# IDC

# Keep Your Edge to Core Networks Up and Running More Efficiently with Vendor Services

**RESEARCH BY:**

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# Navigating this InfoDoc

*Click on titles or page numbers to navigate to each section.*

# In this InfoDoc

The value of reliable and high performing networks continues to reach new heights as individuals and businesses increasingly rely on connectivity that ties them to content, co-workers, suppliers, partners, and customers. We are at the forefront of an evolution of 5G, edge and IoT-based initiatives that will support new solutions like autonomous vehicles, telemedicine and other industrial use cases. This InfoDoc provides information about the best practices communications SPs can implement to uplift their customer experience by providing proactive and automated support.

To understand the service market opportunity associated with these transformations, IDC conducted a web survey of 50 communications SPs globally. Respondents were director level and above and were responsible for network operations, planning, design/architecture, engineering, and/or optimization. This InfoDoc also cites data from other relevant IDC research surveys.

# Support Services — Definition

**Support is becoming the customer experience center, creating better network services through designated SLAs and KPIs, including:**

**Delivering outcomes to your customers** by matching SLAs/KPIs

**Providing multi-modal communication** to work with you the way you want

**Providing on-demand technical expertise** to get you through any issue or to get advice on product and configurations

**Delivering proactive predictive capabilities** through connectivity and monitoring which provides for better planning, patching and updates

**Sharing best practices** to keep systems up and running at peak performance
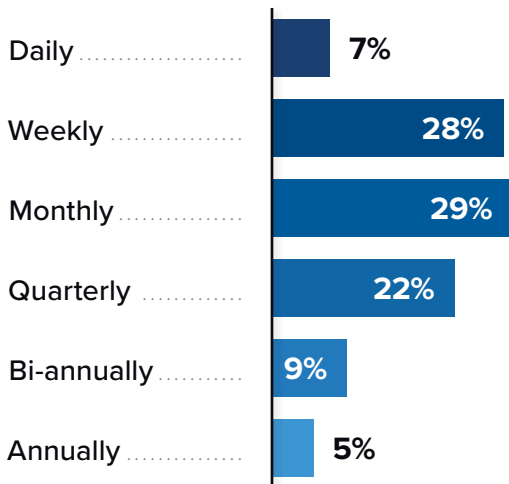
# What Challenges Do Communications SPs and Other Companies Face?

## Downtime

**35%** of communications SPs **use proactive/preventative support services daily and weekly** to help keep downtime out of the environment

**Communications SP frequency of use of proactive/preventive support services**
(% of respondents)

Daily .................... **7%**

Weekly ................ **28%**

Monthly ............... **29%**

Quarterly ............ **22%**

Bi-annually .......... **9%**
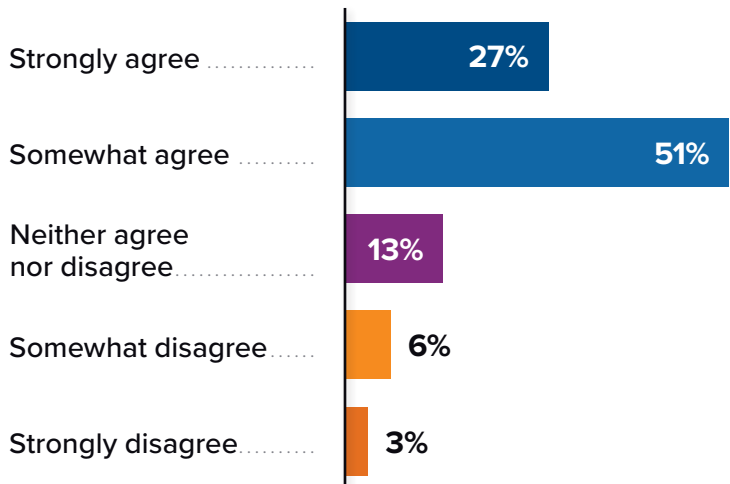
Annually .............. **5%**

n = 1239, Source: *Customer Satisfaction and Value Study*, 2020

## Staff

**76%** of companies surveyed agree or strongly agree they will be **using more vendor/partner services for day-to-day administrative and operational tasks**

