# planit

an **NRI** company

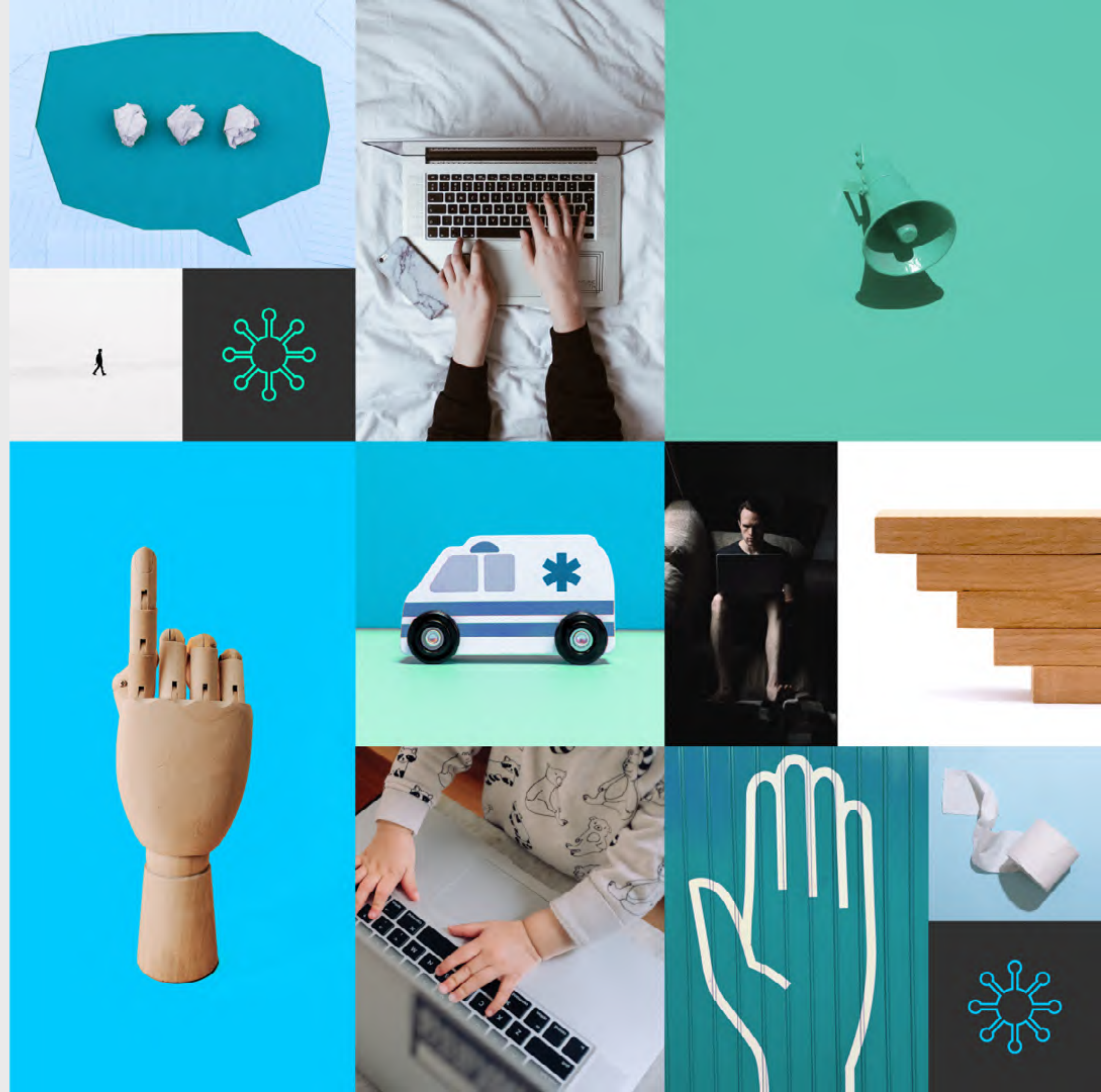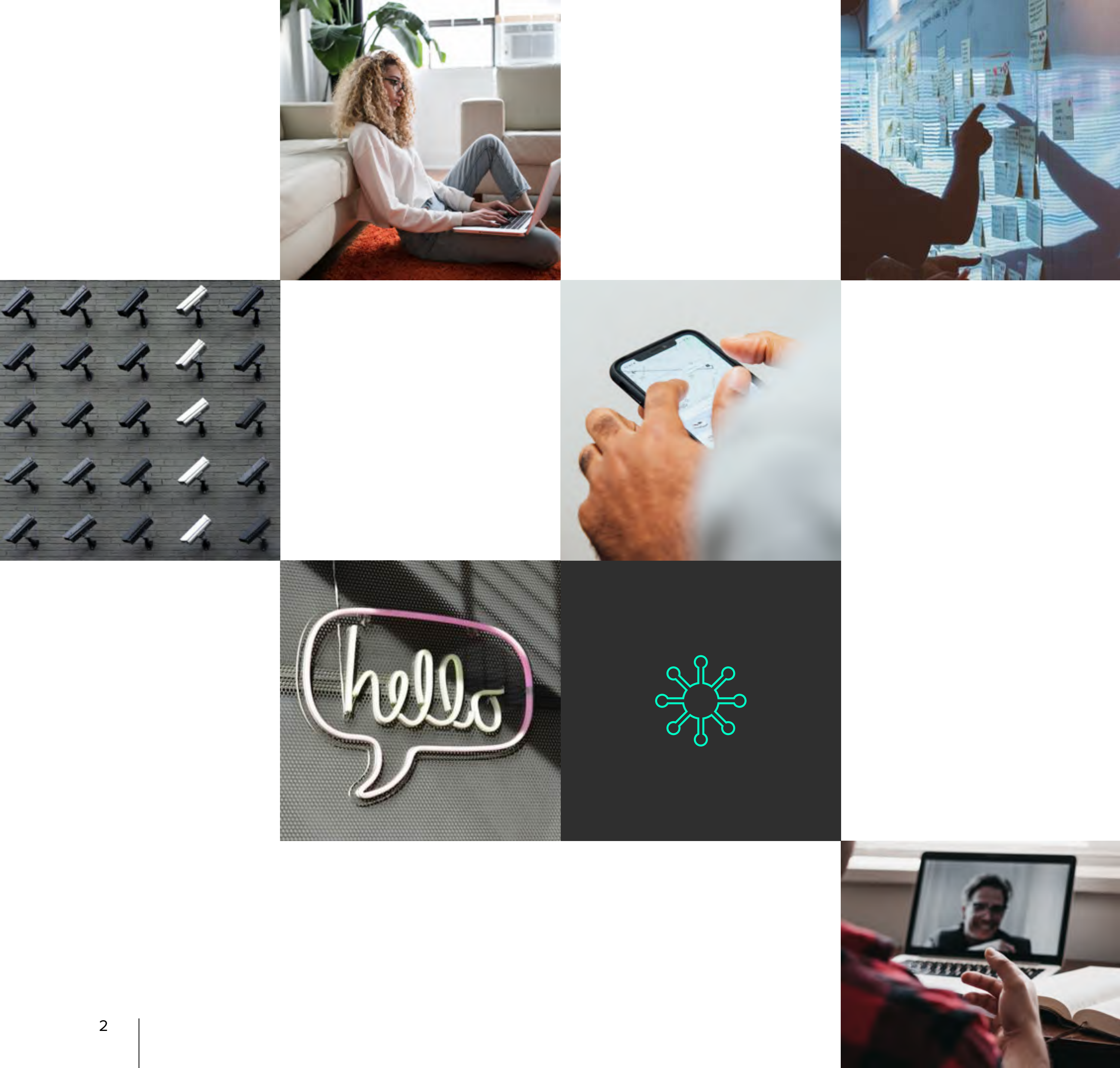# COVID IMPACT

