

# Don't Let App Performance Problems Drag You Down: Get Proactive

Seventy-three percent of enterprises are losing productivity due to poor application performance.

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## A vicious circle

See if this scenario sounds familiar: Frustrated users complain about poor application performance, saying it's killing productivity and morale. IT is barraged with calls and help desk tickets from these unhappy users. But IT often doesn't have the tools to easily and clearly identify where the problems come from and thus spends a lot of time trying to solve them. So IT also becomes frustrated and unhappy. Business executives are breathing down the collective necks of users and IT, demanding solutions. All of this is taking a toll on customer satisfaction and, ultimately, the success of the business.

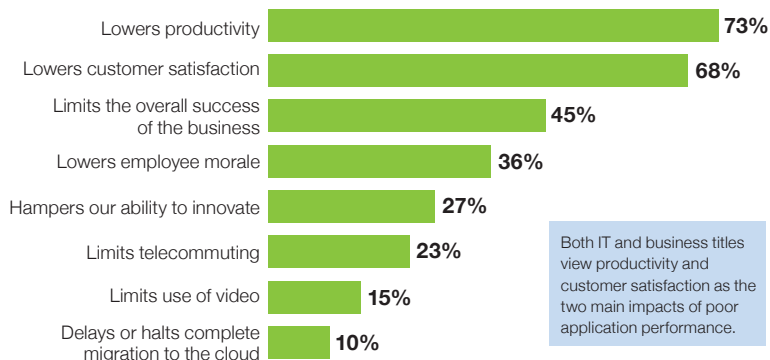
Such scenarios have direct costs in terms of lost time, money, well-being and customer satisfaction. A recent survey of both IT managers and business users conducted by IDG Research for Ipanema proves that case. In terms of its effect on the business, lost productivity is the most

often-cited consequence (73% of respondents) of poor application performance in the IDG Research survey. It is followed by lower customer satisfaction, limiting business success, lower employee morale and hampering the ability to innovate. (See Figure 1.)

This is far from an isolated problem, as 79% of user organizations report they suffer from application performance problems either frequently or occasionally, according to a 2013 survey of some 650 IT professionals by the research firm Vanson Bourne on behalf of Ipanema.

The IDG Research survey shows the far-reaching impact of poor application performance. Asked how it affects the IT organization, nearly half say it means dealing with more end-user complaints, while 43% report increased frustration levels and 39% say they have trouble completing their work on time. Nearly a quarter say it leads to decreased job satisfaction.

## More than two-thirds of respondents cite decreased productivity and customer satisfaction as consequences of poor app performance



Both IT and business titles view productivity and customer satisfaction as the two main impacts of poor application performance.

SOURCE: IDG Research Services, August 2013

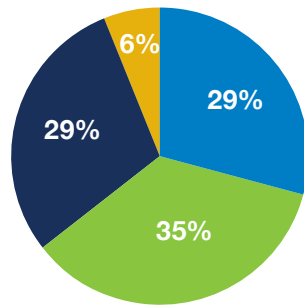
## Falling short on app performance

The IDG Research survey shows there's plenty of room for improvement with respect to application management. Only 29% of respondents say they have a well-defined application performance monitoring plan in place, while another 35% say their plan is somewhat defined. That leaves 35% with either no plan or an ill-defined one.

And of those who do use an application performance management tool, only half are either somewhat (31%) or extremely satisfied (19%) with it.

At the same time, investments in cloud-based applications are going up about 10% per year, making cloud a major driver for application

### Fewer than one-third of respondents say they have a well-defined application performance monitoring plan in place



- Well defined: We have a monitoring solution in place that clearly defines great application performance, and monitors and guarantees application performance, along with a user-satisfaction survey that we administer to our employees.
- Somewhat defined: We have metrics that we track (e.g., KPIs), and informally monitor application performance and downtime. We occasionally ask our end users for feedback, but don't have any formal satisfaction survey in place.
- Not well defined: We occasionally review application performance and have some ideas of where the pain points are, but don't have any metrics that we track.
- Not at all defined: We have a limited or non-existent view of application performance.

SOURCE: IDG Research Services, August 2013

performance monitoring tools. Indeed, in IDG's 2013 cloud study, half of respondents say cloud is increasing the demand for new applications, and with that, demand for performance monitoring.

DeVry Inc., a large for-profit higher education company, has a tool that automates and reports on various overnight batch processing jobs, says Jason Olsen, senior manager of network systems for the company and one of the survey respondents. But otherwise, he only knows about performance problems "when users start to complain."

