2024

STATE OF SYSADMIN

2024

A new era dawns

After years of unrelenting challenges, sysadmins have come to expect major plot twists in their quest for IT success. Remote work? Been there, done that. Increasing cyberattacks? Wouldn't expect any less. AI stealing your job and your spouse? Okay, not yet, but it's clearly on the roadmap.

Normality seems a thing of the past, destroyed long ago in the bowels of Mount Zoom. But at this point, sysadmins are nothing if not nimble. With each roll of the dice, you somehow come out ahead (or at least with a hilarious new story to tell).

We wanted to know what you've been up to, so we did a survey and learned some cool stuff from more than 1,600 mostly willing participants. It's pretty epic. Gather your provisions and ready yourself for the journey ahead.

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PDQ:
Legendary device management

As sysadmins ourselves, we have long quested for a magical solution to device management. Behold! PDQ was wrought from the collective hopes and dreams of all sysadmins, but especially those of us who have succumbed to the sorcerer's spell of sloth.

PDQ Deploy & Inventory helped quench our insatiable thirst for efficiency. Then, we fortified ourselves with SimpleMDM's unstoppable Apple device management and SmartDeploy's mighty device imaging.

But our quest was not yet complete. We had long chased the fabled elixir of agent-based remote Windows management. PDQ Connect glistened ethereally in the distance until we were finally able to unleash its dazzling capabilities upon the world.

Start your journey with a free trial
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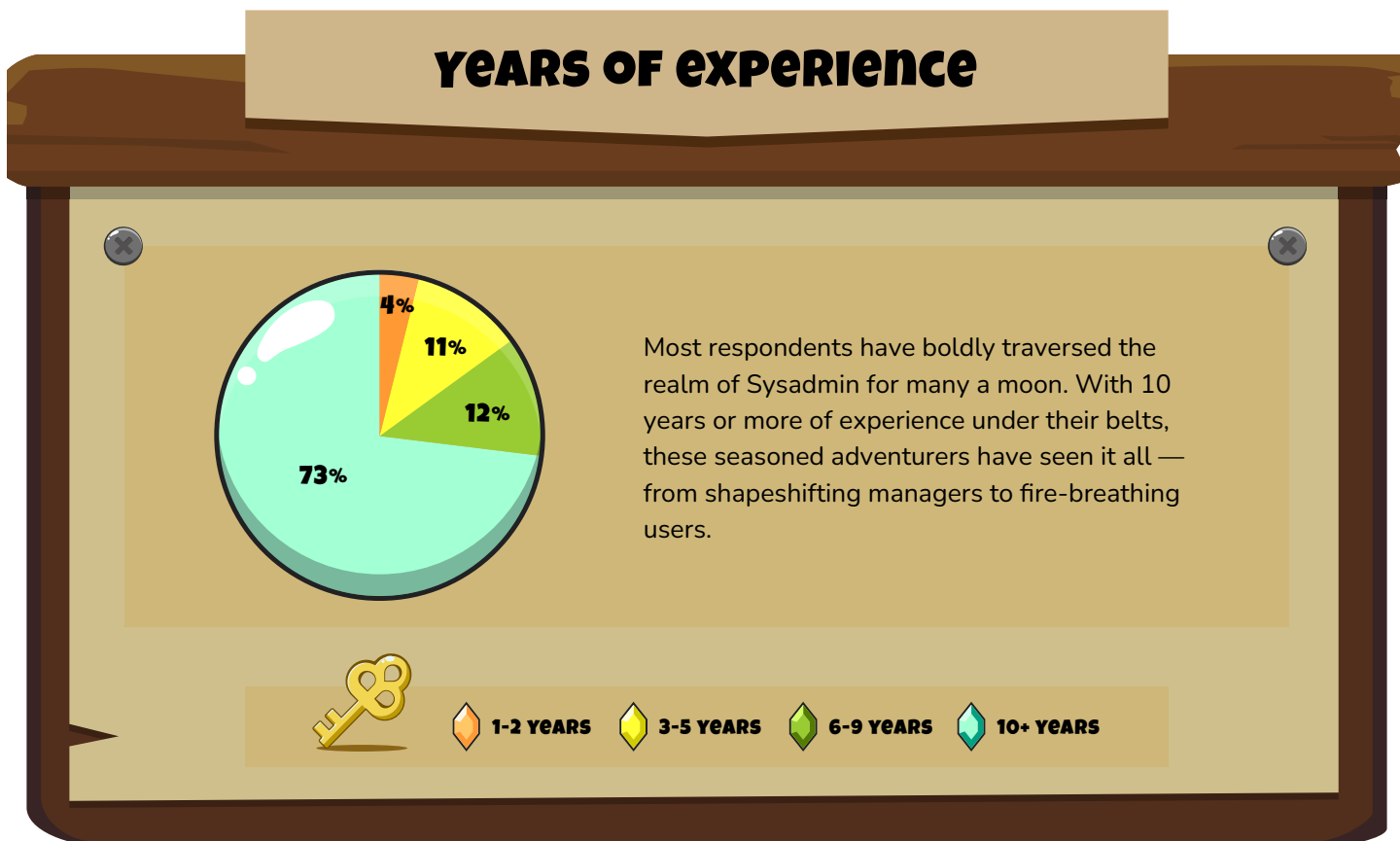
DEMOGRAPHICS

We sent out our finest carrier pigeons (or, you know, emails and stuff) to spread word of our latest survey. More than 1,600 brave adventurers responded to our pleas. But some kept a few secrets guarded within their enigmatic hearts. While your cryptic nature intrigues us, it also creates inconsistent response totals. Woe is our data analysis team.

Role

The vast majority of respondents actively do the day-to-day IT tasks. Around 47% are individual contributors, 38% are managers, and 6% are freelancers or contractors. Another 9% command the forces as executives — and enjoy all the privileges their positions entail. (In other words, they don't have to crawl behind desks or touch filthy user devices unless they really want to, and they presumably sip the finest mead.)

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

4%
11%
12%
73%

Most respondents have boldly traversed the realm of Sysadmin for many a moon. With 10 years or more of experience under their belts, these seasoned adventurers have seen it all — from shapeshifting managers to fire-breathing users.

1-2 YEARS   3-5 YEARS   6-9 YEARS   10+ YEARS

INDUSTRY

Sysadmins explore the vast industry landscape, gaining a stronghold in all corners of the kingdom. This year, we saw more respondents from education, public service, and technology. Welcome to the fellowship, dear allies.

- ✅ **Education**: 20%
- ✅ **Industrials** (manufacturing, construction, etc.): 19%
- ✅ **Public service, social service, government**: 14%
- ✅ **Technology**: 12%
- ✅ **Healthcare**: 8%
- ✅ **Financial services**: 7%
- ✅ **Professional services** (law, consulting, etc.): 6%

SIZE OF COMPANY

In the year 2023, the U.S. Small Business Administration estimated that 99.9% of American businesses qualify as small. And with around 46% of all private-sector employees working for these small businesses, it's no surprise that most of our respondents also happen to work for small to medium businesses (SMBs). However, it is worth noting that SMBs dominate less than last year, with a notable uptick in the number of respondents working for major behemoths.

Our best guess? More SMBs are outsourcing their IT services to managed service providers (MSPs), which would also explain why the MSP market size is expected to double by 2030.

SIZE OF COMPANY	2023	2024
1-10 employees	4%	5%
11-100 employees	21%	20%
101-500 employees	47%	40%
501-999 employees	12%	15%
1,000+ employees	16%	20%

NUMBER OF MACHINES
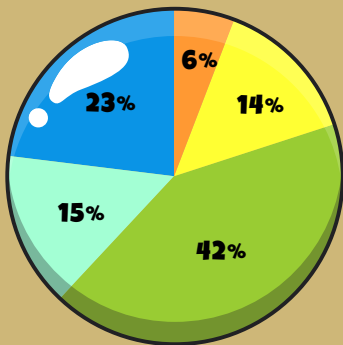
As in surveys past, most respondents reported managing between 101 and 500 machines. However, we've seen increases in the number of respondents managing fewer than 25 machines or over 1,000 machines. These results are likely tied closely to the shift in company sizes.

