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The Critical Role of Application Marketplaces

APRIL 2025



Introduction

Application marketplaces are a critical component of today's technology ecosystems. End users place a premium on vendors who have established thriving marketplaces to find, experiment with, download, and use applications that extend or enhance vendors' core offerings, whether for a hyperscaler, enterprise application, or operational system. Industry leaders such as Splunk, Salesforce, AWS, and Datadog (to name just a few) know their customers rely on third-party and end-user-create applications that extend their value through vetted and easy-to-install and use applications that can reduce their development workload and increase the value received from these solutions.

Application marketplaces serve as a central location for users to easily search and discover new functionality to solve specific problems, integrate with other commercial offerings used in their technology stack, or share application creations with the user community. Applications from these vendor ecosystem marketplaces, or "apps," add virtually unlimited value-added capabilities, from data ingestion and analysis to automation and integrated workflows.

From a vendor's perspective, a thriving marketplace ecosystem can serve as a strategic competitive advantage and help them outdistance themselves from the competition and newcomers to the market. A flourishing marketplace ecosystem not only creates added value to customers but also increases customer retention and offers partners new avenues to reach new customers.

Looking ahead, the importance of application marketplaces cannot be overstated. Application marketplaces represent a transformative shift in how software is distributed and consumed. Technology vendors build significant portions of their go-to-market strategies leveraging marketplace platforms that integrate and bring their broader partner ecosystems to end customers and users.

This report examines what is important to users of application marketplaces and the downloaded applications used within their organizations based on a targeted survey of 70 users of various application marketplaces. Futurum's research assesses the characteristics of what customers and users desire and expect from a healthy, vibrant application marketplace, their experiences using them, and the improvements they would like to see.

As part of Futurum's research, we examine some of the larger vendor marketplace ecosystems, including Amazon Web Services, Salesforce, Splunk, Snowflake, and Datadog. We also examine Splunk's Splunkbase application marketplace, how it is perceived, and how customers' changing needs might shape its future.

Application Marketplace Use

The utility and value of applications (“apps”) acquired from marketplaces can be extensive across the organization. Companies rely upon marketplace apps for a wide range of use cases by users in IT and other departments. Multiple departments, such as security operations, IT operations, and system reliability engineering, often use observability technologies. There are cases where apps may be very targeted in their use by specific individuals within the organization (13%), but two-thirds (66%) indicate apps are utilized much more widely.

Futurum’s study indicates that 40% use marketplace apps primarily within IT and security teams, along with a few other departments. At the same time, one-quarter say apps are used across multiple groups in their organizations.

The purposes for using marketplace apps are quite extensive. Extending the ecosystem vendor’s core functionality is cited the most frequently, though additional purposes are nearly as frequent. Connections, or integrations, to other applications, systems, or data sources are also cited as a frequent use case, and accessing data within the ecosystem vendor’s offering is critically important.

End users often prefer to work within one primary system or set of tools. Apps that facilitate workflows and task automation across solutions help minimize virtual “swivel-chair” inefficiencies by avoiding switching between applications, exporting, manipulating, and importing data. They also help increase productivity and the flow of work.

