2014 Service Availability Benchmark Survey

Published by

Executive Summary

This benchmark survey presents service availability metrics that allow IT infrastructure, business continuity, and disaster recovery managers to compare their organization's performance and practices to their peers.

The results presented here are based on responses from 155 professionals from a wide range of industries and geographies collected through an online survey.

Some of the key findings of the survey include:

- **Ensuring customer satisfaction is the most common business driver for service availability,** mentioned by 43% of the survey respondents. **The vast majority (90%) indicated service availability is highly critical to their customers** (at least 8 on a scale of 1-10).

- At the same time, **41% of the organization surveyed missed their service availability goal for mission-critical systems in 2013**. Organizations with higher service availability goals were significantly less successful in meeting their goal. Given these results, it is not surprising that **66% of the respondents have initiatives for improving service availability management in 2014.**

- **The most common and most effective strategy for ensuring service availability is virtualization HA,** used by 72% of the respondents this year compared to 63% in 2013.

- **Proactive identification of risks is the top challenge 20% of the respondents face in ensuring service availability.**

- **Close to a third (30%) of the respondents state that their cloud application service availability readiness is not on par with the rest of their systems.**

- **26% of the organizations with more than 10,000 employees have a business continuity and disaster recovery budget exceeding $50m a year, and 13% spend more than $100m a year.**

Table of Contents

What Drives Service Availability Goals?

Ensuring customer satisfaction is the most common business driver for service availability, mentioned by 43% of the survey respondents.

The second most common business driver for service availability is avoiding productivity loss, cited by 35% of the respondents.

Figure 1: Most common business driver for service availability

Importance of Service Availability to Customers

The vast majority (90%) of the survey respondents indicated service availability is highly critical to their customers (at least 8 on a scale of 1-10).

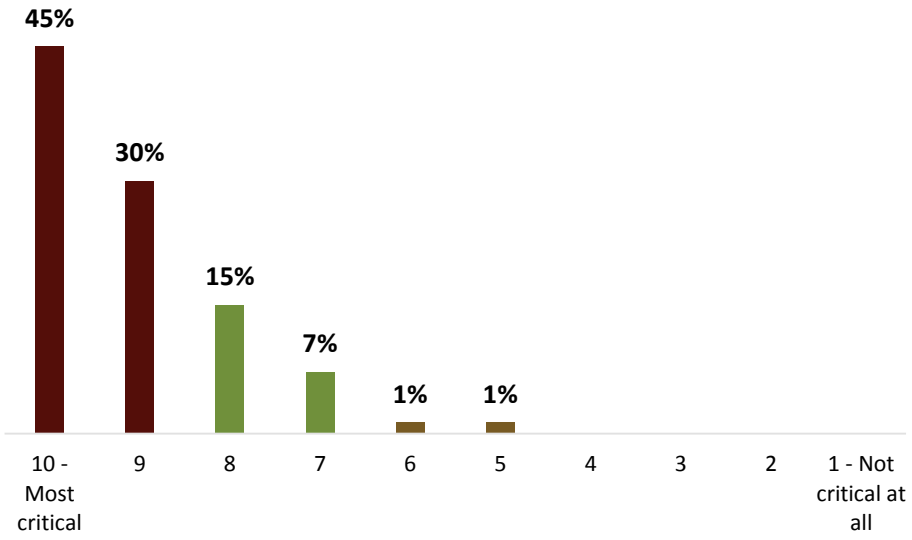

Figure 2: How critical is service availability to your customers?

Service Availability Commitment to Customers

32% of the organizations don't have a formal service availability commitment to their customers.

At the other end of the spectrum, **42% of the organizations have a commitment of less than 8 hours of unplanned downtime per year**, and 13% have the highest level of commitment—less than one hour a year.

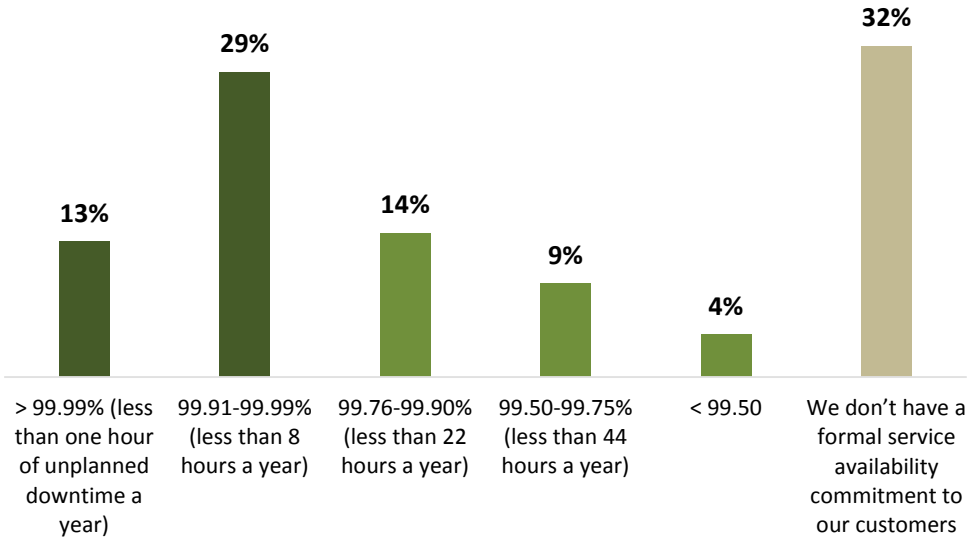

Figure 3: Service availability commitment to customers

Service Availability Goals

73% of the organizations have a service availability goal of over 99.91% (less than 8 hours of unplanned downtime a year) for mission critical systems.
That's compared to 68% that had this goal in 2013.