6% · 14% · 23% · 15% · 42%

◆ 1-25 machines ◆ 26-100 machines ◆ 101-500 machines ◆ 501-999 machines ◆ 1000+ machines

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SALARY

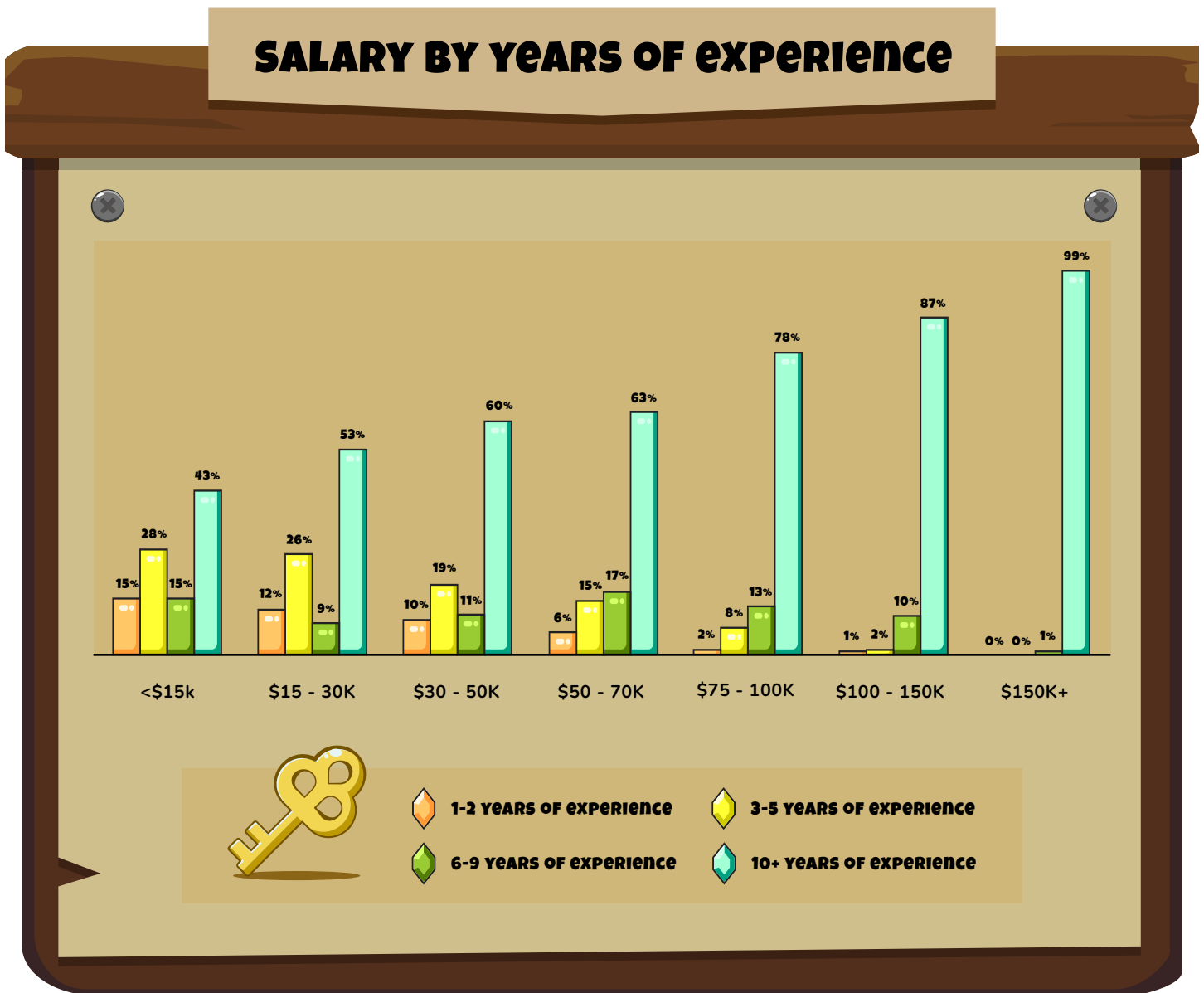Want to know how much coin is in Bartholomew the Blunderer's satchel? You've come to the right place.

SYSADMIN SALARY RANGES

Those in the realm of Sysadmin are thriving, with respondents earning a median salary between $75,000 and $99,999 compared to a nationwide median salary of just under $60,000.*

*Based on 2023 Q4 median weekly earnings

SALARY BY TENURE

With experience comes wisdom — and often money. Virtually all of the top earners who completed the survey had at least 10 years of experience.

SALARY BY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

	1-2 years	3-5 years	6-9 years	10+ years
<$15k	15%	28%	15%	43%
$15 - 30K	12%	26%	9%	53%
$30 - 50K	10%	19%	11%	60%
$50 - 70K	6%	15%	17%	63%
$75 - 100K	2%	8%	13%	78%
$100 - 150K	1%	2%	10%	87%
$150K+	0%	0%	1%	99%

Legend:
- 1-2 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
- 3-5 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
- 6-9 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE
- 10+ YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

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SALARY BY INDUSTRY

Industry continues to play a big role in average salary. To those of you in education, you have our continued sympathy. To those in technology, healthcare, and professional services, please reach out for my Venmo details.

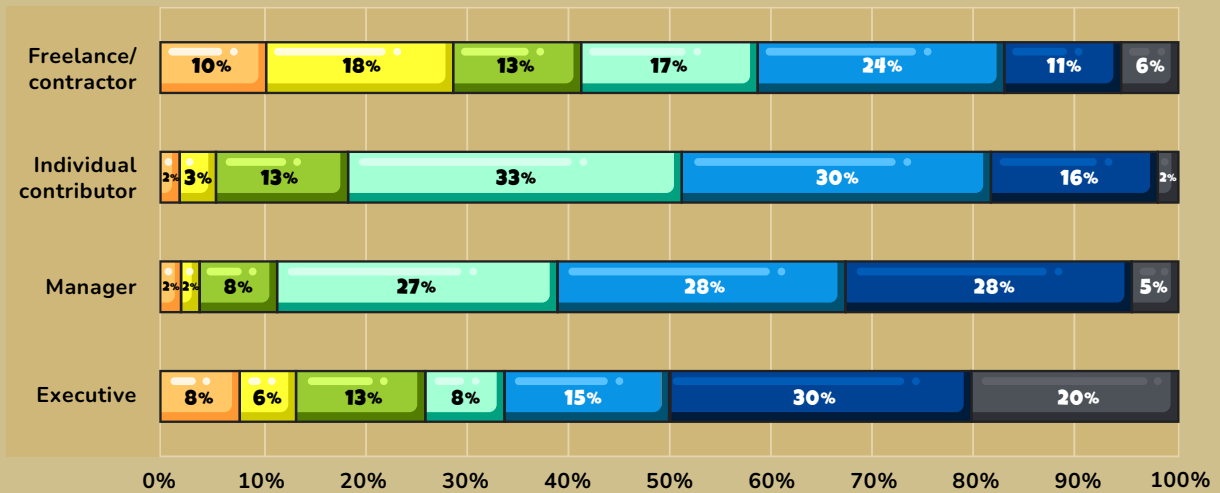| Industry	<$15,000	$15-30K	$30-50K	$50-75K	$75-100K	$100-150K	$150K+
Technology	4%	4%	12%	18%	26%	26%	10%
Public service, social service, government	1%	3%	9%	30%	30%	25%	1%
Professional services	1%	1%	13%	16%	24%	39%	5%
Industrials	2%	2%	13%	24%	31%	24%	4%
Healthcare	2%	1%	5%	26%	32%	29%	4%
Financial services	2%	1%	7%	26%	32%	22%	9%
Education	1%	5%	15%	44%	25%	10%	

Key: <$15,000 • $15-30K • $30-50K • $50-75K • $75-100K • $100-150K • $150K+

To help you better visualize this distribution, here's another look at how it breaks down.

Key: EDUCATION • FINANCIAL SERVICES • HEALTHCARE • INDUSTRIALS • PROFESSIONAL SERVICES • PUBLIC SERVICE • TECHNOLOGY

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SALARY BY ROLE

Because we're incredibly nosy, we also assessed salary by role. Unsurprisingly, executives make the most coin, while managers and individual contributors skew lower. Meanwhile, freelancers and contractors are more evenly distributed across salary bands.

Role	<$15,000	$15-30K	$30-50K	$50-75K	$75-100K	$100-150K	$150K+
Freelance/contractor	10%	18%	13%	17%	24%	11%	6%
Individual contributor	2%	3%	13%	33%	30%	16%	2%
Manager	2%	2%	8%	27%	28%	28%	5%
Executive	8%	6%	13%	8%	15%	30%	20%

Legend: <$15,000, $15-30K, $30-50K, $50-75K, $75-100K, $100-150K, $150K+

TAKEAWAY

Your knowledge of common remuneration can help unlock your full earning potential. Leverage salary data (and your incredible charisma) in compensation negotiations.

