



The Hidden Cost of Staying Still

How Risk and Accountability are
Redefining Irish ICT Purchasing

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Executive Summary



The Irish business landscape is undergoing a profound transformation in how technology partnerships are evaluated. Data from a 2026 survey of 248 ICT decision-makers, carried out on behalf of Viatel Technology Group, confirms that the era of procuring technology based on headline price alone is over. Today, purchasing decisions are dictated by trust, absolute accountability and the urgent need for operational resilience in high-risk, regulated environments.

Faced with escalating compliance mandates, uptime demands and AI readiness pressures, the market is moving decisively away from transactional, fragmented vendor ecosystems. The core finding of this research is clear: risk, not cost, is the primary barrier to change.

In an environment defined by rising regulatory scrutiny, operational risk and accelerating AI adoption, standing still is no longer a neutral position. It is an active liability.



The organisations that will lead the next phase of growth in Ireland are those that move decisively towards integrated, accountable technology partners capable of reducing risk while enabling innovation.

By reflecting on the findings outlined here, organisations can move beyond inertia, de-risk transformation, eliminate hidden cost structures and build the secure, high-performance foundations required to execute on AI, compliance and growth ambitions with confidence.

Paul Rellis
CEO,
Viatel Technology Group





Finding 1

Trust Over Price: What Drives ICT Buying Decisions

The traditional vendor model built on transactional, line-item cost optimisation has failed the modern buyer. When evaluating technology partners, price and total cost of ownership rank significantly lower than relationship quality and delivery certainty.

The True Hierarchy of Buyer Priorities

1. Vendor Credibility and Local Reputation

The most cited factor in technology selection. Buyers need to trust the reputation of the partner before looking at capabilities.

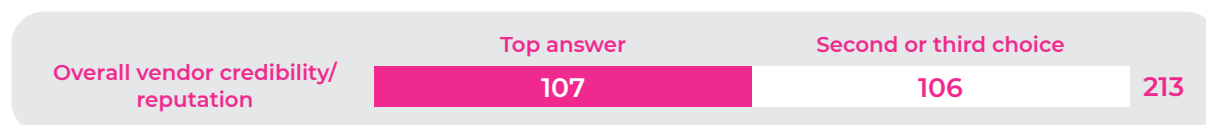


Fig1.1 Select and rank the below factors you use when choosing an ICT vendor

2. Relationship Responsiveness and Account Support

Proactive, human-to-human accountability ranks dramatically ahead of licensing expertise or upfront cost optimisation.

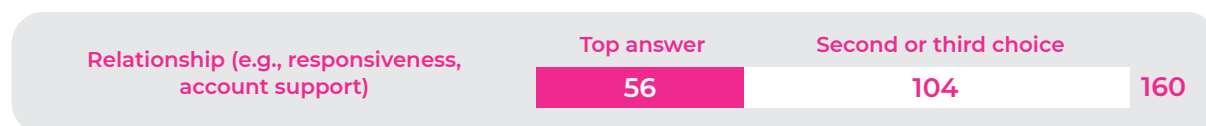
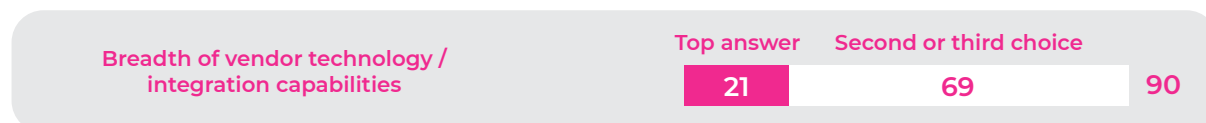


Fig1.2 Select and rank the below factors you use when choosing an ICT vendor

3. Breadth of Integration Capability

The capacity to deliver a unified solution that eliminates multi-vendor complexity.



The Service Dilemma

Buyers are exhausted by global technology conglomerates that treat Ireland as a minor sales territory, routing critical infrastructure emergencies through offshore, scripted Level 1 tech support.

When a network drops or a system stalls, tech leaders do not want to open an automated ticket destined for a corporate black hole. They demand human accountability, localised expertise and an extension of their internal team that answers under pressure.



“Service is no longer a differentiator. It is a primary commercial driver.”

Damien McCann
Managing Director,
Viatel Communications Services

Viatel Technology Group Service and Support

With 24/7/365 local engineering support, Viatel Technology Group’s support model is designed to ensure continuity, responsiveness and measurable outcomes long after deployment. This is reflected in a 91.4 CSAT score. In a market where accountability now defines value, Viatel positions service not as a support function, but as the foundation of long-term partnership and operational confidence.

What Our Customers Say

“It doesn’t happen very often but if there is an issue, I can pick up the phone at any hour of day or night. We know you will react and respond in the manner we need you to.”