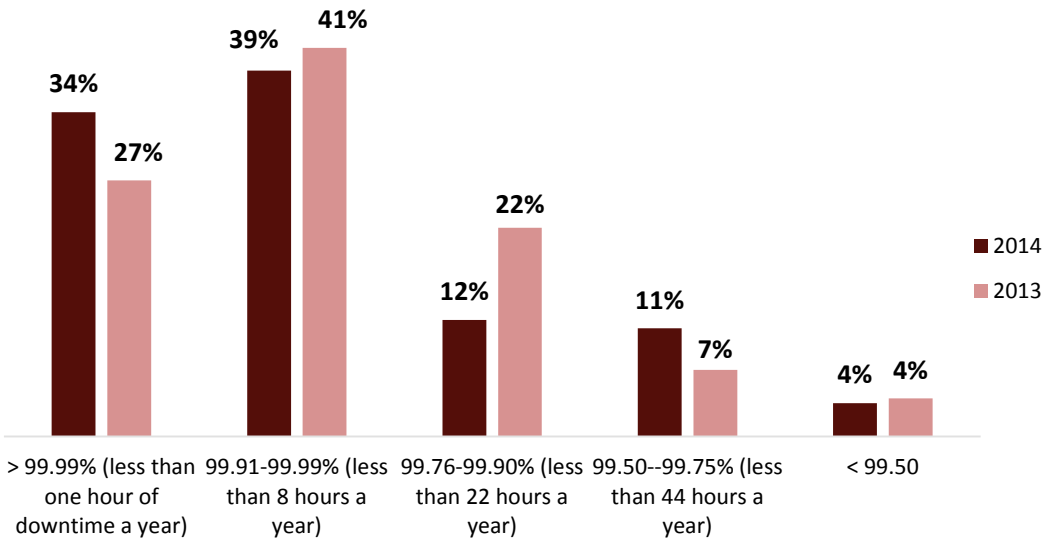

Figure 4: Service availability goals for mission critical systems 2014 vs. 2013

Service Availability: The Reality

Overall, 41% of the organization surveyed missed their service availability goal for mission-critical systems in 2013.

Organizations with higher service availability goals were significantly less successful in meeting their goal.

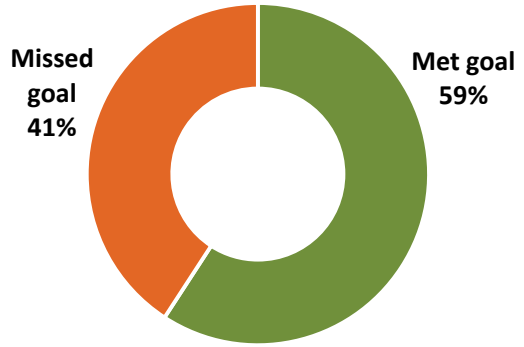

Figure 5: Service availability goals for mission-critical systems: met vs. missed goal

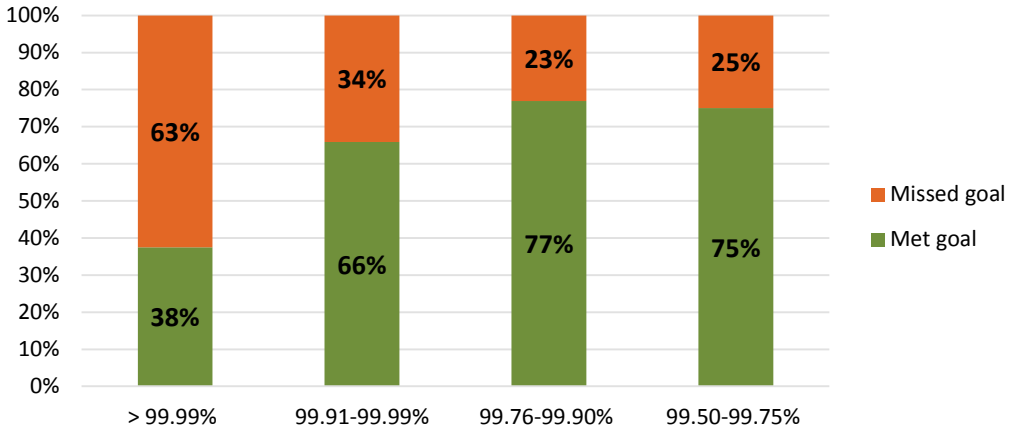

Figure 6: Service availability goals for mission-critical systems

What is Downtime?

88% of the survey respondents define downtime as inaccessible system.

For many of the organizations the definition of downtime also includes instances when the system is accessible but some functions are not operational (51%) or when performance is severely degraded (36%).