## Disruption & Resilience

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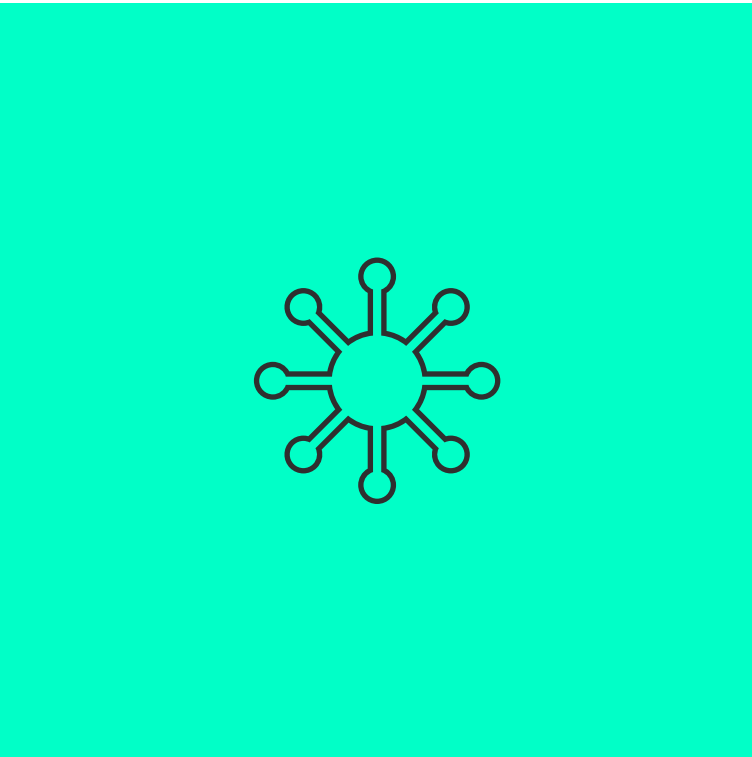**How COVID-19 disrupted organisations and how they responded**

# Contents

# About the Report

This report draws upon Planit's May 2020 Customer Survey that gauged how these organisations had reacted to the C-19 situation, what impact it had on them and what was most challenging. The analysis is also supported by third party research from Gartner, Microsoft and more.
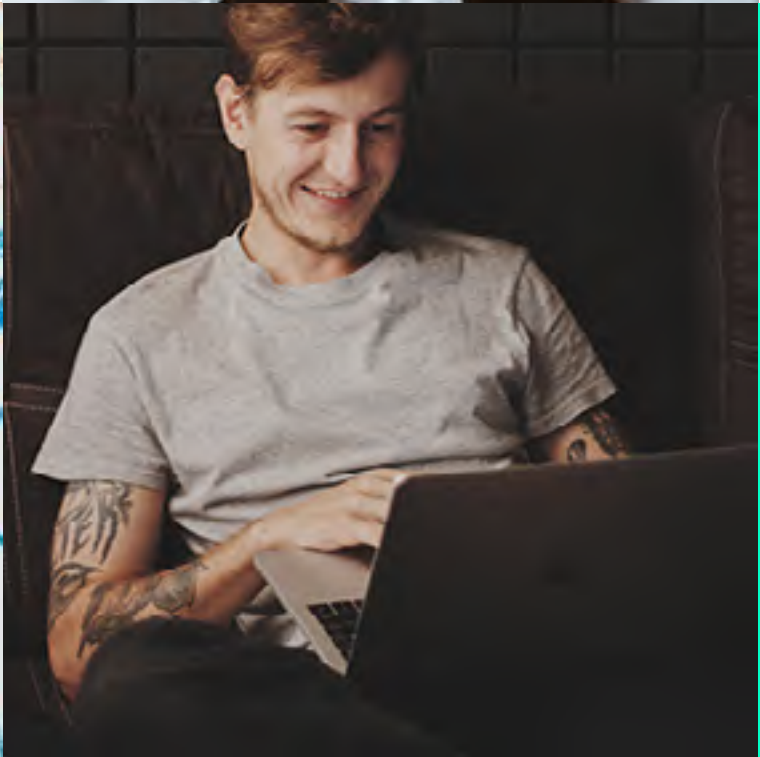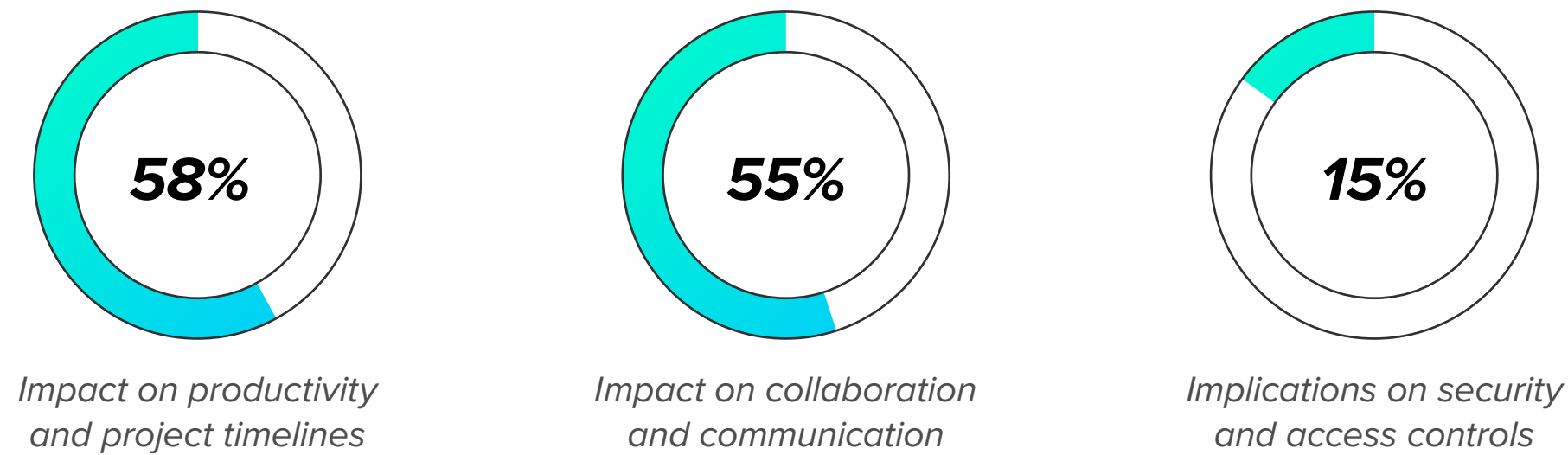
*Biggest challenges:*

# Enabling remote working

COVID-19 brought with it a range of economic, societal and behavioural changes that disrupted business and government on a scale not seen in recent times. Of the many challenges faced by organisations, implementing remote working was the most common, cited as a key challenge by 75% of respondents.

This was a multi-faceted challenge that posed immediate concerns for organisations as societies entered lockdown, including:

**58%**

*Impact on productivity and project timelines*

**55%**

*Impact on collaboration and communication*

**15%**

*Implications on security and access controls*

⌃ *Initial concerns when moving to remote delivery*

The challenging aspect of remote working was that many organisations were unprepared for it. Google and Apple have long been against the idea, while in 2017, IBM pulled back into the office thousands from its then 40% distributed workforce.

Many organisations had no choice but to embrace a work-from-home model. Research has found that for **31% of companies**, COVID-19 was the catalyst to begin allowing remote work. Since then, **88% of organisations** have implemented work from home arrangements for their employees.