Figure 1: Futurum App Marketplace Study 2025

Marketplace App Usage Across The Organization

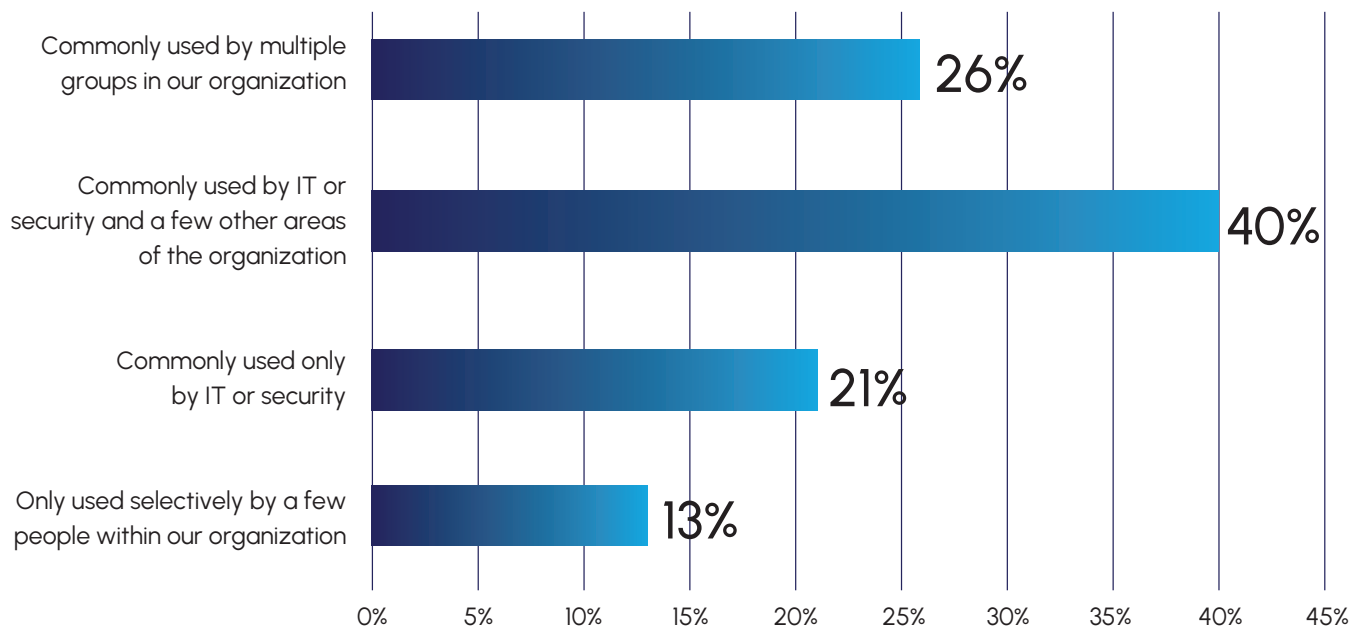
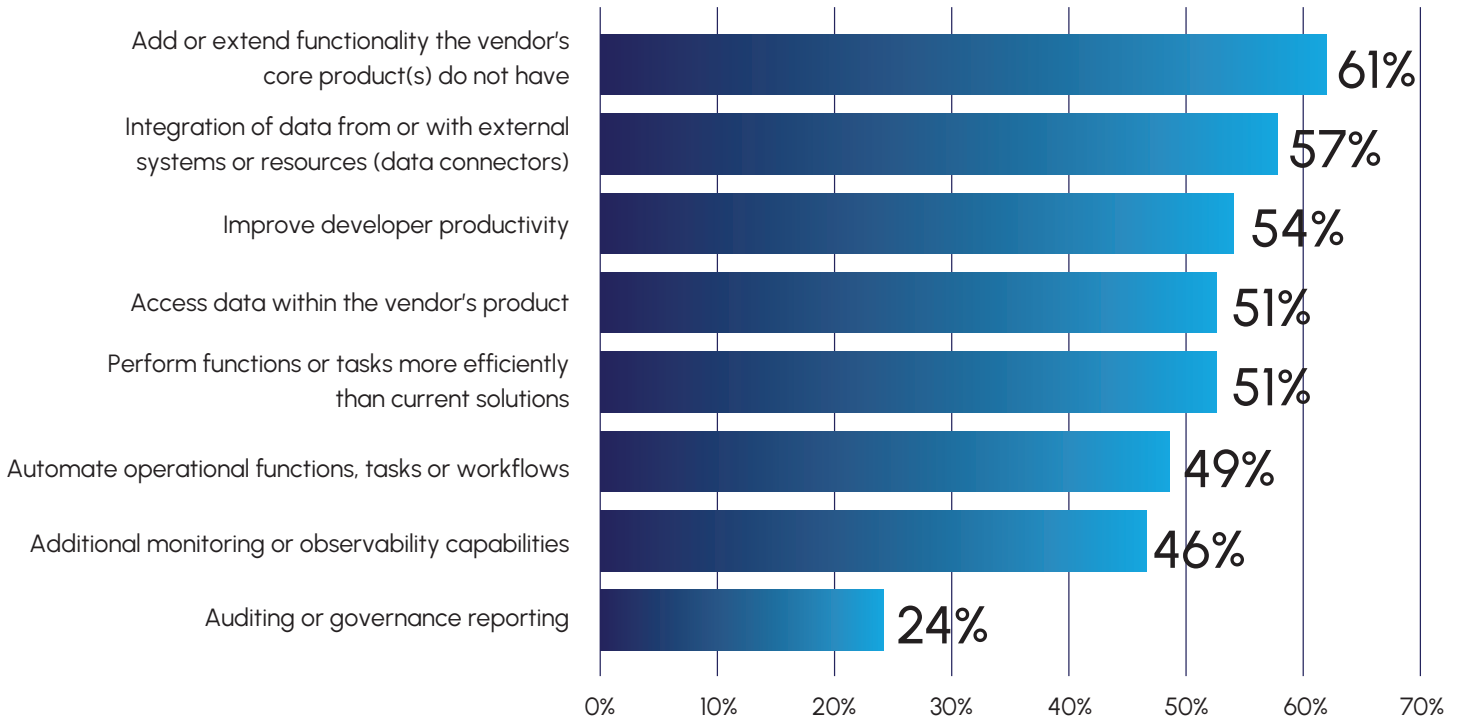


Figure 2: Futurum App Marketplace Study 2025

How Marketplace Apps Are Used



App marketplaces are proving essential to end-user organizations and vendors alike. Organizations that use apps from marketplaces use them extensively. While 16% used 10 or fewer apps within the past 12 months, 41% indicated their organizations used between 11 and 25 apps. Another 26% indicated their organizations used between 26 and 50 apps, and 17% used more than 50 apps.

Individual users also indicate they personally use a significant number of apps in their work. In the survey, 39% used between 6 and 10 apps during the past 12 months, and the other 39% used between 3 and 5 apps during the same time period.