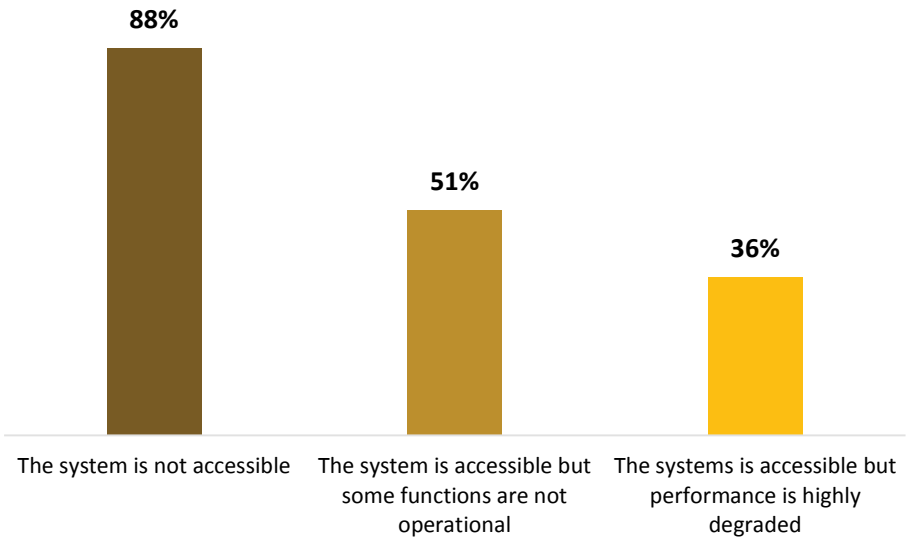

Figure 7: Definition of downtime
(Respondents could select more than one option)

Last Downtime Event

Over half of the companies (59%) had an outage in the past 3 months and 28% had an outage in the past month.

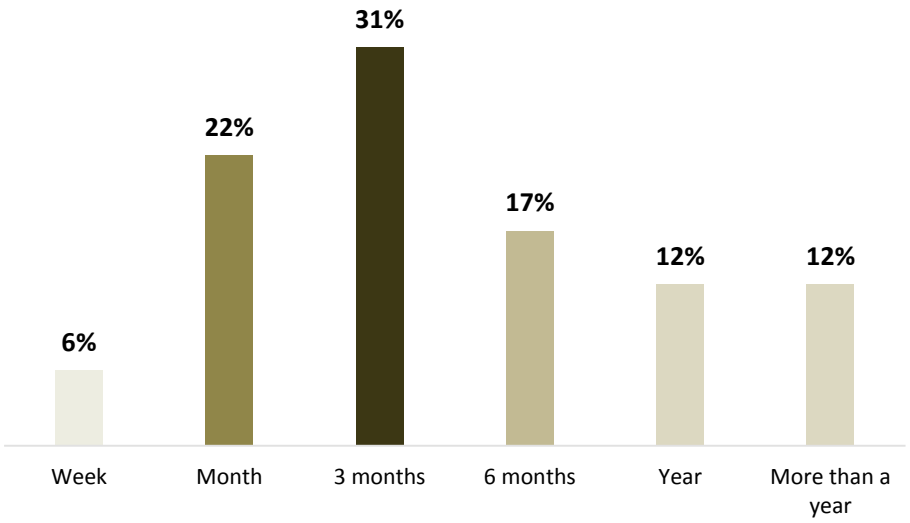

Figure 8: Last downtime event

Strategies and Tools to Ensure Service Availability

The most common strategy for ensuring service availability is virtualization HA. It is used by 72% of the respondents this year, compared to 63% in 2013.

Replication to disaster recovery site, which was the most popular strategy last year, went down from 77% in 2013 to 70% in 2014.

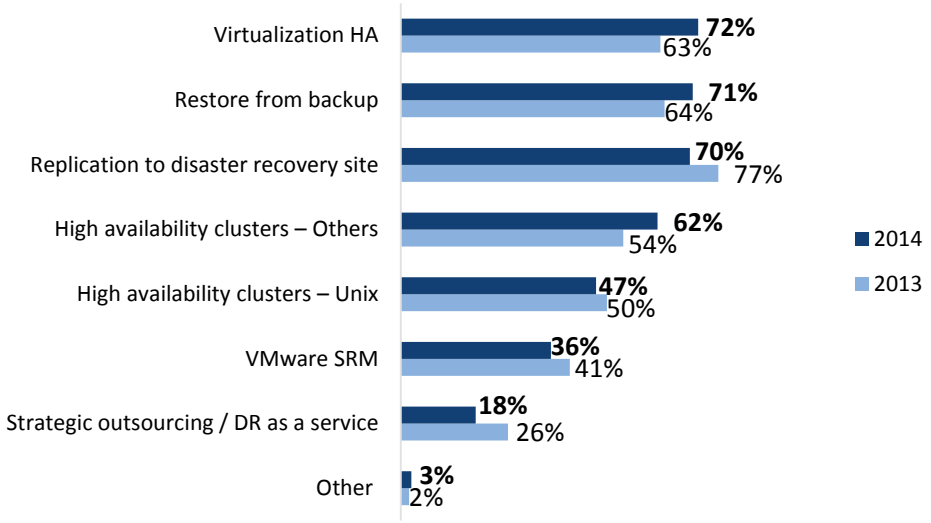

Figure 9: Strategies and tools to ensure service availability (Respondents could select more than one option)

The Effectiveness of Service Availability Strategies and Tools

According to the survey results, virtualization HA is also the most effective strategy for ensuring service availability.

Restore from backup, while the second most common strategy, is viewed as one of the least effective.

