfaction."

The report concludes with a three-stage roadmap to accelerating sustainable IT, which includes:

- Setting the foundations with a sustainable IT strategy that aligns with the organizational sustainability strategy
- Creating a governance process with a dedicated sustainable IT team and support from leadership
- Operationalizing sustainable IT initiatives with sustainability a key pillar of software architecture

A copy of the report can be downloaded [here](#).

Report methodology

The Capgemini Research Institute surveyed 1,000 organizations with annual revenues of \$1 billion+ to understand their sustainable IT outlook. This included organizations in insurance, retail, consumer products, banking, energy and utilities, life sciences and healthcare, automotive, telecoms, industrial manufacturing, technology services and the public sector. The Capgemini Research Institute interviewed senior IT executives, sustainability professionals, as well as senior executives from core functions such as human resources, finance, and marketing.

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