ARROW

Opportunity Watch

Industry research to inform your strategy

Big picture

The speed of technology innovation is undeniable. From cloud and security to AI and the data center, use cases are changing dramatically. Thriving in this volatile environment requires agility and a relentless commitment to remaining informed on how you and your customers could be impacted by the environment. Your ability to adapt and keep pace with the evolving needs of your customers will set the stage for an exciting future. As an IT distributor, Arrow is uniquely positioned between the makers of technology and IT service and solution providers. This gives us a holistic view of the IT ecosystem and we are here to share that perspective.

Arrow's Opportunity Watch is designed to provide you with critical and timely data and thought leadership you need to stay in the know.

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Adding value
across the technology continuum

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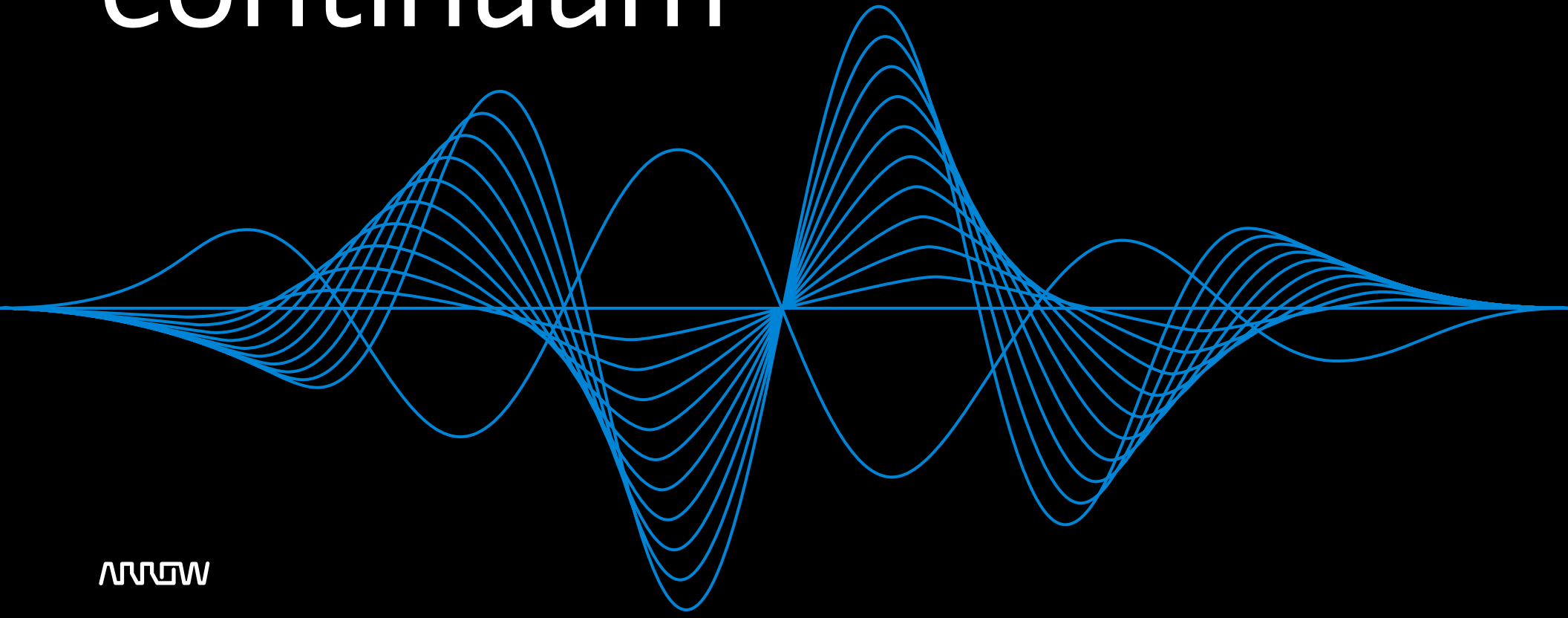
Introduction: Adding value across the technology continuum

The World Economic Forum estimates that 70% of the new value created in the entire economy over the next 10 years will be based on digitally enabled platform business models,[1] and IDC expects partner and vendor engagement through digital distribution marketplaces to grow by 40% through 2025.[35] Today's channel partner (including resellers, VARs, MSPs and CSPs) is just as likely to be managing services as selling hardware and software — and more than likely to be doing both. There is certainly still physical product flowing through the channel, where your business draws from decades of experience to support your customers' on-premises preferences. But the ubiquity of off-premises, multicloud and hybrid cloud environments requires a different lens and set of skills. Your customers are demanding expertise well beyond speeds-and-feeds as capital expense models give way to operational expense strategies that support the ebb and flow of business.

It is a space of complexity where many long for simplicity. That is where the channel shines. Channel partners are adding value across the technology continuum, from networking and applications to infrastructure and security. Many are providing services expertise from product design through environmentally responsible disposition. Not only are customers relying on the channel to source the products and solutions they need, they're looking for consultation, implementation, deployment, managed services and much more.

