



The Hidden IT Burden on HR Teams

How to reclaim HR's strategic role and eliminate the
unseen costs of reactive IT management.



Executive summary

People teams are increasingly responsible for critical IT-driven tasks. Onboarding, offboarding, and everyday employee management are underpinned by technical demands, yet HR is often under-resourced when it comes to IT infrastructure and expertise.

Without tech stack integration, standardized workflows, and centralized visibility, HR teams are left to manage technology through manual processes and disconnected systems. The result is operational friction, wasted time, and mounting frustration for both HR and employees — alongside growing security and compliance risks.

This white paper examines the hidden burden and organizational cost of reactive IT management, and explores a more efficient, user-friendly approach for HR teams.

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The line between HR and IT has blurred

Today's HR teams juggle a growing list of tasks that were once the responsibility of the IT department. Device purchases, app provisioning, data security, and compliance now form part of the onboarding process — and when hardware glitches or access fails, employees often return to HR for support.

What began as a gradual shift in ownership has evolved into a structural change in many organizations. Standalone IT support has become a rarity in growing businesses, and the emergence of new roles like [Chief People and Digital Technology Officer](#) reflect the convergence of once-separate functions.

As People teams navigate this transition, many core HR functions risk being deprioritized. Time spent resolving device issues or chasing down access requests can distract from workforce planning, talent development, culture initiatives, and employee engagement.

A [recent survey](#) of global IT leaders found that the majority expect HR and IT to merge fully in the coming years:

31%

expect HR and IT to merge within the next three years

33%

believe a merger will happen within three to five years

31%

don't foresee a full merger, but they do expect closer collaboration between the two departments

With headcount set to triple in just six weeks, mBIOTA faced a familiar problem: growing fast without the infrastructure to support it. Onboarding and offboarding lagged, existing equipment was overpriced and overbuilt, and hours were lost every week chasing down tickets and troubleshooting email logins.

[Discover how mBiota reclaimed valuable time and cut IT costs >](#)

HR has become accidental IT support

For HR teams, setting up new hires can quickly expand into broader responsibility for devices, permissions, and security:



Onboarding: People teams manage critical tech setup throughout the onboarding process, often becoming the default point of contact for new hires' IT needs.



Device procurement: in many organizations, HR is responsible for device purchases, shipping, provisioning, and hardware inventory management.



Application management: app provisioning for new hires and ongoing user permission management are often handled by People teams.

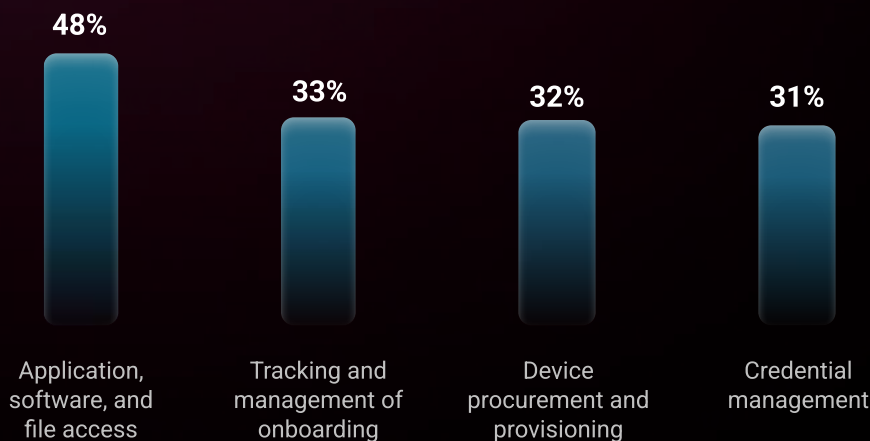


Offboarding: at the end of the employee lifecycle, HR must securely remove employee data from key systems, revoke app access, and retrieve devices.



Cybersecurity: many security responsibilities now fall to HR, particularly when it comes to data protection, compliance obligations, and training for employees.