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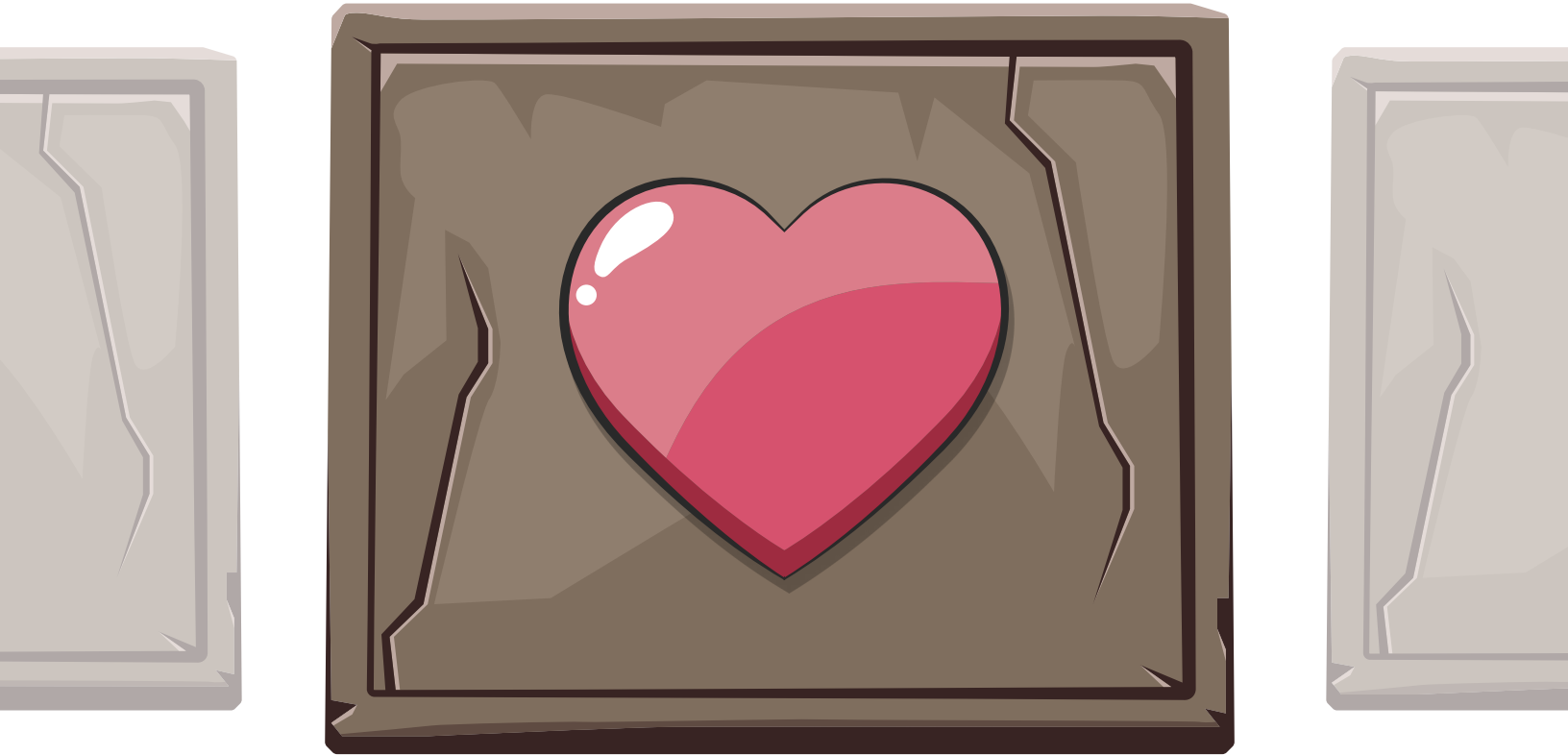
SENTIMENT

While 2023 saw notable improvements in sysadmin sentiments, this year leveled off. In fact, very little has changed since last year. (Temporal loop, perhaps?) Sysadmins still face countless challenges, but most want to stay right where they are.

EXECUTIVE SUPPORT

The glory days of 2023 are over, and perceived executive support is stabilizing. At least you still feel more supported than back in 2022, otherwise known as the dark night of our souls.

But just wait. You're only one spear phishing attack away from becoming an executive's new favorite person.

We get the support we need from the executive team

	2022	2023	2024
STRONGLY AGREE	15%	24%	22%
AGREE	42%	49%	45%
NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	24%	15%	20%
DISAGREE	13%	9%	11%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	6%	3%	2%

STRESS

Stress levels have remained remarkably consistent from 2022 through 2024, with most respondents reporting no major changes. However, while healthcare saw an improvement in overall stress, those of you in financial services appear to have had a rough year (42% of you say you're more stressed at work now than you were a year ago). Who hurt you? Should we fight them?

TOOLS

As in years past, most of you (over 60%) feel you have the tools you need to do your jobs successfully. We're happy for you. But we also selfishly hope by that you mean you're rocking a perfect trifecta of PDQ, SimpleMDM, and SmartDeploy.

CONTINUITY OF EMPLOYMENT

Our continuity of employment survey results are eerily similar to last year. Nearly identical, actually — like a perfect reflection in a scrying mirror. Or like everyone is just copying their answers from last year. The good news is that 72% of you have no intention of switching jobs in 2024. While 7% of you may be in the market for a change, that's significantly below the national average of 53%.

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Folks with 1 to 2 years of experience are most likely to be eyeing other job options, but only 16% of them are actively planning to move on. As for different industries, those working in the professional services and technology sectors are most committed to staying put.

In comparison to last year, the technology sector saw the most significant shift, with more sysadmins reporting plans to stay in their current positions (up from 73% in 2023 to 81% in 2024). Funny how widespread industry layoffs will make you think twice about switching jobs.
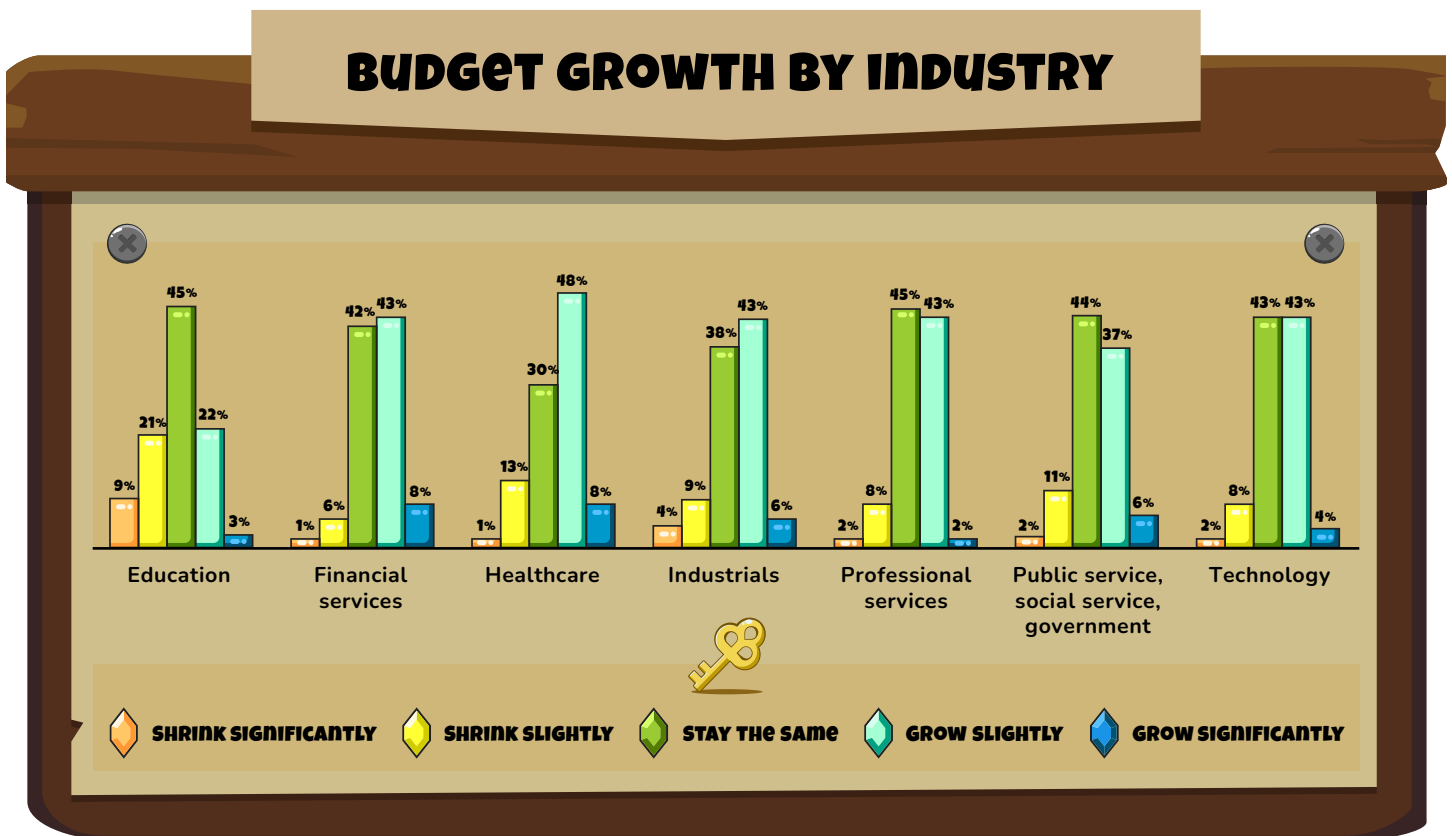
CONTINUITY IN FIELD

Like last year, over 90% of you said you wanted to stay in the IT field. Time to think about adding a sysadmin symbol to your family crest.