Figure 3: Futurum App Marketplace Study 2025

of Apps Your Organization Used in the Past Twelve Months

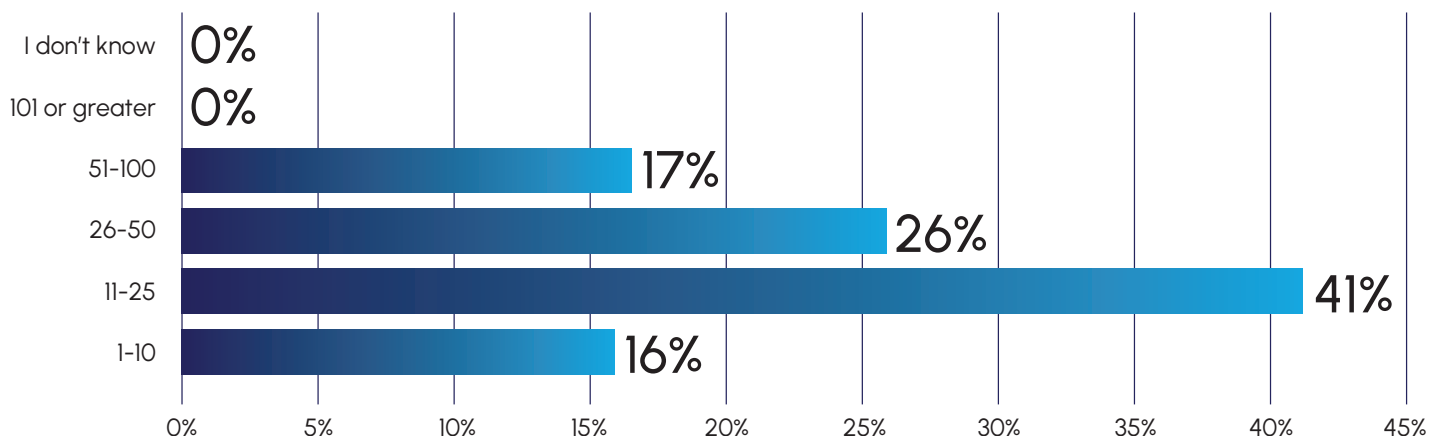
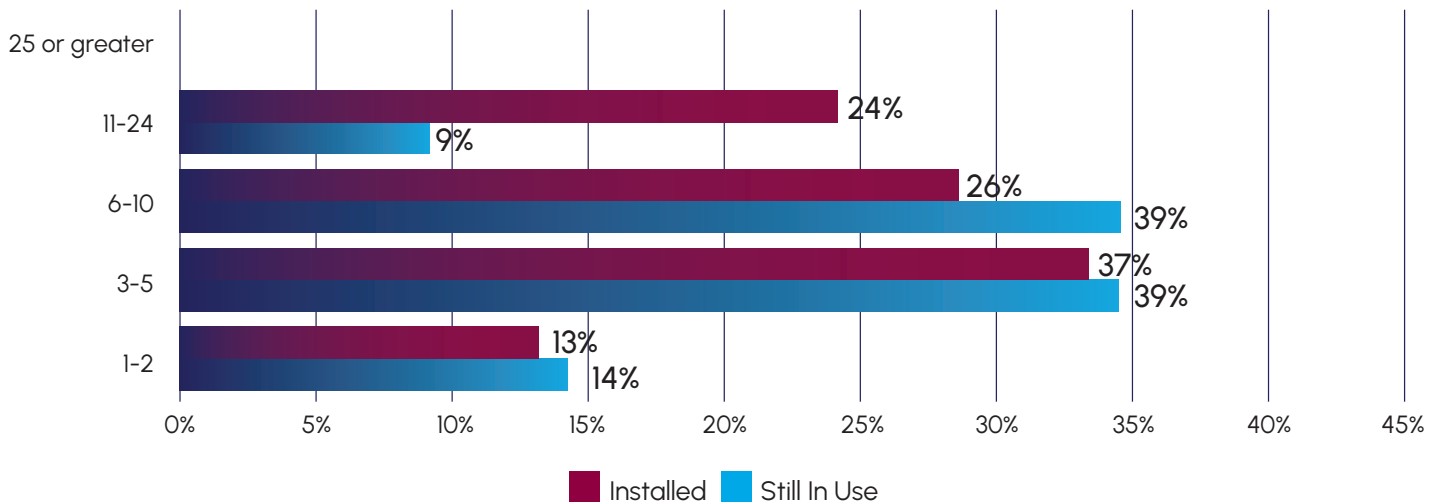


Figure 4: Futurum App Marketplace Study 2025

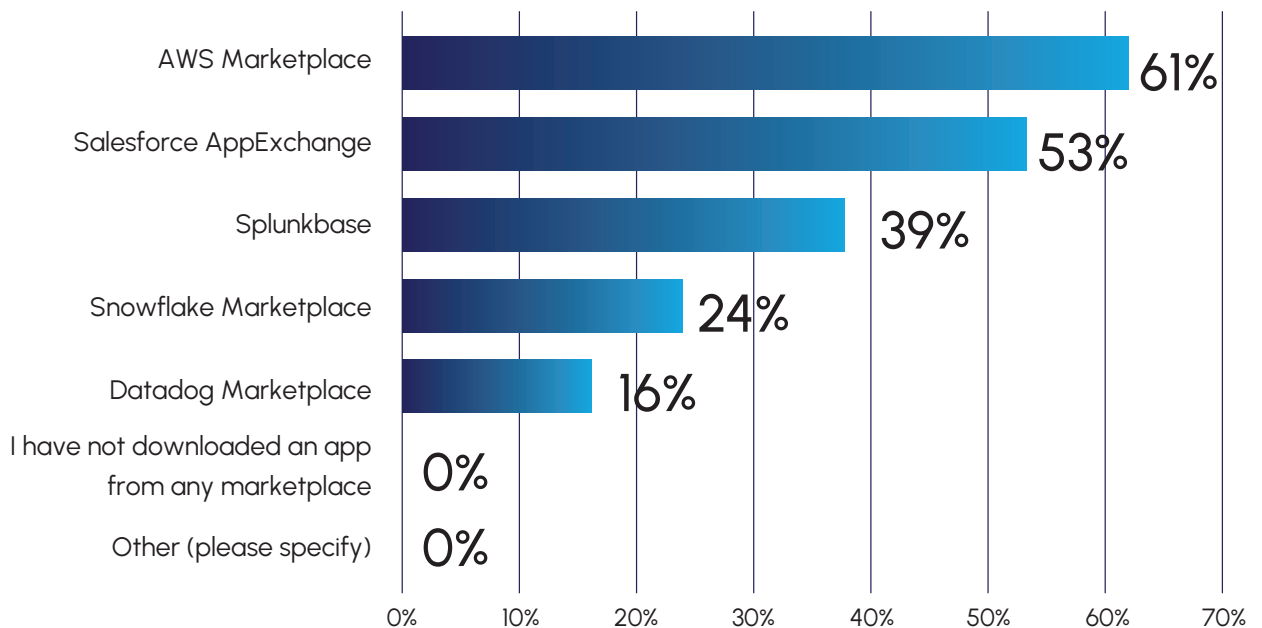
of Apps Your Used in the Past Twelve Months



Companies show they use more than the application marketplace of a single vendor. Of the five application marketplaces represented in our study, over half the respondents indicated they used two or more during the past 12 months. AWS, Salesforce, and Splunk were the three most frequently cited marketplaces used.