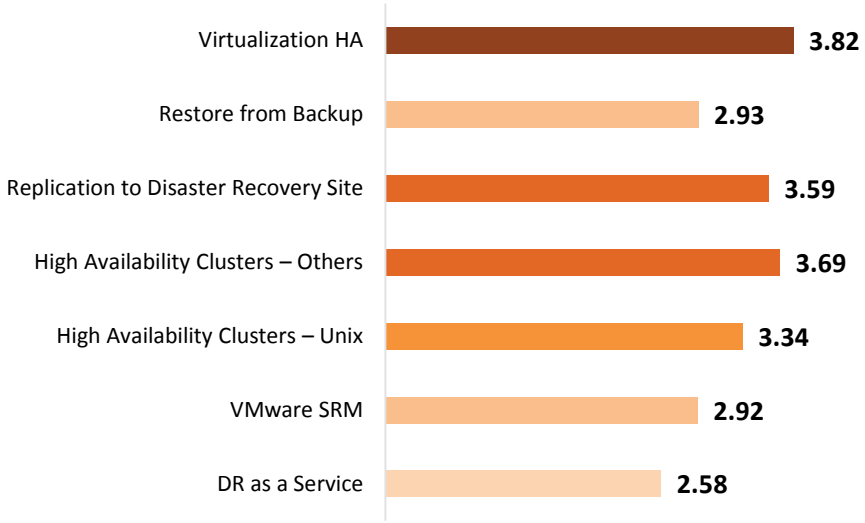

Figure 10: Effectiveness of strategies and tools

Top Challenges in Ensuring Service Availability

Proactive identification of risks is the top challenge respondents face in ensuring service availability.

Other challenges mentioned include:

- Change management
- Lack of resources for testing
- Cross-domain/cross-team coordination

66% of the respondents indicated they have initiatives for improving service availability management in 2014.

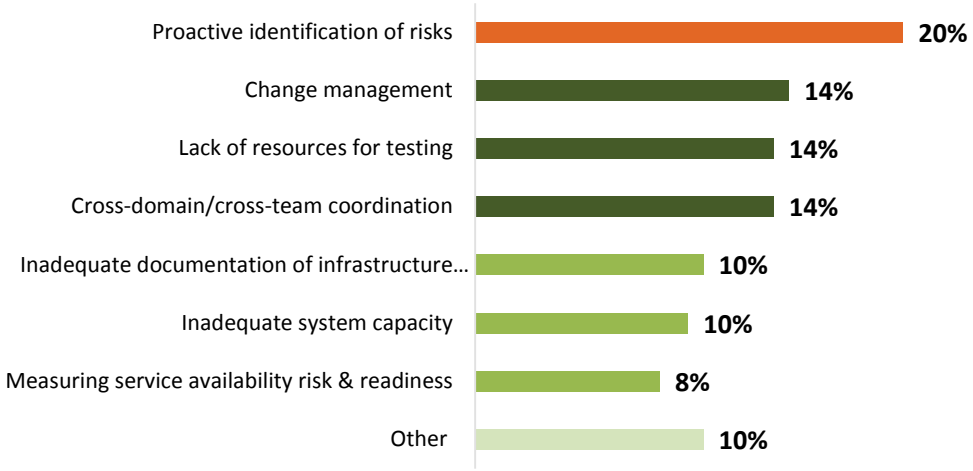

Figure 11: Top challenges in ensuring service availability

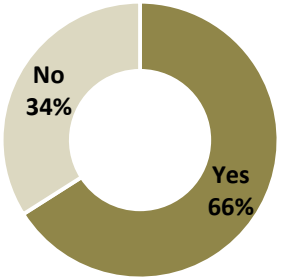

Figure 12: Have a service availability initiative

Cost of Downtime

For 43% of the organizations surveyed, every hour of downtime costs $100,000 or more.

12% of the respondents reported an hourly downtime cost of more than one million dollars.

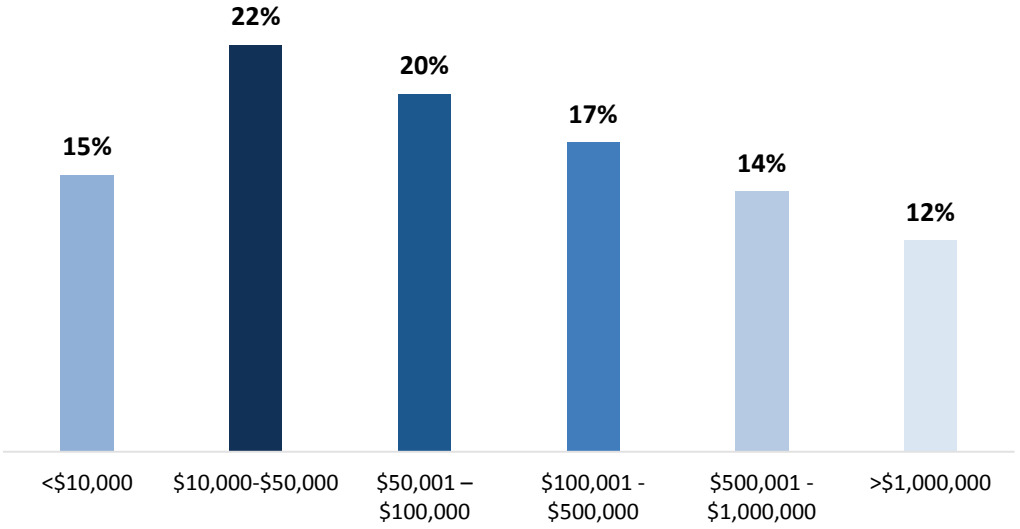

Figure 13: Cost of an hour of downtime

Causes for Outages

Hardware failure continues to be the most common reason for outages, mentioned by 55% of the respondents.