*Biggest challenges in pivoting to C-19:*

**75%**

**Enabling remote working**

**57%**
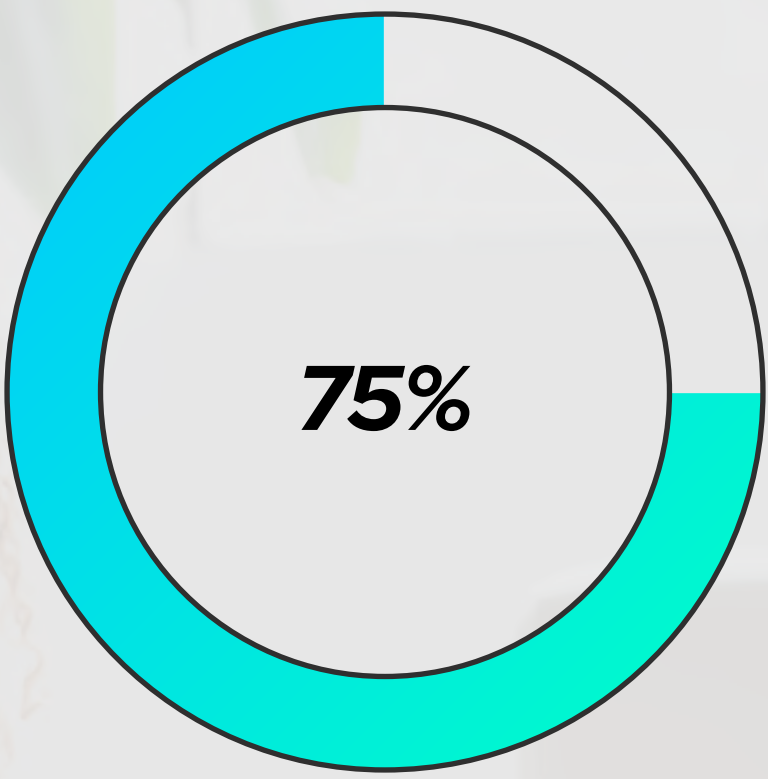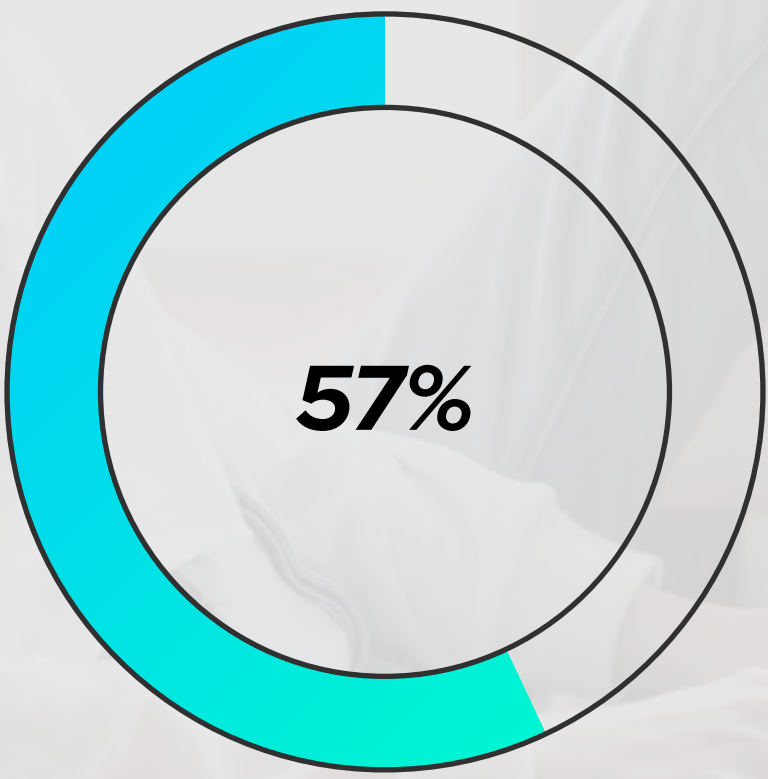
**Deploying hardware for staff**

| | |
|---|---|
| Enabling remote working | 75% |
| Deploying hardware for staff | 57% |

*Biggest challenges:*

# Connectivity & Security

The challenge of technical connectivity matched hardware deployment as the most prevalent challenge for IT departments as they enabled their teams to work from home during the pandemic (57%). Some organisations that had already adopted a cloud-first approach to tooling saw less down-time, whereas those using legacy and on-premise tooling encountered additional challenges.

While VPN access was already common, many organisations needed to increase their capacity to enable their staff to access essential files, apps and other resources while working remotely. This was one of many measures employed to address the changing security landscape, which was cited as a key concern for 36% of respondents.

*Biggest challenges in pivoting to C-19:*

**57%**

**Provisioning technical connectivity**

**36%**
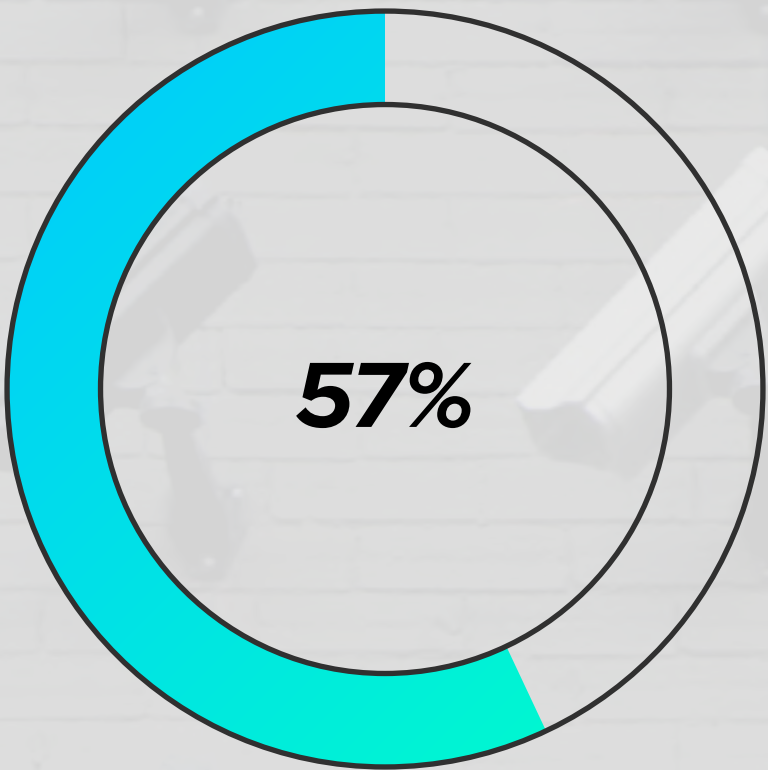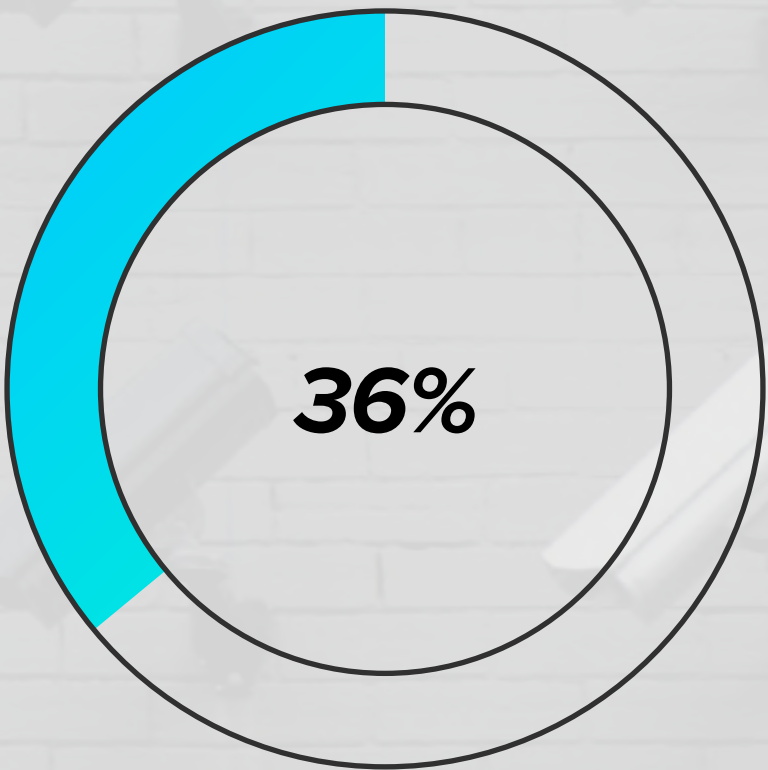
**Ensuring security**

| Provisioning technical connectivity | 57% |
|---|---|
| Ensuring security | 36% |

*Biggest challenges:*

# Collaboration & Communication

Enabling remote teams to collaborate effectively was cited as a key challenge by almost 50% of organisations. For many, the solution was to adopt or improve their utilisation of collaboration tools such as Microsoft Teams, which saw a massive spike in utilisation, facilitating more group chats, calls, file sharing and task management. As video chat became an essential means for replacing daily stand-ups, boardroom meetings, break-out sessions and casual chats, total video calls on Teams also grew by *over 1,000%* with users turning on their camera two times more than before.

Beyond collaborating, employing solid communication processes was also essential as organisations needed to issue urgent updates to employees, customers, suppliers and partners. In fact, this was cited as a key challenge by 41% of respondents.

