# Budget Getting Tight? How to Reduce IT Costs Without Sacrificing User Experience

As a greater share of work takes place online, IT teams have become even more essential to their organization. After all, they are responsible for ensuring employee and customer experiences are seamless, networks are protected, and operations run efficiently. These responsibilities are compounded by the growing complexity of most organizations' infrastructure, ongoing global supply chain issues, the increase in remote work, and rising device costs.

Despite all this, IT teams are increasingly faced with stagnant budgets that aren't keeping pace with rising costs and sometimes even decreasing budgets. In fact, Gartner® reported in its "Quick Answer: What Can IT Leaders Do to Counter Endpoint Cost Inflation?" report from October 2022 that that '73% of surveyed IT leaders are being asked to find ways to reduce spend or to streamline cost.'[1] Meanwhile, that same report found that "inflation and supply chain challenges have resulted devices costs are up 20% since the beginning of 2021". Gartner also forecasted that end-user spending on public cloud services would grow 20.7 percent in 2023 in its "Forecast: Public Cloud Services, Worldwide 2020-2026, 3Q22 Update." As a result, IT leaders are forced to find strategic areas to cut costs without impacting the end-user experience or digital transformation initiatives.

To ease some of the pressure of being tasked to do more with less, IT teams should look internally to find greater efficiencies and areas that can be streamlined. Of course, this is sometimes easier said than done.

However, with the right tools IT teams can gain the visibility they need into actual user experiences, device performance, network usage, and cloud traffic to identify bloat, spot inefficiencies, and strategically reduce IT costs across the business.

In this white paper, we'll explore the challenges facing IT professionals and reveal how Riverbed's Acceleration portfolio, Alluvio Aternity Digital Experience Management (DEM), and Alluvio Network Performance Management (NPM) can help your team reduce your device, software, cloud, and network costs.

[1] The 2022 Gartner Midyear Recession Survey was conducted online from 7 July through July 2022 to understand how leaders are changing spending patterns and behaviors in the shifting business environment. There were 116 respondents, with 62 IT and business leaders, 43 HR leaders and 11 CIOs who were members of Gartner's Research Circle, a Gartner-managed panel. Members from North America (n = 71), EMEA (n = 30), Asia/Pacific (n = 12) and Latin America (n = 3) responded to the survey.

*Disclaimer: The results of this survey do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.*

# The Increasing Complexity of Modern IT Infrastructure

Modern IT infrastructures are becoming more complex, with the rise of hybrid work environments and the ever-increasing prevalence of SaaS and hybrid cloud infrastructure. All of this makes the job of IT professionals more difficult, even as they are facing increasing budget constraints.

## The switch to hybrid and fully remote work

Many organizations now support a hybrid or fully remote workforce. In the rush to adopt these models during the early months of the pandemic, many businesses struggled to sufficiently update their devices, software, and networks to accommodate a new hybrid or remote workforce. As a result, many understaffed and overwhelmed IT teams are still struggling with outdated software and degrading devices as they continue to provide a consistent digital experience for their employees across hybrid work environments.

## SaaS and hybrid cloud infrastructure

As organizations adapt and grow, many are moving towards SaaS and hybrid cloud infrastructures. This infrastructure allows employees working from nearly anywhere in the world to quickly deploy operating systems and applications.

But currently, these systems are a mix of both on-premise data centers and private/public clouds. Visibility into these assets can be difficult and monitoring their performance and usage is often a challenge. While SaaS usually reduces IT support costs overall, the lack of visibility and monitoring often results in unused licenses and unnecessary spending.

The increasing shift to hybrid and remote work as well as the adoption of SaaS and hybrid cloud infrastructures has created incredibly complex infrastructures with devices that are inherently challenging to monitor and track. As a result, IT teams struggle to create a consistent, high-quality user experience. License tracking and other cost saving measures often fall by the wayside as many teams lack the tools to adequately monitor their infrastructure's performance.

# Rising IT Asset Costs and Lower IT Budget

According to an October 2022, Gartner Press Release, the worldwide IT spending is expected to increase 5.1% in 2023.

## What's behind rising IT asset costs?

While inflation has impacted the entire economy, IT asset costs are rising much faster. There's also the issues of the ongoing supply chain challenges which are reducing the supplies of devices and components, rising energy costs, and a strong dollar which makes American products more expensive to foreign consumers. The result of these confluence of events: higher asset prices.

There's also the issue of looming technical debt. Over the past two years, organizations quickly transformed their business processes by adopting more tech, but they did so without taking the time to make sure systems were set up strategically and efficiently. As a result, many organizations now must go back and ensure everything is organized properly, which is costly.

## The frustration of strained IT budgets

At the same time that IT asset costs are rising, IT leaders are experiencing a strain on their total IT budgets due to a variety of internal and external challenges, such as:

- **More expensive talent.** TechCrunch reported in its 2022 survey that organizations expect IT spending to rise 6.7% year over year. While IT would no doubt like to invest in technology that can optimize workflows, they have no choice but to spend more on IT talent which is becoming more expensive.

- **Continuing global economic uncertainty.** According to Gartner, "inflation and supply chain challenges have resulted in device costs increasing 20% since the beginning of 2021." As the world continues to deal with economic uncertainty, IT teams can expect budgets to remain tight and spending conservative.