Other causes for outages include system upgrade & migration (51%), human error (47%), application error (43%) and power outages (39%).

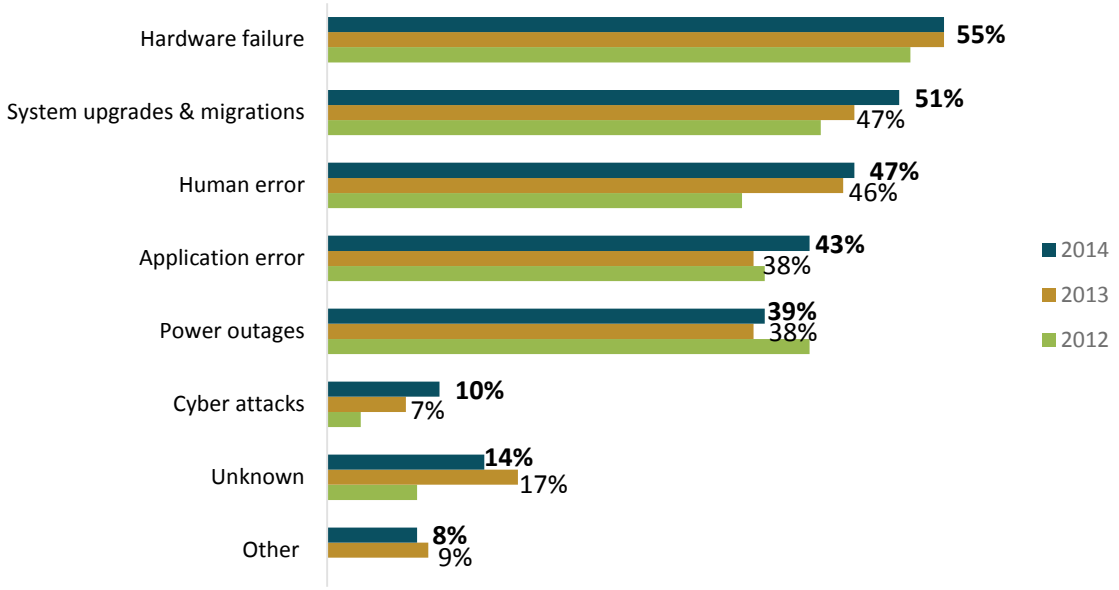

Figure 14: Causes for outages
(Respondents could select more than one option)

Which Industry was Most Successful in Meeting its Service Availability Goals?

Manufacturing is the industry that was most successful in meeting its service availability goals.

At the same time, 59% of the financial services organizations surveyed missed their availability goals for mission critical systems.

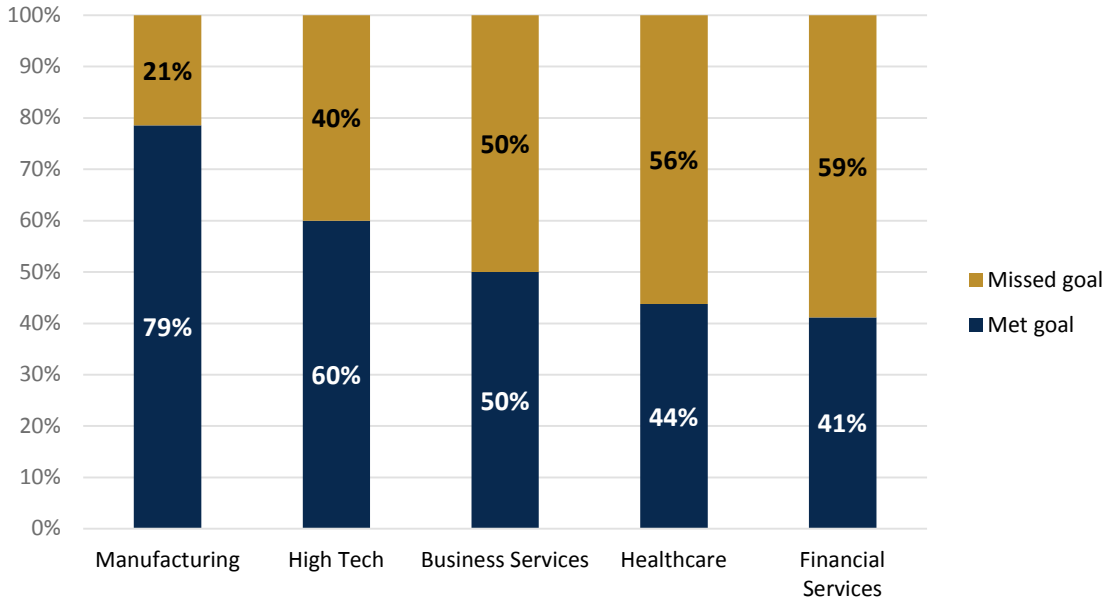

Figure 15: Which industry met its service availability goal?

Mission-Critical in the Cloud

Enterprises are continuing to shift mission-critical applications to the cloud.

75% of the organizations run some mission-critical applications in their private cloud, compared to 71% in 2013.

47% of the organizations run these applications in the public cloud, compared to only 33% which reported doing so in 2013.