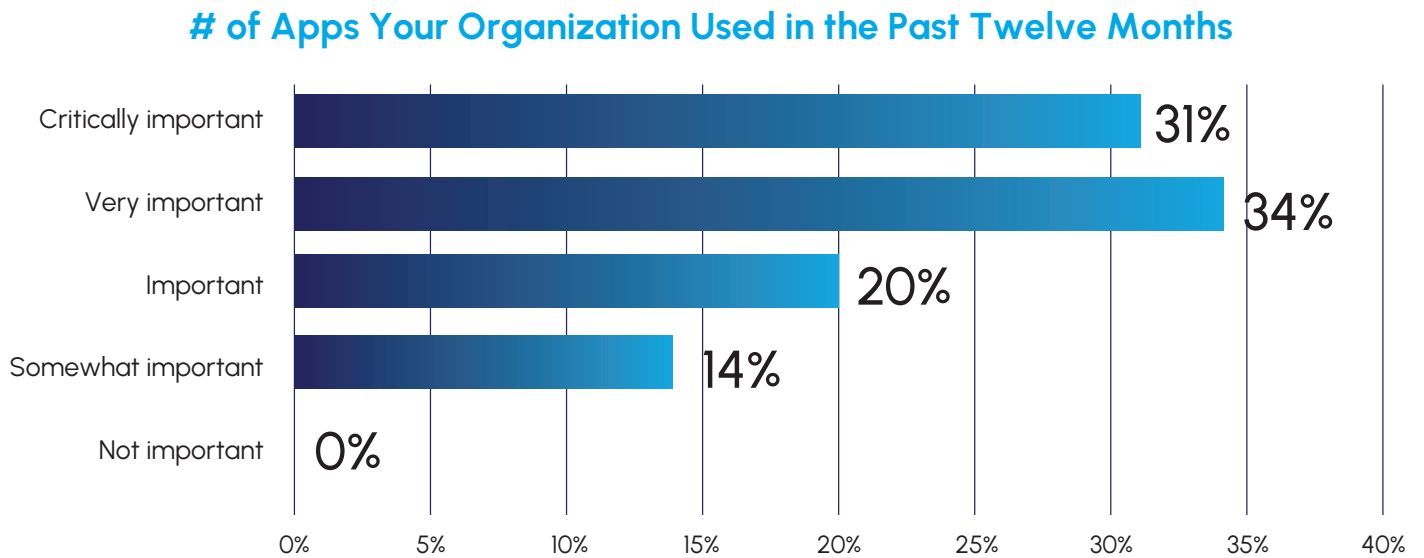
Figure 5: Futurum App Marketplace Study 2025