This sentiment was relatively consistent across industry sectors, though sysadmins in financial services — our respondents most likely to report increased stress — were slightly more likely to consider a career change.

BUDGET CHANGES

Thanks to inflation, you may have sold your amulet of eternal patience to pay for your ale. But does that mean your department's budget will increase? Only if you're lucky. Most respondents expect their budgets to stay the same or grow slightly. That said, more sysadmins in healthcare expect their budgets to grow than in years past, while those in education increasingly fear their budgets may shrink.

BUDGET GROWTH BY INDUSTRY

	Education	Financial services	Healthcare	Industrials	Professional services	Public service, social service, government	Technology
Shrink significantly	9%	1%	1%	4%	2%	2%	2%
Shrink slightly	21%	6%	13%	9%	8%	11%	8%
Stay the same	45%	42%	30%	38%	45%	44%	43%
Grow slightly	22%	43%	48%	43%	43%	37%	43%
Grow significantly	3%	8%	8%	6%	2%	6%	4%

◆ SHRINK SIGNIFICANTLY ◆ SHRINK SLIGHTLY ◆ STAY THE SAME ◆ GROW SLIGHTLY ◆ GROW SIGNIFICANTLY

TEAM CHANGES

For the most part, sysadmins expect their team sizes to hold steady. However, those in financial services and technology remain somewhat optimistic that they might add new coworkers to take some of the weight off their shoulders. Alas, sysadmins in education increasingly think their teams could shrink. Name the time and place — we'll bring the pitchforks.
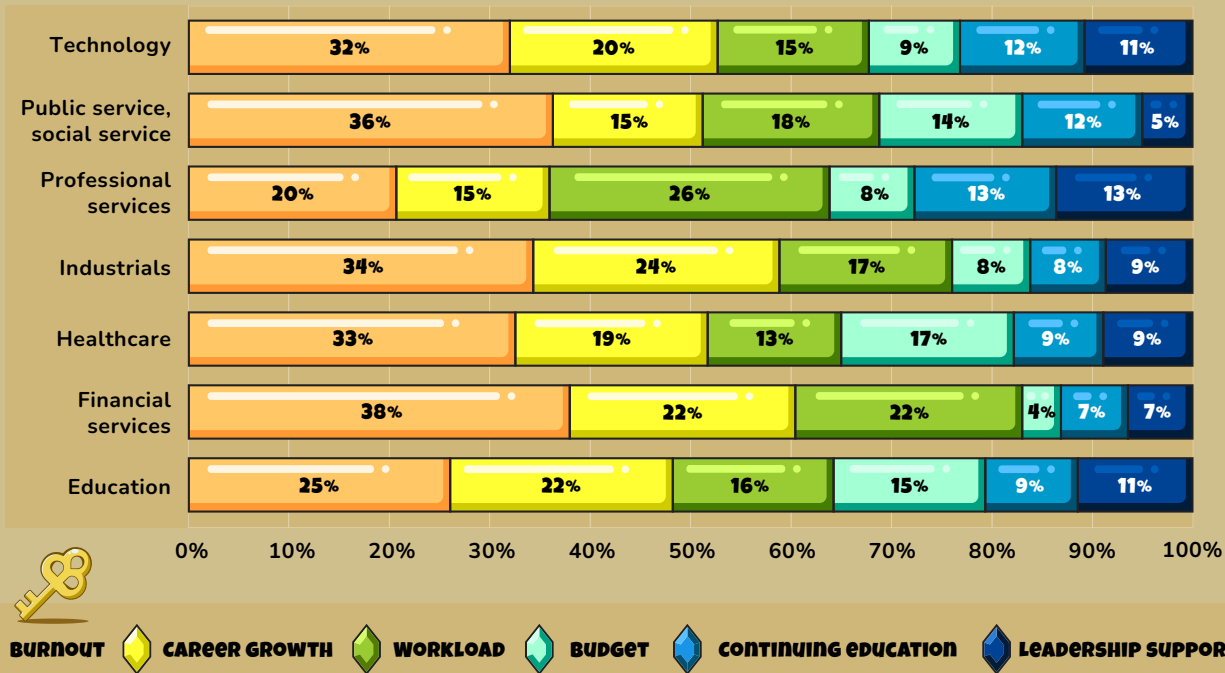
JOB SECURITY ANXIETY

Sysadmin job security anxiety is trending slightly higher than last year, though most respondents still report relatively low overall stress levels.

Those in education and public service report the least concern over their job security, which may be because those areas tend to operate with lower staffing levels to begin with. Sysadmins in tech express the most concern — only natural given the high-profile industry layoffs.

CAREER CONCERNS

By far, career growth and burnout top the list of sysadmin concerns. While those with under 5 years of experience focus primarily on career growth, more seasoned sysadmins increasingly worry about burnout as their career journeys progress. It's also worth noting that burnout is the main concern across most industry sectors, though workload tops the list for professional services.
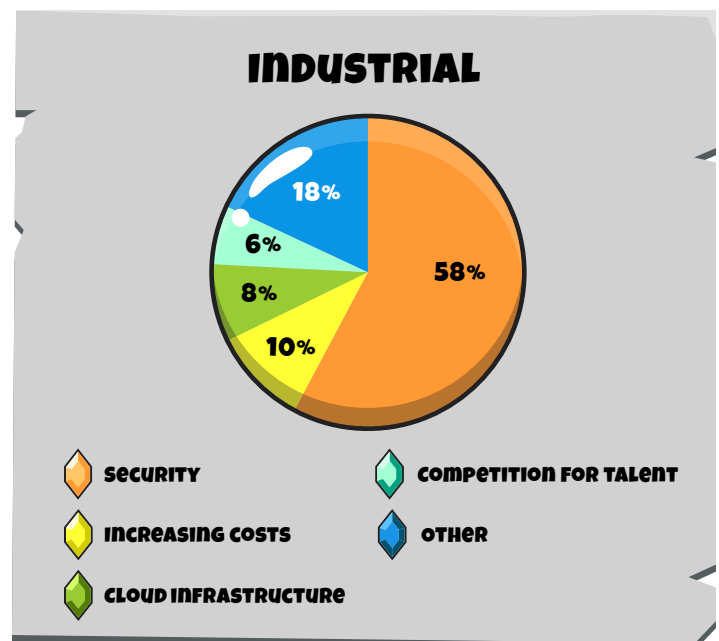
	Burnout	Career growth	Workload	Budget	Continuing education	Leadership support
Technology	32%	20%	15%	9%	12%	11%
Public service, social service	36%	15%	18%	14%	12%	5%
Professional services	20%	15%	26%	8%	13%	13%
Industrials	34%	24%	17%	8%	8%	9%
Healthcare	33%	19%	13%	17%	9%	9%
Financial services	38%	22%	22%	4%	7%	7%
Education	25%	22%	16%	15%	9%	11%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