#### Reactive techniques show the money's already lost

Clearly, these organizations need a better way to deal with application performance issues. Rather than react after the fact to issues, they need a way to proactively manage application performance, so they can address issues before users experience them, and guarantee good performance for the applications employees need and use most. In short, they need Ipanema.

Olsen is one of the 80% of IDG Research survey respondents who say they gauge user satisfaction with application performance by monitoring help desk calls, by far the top response. Only about half issue user satisfaction surveys, while just over one-third have key performance indicators (KPIs) based on time to resolve issues.

Take the example of Rob Janssen, manager of global infrastructure & QRC at Marel, the

leading global provider of advanced equipment, systems and services to the fish, meat and poultry industries.

The organization decided to deploy MS Lync to reduce travel costs and improve employee collaboration and communication with customers. Achieving these expected benefits means delivering guaranteed end-user experience. In the case of issues, the ability to understand where the problems come from in order to solve them before they impact the end users is key for Marel.

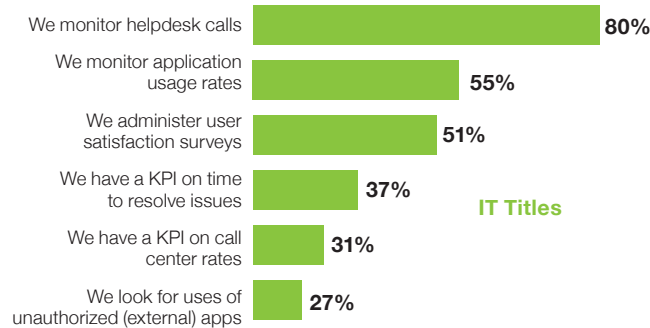
"With Ipanema, we strongly reduced our MTTI [Mean Time to Innocence] and therefore the service delivered to end users. Thanks to a better control of new applications on network resources and business applications, we are more agile and can easily manage new usages without impacting business apps performance and business productivity," says Janssen.

On the flip side of the equation, IDG Research asked respondents with business titles what steps they take when an application is performing poorly. Nearly three-quarters say they open a help desk ticket. Many issue some sort of complaint, either to the help desk (41%) or their manager (23%).

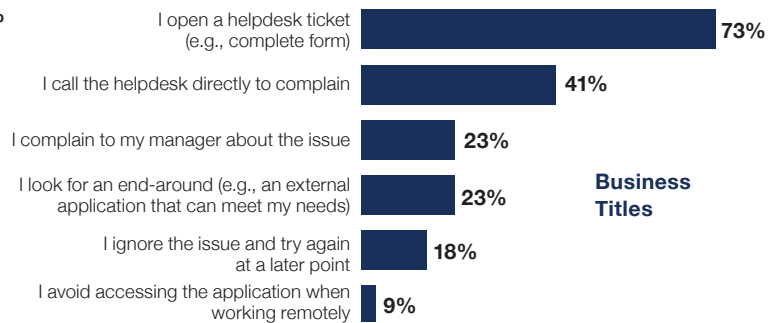
Perhaps worse, another 23% look for an end-around the issue, such as an external application, while 18% simply give up and try later and 9% avoid the application when working remotely. Given that, it's not hard to predict the effect poor application performance

**IT primarily monitors calls to the helpdesk to gauge user satisfaction and potential issues: this aligns with the typical response to poor performance from business users**

*Which of the following do you use to gauge user satisfaction and potential user issues with application performance?*



*If an application is/was not performing as expected, which of the following steps do/would you take?*



SOURCE: IDG Research Services, August 2013

has on end users.

When asked what the result of poor performance is at DeVry, Olsen says: “It’s anywhere from lost productivity on the order of hours or days per month, to frustration levels that lead them to be combative with IT when new initiatives roll out. They start dropping IT out of the loop and doing their own thing,” such as signing a contract with a Web hosting provider—often one IT already has a contract with, leading to inefficiencies and increased expense.

Janssen echoes those themes. When one of his company’s batch jobs was taking far too long to complete, representatives from the database, server, network and application teams were told to go into a room and work together to figure it out.

“These people have to go into a conference room and grind there for eight hours trying everything possible to figure out what’s going on,” he says. “And they have day job duties. They get out [of the conference room] at 6 p.m. and are expected to do those things. Their work/life balance suffers, they get peeved and they leave. It contributes to turnover.”