App Marketplaces Used in the Past Twelve Months

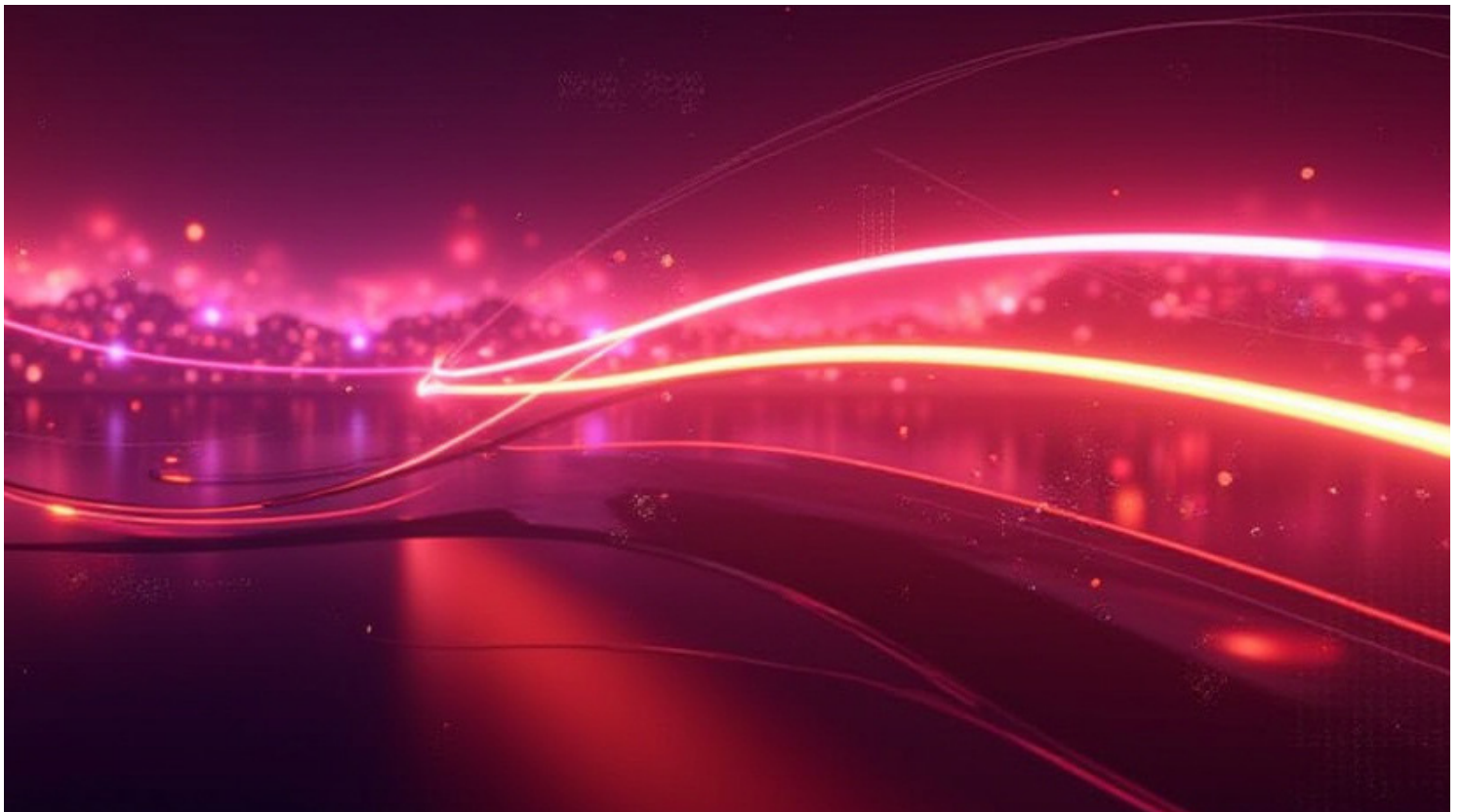


While Futurum's study shows companies often use more than one vendor's application marketplace, there is a very strong preference for using each vendor's own marketplace to extend the functionality of their offering. In the survey, 85% indicate the importance they place on sourcing apps from that vendor's marketplace over other third-party sources, with 66% saying it is very or critically important.

Figure 6: Futurum App Marketplace Study 2025



The data clearly shows that marketplaces are vital resources for customers to gain increased value and utility from vendors' product and service offerings. Our research shows the impact of marketplace apps on departments, teams, and individuals, showing customers seeing gains in efficiencies, automation, flow of work, and data integration across multiple systems and sources.



What Influences Users to Choose Apps from a Marketplace?

Looking across the application marketplaces companies utilize, several factors that influence their use of a marketplace stand out. Ease of app installation, followed by user ratings and reviews of apps, are the top factors that influence the use of a marketplace. Users also considered the source of the app on a marketplace, whether from the marketplace vendor or a third-party commercial company (partner) or contributed by a marketplace community member.

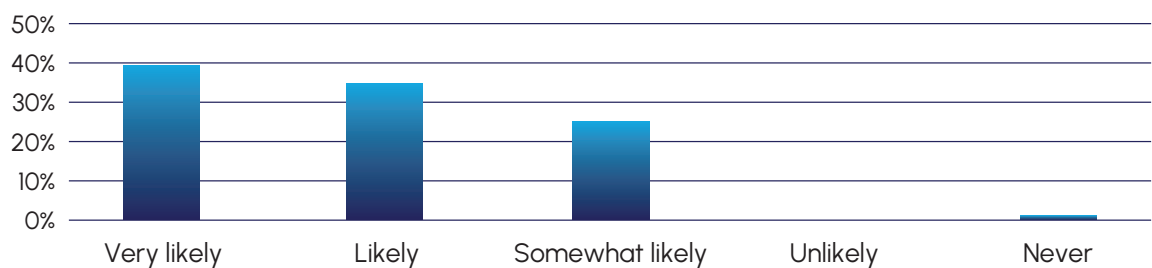
Additionally, users consider the support provided and the update and maintenance history for apps. To avoid becoming dependent on abandoned or poorly maintained apps, users are expecting the apps to be updated regularly and when the most recent updates occur.

Interestingly, price is also highly important, though users are likely to convert from a free to paid version of the app. The high importance of support and recent updates are likely contributors to this willingness to pay for apps from marketplaces. Users also consider user ratings, downloads, and app customization, though these factors are of medium importance.



Figure 7: Futurum App Marketplace Study 2025

Conversion Likelihood: Free to Paid



Futurum's study showed that users consider several factors in determining the value they receive from using apps from vendors' marketplaces. Of those app users expressing an opinion regarding the value, operational improvements, and efficiencies, workflow time savings and impact on customer satisfaction are the top considerations influencing their assessment of the value experience from an app. It's important to note that the top influences are tied to some tangible outcome, benefiting the user organization.

Perceptions of App Marketplaces

As we've seen, a number of considerations determine users' assessments of app marketplaces, including the problems apps may address, support and installation considerations, the level of support by a broader ecosystem of partners and community members, and more.

While this study did not perform a detailed examination of a broader set of application marketplaces, we did ask users about their perception of our representative marketplaces: AWS, Datadog, Salesforce, Snowflake, and Splunk. When considering each representative marketplace's top rankings, AWS and Salesforce led with the highest number, followed by Splunk, then Snowflake, and Datadog. We also show the full ranking results of 1 to 5 below for each of the representative app marketplaces. Note that these rankings are comparative, with each user respondent placing the five app marketplaces in the top-to-bottom order.