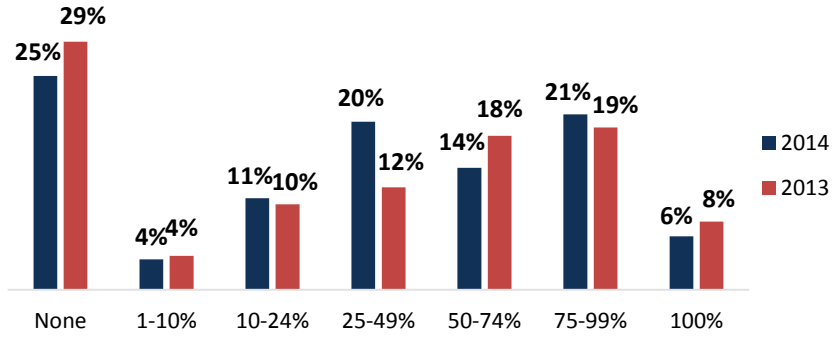

Figure 16: Mission critical applications running in the private cloud

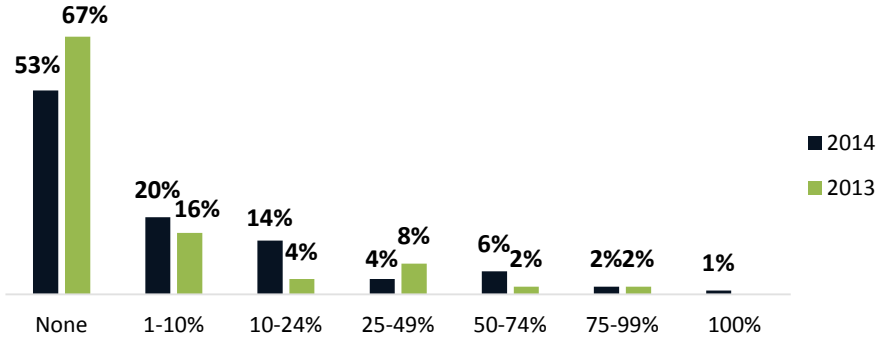

Figure 17: Mission critical applications running in the public cloud

Private Cloud Testing

47% of the organizations surveyed have a DR solution in place for their private cloud system.

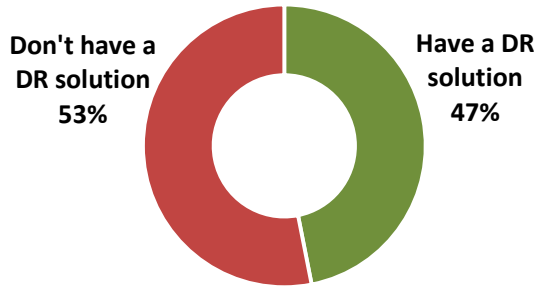

Figure 18: Have a DR solution in place for cloud systems

As many as 39% of the organizations never test their private cloud availability.

Just over a half of the respondents (51%) conduct such testing at least once a year.

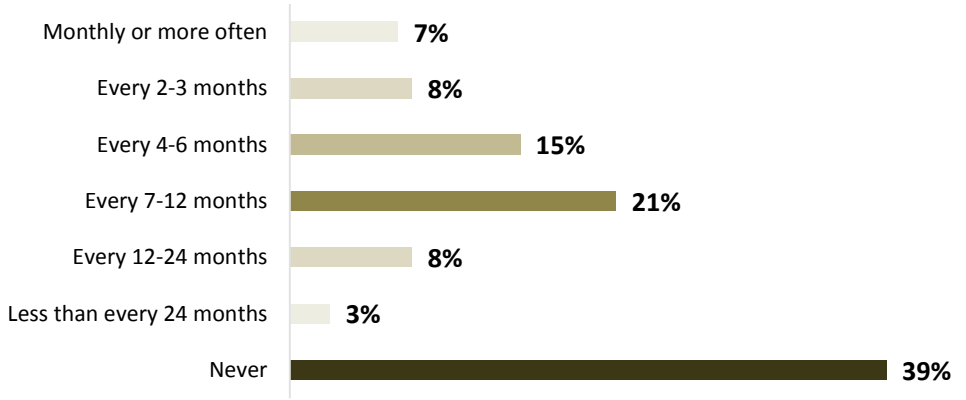

Figure 19: Frequency of testing private cloud availability

Cloud Application Service Availability Readiness

While 26% of the respondents describe their cloud application service availability readiness as better than the capabilities they have for the rest of their systems, **close to a third (30%) state that these capabilities are not at the same level as the rest of their systems.**

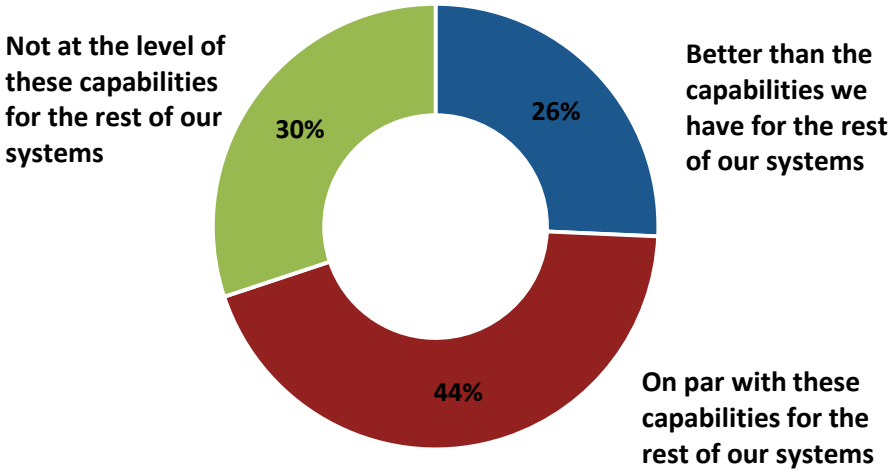

Figure 20: Cloud application service availability readiness

Annual Business Continuity / Disaster Recovery Budget

While 90% of the small organizations surveyed indicate that their annual business continuity / disaster recovery budget is less than $5m, **26% of the largest organizations spend more than $50m a year, and 13% spend more than $100m**.