Whatever your area of expertise, your customers are relying on you to be a consultative expert on critical technology areas that are beyond their capabilities alone. **The opportunity is enormous.**
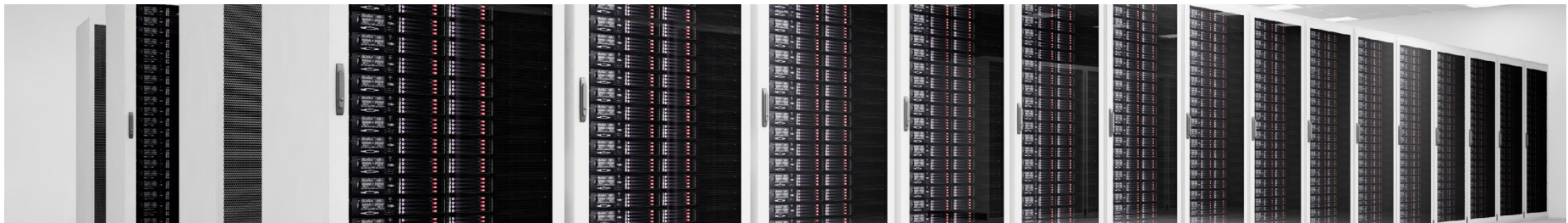
Today's **IT** landscape
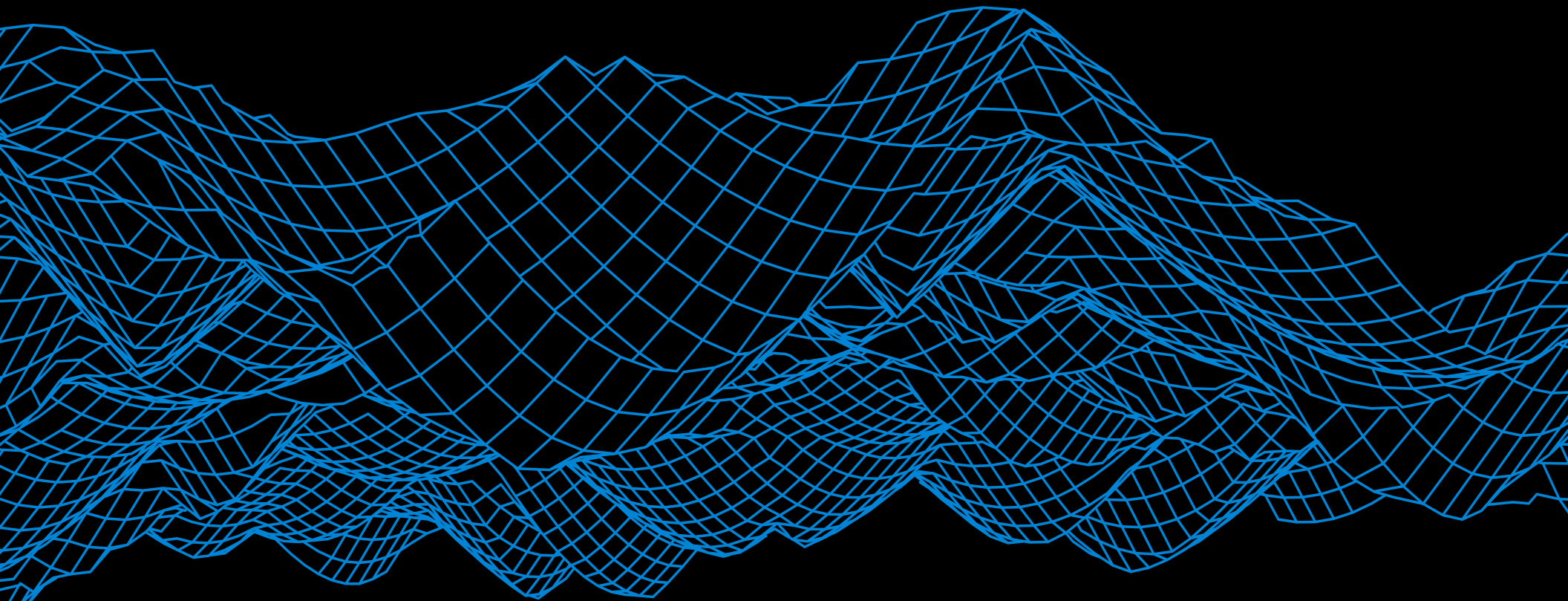
The value of the channel is undeniable.
You're in the catbird seat.

Channel partners have long been key players in the delivery of technology to market. Partner-delivered IT technologies and services were recently projected to exceed $3.4 trillion annually — accounting for more than 70% of the global total addressable IT market — and most channel partners are quite optimistic about the future.[2] In addition, more technology professionals are choosing to work for IT consulting firms and managed service providers,[3] leaving companies with little choice but to partner externally.

70%
of channel partners are optimistic about their business prospects[4]

87%
of channel partners expect revenue and profits to increase or remain steady[4]

Partners will account for a significant portion of the total worldwide IT spend.[5]