Figure 8: Futurum App Marketplace Study 2025

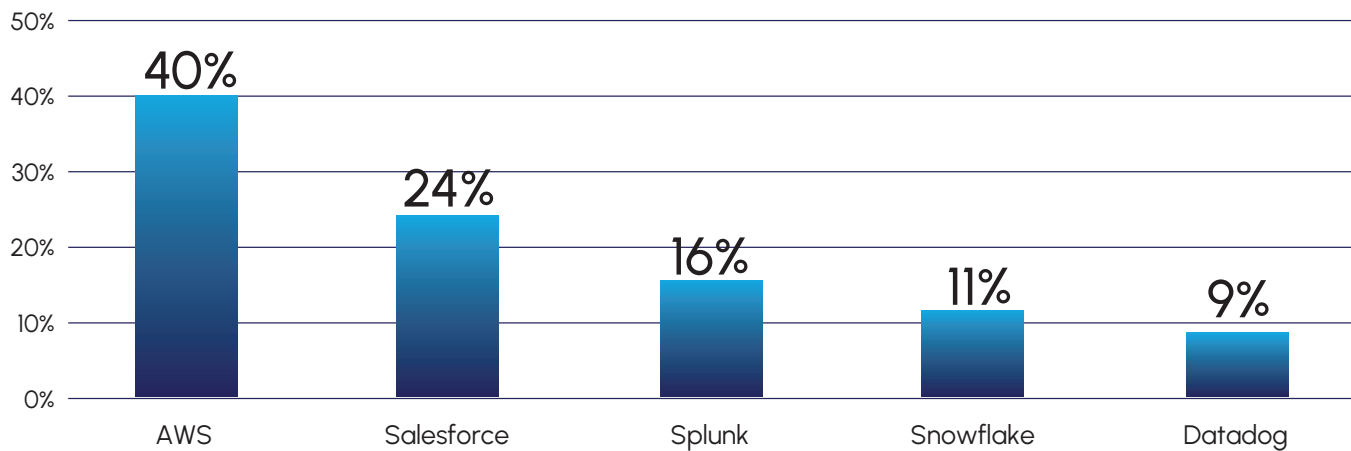
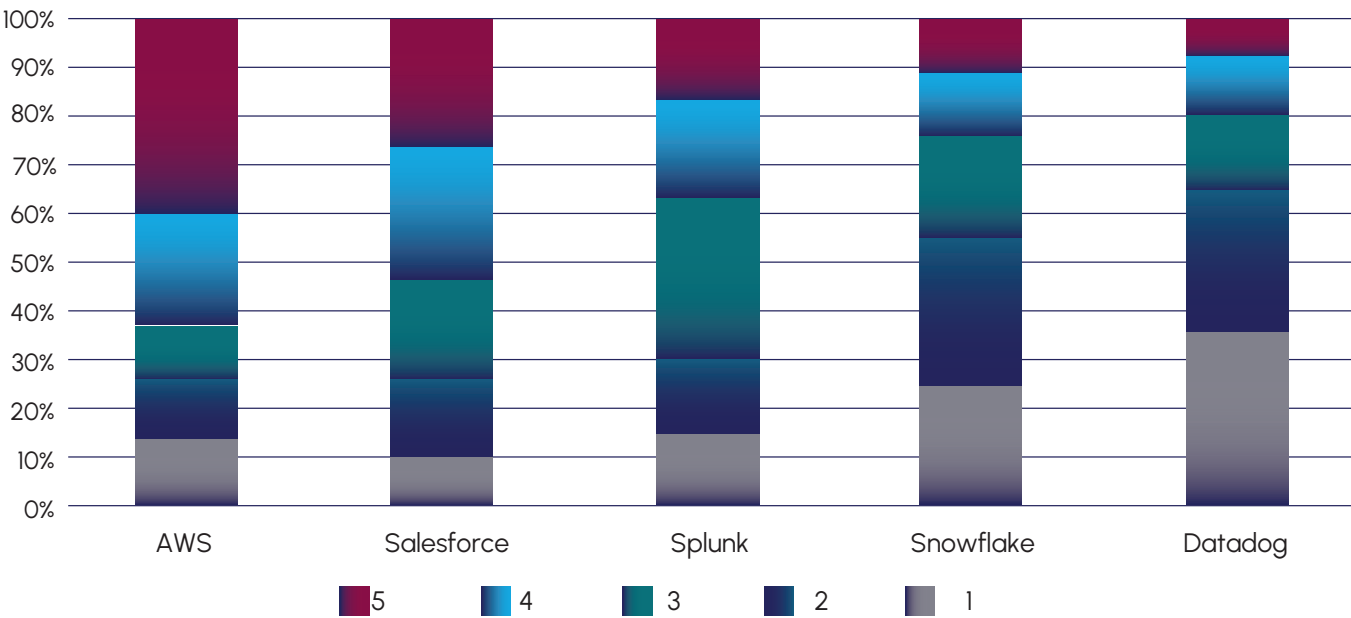


