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Agencies with Complex Networks are Three Times More Likely to Experience Frequent Network Disruptions that Impact IT Performance and Government Service

New Report Points to Need for Open, Non-proprietary Standards to Simplify the Network

Alexandria, Va., July 14, 2014 – [MeriTalk](#), a public-private partnership focused on improving the outcomes of government IT, today announced the results of its new report, “[The Federal Simplicity Report: Navigating Network Complexity](#).” The study, underwritten by [Brocade](#), reveals that Federal agencies with more complex networks are three times more likely to experience frequent disruptions than those with simplified networks, and 94 percent say they have experienced downtime that has impacted agency mission in the past 12 months. Respondents estimate that their agencies could save 18 percent of their IT budget, or \$14.8 billion government-wide, by reducing network complexity by half.

While Federal IT managers know that reducing complexity is generally good for their agencies, 54 percent say their network complexity has increased in the past year and 68 percent believe it will continue to increase over the next three years. The top factors contributing to this complexity boom include: increased network users (36 percent), the move toward server virtualization (33 percent), the move toward cloud computing (32 percent), and increased use of mobile devices, including BYOD (30 percent).

The results of this complexity are quite serious. Eighty-one percent of network managers believe that network complexity can slow or halt IT performance objectives, and 68 percent believe their complexity hampers their ability to implement new technologies, services, or capabilities.

Agencies agree that moving to open, non-proprietary standards is the most important step to reducing network complexity. Respondents note the varied benefits of a simplified network including improved network reliability, speed, security, streamlined maintenance, and improved IT agility to better support the mission.

“Reducing network complexity is a significant opportunity in Federal government data center transformation,” said Anthony Robbins, vice president Federal, Brocade. “Agencies must move toward open, non-proprietary standards to simplify their networks. The resulting networks should be designed for, and use, products from multiple vendors. This will create a more reliable, lower cost network which is set up to move in the direction of software-defined networking. This modernized network will then provide the IT agility required to better meet agency missions.”

In addition to moving to open standards, respondents suggest adding bandwidth (44 percent), increasing redundancy (28 percent), and increasing virtual networking/software-defined networking (22 percent) as ways to simplify current networks.

“The network is the road on which all government information travels,” said Stephen O’Keeffe, founder, MeriTalk. “Taking the road less traveled by – one with reduced complexity, interoperability, and diversification – will make all the difference, and is critical to agency performance and efficiency.”

“The Federal Simplicity Report: Navigating Network Complexity” is based on an online survey of 200 Federal network managers in May 2014. The report has a margin of error of +/- 6.86 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. To download the full study, please visit www.meritalk.com/federalsimplicity.

About MeriTalk

The voice of tomorrow’s government today, MeriTalk is a public-private partnership focused on improving the outcomes of government IT. Focusing on government’s hot-button issues, MeriTalk hosts [Big Data Exchange](#), [Cloud Computing Exchange](#), [Cyber Security Exchange](#), and [Data Center Exchange](#) – platforms dedicated to supporting public-private dialogue and collaboration. MeriTalk connects with an audience of 85,000 government community contacts. For

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