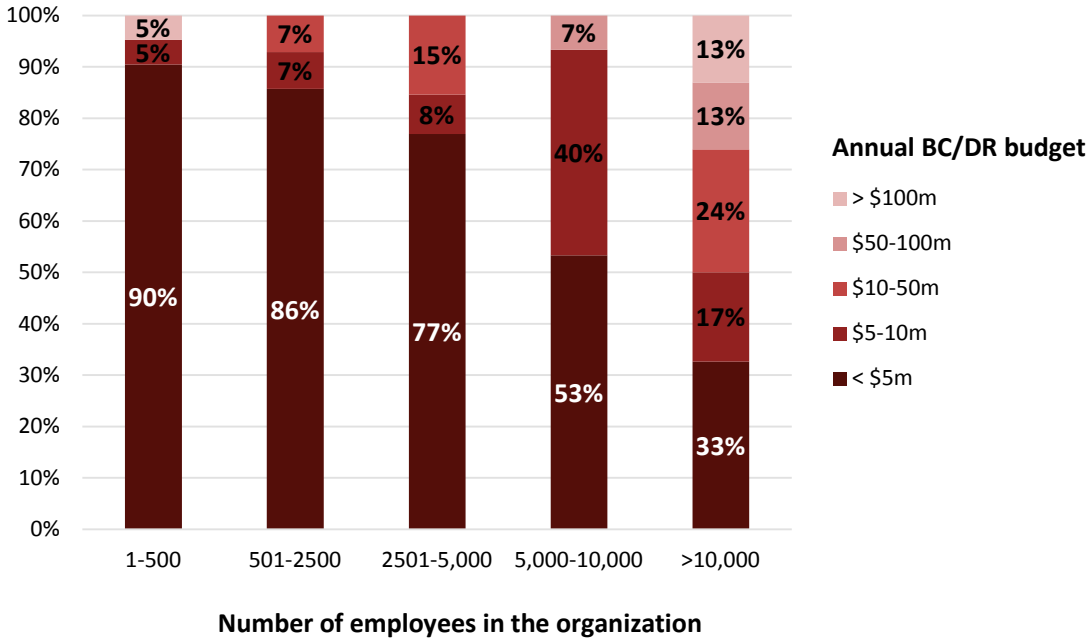

Figure 21: Annual business continuity / disaster recovery budget by company size

Annual Business Continuity / Disaster Recovery Budget vs. Cost of Downtime

Not surprisingly, the budget allocated to business continuity and disaster recovery is correlated to the cost of downtime.

30% of the organizations with a downtime cost of over $1m an hour have an annual budget that exceeds $100m.

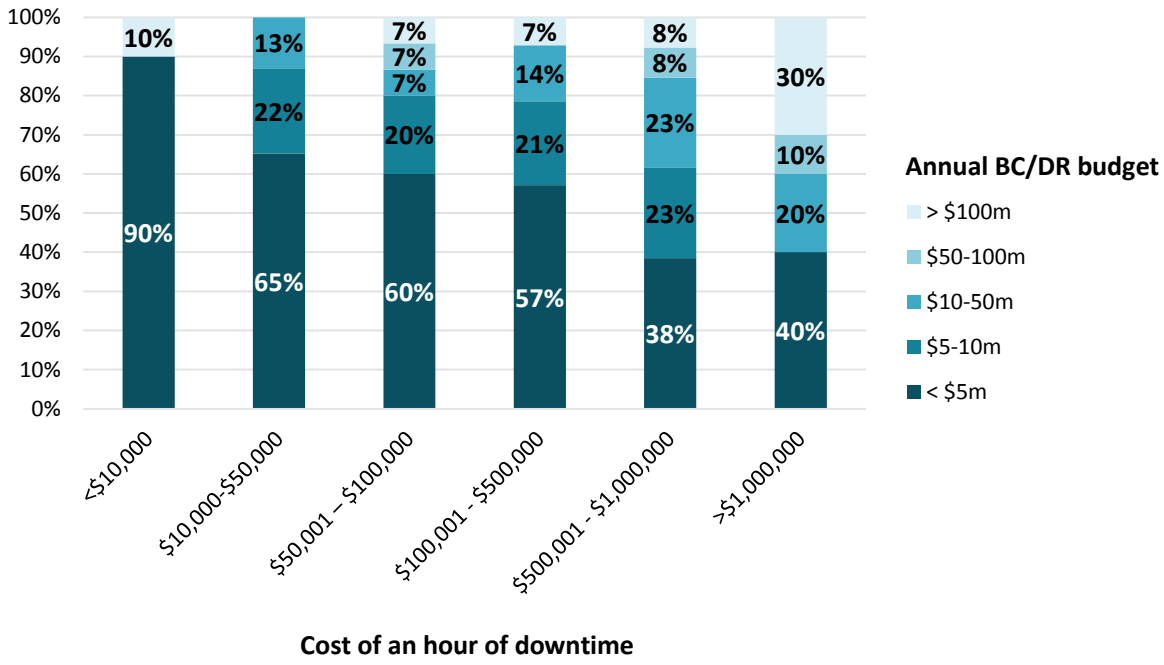

Figure 22: Annual business continuity / disaster recovery budget vs. cost of downtime

Respondent Demographics

44% of the survey respondents come from organizations of over 10,000 employees.