Figure 9: Futurum App Marketplace Study 2025

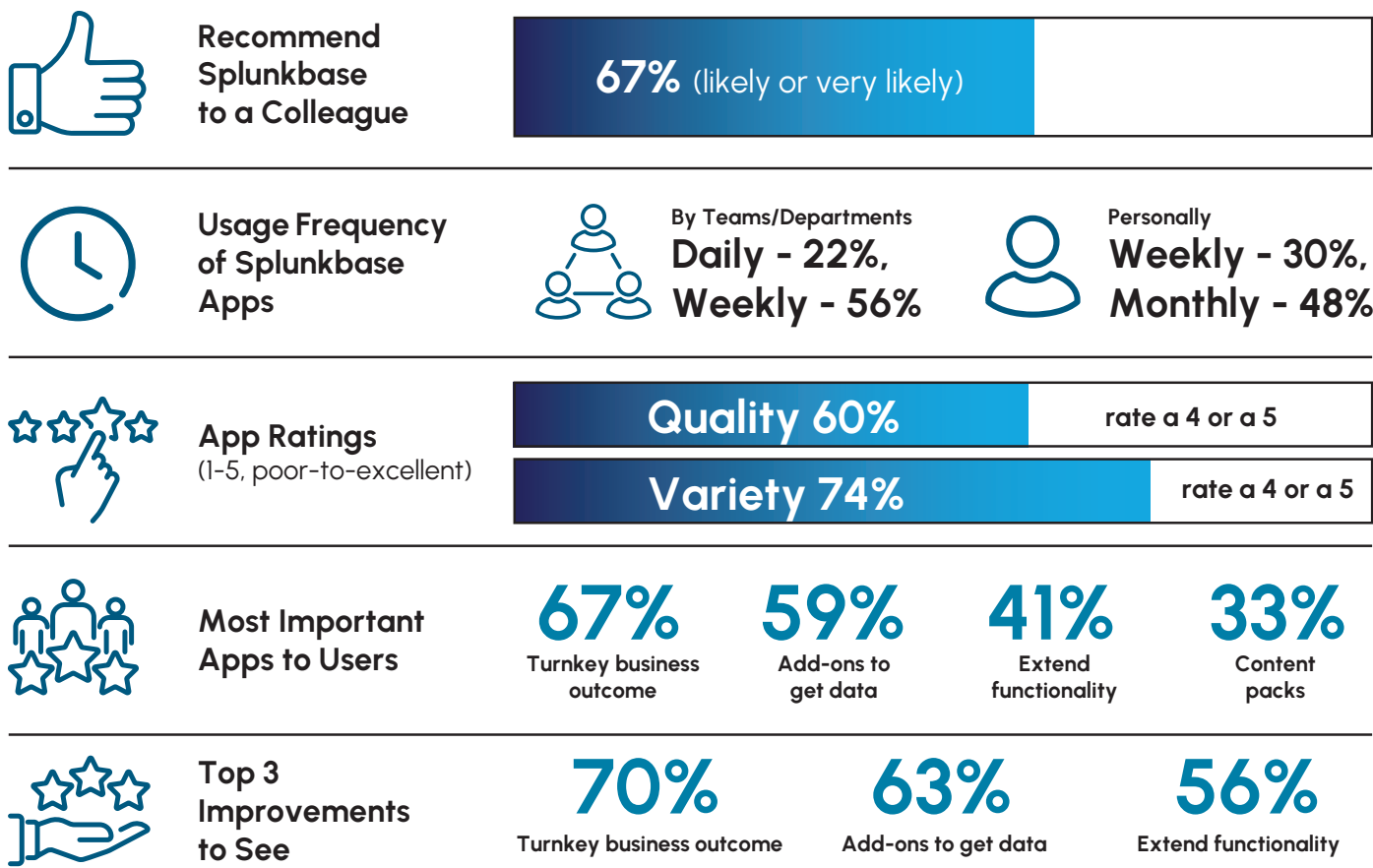


Further Diving Into Splunkbase

As part of Futurum's study, we sought further user input regarding their views of the Splunkbase app marketplace.

Splunk has a robust app marketplace in Splunkbase when considering users' recommendations to peers, their assessment of the quality of apps, and the types of improvements users would like to see.

Overall, just over two-thirds of respondents using Splunkbase would recommend the Splunkbase app marketplace to a colleague or co-worker. When examining how frequently Splunkbase apps are used (over the past 12 months), teams and departments use these apps quite often, on a daily (22%) and weekly (56%) basis. Similarly, individuals reported their use of Splunkbase apps on a weekly (30%) and monthly (48%) basis.



When looking into Splunkbase apps, four types emerged as the most important to users (i.e., types that customers consider most essential to their work, not necessarily based on the availability in Splunkbase): those that are turnkey, enable access to data and data sources, extend Splunk's functionality, and contain additional content (such as the Splunk ES Content Update, for example).

In terms of improvements, users indicated a preference for a greater variety of applications, more free app options (presumably with the choice to upgrade to a paid version, based on previous feedback), and improved integration of applications into Splunk.

Top 10 downloaded Splunkbase Apps over the past 12 months:

- 1 Splunk Add-on for Amazon Web Services (AWS) – Add-on
- 2 Splunk Add-on for Microsoft Windows – Add-on
- 3 Splunk Add-on for Google Cloud Platform – Add-on
- 4 Splunk Add-on for Unix and Linux – Add-on
- 5 Splunk Add-on for Microsoft Cloud Services – Add-on
- 6 Splunk Dashboard Examples – App
- 7 Splunk Machine Learning Toolkit – App
- 8 Splunk Common Information Model (CIM) – Add-on
- 9 Eventgen – App
- 10 Splunk DB Connect – Add-on

Source: Splunk



Analyst Take

As previously emphasized in the report, application marketplaces are a critical component and play a vital role in the health of today's technology vendor ecosystems. They are a trusted channel for partners to reach customers with their offerings and for end users to receive even greater value beyond their investment in the vendor of that ecosystem. Increased value received results in even greater stickiness with the vendor and their partners, with the opportunity to increase the lifetime value of these customers.

Customers today are looking for more than the functionality or utility that apps from an application marketplace can provide. Futurum's research shows that Splunkbase users place the most significant value on turnkey applications that can deliver value now with little to no integration or development. Increased access to data is also high on the Splunkbase user's needs. Users indicated they are willing to pay for some of the applications they use, likely those that deliver significant value to their organizations.

Splunk is in an enviable position, having created a healthy and vibrant application marketplace ecosystem. Splunk can further grow and increase the value of Splunkbase by incentivizing and promoting the development of more turnkey applications. Many vendors offer "early access" to new products, allowing the user community to kick the tires and provide valuable input. Splunk can also survey and gather data to guide partners and the types of turnkey apps most needed by Splunkbase users. Taking steps like these can help Splunkbase be valued even more in the future.




















Part of these improvements comes with a transition path from today's offerings to those on the horizon. As AI rapidly becomes a component of vendor offerings, AI apps and capabilities will also increase as a vital part of app marketplaces. The future of application marketplaces is very bright, with the potential for substantial innovation and even disruption as AI makes a greater and greater impact.