◆ BURNOUT ◆ CAREER GROWTH ◆ WORKLOAD ◆ BUDGET ◆ CONTINUING EDUCATION ◆ LEADERSHIP SUPPORT

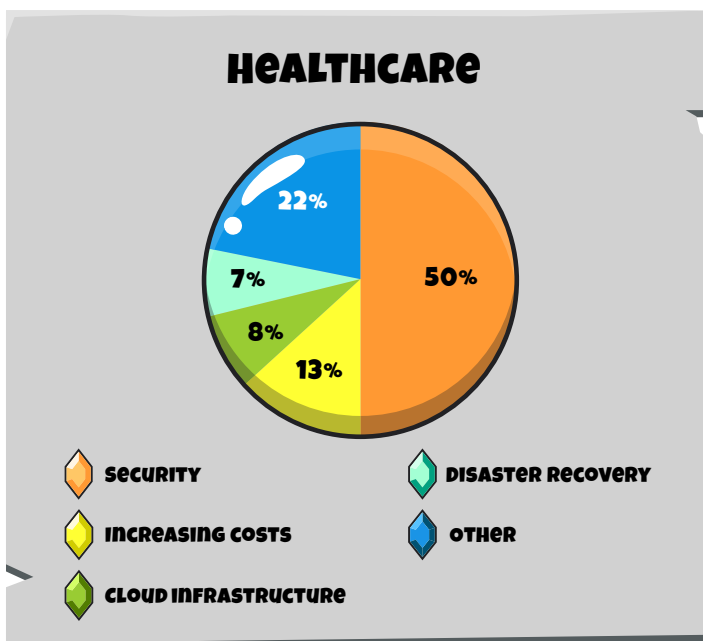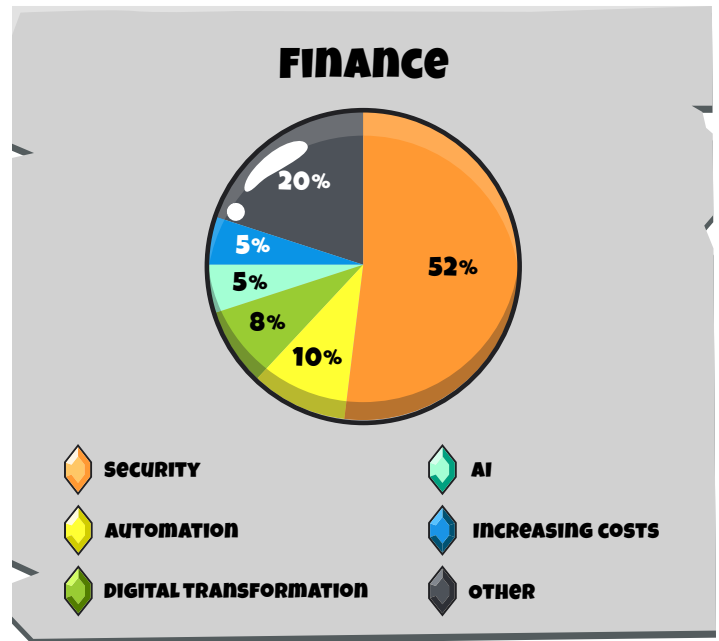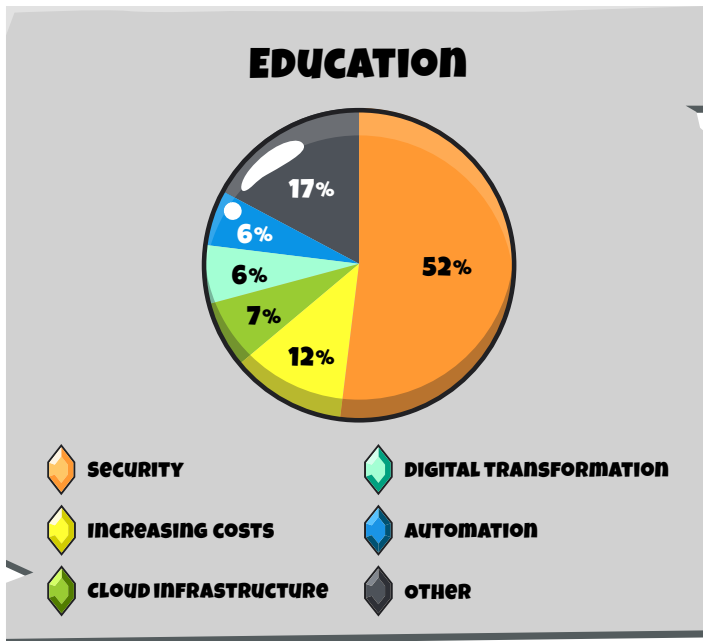PDQ Simple MDM POWERED BY PDQ.COM smartdeploy POWERED BY PDQ.COM
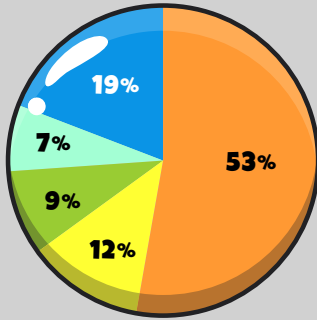
IT INDUSTRY CONCERNS

The biggest IT industry concern is pretty darn predictable. More than half of survey respondents worry about security, and rightly so. But we'll save that juicy topic for later. A lot of write-in responses also noted concerns about AI, and we hear you. (But so does AI, so shush.)

Sysadmins with over 3 years of experience also frequently bemoan increasing costs, whereas early-career sysadmins express more concern about automation and competition for talent.

Curiously, those in tech were less concerned with security than the average sysadmin and more preoccupied with geopolitical impacts and competition for talent. What prophetic secrets do you know?
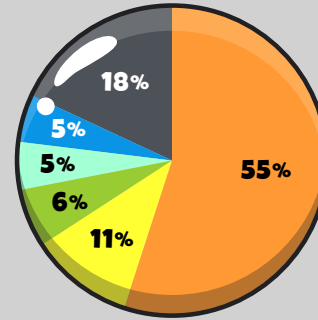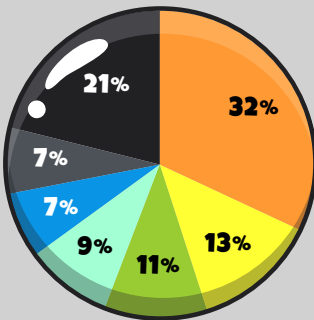
EDUCATION

52% Security
17% Other
12% Increasing Costs
7% Cloud Infrastructure
6% Digital Transformation
6% Automation

- ◆ SECURITY
- ◆ INCREASING COSTS
- ◆ CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE
- ◆ DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
- ◆ AUTOMATION
- ◆ OTHER

FINANCE

52% Security
20% Other
10% Automation
8% Digital Transformation
5% AI
5% Increasing Costs

- ◆ SECURITY
- ◆ AUTOMATION
- ◆ DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
- ◆ AI
- ◆ INCREASING COSTS
- ◆ OTHER

HEALTHCARE

50% Security
22% Other
13% Increasing Costs
8% Cloud Infrastructure
7% Disaster Recovery

- ◆ SECURITY
- ◆ INCREASING COSTS
- ◆ CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE
- ◆ DISASTER RECOVERY
- ◆ OTHER

INDUSTRIAL

58% Security
18% Other
10% Increasing Costs
8% Cloud Infrastructure
6% Competition for Talent

- ◆ SECURITY
- ◆ INCREASING COSTS
- ◆ CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE
- ◆ COMPETITION FOR TALENT
- ◆ OTHER

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PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- 53% SECURITY
- 19% OTHER
- 12% COMPETITION FOR TALENT
- 9% INCREASING COSTS
- 7% DISASTER RECOVERY

Legend:
- SECURITY
- DISASTER RECOVERY
- COMPETITION FOR TALENT
- OTHER
- INCREASING COSTS

PUBLIC SERVICE

- 55% SECURITY
- 18% OTHER
- 11% CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE
- 6% INCREASING COSTS
- 5% AUTOMATION
- 5% END-USER EXPERIENCE

Legend:
- SECURITY
- AUTOMATION
- CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE
- END-USER EXPERIENCE
- INCREASING COSTS
- OTHER

TECHNOLOGY

- 32% SECURITY
- 21% OTHER
- 13% COMPETITION FOR TALENT
- 11% INCREASING COSTS
- 9% AUTOMATION
- 7% CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE
- 7% GEOPOLITICAL IMPACT ON TECHNOLOGY

Legend:
- SECURITY
- CLOUD INFRASTRUCTURE
- COMPETITION FOR TALENT
- GEOPOLITICAL IMPACT ON TECHNOLOGY
- INCREASING COSTS
- OTHER
- AUTOMATION

IT SKILLS

Sysadmins have to keep learning to adjust to the ever-changing IT landscape. This year, most respondents hope to improve their cybersecurity, automation, and PowerShell skills. Many also cite cloud management and networking as high priorities for their 2024 educational journeys.
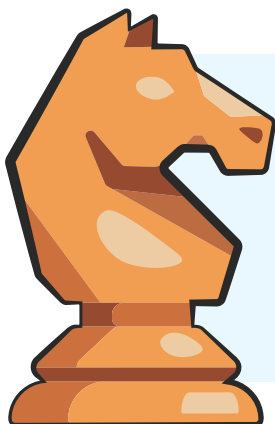
TAKEAWAY

