

Preparing for the 5G Future

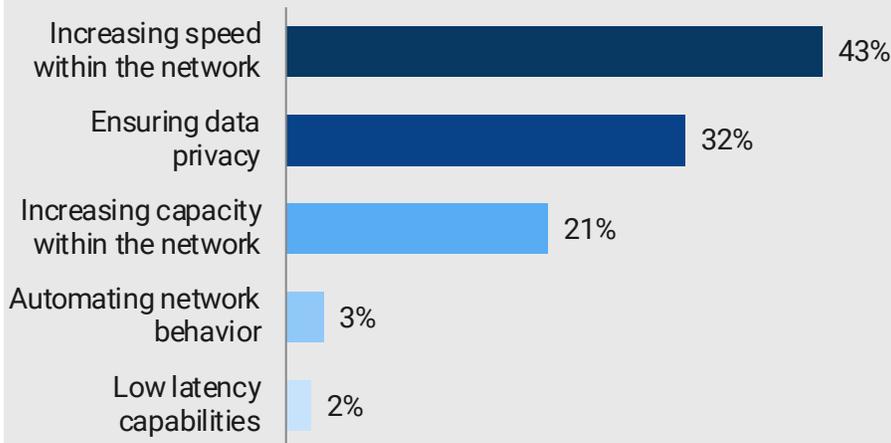
A Poll of Federal Experts on Agency 5G-Readiness

Introduction

The advent of wireless 5G technology promises a new era of communication. Across the government, federal agencies are exploring 5G's implications for their missions, from taking defense technologies to the next level to improving telehealth visits for veterans. But how far are agencies on their journey, and what do they need as they transition? To explore sentiments around how federal government employees view their agency's 5G progress, GBC conducted a brief survey with 116 respondents between November and December of 2021.

Respondents consider increasing network speed, ensuring data privacy most important to their agency's 5G strategy.

What do you think is most important to your agency when thinking about your 5G strategy?



Percentage of respondents, n=116
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

21% of respondents consider increasing the capacity within their network to be most important.

Did you know?

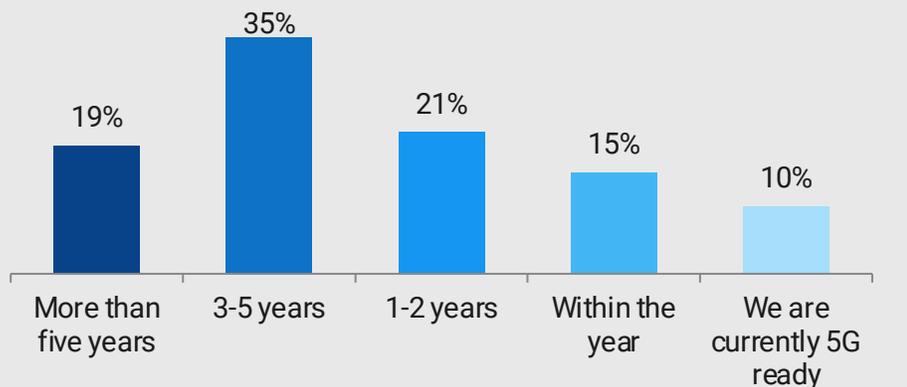
The Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) has released a series of guidance for federal agencies on securing 5G cloud infrastructure, including educational videos on 5G security and resilience. These resources support the National Strategy to Secure 5G as part of the National Cyber Strategy, and is intended to help agencies achieve their 5G goals while ensuring that security and risk mitigation are at the forefront of all investments into 5G.¹

CommScope's Perspective

5G offers the promise of increased speeds, expanded capacity and the ability to adopt next-generation technologies. In order to move in this direction, agencies need to focus on the infrastructure – upgraded cabling, support for multi-gig Ethernet, incorporation of Distributed Antenna Systems, and deployment of Wi-Fi 6 and enhanced switches, to name a few. In order for agencies to prepare for full 5G deployment, they should install infrastructure that supports 4G today with the capability to upgrade to 5G down the road without significant hardware replacements. This ensures agencies can take advantage of a more modern network now while transitioning to 5G as the capability and devices become more available.

45% of respondents think their agency will be ready to adopt 5G in less than two years, if not sooner or currently ready.

How soon do you think your agency will be 5G ready?



Percentage of respondents, n=105
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

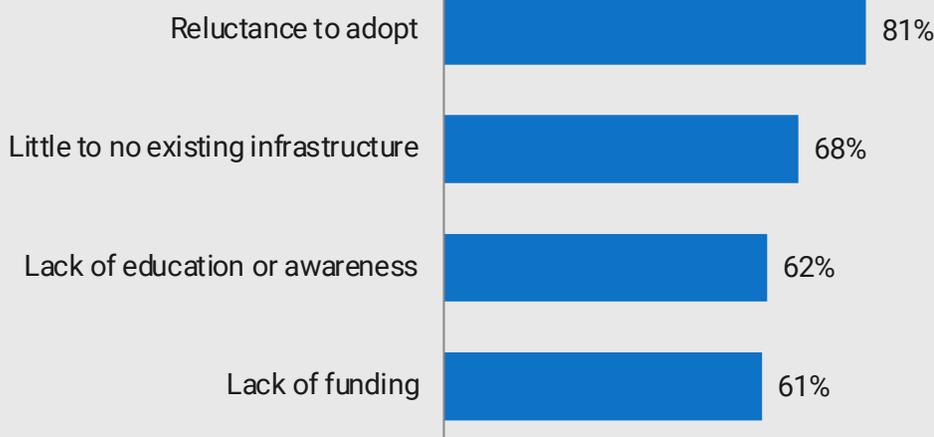
19% of respondents think it will be more than five years before their agency is 5G ready.

Some agencies have begun investing into 5G technologies earlier than others, including the Defense Department's 5G Task Force, which has already set up test beds on several military installations. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is also modernizing its regulations and updating its infrastructure policy to better support 5G implementation both inside and outside federal agencies.²

Respondents cite reluctance to adopt and lack of existing infrastructure as barriers to their agency's 5G journey.

Respondents suggest that there is still room for education on the potential of 5G for federal employees and agencies, noting "lack of understanding and implementation by its end users" as a barrier to 5G adoption. Increasing funding and investments into agency 5G infrastructure, following guidance from CISA and the National Cyber Strategy, would also significantly prepare agencies to take the next step in their journey.

What do you think are some of the biggest barriers to 5G-readiness for your agency? Select all that apply.



Percentage of respondents, n=114
Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to participants selecting multiple choices.

Methodology

GBC deployed a 3-question poll on 5G readiness to a random sample of 116 federal government employees. The poll was fielded in November- December 2021.

- <https://www.fcc.gov/5G>
- <https://www.cisa.gov/5g>

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