Futurum Notice: This white paper was produced as part of a Splunk engagement with Futurum. Splunk provided basic Splunkbase marketplace information. The analysis and writing contained herein were developed independently by Futurum. Splunk reviewed the white paper for product, brand, and registration mark accuracy.

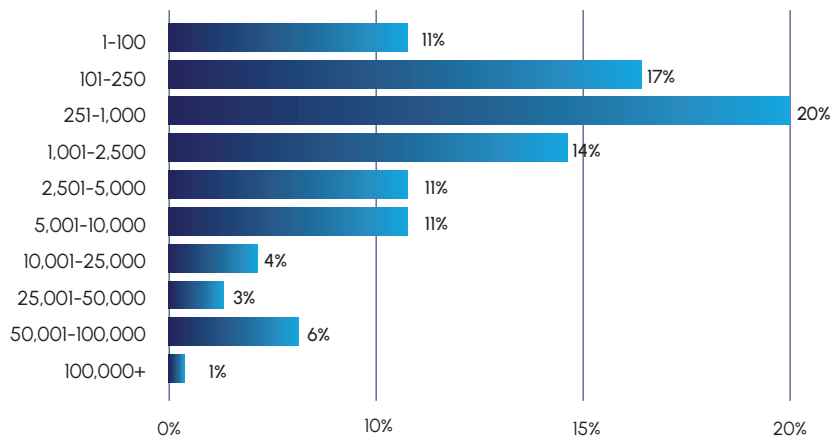
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Survey Demographics

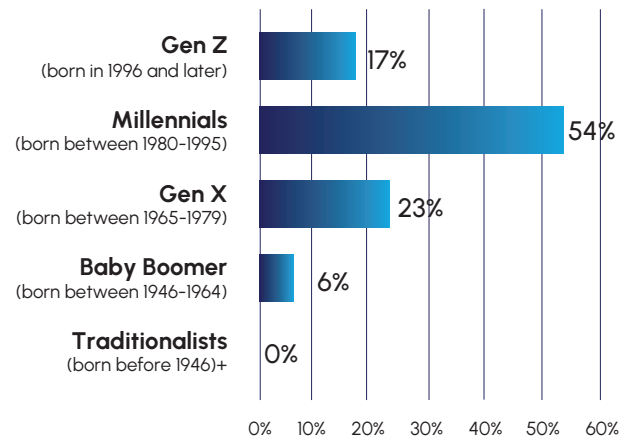
Organization's Primary Industry

	Automotive	6%		Food & Beverage	1%		Logistics	4%		Sports	3%
	Business Services	4%		Gaming	4%		Manufacturing & Industrial	9%		Telecommunications	6%
	Consumer Products	3%		Government/ Public Sector	4%		Media and Entertainment	3%		Transportation	3%
	Energy and Utilities	3%		Healthcare	9%		Real Estate & Construction	3%		Travel & Hospitality	3%
	Financial Services and Insurance	7%		Information Technology	13%		Retail/Online Retail	7%		Other	6%

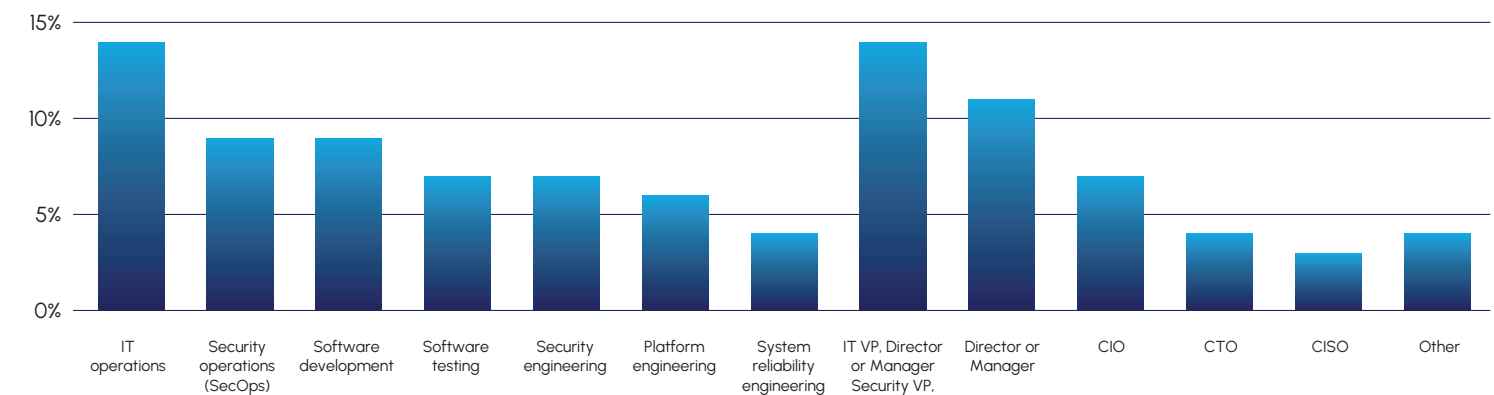
Total Employees



Generation



Role



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Splunk is a leading software company specializing in data analytics and management, helping organizations collect, monitor, and visualize real-time data. Its platform enables businesses of all sizes to transform raw data into actionable insights for security, IT operations, and business analytics.

With Splunk, companies can quickly detect and resolve issues, optimize their IT infrastructure, and make data-driven decisions with confidence. Through its extensive marketplace, Splunk provides seamless integration with various systems and tools, empowering users with greater efficiency and control over their digital environments.

For more information, visit splunk.com.

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