73% partner delivered

27% vendor delivered

2. Canalys
3. Gartner
4. CompTIA
5. Canalys
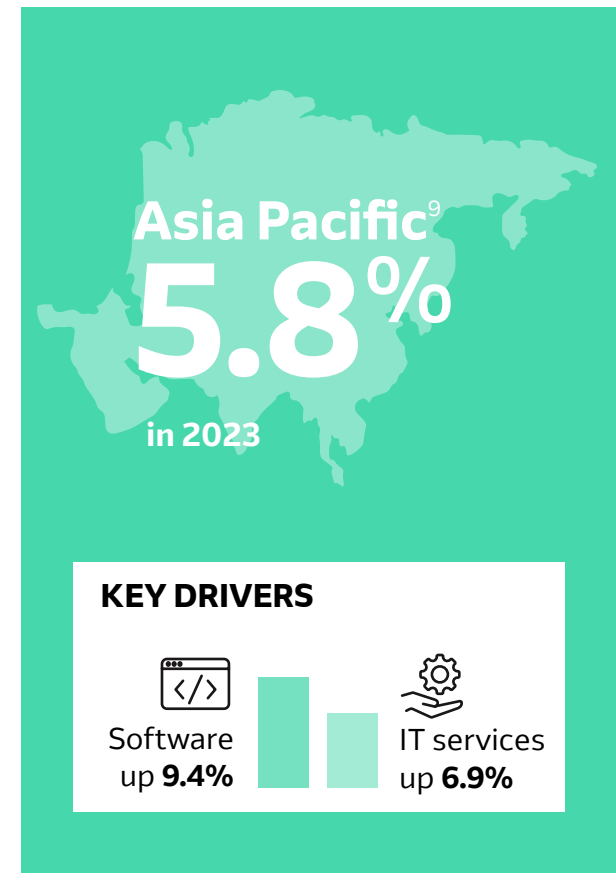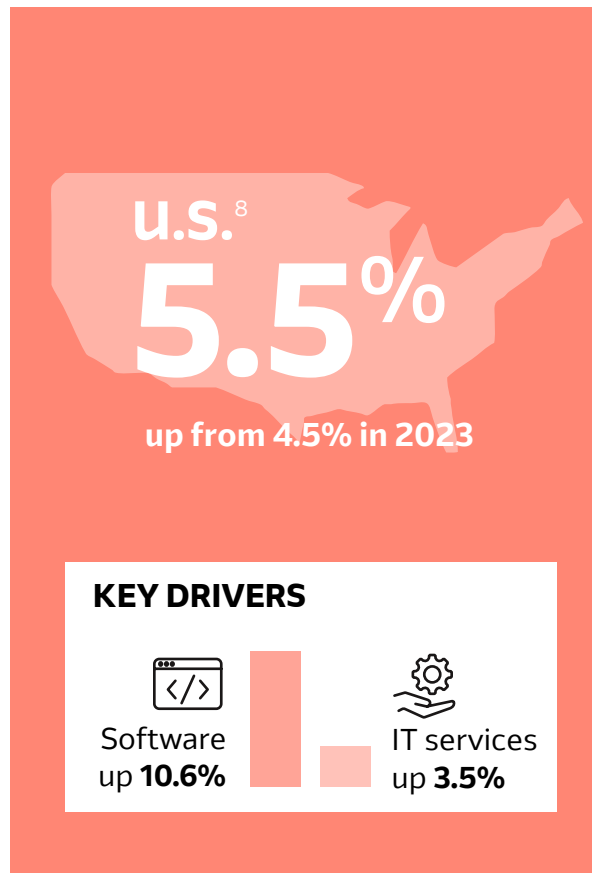
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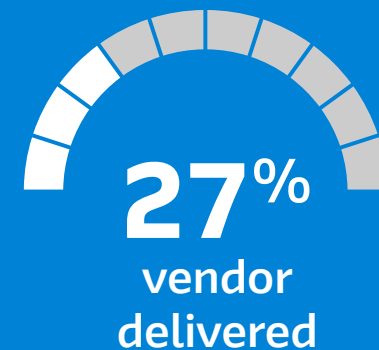
Global IT spending is strong worldwide

Technology priorities are as varied as companies themselves, which creates substantial opportunities for channel partners who come at the challenges of digital transformation and operational efficiency from a variety of angles. In 2024, tech spend will increase in the U.S., Europe and Asia Pacific, largely in line with individual countries' gross domestic product (GDP) growth. And for the first time, IT services spend will outpace the investment in communications services.[5]

Worldwide IT spending forecast by category[6] *(in millions U.S. dollars)*			
	2023 spending	**2023 growth**	**2024 spending**	**2024 growth**
Data center systems	$243,063	7.1%	$261M	7.5%
Devices	$699,791	-8.7%	$732M	4.6%
Software	$913,334	12.4%	$1.03B	12.7%
IT services	$1,381,832	5.8%	$1.50B	8.7%
Communications services	$1,440,827	1.5%	$1.47B	2.3%
Overall IT	**$4,678,847**	**3.3%**	**$4,997,718**	**6.8%**

Tech spend by geography 2024

Europe[7]
5.1%
up from 2.6% in 2023

KEY DRIVERS

Software up **10.1%**

IT services up **3.9%**

U.S.[8]
5.5%
up from 4.5% in 2023

KEY DRIVERS

Software up **10.6%**

IT services up **3.5%**

Asia Pacific[9]
5.8%
in 2023

KEY DRIVERS

Software up **9.4%**

IT services up **6.9%**
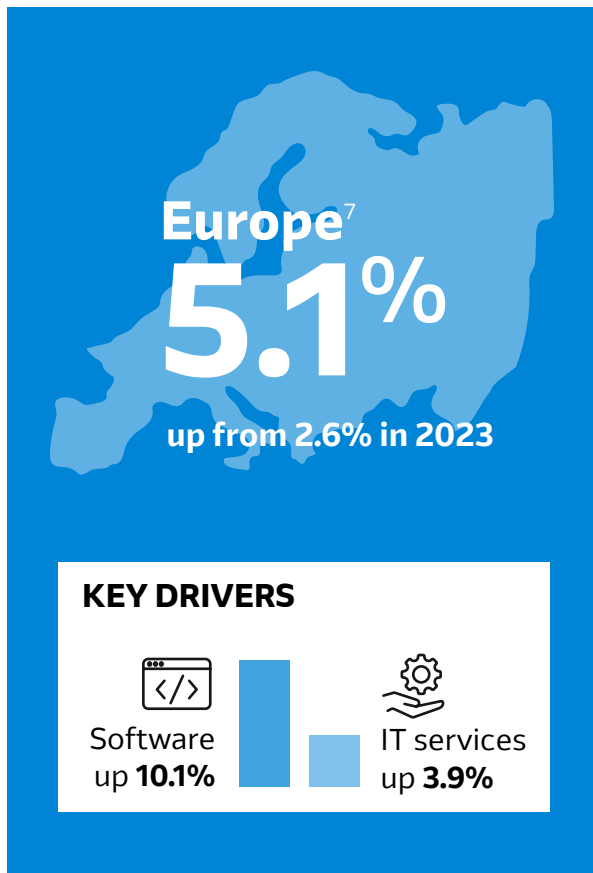
Where there is complexity
there is opportunity