The quest for IT success was never going to be easy, but you're passionate about what you do. If you're not getting the support and resources you need to do your best work, we recommend forging more direct links between IT and company goals. It's hard for executives to resist propositions that might make them look good.
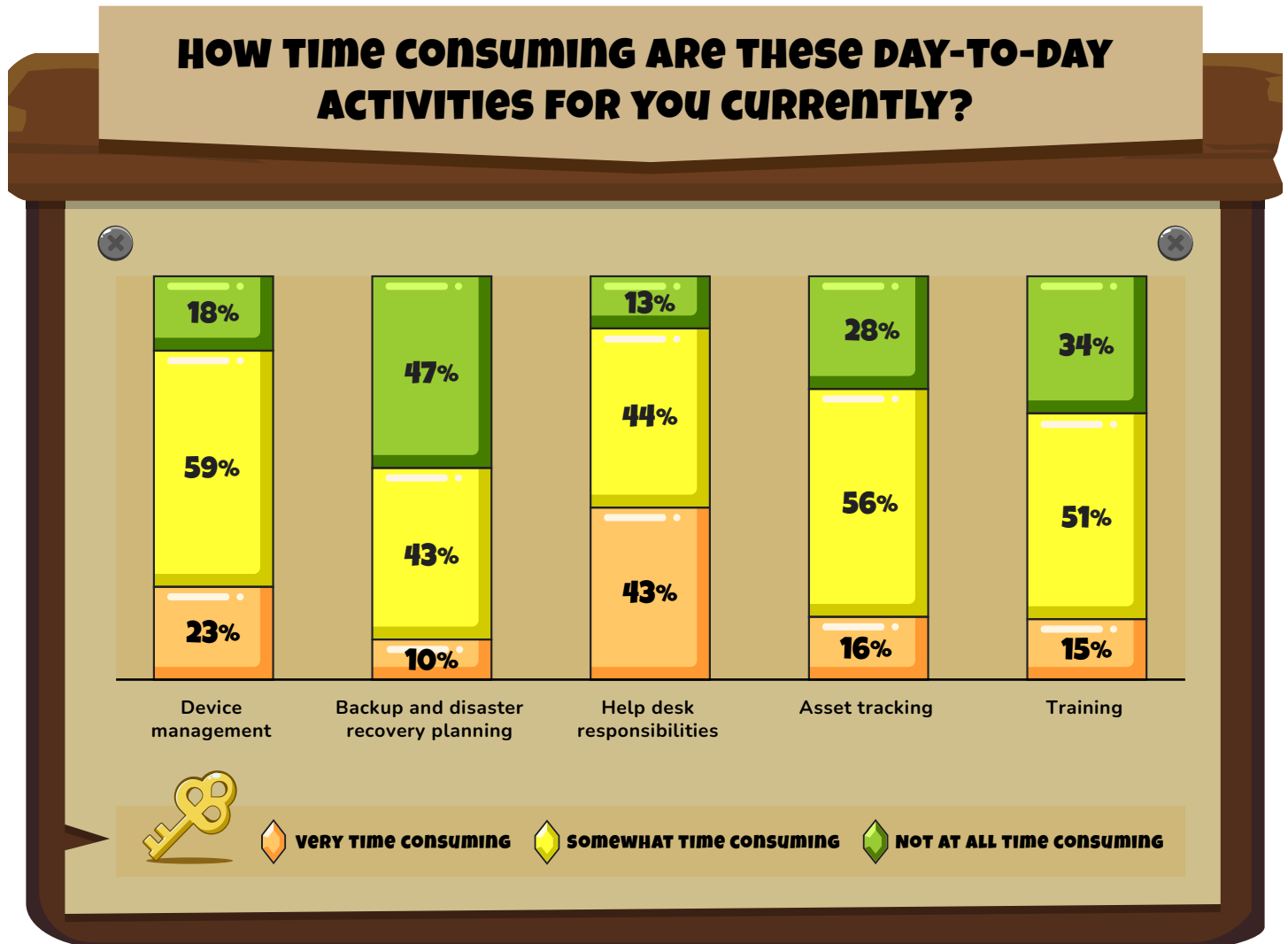
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WORK ENVIRONMENT

We wanted to understand the average sysadmin's world. How do they occupy their time? With whom do they ally? What are the limits to their powers, and what features might we conjure up to ~~convince them to loosen their coffers~~ make their lives easier?

We'll break down what you should know about a sysadmin's work environment.

Time-consuming tasks

The average sysadmin spends their workday much as they have in years past. Help desk responsibilities continue to be a waking nightmare for many, occupying a disproportionate amount of time. Meanwhile, backup and disaster recovery isn't too demanding.
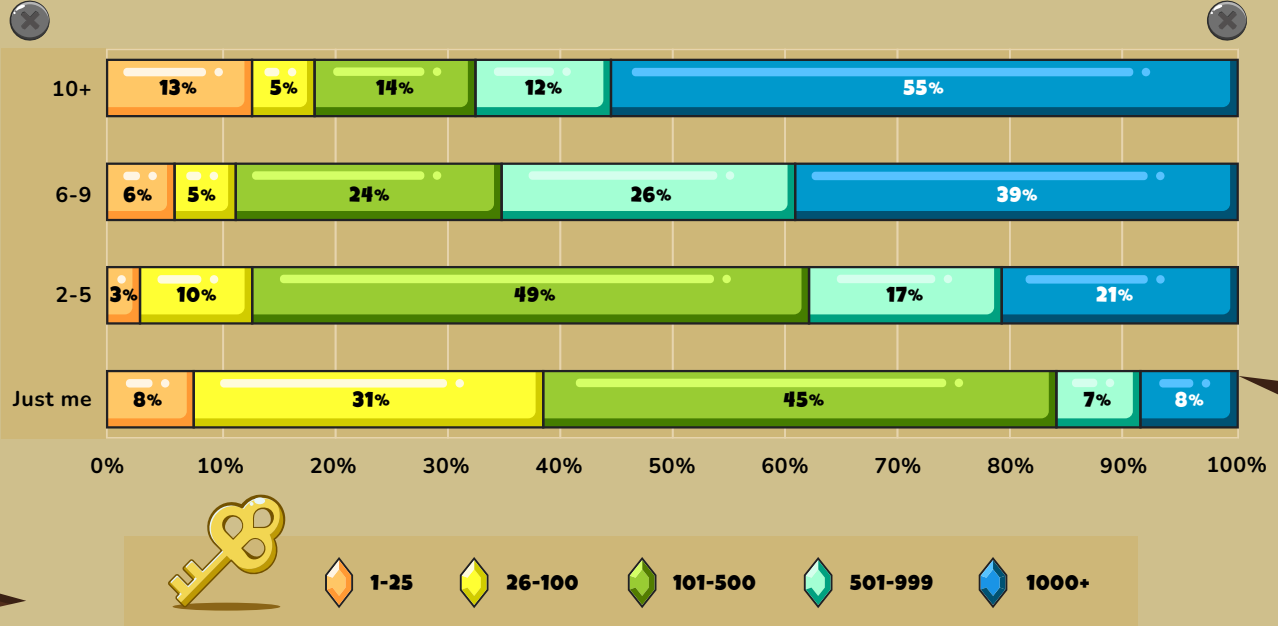
How time consuming are these day-to-day activities for you currently?

	Device management	Backup and disaster recovery planning	Help desk responsibilities	Asset tracking	Training
Not at all time consuming	18%	47%	13%	28%	34%
Somewhat time consuming	59%	43%	44%	56%	51%
Very time consuming	23%	10%	43%	16%	15%

Legend: Very time consuming · Somewhat time consuming · Not at all time consuming

Number of sysadmins and machines

Most sysadmins work on teams of 2 to 5 people and manage more than 101 machines in total (excluding servers). It's a challenge, but you push through.

Environments with lone sysadmins most often have a fleet of 26 to 500 machines, but 8% of these brave souls single-handedly manage more than 1,000 endpoints. They will one day sing songs of your efficiency.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, 55% of respondents working on teams of 10 or more sysadmins manage over 1,000 machines. Meanwhile, 13% of these large teams are living the dream, overseeing 25 or fewer machines per team.

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MANAGED MACHINES BY SYSADMIN TEAM SIZE

Team size	1-25	26-100	101-500	501-999	1000+
10+	13%	5%	14%	12%	55%
6-9	6%	5%	24%	26%	39%
2-5	3%	10%	49%	17%	21%
Just me	8%	31%	45%	7%	8%

Key:
◆ 1-25 ◆ 26-100 ◆ 101-500 ◆ 501-999 ◆ 1000+

FLEET BREAKDOWN

Hybrid environments that include both PCs and Apple devices are the norm, with 56% of respondents navigating these difficult waters. While permitting both types of endpoints makes end users grin from ear to ear and supports BYOD, it also creates more work for you.