*Biggest challenges in pivoting to C-19:*

**48%**

**Enabling collaboration**

**41%**
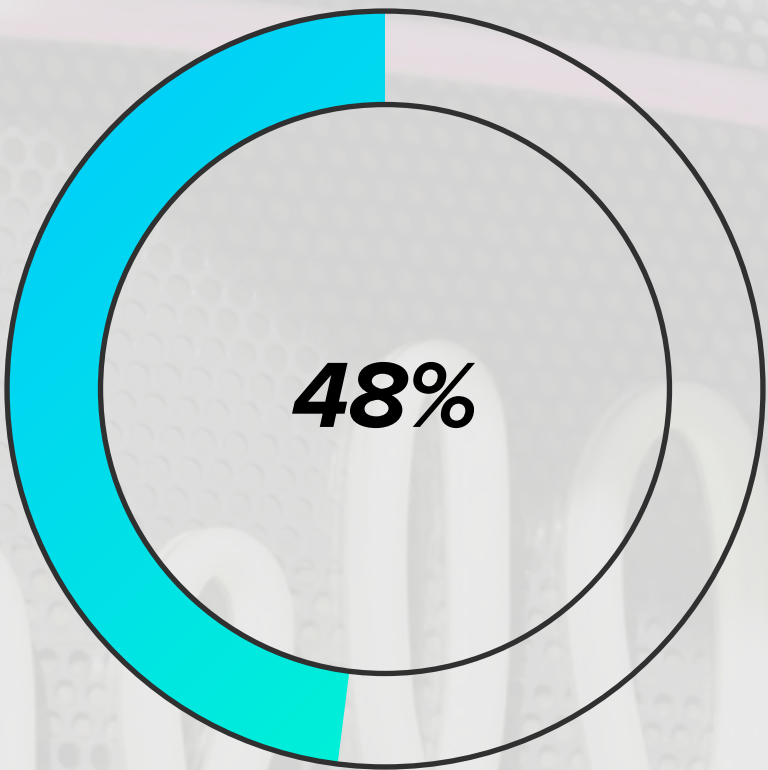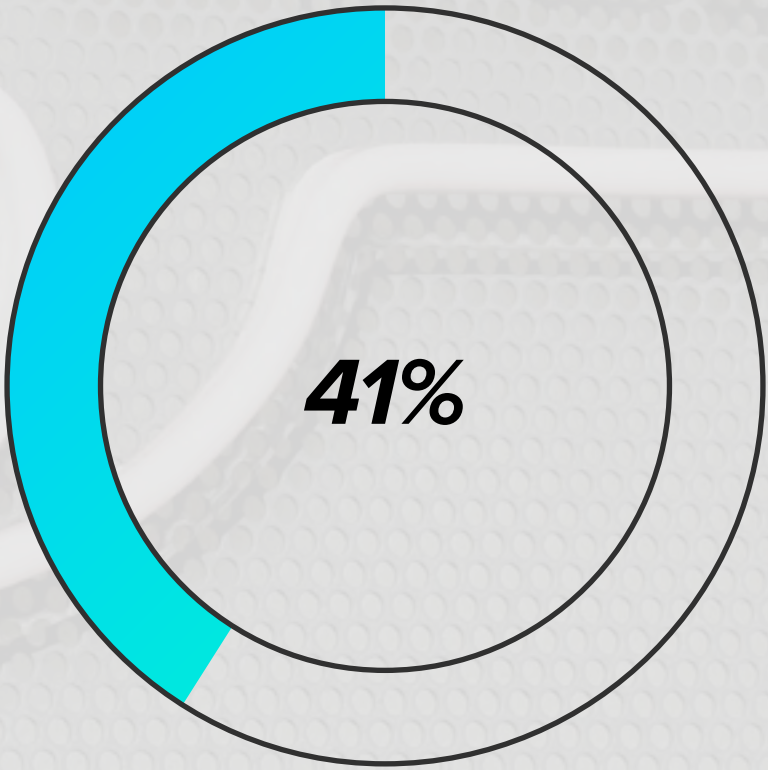
**Improving communication processes**

| Enabling collaboration | 48% |
|---|---|
| Improving communication  processes | 41% |

*Biggest challenges:*
# Organisation & Coordination

With their workforce distributed, many organisations (43%) experienced disruption in the way they coordinated projects and managed teams. The absence of close physical proximity required project leaders to adjust their management style to match the characteristics of email communication and online collaboration tools.

Co-located teams make much better use of informal communication methods and feedback, such as asking for help, double checking understanding or even small complaints. When these are removed from teams it can create vacuum which can make people feel isolated and less productive. Team leaders need to find a way of replacing that.

*Biggest challenges in pivoting to C-19:*

**43%**

**Coordinating projects**

**39%**
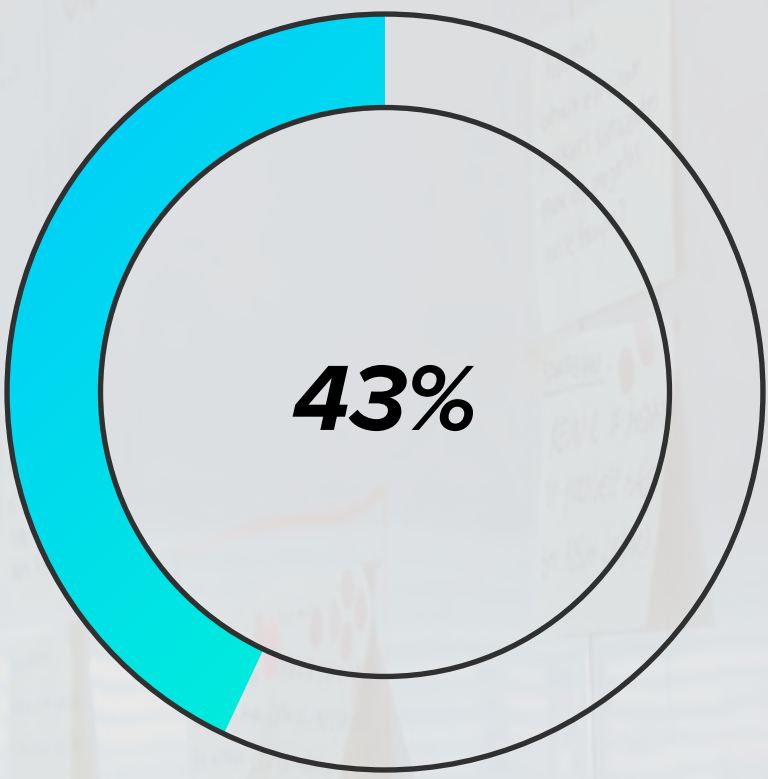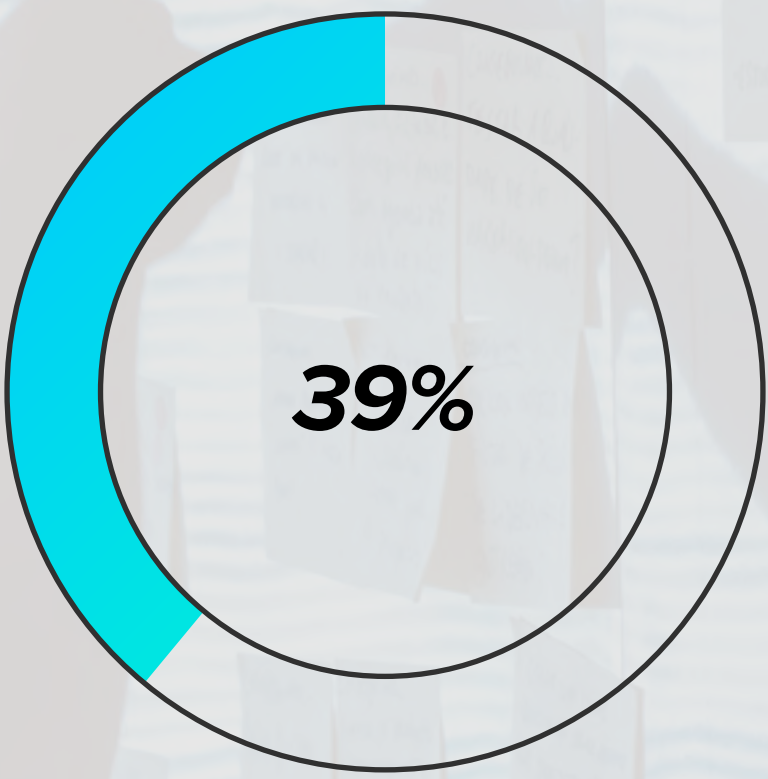
**Organising teams**

| Coordinating projects | 43% |
| Organising teams | 39% |

## Wins taken forward:

# Continued remote working

Although many struggled with the technical and logistical side of implementing it, remote working has enabled organisations to be more elastic and responsive than ever before. In fact, remote working has been cited as the biggest benefit IT departments expect to carry over when the situation normalises, cited by 63% of respondents. A further 14% cited improved use of communications and collaboration tools as their key win moving forward.

Research has also found that organisations are seeing other positive benefits of the work from home arrangement, such as 77% of executives expecting it to lead to *lower operating costs*. It is also expected to have a positive impact on workforce retention, with most staff (75%) asking to *increase their remote work* hours by 35%. 6% of organisations saw improved productivity from their staff, also likely a result from remote working. Before the pandemic, it was found that remote workers are *35-40% more productive* than those who work in the office, and that number is likely higher now.