Complexity remains one of the top concerns for IT executives globally — if not **the** top concern. The complex and constantly changing and accelerating landscape impacts every aspect of the technology estate, including the ability to secure it and use it to create a competitive advantage. To add fuel to the fire, employees are frustrated by it. While nearly all tech execs acknowledge that reducing IT complexity is a must, few are managing it well.

What IT executives are saying about IT complexity[10]
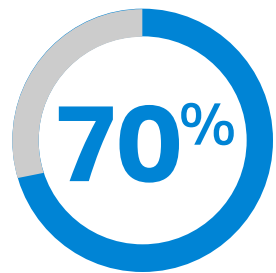
70%
say IT complexity is a growing challenge for their organization
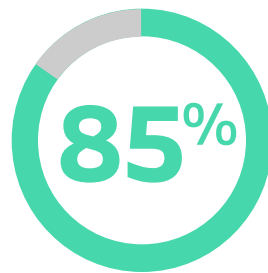
85%
say reducing IT complexity is a high or moderate priority at their organization
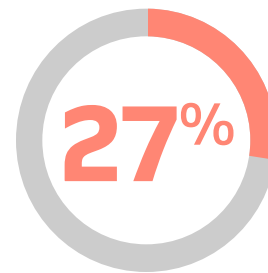
27%
say they are managing their organization's IT complexity effectively

The top 6 causes of IT complexity[10]

1. Incompatible systems and technologies

2. Regulatory compliance requirements

3. Operating hybrid IT environments

4. Scaling quickly

5. Maintaining a hybrid workforce

6. Operating in multicloud environments

Companies are looking for trusted channel partners[10]

Companies look to channel partners to help them reduce IT complexity. They prefer those that are able to provide exceptional consulting services, comprehensively evaluate their business and proactively recommend solutions.

Professional and managed services are in demand

The IT services market, already expected to reach USD $1.2 trillion in 2024, is projected to grow to USD $1.8 trillion by 2029.[11] And no wonder — professional and managed IT services are incredibly varied, and providers play key roles in almost every aspect of business operations. In this fertile and target-rich environment, channel partners are helping organizations of all sizes access, design, build, run and support technology solutions that optimize business performance.

Managed services are a path toward strategic growth. Channel partners can leverage managed services to remain competitive by being able to extend the value and capabilities they offer to customers. For small and medium sized businesses, where resources — including time, money and qualified talent — are not always readily available, consider offloading volume services.

From storage to cloud backup, networking, security and cloud orchestration, Arrow offers a growing selection of managed service offerings to help you seamlessly scale. As a distributor, we're able to take on volume services so you don't have to.

Storage
Enhance performance and save costs with in-depth, round-the-clock monitoring of the storage deployments — both on-premises and in the cloud

Cloud backup
Ensure secure backup of all subscriptions

Networking and security
Improve operational efficiency, prevent threats, and anticipate security vulnerabilities with automated monitoring, alerts, and proactive remediation services

Cloud orchestration
Accelerate public cloud deployments, taking advantage of 24x7 cloud monitoring, and a self-service portal to orchestrate and automate daily operations for public cloud infrastructure providers

Tech
trends and
opportunities

Cloud:
Going multicloud — and being able to manage it

Hybrid and multicloud environments that encompass private (on-premises) and public (off-premises) cloud solutions are becoming the norm, and for good reason. They give organizations unprecedented agility, flexibility and scalability. But with them, complexity and sometimes costs, have skyrocketed. **FinOps** — the marriage of financial and cloud disciplines — is flourishing as companies seek to optimize their cloud resources and curb duplicative or unnecessary investment.[12] Techaisle went so far as to call FinOps "the new Gold Rush for consulting."[13] Such efforts have a long tail for channel partners, from those of you on the consulting end to MSPs, who have much to offer in terms of cost optimization, risk management and compliance.

65%

By 2025, almost two-thirds of Global 2000 companies will engage in multicloud deployments through partner ecosystems that provide services, app development and integration.[14]

50%

Half of enterprises will break with public cloud migration by 2025, choosing to deploy hybrid cloud on premises, at a managed service provider or at a colocation provider.[14]
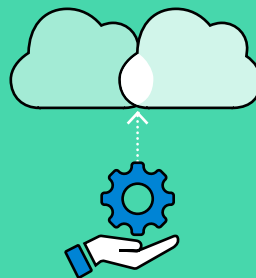
18.8% CAGR

The cloud FinOps market size is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 18.8% during the forecast period.[15]

(in U.S. dollars)

$2,750.5 Million

$832.2 Million

2023   2028

12. Data Center Knowledge, ITPro Today
13. Techaisle
14. IDC
15. Global Market Estimates
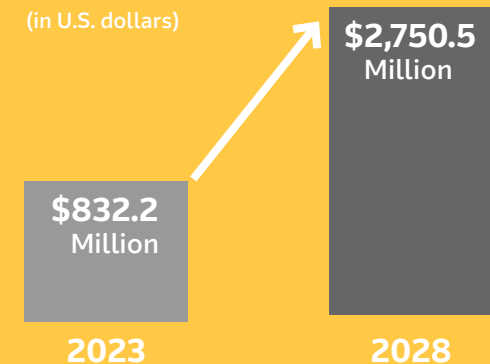
This dynamic — cloud adoption and optimization — creates opportunities for you throughout the customer lifecycle. Managing cloud spend, security and governance are of particular concern to technical executives, as is the oft-mentioned shortage of skilled technology employees.

