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Security and AI Are Increasingly Driving Endpoint Strategy

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Overview

As the very definition of the workplace evolves, the impact of the endpoint device on end-user productivity, IT management, and security is under more scrutiny than ever before. Alongside this trend is the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI), which is rapidly climbing the list of priorities—and challenges—that organizations have.

To understand how endpoint strategies are changing due to higher demands on procurement, management, and security, as well as the impact of AI-enabled hardware and software, TechTarget's Enterprise Strategy Group surveyed 350 IT professionals from SMBs (50-750 employees) worldwide. These professionals are familiar with their organization's purchase process for storage, servers, and client technology solutions. The results revealed that SMBs face challenges similar to those of larger enterprises, with AI and security rapidly becoming top priorities. Most strikingly, client-side AI use is surpassing expectations by leaps and bounds.

Analysis

Research repeatedly highlighted that SMBs grapple with the same client device issues as large enterprises. Yet, these challenges hit harder for SMBs, which often lack the deep pockets and extensive IT resources of their larger counterparts. The pressing concerns included security threats (44%), soaring costs (32%), application compatibility woes (31%), compliance hurdles (30%), and maintaining a seamless user experience (28%). These issues represent the daily struggles and resilience of SMBs trying to stay competitive.

Windows 11 should be a high priority for organizations. Just 16% have migrated more than 90% of the devices to Windows 11, while 32% aren't even halfway done.

Organizations are reacting appropriately, investing heavily in productivity suites and AI-enabled devices. Over the next 12 months, significant investments in Windows 11 migrations and AI-powered laptops/desktops are on the

horizon, with 32% and 28% of respondents highlighting this, respectively. Prioritizing Windows 11 is essential, as only 16% of organizations have migrated more than 90% of their devices, while nearly a third (32%) have migrated less than half. Those investments appear to be paying off. For example, the reported benefits of upgrading to Windows 11 are significant, with nearly half of respondents reporting enhanced security features (49%) and better performance (48%). Additionally, 45% experienced improved reliability, 40% saw advancements in collaboration technology, and 39% reported benefits related to Microsoft Copilot.

When asked what factors are driving AI PC purchases, 57% said it will offer them an opportunity to dramatically increase user productivity, while 50% hoped to accelerate threat detection while preventing incidents at the device level. In addition, 49% cited the desire to create efficiency by dramatically reducing IT support needs. In fact, most respondents noted that both built-in AI (83%) and security features (81%) are increasingly important to their organization.

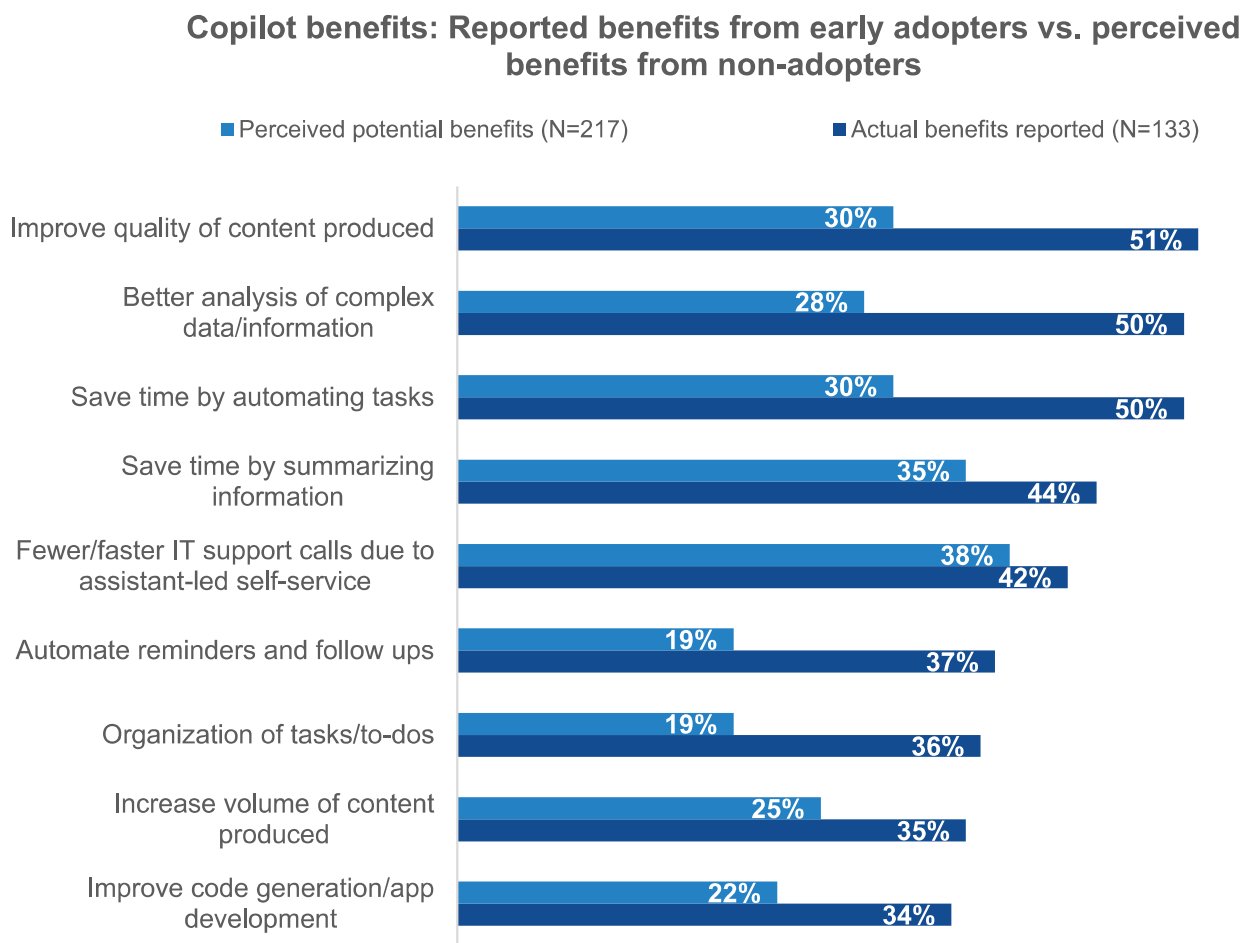
Specifically related to AI, those who haven't yet deployed Copilot are highly excited about its potential. Over half said that they expected "significant" or "game-changing" improvements to end-user-productivity (65%), cross-functional collaboration and communication (59%), and more personalized experiences (57%).