*Benefits taken forward post C-19:*

**63%**

**Efficient remote working**

**14%**

**Better use of comms/collaboration tools**

**6%**

**Improved productivity**

| | |
|---|---|
| Efficient remote working | 63% |
| Better use of comms/collaboration tools | 14% |
| Improved productivity | 6% |
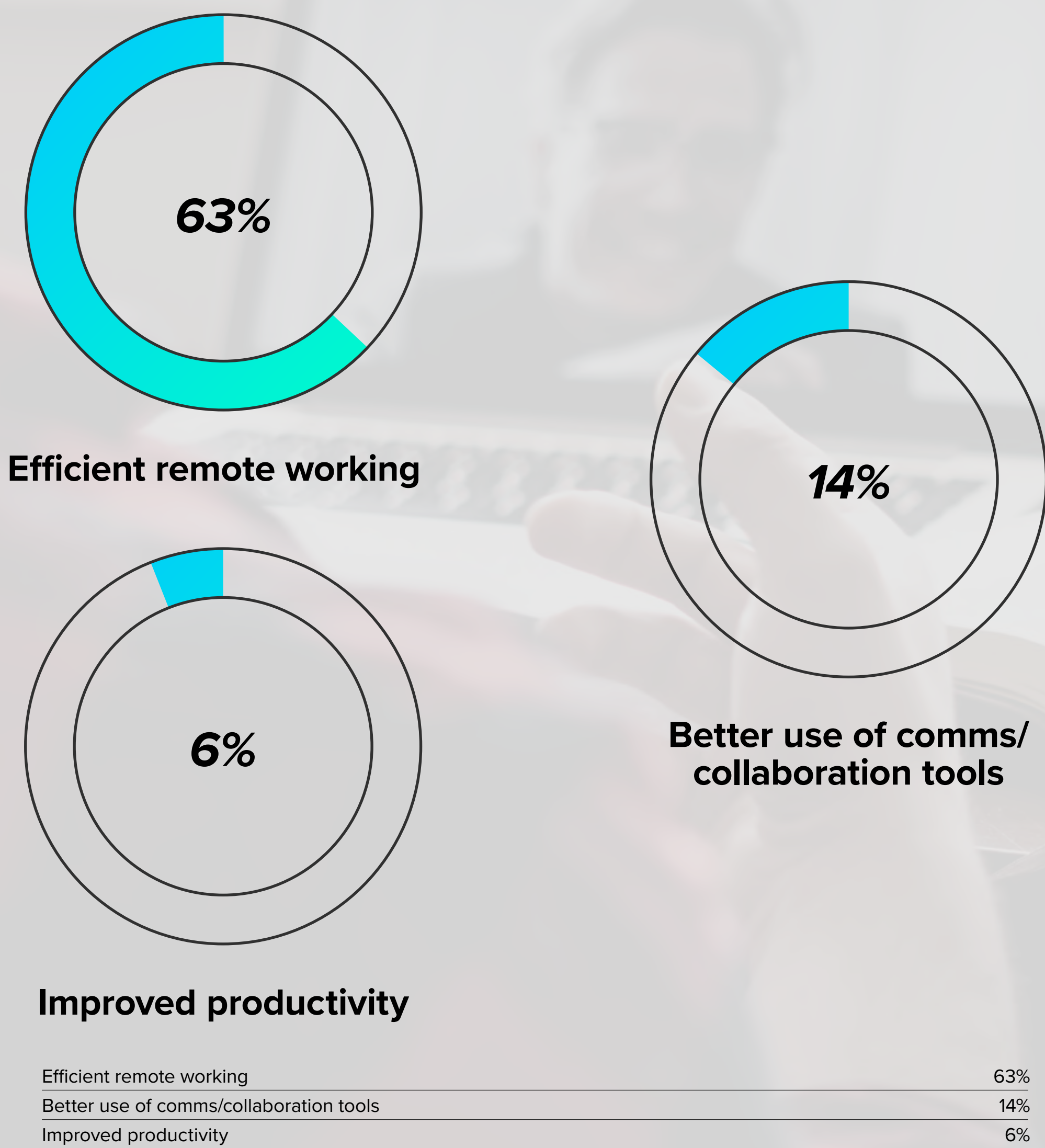
## Top Priorities:
# Delivering customer-centric apps

While many organisations were caught off-guard with the on-set of COVID-19, the event has enabled them to identify weaknesses as well as potential market opportunities.

When the lockdown ends, 55% of organisations expect to prioritise the delivery of customer-centric digital and cloud applications, ensuring they are robust, fast, and secure. A key enabler for this is test automation, cited by 52% of respondents as a main area of focus moving forward, helping them to achieve their quality goals and drive the levels of efficiency required in today's climate.

With 74% of companies planning to have their staff doing *more remote work* permanently post COVID-19, it is no surprise that many (43%) will be investing in technologies to further enable their distributed workforce.
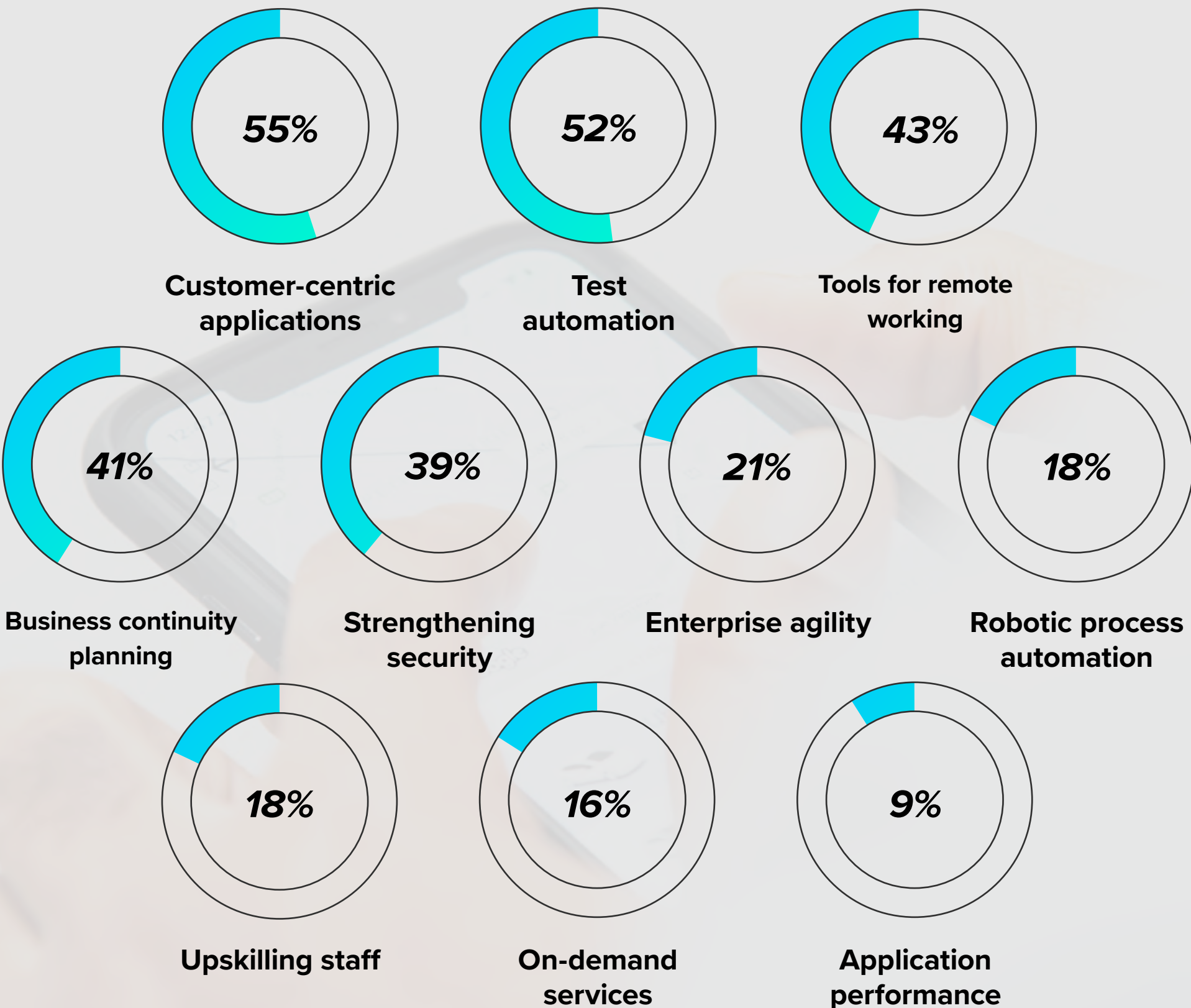
41% will carry out business continuity planning to avoid any of the disruptions they may have experienced during COVID-19. Industry research has found that *71% of executives* are worried about continuity during the pandemic, which has led to *81% of companies* putting a crisis response team in place to better coordinate the current situation, and any others that may come along in the future.