Current high-priority activities: Cloud infrastructure[16]

Activity	%
Implementing data management	35%
Automating security activities	33%
Improving web/mobile presence	33%
Defining/managing data flow	32%
Procuring SaaS applications	30%
Improving workforce technology	30%
Implementing DevOps processes	29%
Classifying datasets	29%
Building a data warehouse	29%
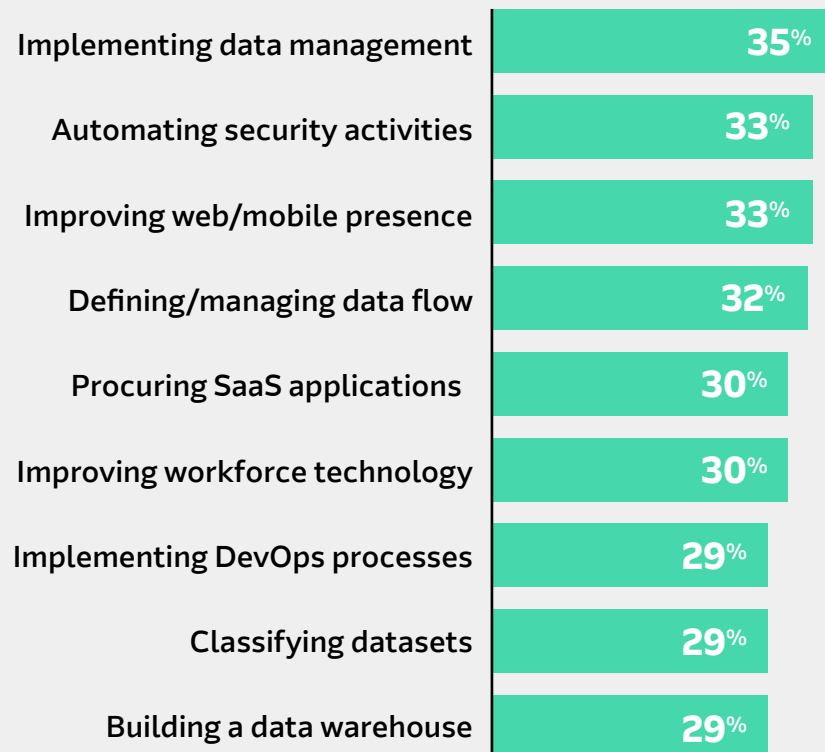
On the horizon:
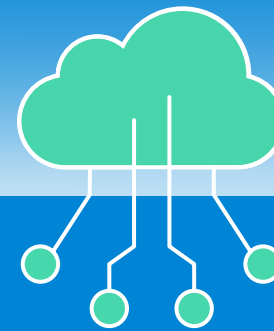
Industry clouds

Gartner expects that by 2027, **more than 70%** of enterprises will use industry cloud platforms to accelerate their business initiatives, up from less than 15% in 2023.[17]

Accelerate and scale your cloud offering with ArrowSphere Cloud

Your customers are looking for cloud products and solutions. Now you can acquire, provision, manage and scale multicloud services with ease using Arrow's end-to-end cloud lifecycle management from ArrowSphere Cloud. Use our platform to simplify the complexity of multicloud environments for your customers and seamlessly accelerate the growth of your cloud business.

Deliver powerful solutions
Design tailored solutions with leading hyperscalers and proven IaaS, PaaS, SaaS, HaaS and cloud software vendors.

Share optimization insights
Ensure your customers are getting the most out of their cloud investment. Achieve cloud business excellence. ArrowSphere Cloud is equipped with insightful dashboards that help you monitor the cloud posture of your customers and pinpoint opportunities to strengthen it. The dashboards are focused on security, cost and sustainability.

Work smarter and faster
AI-powered ArrowSphere Assistant brings the speed and efficiency of AI into the workflow for channel partners growing their cloud business with Arrow. Powered by Azure AI, ArrowSphere Assistant allows you to get instant answers to specific questions about your business, so you can take immediate action and make an impact faster. Dig in and quickly discover which customer is performing best this month, what your revenue forecast looks like through the end of the year, how your business is performing compared to this month last year, and so much more.
(ArrowSphere Assistant is available on a limited basis until H2 2024.)

Secure customer data

ISO 27001 certification ensures that controls are in place for data integrity, compliance, infrastructure resiliency, business continuity and disaster recovery.

Sell easier

White-label customer portals let you customize solutions and pricing, illuminate more opportunities, and improve the customer experience.
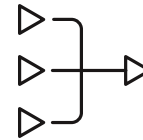
Streamline operations

Integrate multivendor quoting, ordering and provisioning for error-free implementations, with real-time notifications that highlight opportunities to improve efficiency and lower costs.

Identify growth opportunities

Monitor your customers' cloud businesses in real time to surface opportunities based on spending trends and future consumption.