Perhaps the most revealing data in the entire project stems from comparing the expectations from those that haven't deployed Copilot to the benefits achieved by those that had. Put simply, Copilot exceeded expectations in every measured area:

- 79% of SMB customers that had deployed Copilot reported enhanced end-user-productivity—a 14% improvement over expectations.
- 82% reported better cross-functional communication and collaboration—a 23% improvement.
- 71% reported a more personalized experience—a 14% improvement.

Closer inspection reveals where the lion's share of the benefits resides (see Figure 1). Content quality and volume, complex data analysis, task automation, and code generation all far exceeded expectations, which were already high. Even areas that met expectations showed notable improvements for organizations, such as fewer IT support calls and quicker resolutions, thanks to assistant-led self-service.

Figure 1. Microsoft Copilot Actual Benefits Significantly Outpace Even the Loftiest Expectations



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

Conclusion

It's clear that organizations that aren't prioritizing end-user-facing generative AI, especially Copilot, should include it as part of their strategy. To do this effectively, they need to upgrade their devices to the latest AI-enabled hardware and update Windows 10 to Windows 11. As technology evolves, modernized hardware becomes essential to leverage AI's full potential. By adopting AI PCs, organizations can enhance productivity, strengthen security, and stay competitive, fully harnessing the transformative power of AI.

How Dell Technologies, Intel, and Microsoft Can Help

By choosing Dell Technologies to accelerate AI-driven productivity across your workforce, you leverage our expertise and benefit from our close partnerships with Intel and Microsoft.

This collaboration has resulted in trusted solutions co-engineered by all three industry leaders. To meet the growing demands of AI organizations need modernized hardware. Our devices are optimized for AI workloads, including the use of Microsoft Copilot powered by the new Intel® Core™ Ultra processor. Combined with Dell's services and technical expertise, we provide organizations with a comprehensive approach to transform work and innovate everywhere.

A Definitive AI PC Experience for Business

The Intel Core Ultra with Intel vPro offers our best PC experience yet, optimized for AI to enhance applications and handle demanding workloads quickly. Boost productivity and performance while ensuring long-lasting battery life and powerful protection right out of the box. AI-powered security features and remote manageability ease PC fleet management, enabling work-from-anywhere and sustainable computing practices. All packaged together to deliver performance that makes users happy.

Powerful Performance, Advanced AI, and Security at Your Service

Accelerate innovation, solve problems faster and drive business impact with Windows 11 Pro Copilot PCs. Devices come with a turbocharged multi-processor package of CPU, GPU, and NPU for powerful performance and unique AI experiences. Copilot PCs are business-ready, Secured-core PCs that include Microsoft Pluton for extra protection. With unique AI experiences combined with the highest level of Windows security, you can find mission-critical information faster, turn ideas into action, respond more quickly to customers and safeguard your most sensitive data.

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