Meanwhile, as less people work from the very controlled office environment, 39% of organisations will be keenly focusing on strengthening their cyber security. The importance of security was further accentuated by the increase in cybercrime during pandemic, which actually *quadrupled* due to all the COVID-19-themed scams and phishing attacks.

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## Business priorities post C-19:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **55%** | **52%** | **43%** |
| Customer-centric applications | Test automation | Tools for remote working |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *41%* | *39%* | *21%* | *18%* |
| Business continuity planning | Strengthening security | Enterprise agility | Robotic process automation |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *18%* | *16%* | *9%* |
| Upskilling staff | On-demand services | Application performance |

| | |
|---|---|
| Customer-centric applications | 55% |
| Test automation | 52% |
| Tools for remote working | 43% |
| Business continuity planning | 41% |
| Strengthening security | 39% |
| Enterprise agility | 21% |
| Robotic process automation | 18% |
| Upskilling staff | 18% |
| On-demand services | 16% |
| Application performance | 9% |

## About Planit

At Planit, we help our customers accelerate their delivery of quality applications that support their business strategy and drive engagement. We do this through our comprehensive offering of quality engineering and assurance services, accelerators and solutions.

As COVID-19 hit, we were in a position to fully mobilise and pivot with our customers to help them meet the immense new challenges they were facing. In our customer survey, 96% were satisfied or very satisfied with our ability to deliver remotely during the height of the pandemic. Looking forward, 83% could cite no areas for improvement in our partnership and relationship as the world enters a "new normal".

If you need help ensuring application quality, leveraging automation, enabling your remote teams, ensuring security, driving accessibility and delivering a great user experience, our team of consultants can help. Find out how by visiting our **website.**
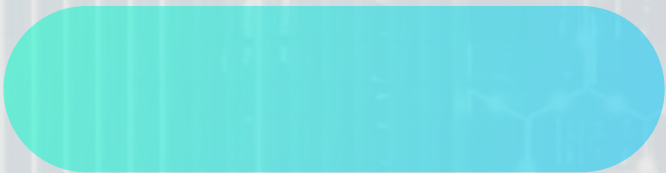
# What were the biggest challenges in pivoting to C-19?



| | |
|---|---|
| Enabling remote working | 75% |
| Deploying hardware for staff | 57% |
| Provisioning technical connectivity | 57% |
| Enabling collaboration | 48% |
| Engaging staff | 45% |
| Coordinating projects | 43% |
| Improving comms processes | 41% |
| Organising teams | 39% |
| Ensuring security | 36% |
| Finding cost savings | 11% |
| Ensuring staff well-being | 5% |
| Achieving work-life balance | 5% |
| Embracing customer-centricity | 2% |
| Adjusting strategy | 2% |
| Increasing delivery velocity | 2% |
| Returning to office safely | 2% |
| Driving efficiencies | 2% |

Chart axis: 100% / 0%

Bar values and labels:
- 75% — Enabling remote working
- 57% — Deploying hardware for staff
- 57% — Provisioning technical connectivity
- 48% — Enabling collaboration
- 45% — Engaging staff
- 43% — Coordinating projectsprocesses
- 41% — Improving comms processes
- 39% — Organising teams
- 36% — Ensuring security
- 11% — Finding cost savings
- 5% — Ensuring staff well-being
- 5% — Achieving work-life balance
- 2% — Embracing customer-centricity
- 2% — Adjusting strategy
- 2% — Increasing delivery velocity
- 2% — Returning to office safely
- 2% — Driving efficiencies

# What benefits will you take forward post C-19?

| | |
|---|---|
| Efficient remote working | 63% |
| Better use of comms/collaboration tools | 13% |
| Improved productivity | 6% |
| Increased business focus | 2% |
| More flexible working | 2% |
| Increased security | 2% |
| Acceleration of delivery | 2% |
| Strengthened online channels | 2% |
| Improved processes | 2% |
| Increased quality | 2% |
| Efficiencies through RPA | 2% |
| Other | 2% |

Bar chart with y-axis from 0% to 100%.

| Category | Value |
|---|---|
| Efficient remote working | 63% |
| Better use of comms/collaboration tools | 13% |
| Improved productivity | 6% |
| Increased business focus | 2% |
| More flexible working | 2% |
| Increased security | 2% |
| Acceleration of delivery | 2% |
| Strengthened online channels | 2% |
| Improved processes | 2% |
| Increased quality | 2% |
| Efficiencies through RPA | 2% |
| Other | 2% |