58%

Cloud contribution to IT spending by 2027, driven by generative AI and artificial general intelligence (AGI)[18]
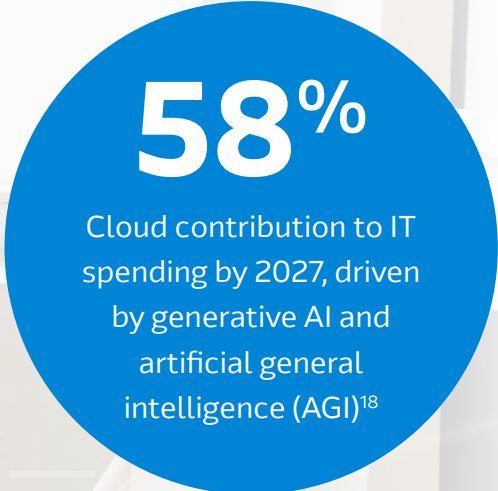
Learn more about ArrowSphere Cloud.

Security:
Cybersecurity is everyone's No. 1 priority

Globally, organizations rank cybersecurity as their top investment priority, and they're spending billions of dollars on security and risk management. It's not just the big guys, either. Increasingly, smaller companies are being targeted by cybercriminals. Dispersed computing — cloud instances and edge devices — and AI exacerbate the problem, serving as opportunities and/or accelerants for those bent on cyber mayhem. Comprehensive, proactive security is needed on all fronts, as are resiliency and rapid recovery. And that's right in the sweet spot for channel partners.

91.5%

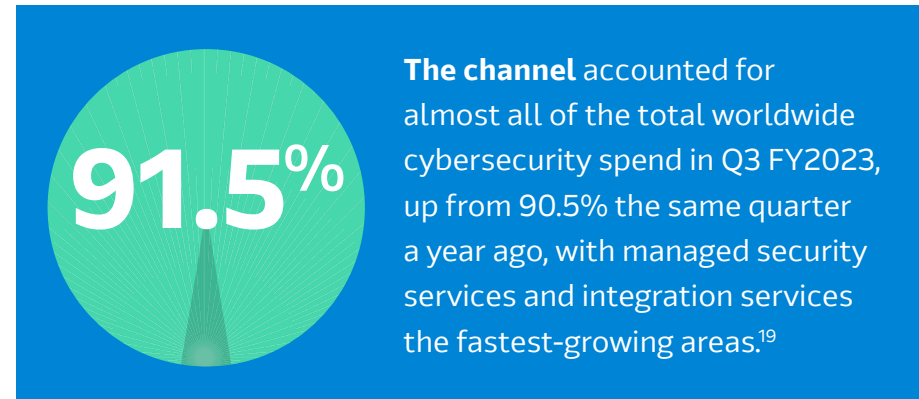**The channel** accounted for almost all of the total worldwide cybersecurity spend in Q3 FY2023, up from 90.5% the same quarter a year ago, with managed security services and integration services the fastest-growing areas.[19]

An ever-changing regulatory environment plays into cybercriminals' hands as well. Laws governing data privacy are proliferating in many states and countries worldwide. The U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has adopted new requirements for publicly traded companies that will have a significant impact on incident reporting and security execution. The European Union, often at the forefront of data and information security-related governance, continues to refine their stance. Channel partners with specialized compliance tools and services will be in demand.

The accelerating adoption of zero-trust architectures and the growing awareness of its necessity outside of IT and cybersecurity circles also presents opportunities for channel partners as your customers seek to implement verification and continuous monitoring strategies. Enabling businesses to function without compromising security is a balancing act that every company must get right.

Companies' top cybersecurity partnership priorities for 2024 are MSPs with many core IT offerings (including cybersecurity), followed closely by managed service providers focused exclusively on cybersecurity (MSSPs). But more than half of channel companies surveyed find themselves with a cybersecurity skills deficit.[20] If you can crack that nut, you stand to benefit immensely.

73% of SMBs experienced a cyberattack, data breach or both within the past 12 months, up from 43% in 2022.[21]

11% of companies' annual IT budget is dedicated to cybersecurity worldwide.[22]

$215B will be spent on security and risk management in 2024, with security services — consulting, IT outsourcing, implementation, hardware support — accounting for 42% of it.[23]

What's on the cybersecurity trends radar?[24]

- Attackers and defenders using AI to scale operations
- Cybercrime linked to organizations and nation states seeking to achieve geopolitical goals
- Exploitation of zero-day vulnerabilities, edge devices and virtualization software
- Cyberthieves using cloud services to scale attacks via vulnerabilities
- Use of older techniques not accounted for in modern detection systems
- Malware authors developing software in more programming languages

20. CompTIA
21. Identity Theft Resource Center
22. McKinsey & Company
23. Gartner
24. Google Cloud

Security and risk management end-user spending for all segments, worldwide[25]
(in millions U.S. dollars)

Segment	2022 spending	2022 growth	2023 spending	2023 growth	2024 spending	2024 growth
Application security	$5,047.6	10.9%	$5,765.2	14.2%	$6,670.3	15.7%
Cloud security	$4,487.4	24.0%	$5,616.7	25.2%	$7,002.6	24.7%
Data privacy	$1,129.2	9.9%	$1,338.7	18.5%	$1,667.3	24.6%
Data security	$3,072.9	21.4%	$3,692.1	20.1%	$4,333.3	17.4%
Identity access management	$13,944.1	13.6%	$16,169.1	16.0%	$18,556.5	14.8%
Infrastructure protection	$24,089.0	19.9%	$28,359.6	17.7%	$33,319.6	17.5%
Integrated risk management	$5,157.3	9.6%	$5,687.1	10.3%	$6,277.7	10.4%
Network security equipment	$18,932.5	11.9%	$21,383.6	12.9%	$24,360.1	13.9%
Security services	$73,394.7	3.9%	$80,835.7	10.1%	$89,996.7	11.3%
Consumer security software	$7,443.4	2.9%	$7,901.7	6.2%	$8,406.7	6.4%
Others	$8,029.8	50.1%	$11,365.4	41.5%	$14,362.8	26.4%
Total	**$164,728.0**	**10.6%**	**$188,114.8**	**14.2%**	**$214,953.7**	**14.3%**