Business users have similar issues, with half reporting both increased frustration and lower speed and agility. Forty-five percent say they have trouble completing work on time, and about a

quarter say they have both a lower opinion of IT and decreased job satisfaction.

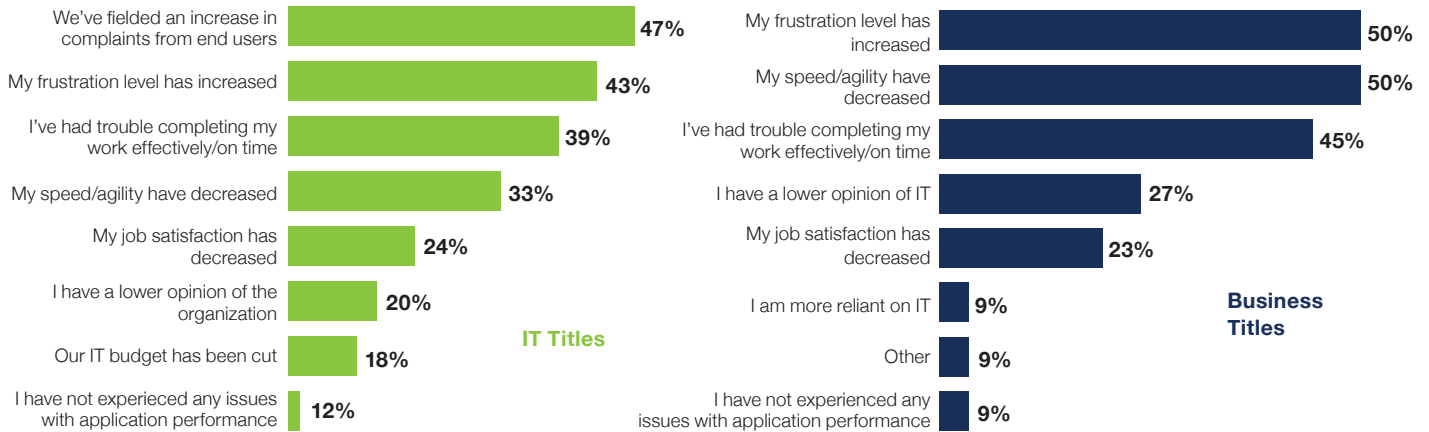
**Application performance under control requires preemptive methods**

Traditional methods for dealing with application performance management—monitoring things like help desk calls and application usage rates, and even performing user satisfaction surveys—have one fatal flaw in common: They are all reactionary.

“What IT needs is a solution that not only allows them to monitor usage and application performance in real time, but gives them control over it to guarantee the business apps performance in all circumstances and whatever the complexity,” says analyst Jim Metzger of Ashton Metzger & Associates. “It’s not enough to be alerted after the fact to a performance problem. You need to be able to address performance issues before they affect end users.”

The Ipanema solution does just that by providing a dynamic sense and response capability. With Ipanema, IT simply chooses one of four levels of criticality for each application. That’s it! Ipanema devices then constantly analyze traffic while assessing bandwidth capabilities and application performance objectives, ensuring each application gets an appropriate level of bandwidth.

**Respondents report that poor application performance has resulted in increased frustration levels, an increase in complaints from end users and issues completing work effectively/on time.**



SOURCE: IDG Research Services, August 2013

And the devices do all of that dynamically. In many cases, the approach enables IT to address its application performance requirements without increasing bandwidth, simply by ensuring that noncritical applications don't shut out other, more critical applications.

This is increasingly important as companies make use of unified communications (UC) applications that include videoconferencing and telephony. Such UC applications may have similar characteristics to noncritical applications, such as users employing YouTube for non-business functions. A solution such as Ipanema enables IT to ensure the UC applications always get priority.

With Ipanema, the IT team at Henkel, a manufacturing company making various chemical products for consumer and industrial businesses, is now able to easily deploy new IT services and innovations without impacting productivity.

Deploying telepresence and the growing adoption of cloud computing and SaaS applications by the business units is no longer problematic. The IT department can now confidently support the company's growth in emerging markets like China and dynamically adapt to changes.

Further, the Ipanema solution allows Henkel to easily and dynamically align the application

and network performance with the company's business objectives.