# What will your business prioritise post C-19?



| | |
|---|---|
| Customer-centric applications | 55% |
| Test automation | 52% |
| Tools for remote working | 43% |
| Business continuity planning | 41% |
| Strengthening security | 39% |
| Enterprise agility | 21% |
| Robotic process automation | 18% |
| Upskilling staff | 18% |
| On-demand services | 16% |
| Application performance | 9% |
| No change in priorities | 19% |
| Other | 7% |
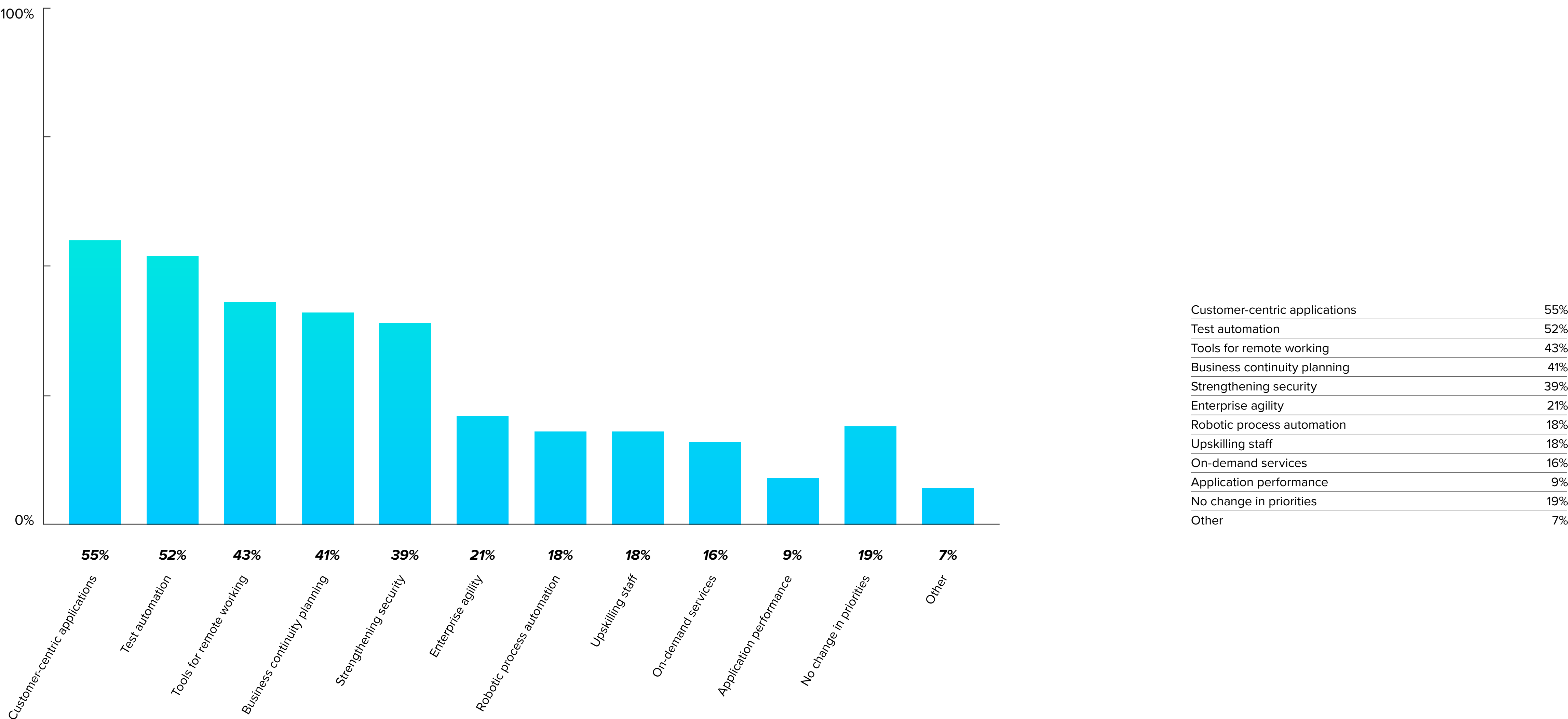
# How do you rate Planit's response and support through C-19?
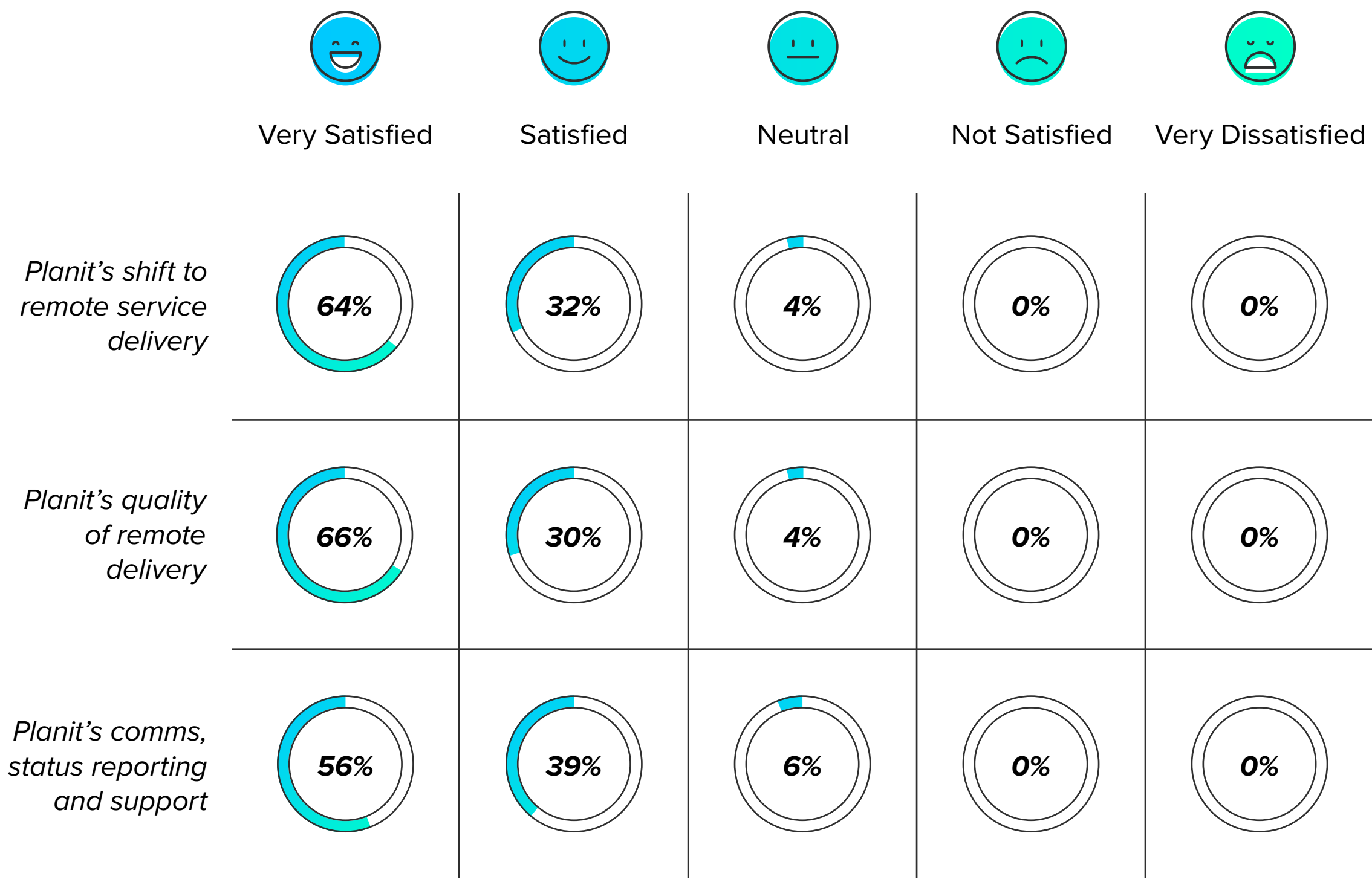
# Did Planit's approach alleviate your concerns?

| | Very Satisfied | Satisfied | Neutral | Not Satisfied | Very Dissatisfied |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Planit's shift to remote service delivery* | 64% | 32% | 4% | 0% | 0% |
| *Planit's quality of remote delivery* | 66% | 30% | 4% | 0% | 0% |
| *Planit's comms, status reporting and support* | 56% | 39% | 6% | 0% | 0% |

**95%**

**5%**

| Yes | 95% |
|---|---|
| No | 5% |
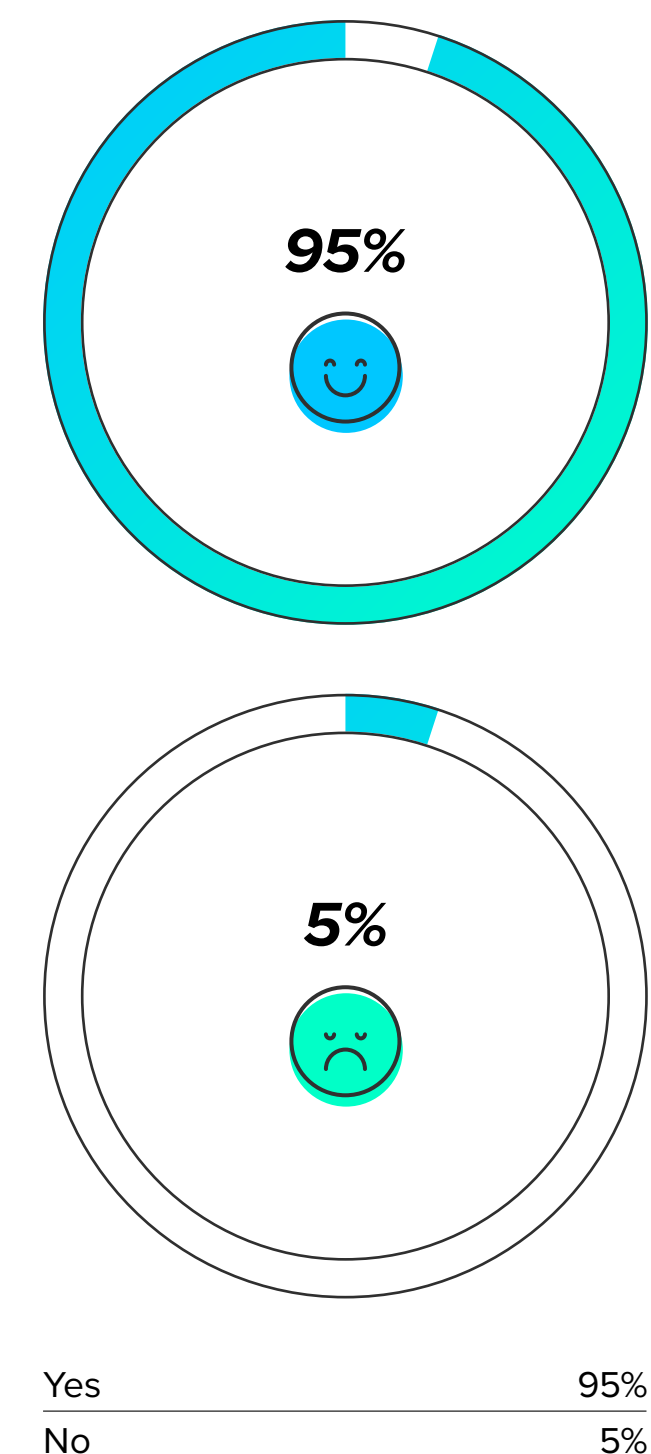
# How can Planit improve our support post C-19?
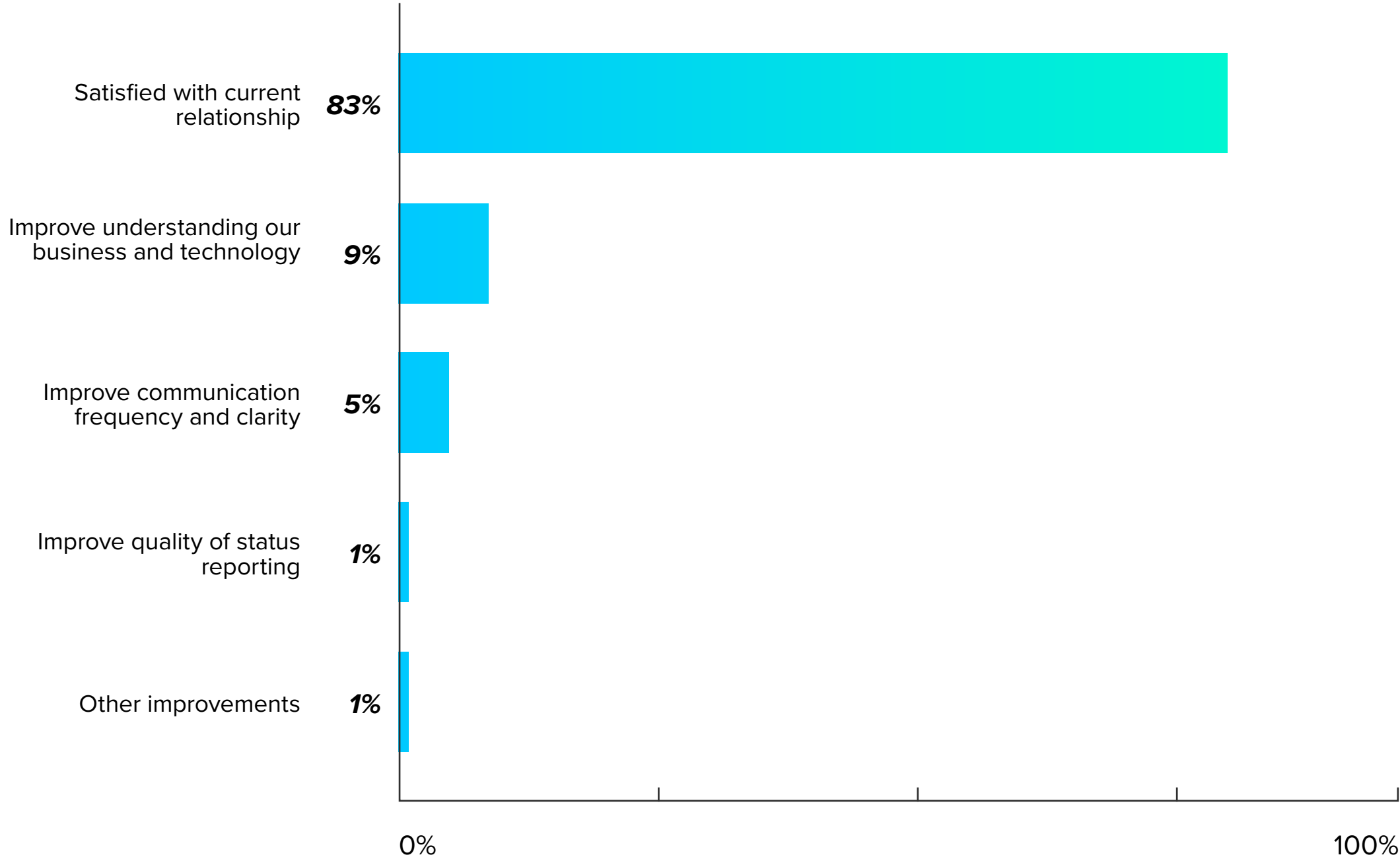
# What were your initial concerns when moving to remote delivery with Planit?