Gradually, HR assumes the role of informal IT support — without the systems, resources, or expertise of a dedicated IT team. In research carried out by Electric, 39% of HR professionals said they lose valuable time to repetitive tasks that could be automated. Onboarding, in particular, drains time and resources, with the following identified as the most challenging aspects:



These findings highlight how deeply operational IT work and everyday troubleshooting have become embedded in modern HR roles.

IT responsibilities distract from people-focused work

As HR absorbs more IT responsibilities, ad hoc management erodes time, focus, and strategic capacity. Instead of enabling HR to move faster, disconnected tools and makeshift processes create friction and add to existing workloads.

[Other studies](#) reveal similar results when it comes to fragmented tech stacks and ineffective use of technology:

This strain is reflected in Electric's research:

52%

of HR professionals find onboarding to be a challenging or frustrating aspect of their role

42%

of HR professionals have less time to spend on recruitment and retention due to IT limitations

\$4,072

in labor costs are wasted per employee each year due to IT problems

24%

report that their organization's HR function is deriving the maximum value from HR technology

35%

are confident their current approach to HR technology is helping to achieve business objectives

2 out of 3

believe that if they don't take action to improve HR's approach to technology, their function's effectiveness will decrease

Over time, this operational drag reshapes HR's role. Energy that should be invested in talent strategy and leadership development is redirected toward technical bottlenecks.

Without the right systems or automation in place, HR becomes reactive — focused on resolving issues instead of shaping long-term organizational success.

Fragmented IT damages the employee experience

Reactive IT management also directly impacts the employee experience. Delays in system access or device readiness can undermine first impressions during onboarding, while ongoing IT friction reduces productivity and engagement.

Research by Electric found:



Nearly 3 in 5 workers feel they have wasted time dealing with tech issues at work



69% of workers have missed deadlines due to tech issues

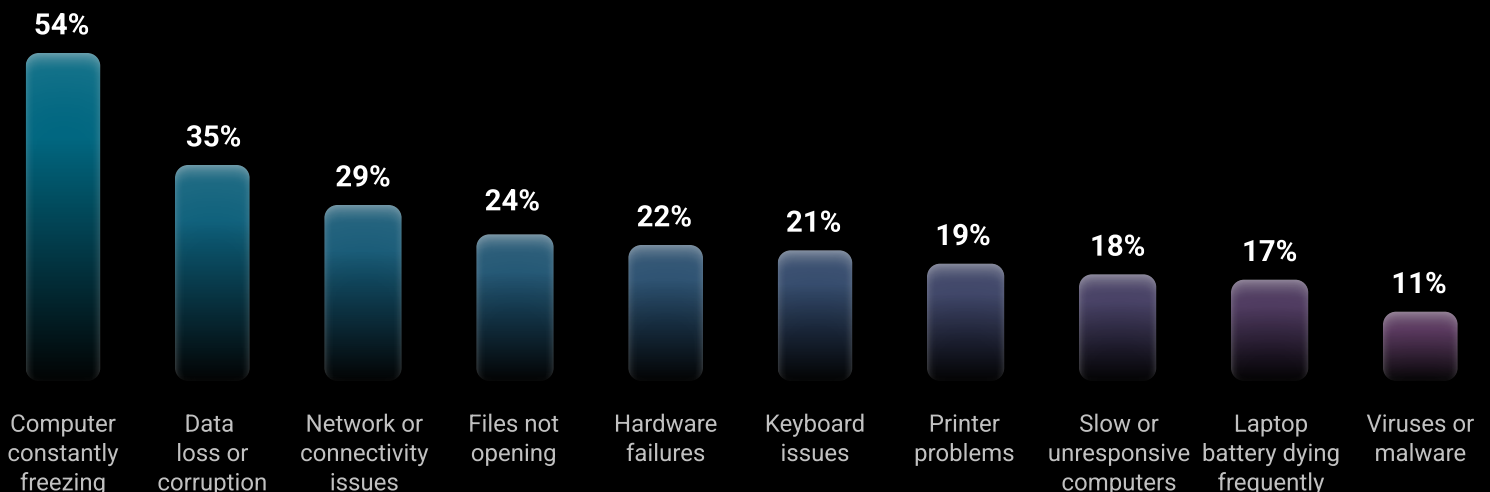


Employees spend nearly three hours per week (more than 140 hours per year) fixing tech issues.