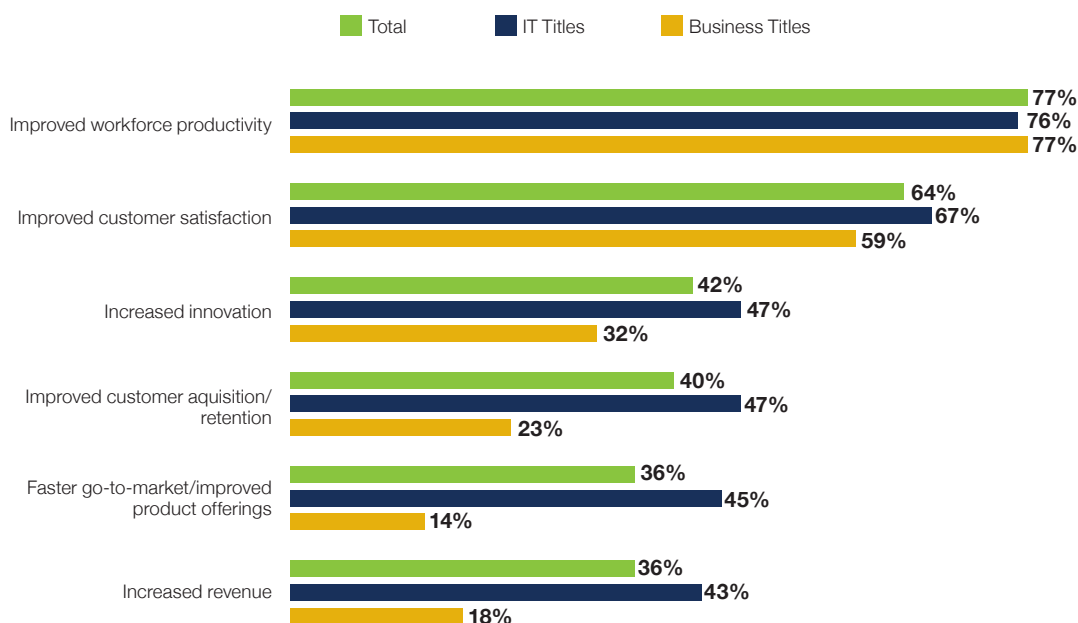
"Our hybrid network delivers its promises," says Frank Meyer, technical project lead, Henkel. "It allows us to cost-effectively benefit from the best of MPLS and the Internet. The objective-based application performance management strongly reduces complexity and enables us to dynamically guarantee the applications' performance to the end users anytime."

**Application performance is a business issue—not just an IT one**

When companies adequately address application performance issues, IDG Research survey respondents say it brings significant benefits. They include improved productivity (77% of respondents), improved customer satisfaction (64%) and increased innovation (42%), as well as increased customer acquisition and retention, faster go-to-market for new products and increased revenue.

"While application performance tools might live within the realm of IT authority, it's clear that their impact affects business performance in all aspects, from morale to employee retention, from productivity to profitability and from customer satisfaction to sales," according to Ipanema's Vice

**The primary benefits both IT and LOB respondents associate with great application performance are improved productivity and improved customer satisfaction**



SOURCE: IDG Research Services, August 2013

President of Marketing Béatrice Durand-Piquer.

In general, it's about visibility and control. "When companies talk about so-called 'IT transformation,' what they're really talking about is dynamic control to guarantee business apps whatever the situation," she notes. "But, you can't control what you can't see. And if you can't control it, you can't improve it; you can't protect business apps and end users' productivity."

For French DIY retailer Leroy Merlin, part of the Adeo group, customer satisfaction is at the heart of its business. The performance of business applications on the network is critical for Leroy Merlin employees, who need tools to respond quickly to the diverse needs of their customers anytime, regardless of store location. But the constant increase in network traffic over the past few years had led to a significant deterioration in application performance and therefore user satisfaction.

Of the 150 applications that run on Leroy Merlin's network, around 20 are critical to the company's productivity—for example,

applications that provide access to the online product catalog, the order system, the loyalty card program and inventory management. Any malfunction here may have considerable negative impact on revenue and productivity.

Beyond distributing home improvement products, Leroy Merlin helps customers in their decision-making process by providing information, advice and services, including sales and financing tools. These critical business applications on the network are essential to meet customer expectations by helping them find the best solution to meet their needs.

Thanks to Ipanema's application performance guarantee solutions, customer wait time in the store is reduced, the purchasing process is simplified and, as a result, customer satisfaction is improved. ■

If you want to fix your application performance issues, get in touch with Ipanema. Visit: [www.ipanematech.com](http://www.ipanematech.com).