| | |
|---|---|
| Satisfied with current relationship | 83% |
| Improve understanding our business and technology | 9% |
| Improve communication frequency and clarity | 5% |
| Improve quality of status reporting | 1% |
| Other improvements | 1% |

| | |
|---|---|
| Maintaining productivity to meet timelines | 58% |
| Continued effective collaboration and communication | 55% |
| Adequacy of security and access controls | 15% |
| Other concerns | 3% |

| | |
|---|---|
| Satisfied with current relationship | **83%** |
| Improve understanding our business and technology | **9%** |
| Improve communication frequency and clarity | **5%** |
| Improve quality of status reporting | **1%** |
| Other improvements | **1%** |

0%          100%

| | |
|---|---|
| Maintaining productivity to meet timelines | **58%** |
| Continued effective collaboration and communication | **55%** |
| Adequacy of security and access controls | **15%** |
| Other concerns | **3%** |

0%          100%

# How would you prefer to engage with Planit post C-19?

# Do you anticipate changing your FTE resource model post C-19?

| | |
|---|---|
| Hybrid model splitting time on-site/off-site | 46% |
| Return to previous on-site delivery model | 23% |
| Continue remote delivery with local support | 4% |
| Unsure at this stage | 26% |
| Other | 1% |

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes, continuing remote working model | 7% |
| No, return to office with increased safety precautions | 12% |
| Hybrid model | 51% |
| Unknown at this stage | 30% |

Hybrid model splitting time on-site/off-site **46%**

Return to previous on-site delivery model **23%**

Continue remote delivery with local support **4%**

Unsure at this stage **26%**

Other **1%**

0%          100%

Yes, continuing remote working model **7%**

No, return to office with increased safety precautions **12%**

Hybrid model **51%**

Unknown at this stage **30%**

0%          100%
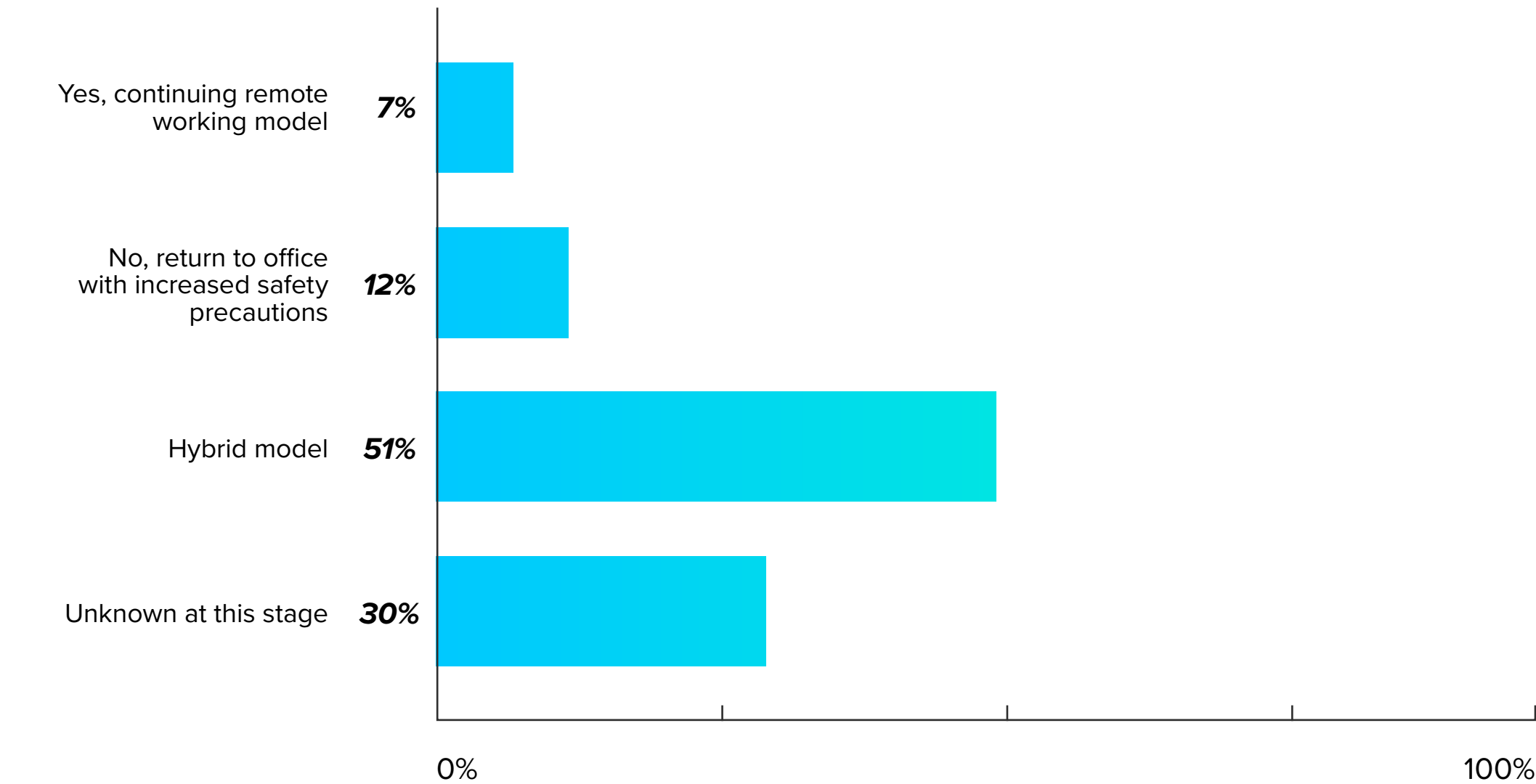
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*2020*