Remote workers (73%) waste more time due to tech issues than on-site (22%) and hybrid workers (41%).

Employees themselves identify the most time-consuming tech issues as follows:



Individually, these issues are relatively minor. Collectively, they represent hundreds of lost hours and diminished confidence in workplace systems. To support employees to do their best work, organizations need a structured, scalable approach to IT management.

Ad hoc IT puts security and compliance at risk

Fragmented IT affects more than HR productivity and the employee experience, it also has serious implications for security and compliance.

HR is increasingly expected to maintain accurate records of user permissions, approve access changes, and ensure the principle of least privilege is upheld. Handled manually, these tasks are prone to human error, leaving sensitive data vulnerable and creating costly compliance issues:

31%

of organizations report ex-employees [still have access](#) to at least one SaaS application after they leave.

60%

of former employees with continued account access said [unchanged passwords](#) allowed them to log in.

20%

of businesses have [experienced data breaches](#) connected to former employees.

Without centralized visibility into applications, devices, and permissions, gaps become inevitable. Offboarding, in particular, opens businesses up to heightened risks when performed manually. Access lingers, devices go unaccounted for, and audits become a minefield.

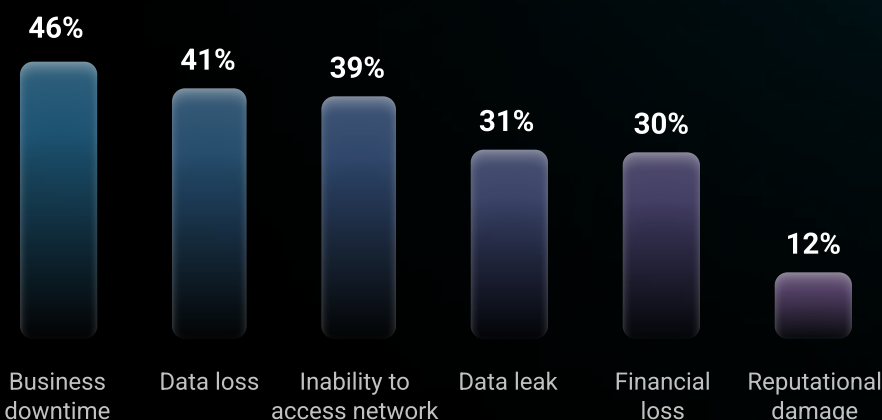
These oversights can leave organizations vulnerable to significant risks. Research by Electric found that 47% of small businesses have fallen victim to cyber attack. The primary targets include:

40% Customer financial data

36% Customer personal data

35% Business financial data

The business impact of these attacks include:



As HR's scope expands, so too does exposure to these security and compliance risks.

How integrated IT management transforms HR

Centralized IT management gives People teams the structure and visibility to move from reactive problem-solving to proactive enablement. When onboarding, offboarding, device management, and app access are managed from a single platform, manual work is reduced, processes become consistent, and security gaps are eliminated.

Instead of relying on spreadsheets and email threads, HR leaders gain a clear, real-time view of employees, devices, and applications across the organization. With integrated workflows and automation in place, HR teams can standardize critical processes without the need for deep technical expertise.

Electric provides an all-in-one solution designed to help People teams simplify:



Onboarding



Offboarding



**Device procurement
and warehousing**



**Application
management**



Security



Compliance

Electric integrates with the most commonly used HR platforms in a single click, keeping data in sync and delivering full visibility of employees, devices, and applications in one place. Businesses can also manage market-leading cybersecurity solutions directly within the platform, ensuring unified oversight of your IT environment.

To learn more about how Electric can streamline IT management and restore valuable time for HR teams, [**book a free demo today.**](#)