**Level of agreement with statement: We need to simplify and unify the way we manage and secure dedicated and cloud infrastructure.**
(% of respondents)

Strongly agree ............. **27%**

Somewhat agree .......... **51%**

Neither agree nor disagree ................ **13%**

Somewhat disagree ...... **6%**

Strongly disagree .......... **3%**

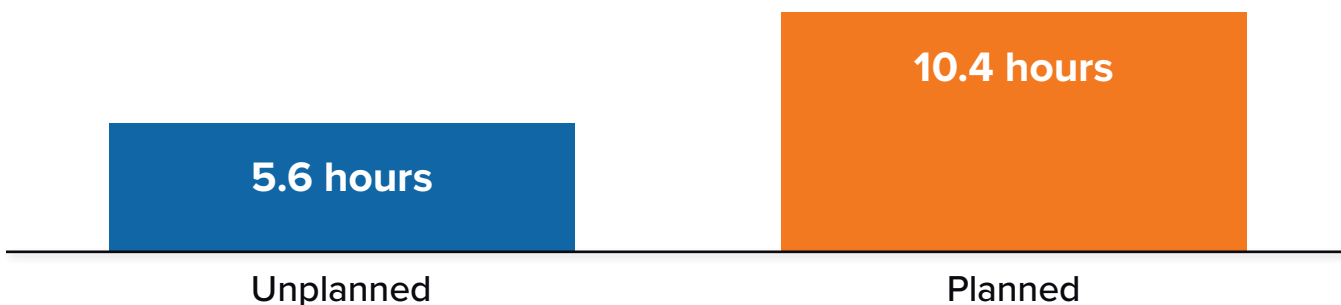Source: IDC's *Future Enterprise Resiliency & Spending Survey, Wave 10*, October 2021

## Other Challenges

- ✓ Are my customer SLAs matched by my vendor?
- ✓ What does the technology future hold, and how do we best harness it?