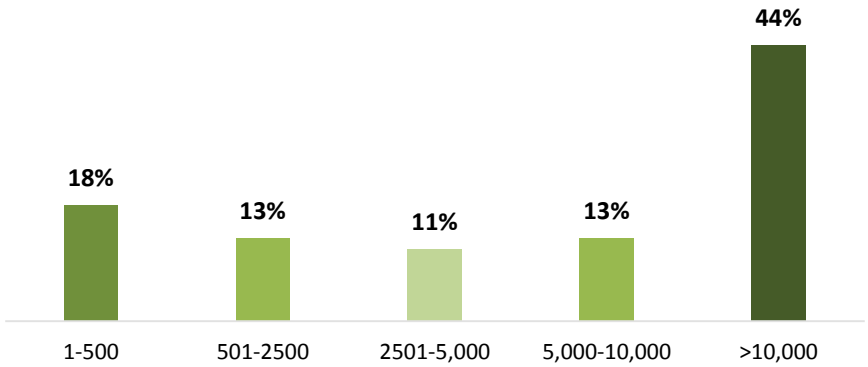

Figure 23: Number of employees

40% of the respondents have more than 1,000 servers deployed across all their data centers.

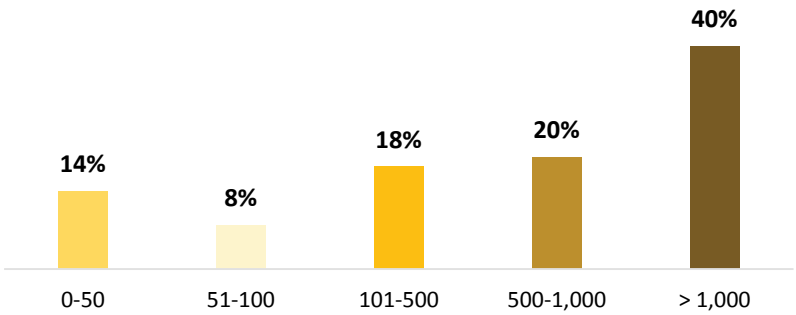

Figure 24: Number of serves deployed across all data centers

Respondent Demographics

27% of the survey respondents are in IT infrastructure management and another 18% are responsible for other IT functions.

12% of the respondents are in business continuity and another 12% are in disaster recovery functions.

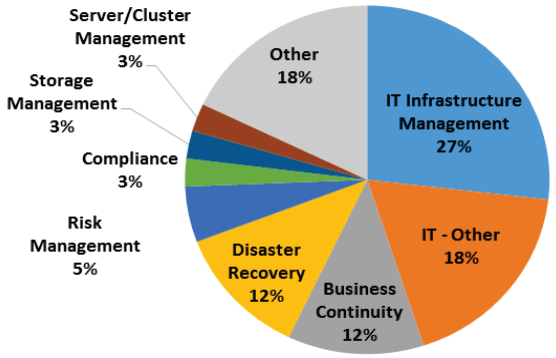

Figure 25: Job responsibility

18% of the respondents come from the financial services sector, 17% from healthcare, 14% from manufacturing and 10% are in the business services sector.

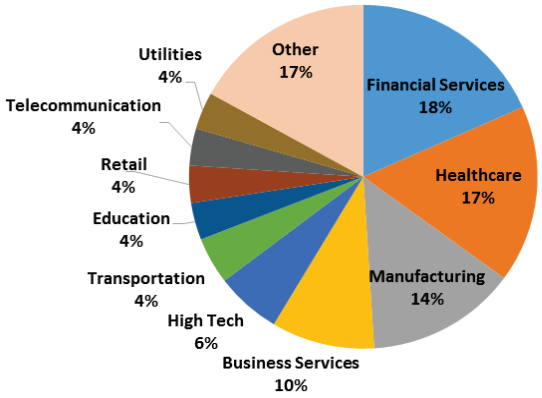

Figure 26: Industry

Table of Figures

Sign up for a Service Availability Assessment

Sign up for a Service Availability Assessment and find out how your IT organization can improve your ability to meet critical KPI goals:

- Find hidden risks that can jeopardize your datacenter
- Test your environment against a database of 5,000+ documented availability risks
- Get actionable recommendations that will help you eliminate availability risks before they impact your business

100% of the companies that have performed the assessment uncovered vulnerabilities that were previously undetected!

Sign up today

About Continuity Software

Continuity Software is a leading provider of Service Availability Management solutions, helping many of the world's largest organizations avoid infrastructure outages and prevent service disruptions .

By proactively detecting single-points-of-failure and deviations from vendor best-practices across all layers of the IT infrastructure, our software will help you ensure IT operations excellence and 24x7 availability.

For more information

Website: www.continuitysoftware.com
Email: info@continuitysoftware.com
Tel: 1-888-782-8170 or +1-646.216.8628