Build a robust cybersecurity practice with Arrow's security solutions for partners

Maintain the integrity of your customers' networks, applications and enterprise assets with tools, software and expertise from Arrow that protects from core to edge to cloud. Build your security practice confidently with Arrow's practice accelerator program — a phased program designed to help you grow from the ground up. We offer essential training, marketing and pipeline development so you have the tools you need to succeed. There are a number of other ways Arrow is here to help you seize the tremendous opportunity within cybersecurity.

Manage access, secure endpoints and correct vulnerabilities – Systems and data need to be accessible anytime, anywhere. Access Arrow's robust security line card, managed services and support services to help your customers stay seamlessly connected and secure across every platform and device, limit their exposure to risk, and mitigate vulnerabilities in their architecture.

Add an intelligent layer to security – Combat the most sophisticated cyberthreats by leveraging advanced threat protection, automated security and cutting-edge monitoring solutions to add an intelligent layer to your security portfolio and provide a faster, more coordinated threat response for your customers.

Deliver tailored customer solutions – Tap into Arrow's security engineering experts for up-to-the-minute guidance about cybersecurity technologies and the vendor solutions that complement them to ensure your team is well-informed and well-positioned to support your customers' needs.

Design, test and demo solutions – Use Arrow's global technology network of solutions labs and technical briefing centers to collaborate with technical experts and simulate a real-world environment so you can build bespoke security solutions that precisely suit your customers' requirements.

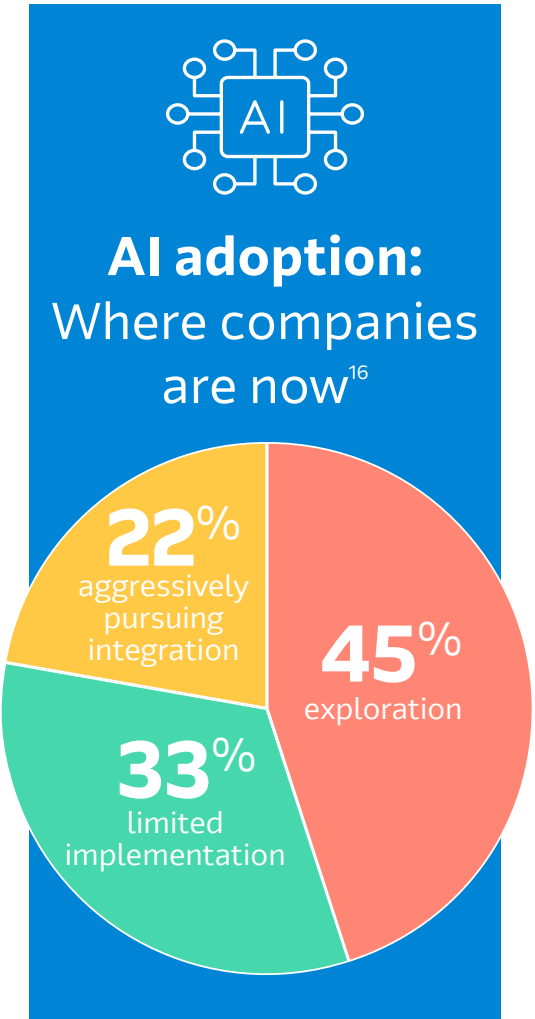Learn more about **Arrow's security solutions** for partners.

20

Artificial intelligence:
It's still early days for AI, but adoption is accelerating

It may seem as though AI is here, there and everywhere, but even technology companies are still largely in the figuring-it-out stage as they explore ways to deploy it internally to streamline operations, bolster security or improve the customer experience. To put it in perspective, companies are still spending more on security than they are on AI because the threat of a breach seems more pressing.[3] That said, it's coming. Almost two-thirds of vendors (62%) expect a moderate to significant increase in future AI investments in 2024.[4] These initial efforts may also be informing the use cases and AI-infused solutions they'll take to market.

Spending on AI will ramp up fast

When companies are ready to adopt AI, spending will increase rapidly. Gartner predicts that by 2030, every person in a developed country will have an interaction with at least one AI instance every single day, and every dollar of GDP created anywhere on the planet will be influenced by AI.[3] Spending on commonplace AI — the AI we may already be familiar with and use in our day-to-day, such as analytics, voice assistants, writing assistants, maps, recommendations, etc. — remains strong in services, software and the data center through at least 2026.[3]

Channel partners with deep technology expertise have helped their customers embrace innovation, and it will be no different with AI and generative AI. The key will be to strengthen your expertise in these and other of-the-moment technologies so you remain the partner your customers can't live without, rather than the one that can't keep pace. Many companies will choose to embrace AI initiatives using cloud services from hyperscalers, a service model you are likely quite familiar with already.[26]

AI adoption:
Where companies are now[16]

- 45% exploration
- 33% limited implementation
- 22% aggressively pursuing integration

3. Gartner
4. CompTIA
16. CompTIA
26. Forrester

95%

of executives believe that generative AI will compel their organization to modernize its technology architecture.[27]

$372B

will be spent on products and services worldwide to implement generative AI from 2024 to 2027, with a focus on increasing revenue and improving business outcomes.[28]

87%

of U.S. enterprise technology decision makers who work in a data discipline say their organization will increase their investment in AI capabilities over the next 12 months.[29]

> "AI is not a market you are going to try to get into. It is a market you actually cannot avoid because every piece of technology is a channel for AI."

