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Less than One-Fifth of Federal IT Pros Are Fully Confident in Their Agency’s Ability to Meet Uptime and Failover Requirements

New Study Examines Field Workers’ Dependence on Instant Information Access; Points to Critical Requirement for Data Center Optimization

Alexandria, Va., August 11, 2014 – [MeriTalk](#), a public-private partnership focused on improving the outcomes of government IT, today announced the results of its new report, “[The Drive to Thrive: Ensuring the Agile Data Center](#).” The study, underwritten by [Symantec](#), reveals that while 80 percent of Federal IT professionals cite data center reliability as a top priority for their agency, very few are completely confident in their ability to meet their most critical uptime and failover service level agreements (SLAs). The impact is significant, as 42 percent of Federal field workers state that downtime leaves them unable to support their agency’s mission.

The “Drive to Thrive” report surveyed two audiences – Federal field workers (employees who spend at least 50 percent of their time in the field/away from a Federal office) and Federal data center leads/professionals. The study examined field workers’ reliance on real-time information in comparison to Federal IT teams’ ability to deliver the right information resources to the right users – even in a business continuity scenario.

Federal field workers note that real-time information access is critical – saving them an average of 17 hours per week, or 816 hours per year. Considering the number of field workers in the U.S. government, that equates to approximately \$32.5 billion in annual productivity savings. But in the last month, 70 percent of agencies have experienced downtime of 30 minutes or more, and 90 percent of field workers say the downtime affected their ability to do their job. Security could also be at risk, as one in three field workers use personal devices or work-arounds like Google Apps when they are not able to access agency applications and systems.

Thirty-six percent of field workers give their IT department a grade of “C” or lower for recent downtime management, and just 29 percent believe their IT department fully understands the impact downtime has on their ability to work.

“Federal field workers are dependent on instant information access to do their jobs – from food inspection and traffic control, to healthcare and disaster aid,” said Rob Potter, vice president, Federal, Symantec. “Agile data centers – that optimize storage and ensure 24x7 availability, while accelerating virtualization and cloud adoption – are critical for efficient government operations and service.”

Federal IT professionals certainly recognize the challenge, with 69 percent saying that downtime of more than 30 minutes is unacceptable and only 23 percent giving their agency’s data centers an “A” for effectively delivering the right information and resources to the right users on a daily basis.

While nearly three-quarters of IT professionals say their agency has improved their data center reliability over the past two years, just 19 percent are fully confident in their department’s ability to meet their most critical application SLAs. In addition, 31 percent say their agency either does not have a continuity of operations (COOP) plan or that their current plan is insufficient.

So what’s holding agencies back? Federal IT professionals say they only have 56 percent of the data storage, 52 percent of the computational power, and 45 percent of the personnel they need to provide a truly reliable and agile data center. They cite greater bandwidth, security, and senior leadership support as the top factors in improving data center agility.

“Nobody’s going to give up their umbrella if the roof keeps leaking,” said Stephen O’Keeffe, founder, MeriTalk. “The mission trumps IT savings. FDCCI is DOA unless DCs are G2G.”

“The Drive to Thrive: Ensuring the Agile Data Center” is based on two online surveys conducted in June 2014. The first surveyed 152 Federal field workers with a margin of error of $\pm 7.92\%$ at a 95% confidence level. The second surveyed 150 Federal IT professionals familiar with

their agency's data centers, with a margin of error of $\pm 7.97\%$ at a 95% confidence level. To download the full study, please visit www.meritalk.com/drivetothrive.

About MeriTalk

The voice of tomorrow's government today, MeriTalk is a public-private partnership focused on improving the outcomes of government IT. Focusing on government's hot-button issues, MeriTalk hosts [Big Data Exchange](#), [Cloud Computing Exchange](#), [Cyber Security Exchange](#), and [Data Center Exchange](#) – platforms dedicated to supporting public-private dialogue and collaboration. MeriTalk connects with an audience of 85,000 government community contacts. For more information, visit www.meritalk.com or follow us on Twitter, [@meritalk](#). MeriTalk is a [300Brand organization](#).