# IDC Worldwide Communications SP Downtime Estimates

## Average Downtime Hours Annually:
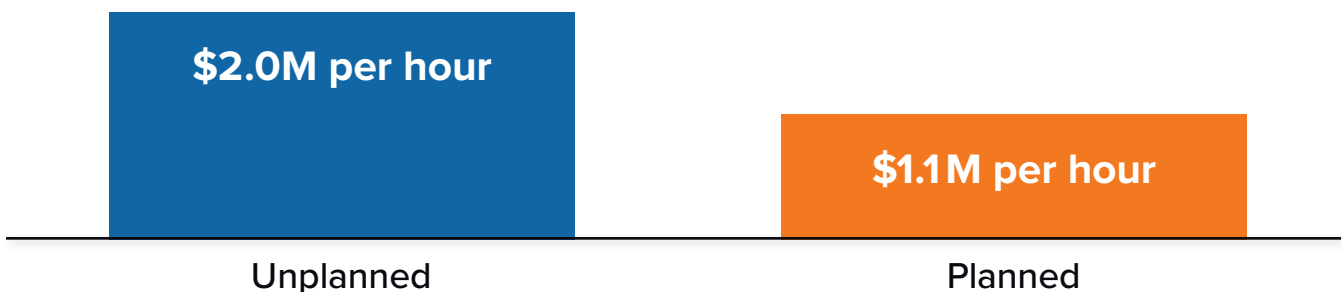
### 16 hours
**(SLA = ~99.8%)**

| 5.6 hours | 10.4 hours |
|:---:|:---:|
| Unplanned | Planned |

## Cost of Downtime/Hour:

### $1.4M/hour

**Downtime Cost Estimate**

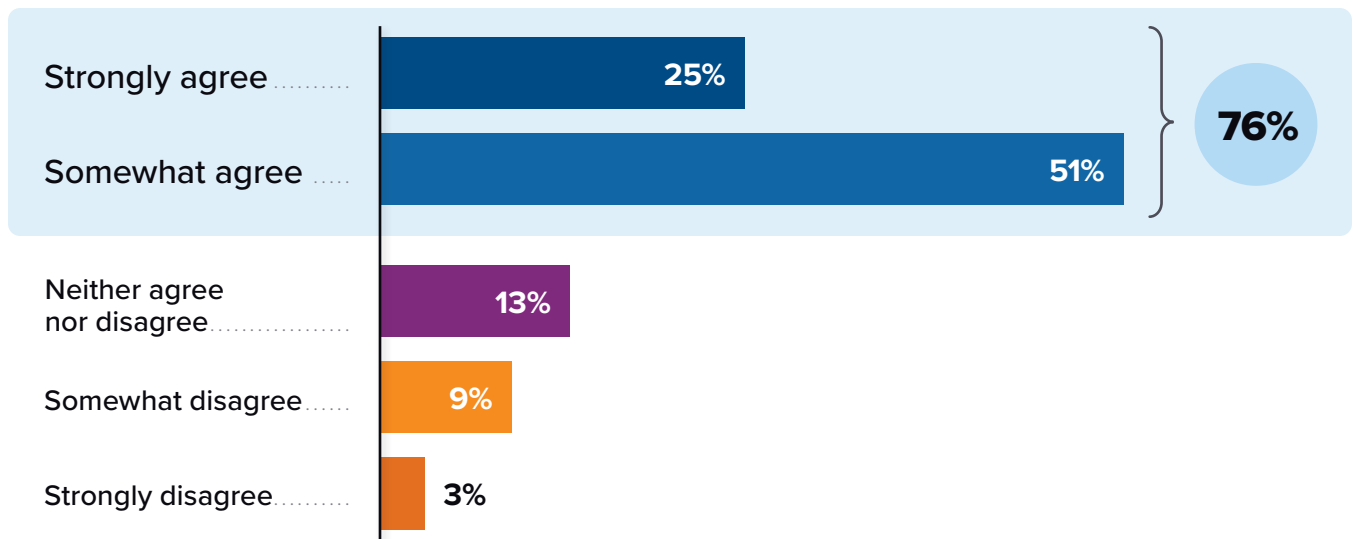| $2.0M per hour | $1.1M per hour |
|:---:|:---:|
| Unplanned | Planned |

# More Time for Value-added Activities

## Enterprises want their strategic vendors to focus on day-to-day activities to give their internal staff more time to focus on innovation

**Please estimate the percentage of time before support and after, assuming the following activities comprise 100% of time spent.**

Innovation **before** support contracts .............. **12%**

Innovation **after** support contracts .............. **15%**

This equals approximately **56 more hours** of time per year innovating

**Level of agreement with statement: We want our strategic vendors to take more day-to-day administrative and operational responsibility for infrastructure so our internal staff can focus more on the business.**

Strongly agree .......... **25%**

Somewhat agree ...... **51%**

**76%**

Neither agree nor disagree .......... **13%**

Somewhat disagree ...... **9%**
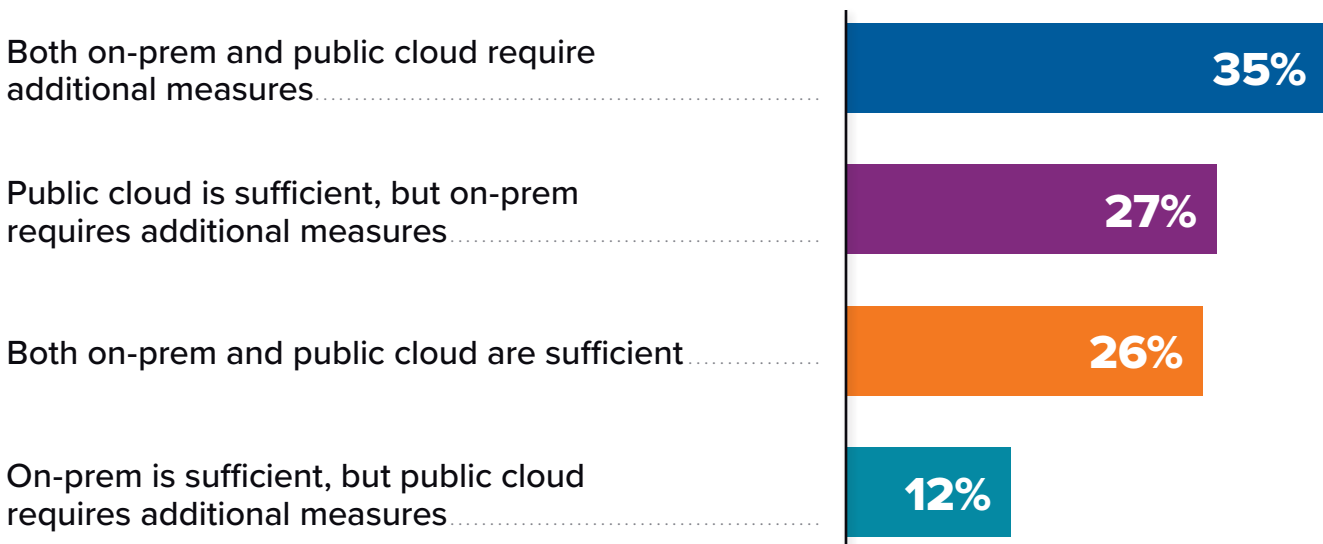
Strongly disagree .......... **3%**