John Lovelock
Distinguished Gartner Analyst[3]

Lean on Arrow to support your business throughout the AI revolution. Access leading and cutting-edge AI products and solutions for you to offer your customers. From enabling CSPs to accelerate adoption of **Microsoft Copilot** to a dedicated AI lab, we offer partner enablement to give you the tools you need to succeed. Tap our technical engineering team who has been following AI from the beginning and can help you build a strategic AI practice to enable your customers.

Data center:
The data center is complex, but it's not untamable

Data centers are at the heart of data and application storage, processing and distribution. As such, they are central to a company's performance and profitability. Today's data centers are a mélange of hardware, software and systems deployed on premises, at edge locations and in multicloud environments. That, of course, means opportunity for channel partners well-versed in IT infrastructure migration, scalability, security, optimization and integration. Straightforward solutions are a welcome respite from the complexity, especially when they help your customers lower costs, increase efficiency, innovate faster and serve their clients better.

Increasingly, sustainability is making its way into the conversation as our insatiable desire for technologies that require more data storage and computing power exacerbate environmental degradation — it takes a lot of land and nonrenewable resources to build ever-larger data centers, and a lot of power to operate them. The rise of environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting is increasing scrutiny on energy consumption, pollution, waste and other factors that impact a company's ability to attract investors, partners, customers and employees. This makes sustainability a significant area of opportunity for channel partners.

4 data center trends to watch in 2024[30]

| AI | Edge computing | Hyperscale data centers | Energy sustainability |

29 countries and territories maintain some degree of mandatory ESG disclosure regulation.[31]

99% of the S&P 500 is reporting ESG information, and the number of companies seeking assurance on certain ESG metrics is on the rise.[32]

Collaborate with Arrow's technology experts to deliver exceptional data center solutions

When it comes to enhancing your data center capabilities, Arrow is more than a distributor — we're a catalyst for growth. Increase your value as a trusted partner by collaborating with engineering professionals who can help you configure solutions tailored to your customers' needs and investment horizon. Arrow offers you an array of services to help you build your data center practice.

Discover, design and demo – Take the guesswork out of technology recommendations. As part of Arrow's global technology network, our solutions labs offer a dynamic hybrid cloud infrastructure where you can design, build, test and demonstrate integrated IT solutions that enable your customers to solve immediate challenges, transform their business and achieve their vision for the future.

Build expertise – Gain hands-on experience with legacy and emerging technologies through product demonstrations, proofs of concept, and the integration of multivendor solutions at Arrow's solutions labs and technical briefing centers, along with the training and enablement you need to serve your customers confidently.

Deliver tailored solutions – Collaborate with technical experts on solutions that meet your customers' unique requirements and ideate ways to guide customers through the intricacies of design and implementation. Tap into Arrow's vast line card of technology vendors and IT service providers to put together a bespoke solution for any customer.

Sell effectively – Tap into Arrow's sales engineers to help you build customer confidence and remove objections so you can increase deal velocity. Brainstorm ways to generate pipeline through technical workshops, assessments and discovery activities aimed at high-value customers.

Benefit from sustainability mandates – Assess your customers' ESG efforts and help them move closer to their environmental goals with a sustainability dashboard that gives you the insights you need to make strategic recommendations for improvement.

The technology ecosystem:

Forging
connections

The technology ecosystem: Forging connections

As technology and solution complexity have increased, so too has the appetite for collaboration. Healthy competition with those in your lane is still a point of pride, but a new respect for cooperation in service of the customer has emerged as complexity intensifies and the technology skills gap continues. Symbiotic relationships flourish among those whose expertise complements each other. The customer becomes the shared customer. Individual success is predicated on collective success.

Solution providers need look no further for evidence of this shift than vendor partner programs. They're broadening their own definitions of what it means to be a channel partner, and the rules of engagement and compensation within partner programs are multifaceted. Value is being recognized and rewarded across the entire customer lifecycle for activities well beyond the transactional. The value of the role in helping achieve customer outcomes is gaining traction, as are solution development funds and compensation for influencing purchase decisions. This is a boon for partners with wide-ranging expertise, too, because they can be compensated for different activities throughout a single customer journey.

As the dynamic shifts from channel push to ecosystem pull, collaboration and strong relationships among channel participants are essential. Ecosystem alliances become well nurtured must-haves, not opportunistic niceties. Arrow is here to help you forge meaningful connections across the IT channel.

Successful channel partners will focus on solutions that connect multiple products, bolstering single-digit resale margins with much healthier profits tied to planning, integration and support.[33]

48% of those surveyed for CRN's 2023 Channel Chiefs project have embraced an ecosystem model comprising vendors, solution providers, distributors and others.[34]

33. Techaisle
34. CRN

SUPERCHARGE
your business
with **Arrow**

The technology landscape is constantly evolving and bringing you new opportunities at every turn. However you want to grow, Arrow has the people, platforms, programs, solutions and expertise to support you and extend your capabilities.

What are your current challenges?

Let's talk. We're here to help you turn them into opportunities.

Get in Touch

Note: Arrow offers extensive capabilities to help you offer more to your customers and accelerate your growth. Service availability varies by region. Contact your local Arrow team to discuss services and solutions that may be right for your business.

ARROW

Sources

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4. CompTIA, Strategy and Tactics: The Channel Looks Ahead to 2024, Carolyn April, January 2024

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