Meanwhile, around 41% of respondents who manage a more uniformed environment work with exclusively PCs, but another 3% oversee Apple-only environments. But then again, most of our respondents are PDQ customers and most of our products are Windows specific, so this probably isn't representative of the broader sysadmin population.

REMOTE

In 2023, we saw a dramatic shift away from remote work. But presumably thanks to widespread pushback from sweatpant-loving employees, the tables are turning yet again, and 38% — up from 35% last year — of respondents again manage environments with at least a quarter of their teams working remotely.

Because of the nature of the work, certain sectors are more prone to an in-person environment than others. While most sysadmins working in education or industrials manage few (if any) remote machines, those in technology tend to oversee a workforce that's at least partially remote.

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PERCENTAGE REMOTE WORKFORCE

Education
- 85%
- 10%
- 3%
- 1%

Financial services
- 54%
- 29%
- 10%
- 4%
- 2%

Healthcare
- 54%
- 23%
- 7%
- 14%
- 2%

Industrials
- 74%
- 7%
- 2%

Professional services
- 48%
- 27%
- 6%
- 14%
- 4%

Public service, social service, government
- 65%
- 22%
- 10%
- 3%

Technology
- 28%
- 26%
- 22%
- 13%
- 10%

Key:
- 0-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 76-99%
- 100%
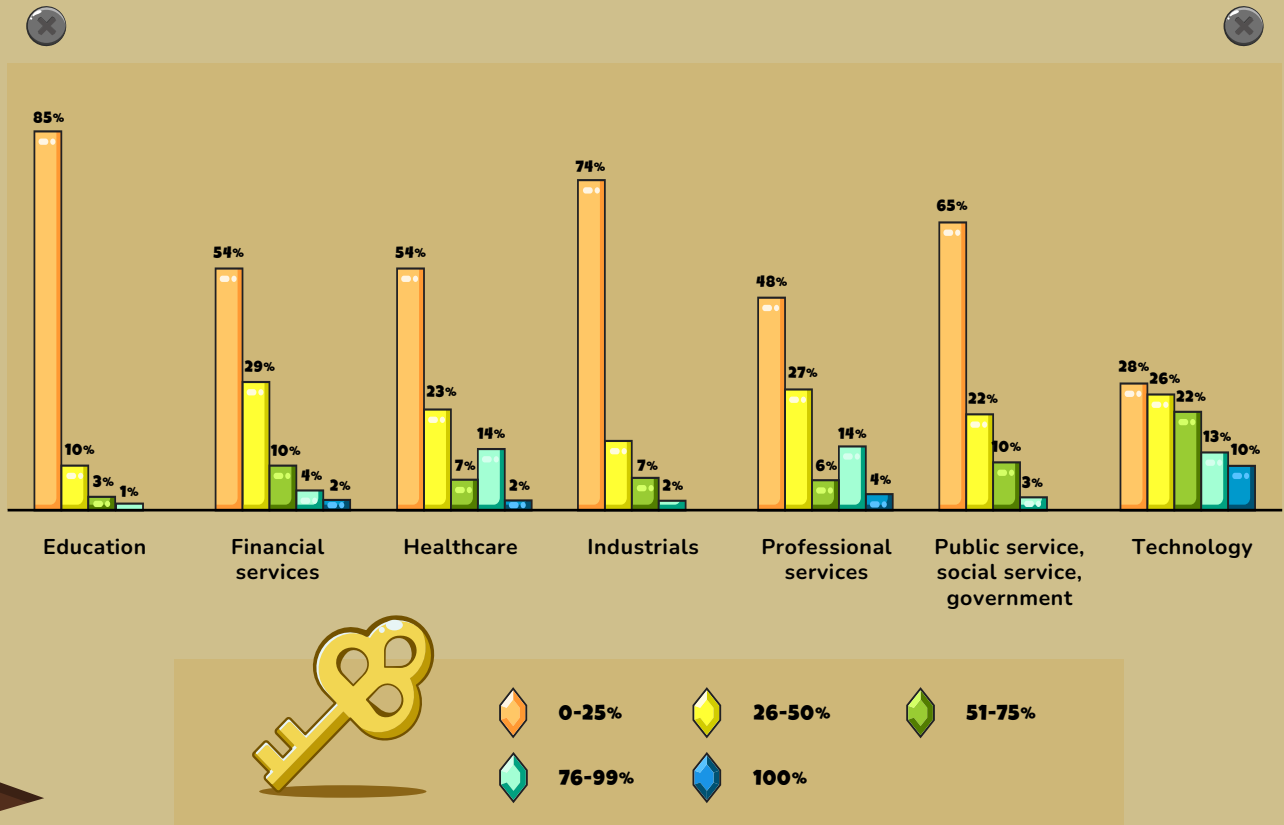
TAKEAWAY

While sysadmin team size is skewing a little higher this year, the number of teams managing fleets of over 1,000 has also increased. If your fleet's growth outpaces your hiring, don't be afraid to sign up for free trials of solutions that might simplify your most time-consuming tasks.

And if you're one of the lucky few with a large team managing limited endpoints, take a moment to bask in the resplendence of your life.

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APPLE DEVICE MANAGEMENT

Windows device management has long dominated the IT landscape, but more and more sysadmins also oversee Apple devices. In addition, plenty of MacAdmins focus exclusively on the Apple ecosystem.

If you work exclusively with PCs and can't envision a day when an Apple device walks into your life, feel free to skip ahead. But really — Apple device management is a valuable skill for any sysadmin.

MDM experience level

Most people managing Apple and hybrid fleets feel comfortable with MDM, and many are downright experts. But unsurprisingly, those who report having vast knowledge and experience are more likely to manage exclusively Apple devices. You've found your niche.

Hurdles managing Apple devices

Some Apple MDM tasks are more challenging than others. For most respondents, managing OS software updates was the biggest bane of their MDM existence, but managing device configuration and keeping apps up to date also deservedly earned the ire of many respondents.

WHAT HURDLES DO YOU FACE WHEN MANAGING APPLE DEVICES IN YOUR ENVIRONMENT?

Managing OS software updates	58%	Managing hybrid fleets with Apple and Windows devices	41%
Managing device configurations and preferences	54%	Managing user accounts and passwords	40%
Keeping apps up to date	49%	Adding devices to Apple Business Manager	28%

Most useful MDM solution features

New to MDM? Our respondents reported that OS updates, app management, and device provisioning were among the most useful features for MDM solutions, so be on the lookout for these capabilities when choosing your tools.

Or just sign up for a SimpleMDM trial to take advantage of all the most popular MDM features and more. Think of it as finally claiming your Excalibur but without any of the frustrating demand for a sufficiently round table.
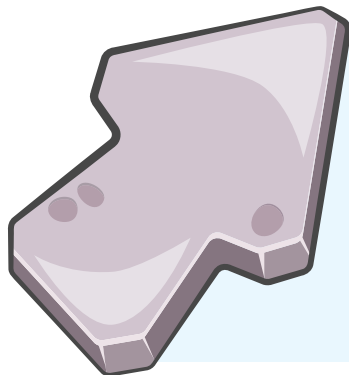
TAKEAWAY

Apple device management has its challenges, but any sysadmin can do it with the right tools and some guidance from experts (i.e., the Mac Admins Slack community). As you build your skills and expand your knowledge, common tasks get easier and easier.

PDQ   SimpleMDM   smartdeploy

CYBERSECURITY

With a reported 8% surge in weekly cyberattacks in the second quarter of 2023, cybersecurity has never been more pressing. But we're happy to report that our respondents have hardened their cybersecurity postures* to fight threats head-on. You never cease to impress us.

*Compared to last year's survey results

CYBERATTACKS

Around 32% of respondents have experienced cybersecurity attacks in the last 5 years. That's a 2% increase since last year's survey. Industrials had the highest incident rate, whereas the public service sector had one of the lowest rates.

Compared to last year, there are also a number of movers and shakers in terms of targeted industries. Respondents in education, financial services, and industrials increasingly say they've experienced incidents. Meanwhile, last year's top target, healthcare, garnered fewer reports.

The good news is that slightly more sysadmins feel at least somewhat prepared for a cyberattack than last year. And those who've experienced a cyberattack in the last 5 years now tend to feel slightly more prepared for a cyberattack than those who haven't. We applaud your ability to leverage your learning experience to wield more incredible power than ever before.

CYBERSECURITY TRAINING CADENCE

	2023	2024
NEVER	12%	11%
AD HOC	28%	22%
YEARLY	25%	28%
QUARTERLY	20%	21%
MONTHLY	14%	17%

TRAINING

We're big fans of security training, and it seems like our respondents also have an increasing appetite for well-prepared users. Since last year, you've implemented more regular training. Hackers probably hate you for that.