Source: IDC's *Future Enterprise Resiliency & Spending Survey, Wave 10*, October 2021; IDC's *Ciena Network Support Services Survey*, December 2020

# IT Infrastructure Is Not Sufficiently Resilient

## Only ~25% of organizations believe their IT infrastructure is sufficiently resilient

**Given the advancements in virtualization and IT automation over the past ten years, how would you describe the current state of resiliency/redundancy in your IT environment?**

| | |
|---|---|
| Both on-prem and public cloud require additional measures | **35%** |
| Public cloud is sufficient, but on-prem requires additional measures | **27%** |
| Both on-prem and public cloud are sufficient | **26%** |
| On-prem is sufficient, but public cloud requires additional measures | **12%** |

The lack of resiliency is still causing unplanned downtime to critical network infrastructures

Human error and security breaches are leading causes of unplanned downtime

Source: IDC's *Cost of Downtime and the Value of Support Contracts Survey*, 2020

# What Communications SPs Are Looking for in Support Contracts (Top 4)

**Why are you buying more advanced support contracts with more services?**

**73%** We want **more services like optimization and proactive support** and are willing to pay for them through better support contracts

**50%** We want our support staff **to focus on other business priorities**

**46%** Our network is becoming more important and **we cannot tolerate downtime**

**36%** The technology is complex and **our staff cannot keep up with the training**

Base = respondents buying more advanced support contracts with more services. Source: IDC's *Ciena Network Support Services Survey*, December 2020

# Downtime Saved with Support Contracts in Place

**Has your organization's use of vendor support impacted the frequency of planned and unplanned downtime affecting the environment it covers?**

**14% fewer hours** of downtime per incident

**15% fewer downtime incidents** per year

Communications SPs that have seen a decrease in downtime attribute the success to better patch planning that is done through proactive abilities identifying issues before they occur.

# Essential Guidance for Communications SPs

**Look for vendors with strong technology expertise in advanced technologies** like AI/ML, automation, data analytics and AR/VR that can help drive greater efficiencies.
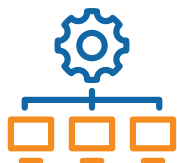
**Work with vendors that put emphasis on their services roadmap, not just their product roadmap.** A good partner will continually enhance the experience with their product through the right services mix.

**Look for providers to work with you on the SLAs and KPIs that satisfy your customers' needs.** Augmenting your staff with vendor expertise deepens relationships and understanding of business needs.

# About the Analyst

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Rob Brothers is a Program Vice President for IDC's Datacenter and Support Services program, as well as a regular contributor to the Infrastructure Services and Financial Strategies Programs. He focuses on worldwide support and deployment services for hardware and software and provides expert insight and intelligence on how enterprises should be addressing key areas for datacenter transformation and edge deployment and management strategies. IT hardware services covered include IoT devices, converged infrastructures, storage, servers, client devices, networking equipment, and peripherals. Software covered includes software defined infrastructures, cloud support, operating systems, databases, applications, and system software. He also has expertise in the latest consumption models which includes as-a-service models such as device-as-a-service.

**More about Rob Brothers**

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