- **Decreased capital budgets as a result of rising on-premises IT infrastructure and public cloud spend.** IT decision makers are reporting a 13% decrease in their capital spending budgets as, in the short term, they are maintaining both costly on-premise IT infrastructures and cloud/subscription services during the continuous migration to the cloud. While in the long-term the move to the cloud will help streamline costs, currently, paying for both infrastructures is eating into budgets.

IT leaders are looking to cut expenses without sacrificing the employee digital experience – a mission made more difficult by rising IT asset costs and simultaneous IT budget constraints. Ways to accomplish this include optimizing hardware device refresh programs, eliminating unnecessary spending on underused software licenses, monitoring cloud traffic to reduce wasteful cloud traffic, and streamlining network bandwidth usage. Tackling all of these might seem overwhelming, but Riverbed's IT solutions can help make it happen.

## Reduce Bloated IT Costs Without Sacrificing User Experience

Unlike many other solutions geared toward IT asset management, Riverbed's solutions enable enterprise IT organizations to avoid excessive IT costs across the entire business. From employee devices and applications, to network and cloud bandwidth costs, Riverbed solutions provide insight into actual user experiences, network usage, and cloud traffic to identify unnecessary expenses.

IT teams can find deep infrastructure insight and visibility with Alluvio Aternity Digital Experience Management (DEM), which monitors devices and applications, and the Riverbed Acceleration and Network Performance Management (NPM) portfolios, which optimize cloud and network infrastructure.

Let's explore how your organization can leverage these tools.

## Alluvio's Digital Experience Management

Alluvio Aternity DEM provides actionable insights on user experience. Organizations can use it to easily deep dive into every device, app, and click. This leads to more informed decisions and additional dollars to your bottom line. Benefits include:

- **Improved device performance while controlling costs**: Locate devices with high levels of resource utilization, view complete device list and issues, and reclaim unused or underused licenses to lower IT costs.

- **Smart device refresh:** Traditionally, teams rely on a device's age as an indicator for when it's time to refresh. This, however, doesn't speak to the actual health or performance of the device. Alluvio Aternity DEM offers insight into actual user experience, which helps teams make more informed decisions to replace devices when they're no longer performing well. Targeted device replacement saves you money by allowing you to replace devices based on user experience rather than device age.

- **Reclaimed licenses:** According to a 2020 SaaS trends report, the average company wastes more than $135,000 annually on unused, underused, or duplicate SaaS tools which includes software licenses. With Alluvio Aternity DEM, you can easily locate licenses with little or no usage in a particular time frame. This can help organizations eliminate and/or reallocate licenses accordingly.

## Riverbed Acceleration and NPM Portfolios

Alluvio Network Performance Management provides end-to-end visibility into your network, making it easy to monitor, troubleshoot, and analyze what's happening across your hybrid environment.

Riverbed's Alluvio Network Performance Management portfolio delivers granular visibility across hybrid networks with full-fidelity data for insight into networks, servers, applications and cloud-native environments.

The growing portfolio currently includes Alluvio NetProfiler, which provides in-depth traffic insights that can help identify wasteful network and cloud spending. Meanwhile, the Riverbed Acceleration Portfolio can significantly reduce network and cloud costs across your organization's digital enterprise by streamlining data transport with Cloud Accelerator.

- **Alluvio NetProfiler** provides network flow monitoring, giving a complete picture of the communications occurring over the network, including cloud traffic patterns. This enables efficient capacity planning and up to a 99% reduction in bandwidth requirements.

- **Cloud Accelerator** reduces the data sent across the network. It prioritizes traffic according to importance and reduces round trip traffic to IaaS-hosted applications with data, transport, and application streamlining, significantly cutting cloud egress costs.

The strength of these solutions is how they provide end-to-end, cost-saving insights within your entire IT infrastructure. Often, IT teams spend considerable time and money tracking down various, unrelated solutions from multiple providers that require additional time to implement and learn. But Riverbed's solution portfolio is cost efficient and easy to implement. Additionally, you can eliminate the potential of acquiring additional software bloat and technical debt that comes with adding less efficient solutions.

## Save Money with Riverbed's IT Asset Cost Reduction Solutions

When IT teams approach asset cost reduction, they're often forced to make sacrifices in their digital transformation initiatives or make cuts that end up harming the user experience. Fortunately, Riverbed offers agile solutions that nimbly address common IT cost issues like software bloat, unused licenses, poor network performance, and wasteful cloud spending.

It's never been easier to optimize your IT infrastructure to save money and make more informed resource decisions.

To see for yourself, get started with a Free Trial today.

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Riverbed is the only company with the collective richness of telemetry from network to app to end user, that illuminates and then accelerates every interaction, so organizations can deliver a seamless digital experience and drive enterprise performance. Riverbed offers two industry-leading portfolios: Alluvio by Riverbed, a differentiated Unified Observability portfolio that unifies data, insights, and actions across IT, so customers can deliver seamless, secure digital experiences; and Riverbed Acceleration, providing fast, agile, secure acceleration of any app, over any network, to users anywhere. Together with our thousands of partners, and market-leading customers globally – including 95% of the FORTUNE 100 –, we empower every click, every digital experience. Riverbed. Empower the Experience. Learn more at riverbed.com. MSHD-932_IT-ACR_WP_US_021023