But we love you, and that's all that matters in this cold, lonely world.

TAKEAWAY

Healthy fear and careful preparation are the perfect potion for a more secure business. We applaud your efforts to fortify your defenses, but never get too comfortable. Only time will tell what threats 2024 will bring. Increasingly sophisticated attack vectors and clever uses of AI could throw a wrench in even your best-laid plans.

PDQ   SimpleMDM POWERED BY PDQ.COM   smartdeploy POWERED BY PDQ.COM

TOOLBOX

Any journey is infinitely harder without the right tools in your satchel. Endpoint setup, maintenance, monitoring, and security require powerful tools befitting the highest-level device management druid. Some of you bravely forge your path through the wilderness alone, but others seek the unyielding support of their favorite tools.

FULL DISCLOSURE

Many an existing PDQ customer participated in our survey, so PDQ products may look especially beloved. While it is true that we have wiggled our way into countless hearts through careful diplomacy and the occasional strategic spellcasting, the results could be slightly deceptive. But we're okay with that as long as it fills our nemeses with the crushing weight of jealousy.

MOBILE DEVICE MANAGEMENT

Users love mobile devices. Between tablets, smartphones, and laptops, many environments have more mobile devices than desktops at this point. However, this shift towards more portable endpoints also creates unique concerns for sysadmins. While mobile device management (MDM) solutions help, 28% of respondents forgo them.

Those who use MDM software prefer Microsoft (Endpoint Manager, SCCM, Intune), Jamf, and SimpleMDM (aka, our pride and joy).

Microsoft   jamf   SimpleMDM

SOFTWARE DEPLOYMENT & UPDATES

Only 7% of respondents currently update software manually. Huzzah! Most survey respondents trust PDQ Deploy for their deployment needs, and we're proud to be your loyal sidekick. Many also use Microsoft (Endpoint Manager, SCCM, Intune) or SmartDeploy, one of which we own and one of which refuses our repeated offers to buy its multitrillion-dollar company in exchange for our rarest new-in-box LOTR: FOTR action figures.

Microsoft   smartdeploy

> PDQ Connect made a special appearance as a write-in candidate.

ASSET MANAGEMENT

A disconcerting 13% of you don't use software to inventory your assets, which is up from 10% last year. Of those of you who take the easy route, PDQ Inventory tops the list of most popular solutions. Meanwhile, Snipe-IT and SmartDeploy hold strong in the second and third positions.

SNIPE-IT   smartdeploy
OPEN SOURCE ASSET MANAGEMENT

PDQ   SimpleMDM   smartdeploy

Installation & Configuration of Operating Systems

While 29% of you brave the mind-numbing tedium of manual OS installation and configuration, we're relieved that a few more respondents use a solution than last year. MDT, SmartDeploy, and Windows Autopilot are the most popular options for sysadmins who rely on software for OS installation and configuration.

Remote Access

Like last year, remote access solutions face intense competition. A whopping 46% of responses included write-in answers, most notably BeyondTrust (formerly Bomgar), AnyDesk, Kaseya VSA, and Zoom. TeamViewer, ConnectWise, and Splashtop also got plenty of love.

Ticketing

Ticketing has always been a hotly contested tool category, and this year is no different. Jira Service Desk, Freshdesk, and Spiceworks again topped the list, but 50% of respondents submitted write-in mentions, including Zendesk, ServiceNow, and TOPDesk. Another 17% of you don't use ticketing software at all.

Takeaway

Sysadmins are the wizards of the IT world, but the right tools empower them to perform their greatest feats of efficiency. If you complete any of these routine tasks manually, consider signing up for a software trial — ideally, from the best-looking, most charismatic device management software company with a three-letter acronym for a name.

BREAKROOM DEBATES

Since the dawn of time, countless breakroom battles have been waged. Who stoleth Lady Linda's leftover lasagna? Did someone warm a herring in the communal radiation chamber, or must we dip Bartholomew the Blunderer in the wash basin again to dissipate the lingering miasma? And, most vexingly, who drank the last chalice of the elixir of life and failed to brew more?

While we can't answer these pressing questions, we can set a few debates to rest.

We have conclusively determined that Sauron failed to put guards in front of Mount Doom because of understaffing due to late-stage Mordorian capitalism. From this, we can also infer that many unemployed orcs applied for work outside of their primary fields, leading to a rash of bloodthirsty baristas.

Many respondents also suspected Sauron underestimated the abilities of hobbits — never doubt someone who eats second breakfast. It's where they get their power.
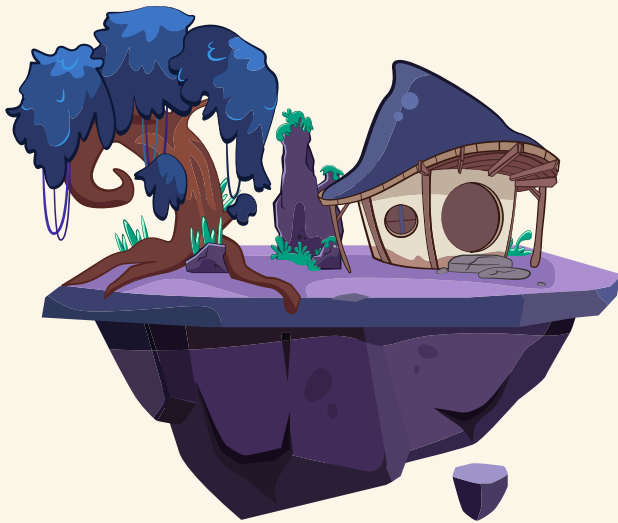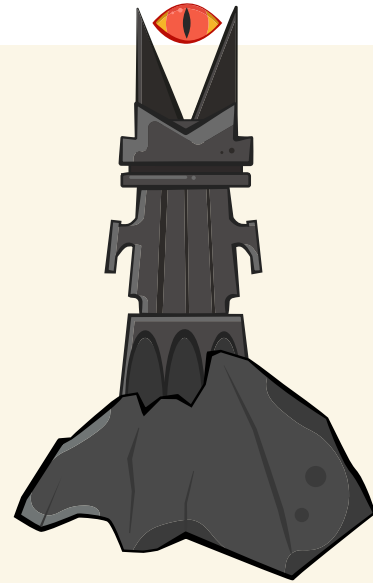
Sysadmin adventurers would generally prefer a quest to destroy the cursed printer in the Frustration Forest or vanquish the shadow IT sorcerer from the Enchanted Server Room. Very few dare slay the DDoS dragon in the Cave of Cloud Computing. This makes sense because most sysadmins surveyed lack the night vision necessary to venture into the depths of a darkened cavern.

Now feel free to leverage this data to finally emerge triumphant from the breakroom.

SUMMARY & TAKEAWAYS

So what do the prophecies foretell for 2024? Let's recap the top takeaways to ready ourselves for the year ahead:

✅ Your knowledge of common remuneration can help unlock your full earning potential. Leverage salary data (and your incredible charisma) in compensation negotiations.

✅ The quest for IT success was never going to be easy, but you're passionate about what you do. If you're not getting the support and resources you need to do your best work, we recommend forging more direct links between IT and company goals. It's hard for executives to resist propositions that might make them look good.

✅ While sysadmin team size is skewing a little higher this year, the number of teams managing fleets of over 1,000 has also increased. If your fleet's growth outpaces your hiring, don't be afraid to sign up for free trials of solutions that might simplify your most time-consuming tasks.

✅ Apple device management has its challenges, but any sysadmin can do it with the right tools and some guidance from experts (i.e., the Mac Admins Slack community). As you build your skills and expand your knowledge, common tasks get easier and easier.

✅ Healthy fear and careful preparation are the perfect potion for a more secure business. We applaud your efforts to fortify your defenses, but never get too comfortable. Only time will tell what threats 2024 will bring. Increasingly sophisticated attack vectors and clever uses of AI could throw a wrench in even your best laid plans

✅ Sysadmins are the polymaths of the IT world, but the right tools empower them to perform their greatest feats of efficiency. If you complete any of your routine tasks manually, consider signing up for a software trial — ideally, from the most appealing device management software company that uses a three-letter acronym as a name.

Thank you to all who joined the quest, and we hope you uncovered valuable wisdom. Remain vigilant for another report at the same time next year. Until then, continue your journey with our free trials if you haven't already:

[14-day free trial of PDQ](#)

[30-day free trial of SimpleMDM](#)

[15-day free trial of SmartDeploy](#)

Share this report with your allies and rivals alike over a nice ale to both inspire and stun them. To surveil the latest goings-on in the realm of Sysadmin, subscribe to our blog, check out our YouTube channel, and venture to our official Discord server.