Keith O’Connor
Director of IT, Cpl



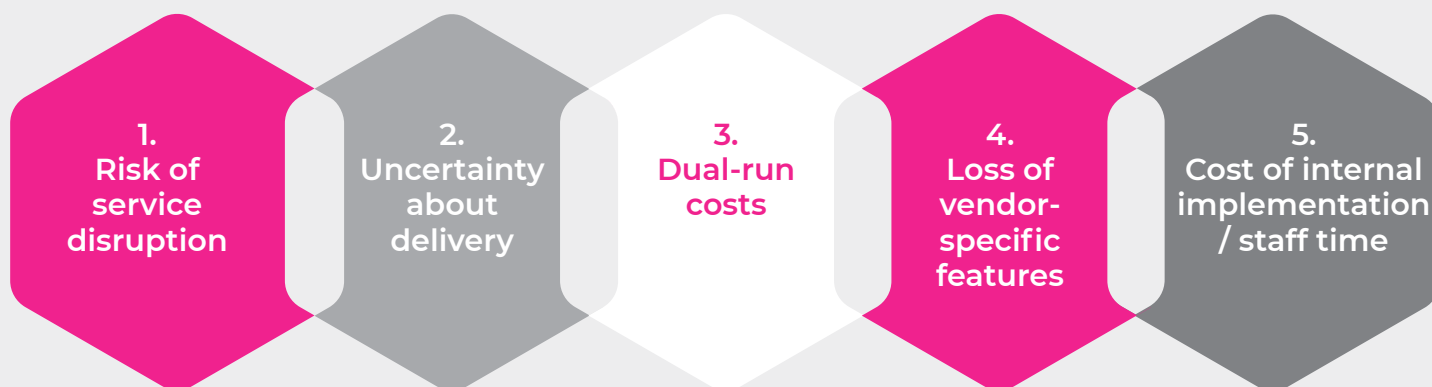


Finding 2

The Hidden Cost of Staying Still

Buyers are highly dissatisfied with rigid legacy vendors, but they frequently remain paralysed. The data reveals that the primary barrier to changing providers is the perceived risk of service disruption during transition. Concerns over data migration failures, dual-running costs and operational downtime outweigh direct financial incentives.

The Top Five Barriers to Switching Providers



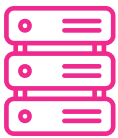
The Realities of Inertia

This inertia is a costly tactical mistake. Remaining locked into brittle legacy networks creates catastrophic exposure and unmeasured structural waste.



1. Brittle Foundations for Modern AI Workloads

Traditional networks lack the low-latency throughout and strict data residency required to execute secure, localised AI strategies without exposing proprietary data to the public web. Many networks are simply not fit for modern workloads.



2. Exposure: Connected, not protected

Running unhardened server setups or legacy routing protocols under a desk is no longer just a technical deficiency; under NIS2 and DORA, it is a severe liability.



3. Invisible Licensing Waste

While infrastructure risk dominates boardroom discussions, a quieter and often unchecked cost sits within Microsoft licensing. Survey data confirms that licensing expertise and the ability to optimise vendor spend are considered important capabilities when selecting a managed partner.

Yet in practice, many organisations operate in a state of over-licensing, under-utilisation or misaligned subscription structures. Without proactive licence management, businesses are routinely paying for:

- Dormant or duplicated user licences
- Incorrect tiering relative to actual usage
- Missed optimisation opportunities across cloud, security and collaboration estates

This creates a hidden inertia cost not visible in headline contracts, compounding monthly.



“The biggest IT cost isn’t switching partners. It’s not switching when you should.”

James Finglas
Managing Director,
Viatal Digital Services



Finding 3

The Move to Integrated Technology Partners

Fragmented supplier ecosystems are actively being rejected by the market. A majority of respondents found using a single supplier or reseller for multiple services preferable to managing multiple providers. Managing an array of isolated vendors creates severe integration challenges, diffused accountability and unmeasured operational overhead.

54%

of Irish ICT buyers indicate they are more likely to purchase from a provider offering a single integrated stack, such as that offered by Viatel Technology Group, combining connectivity, cloud and cybersecurity into a unified architecture.

Top Advantages of Integrated Technology Partners

This shift provides measurable operational advantages:



1. Elimination of Vendor Blame-Shifting

A single contract and invoice mean one supplier is completely accountable for end-to-end delivery. When an issue occurs, there is no cross-vendor finger-pointing.



2. Reduction of Hidden Architecture Costs

Integrated delivery removes overlapping line-item costs and duplicative management overhead across providers.



3. Hardwired Interoperability

A secure-by-design infrastructure ensures that core connectivity, cloud voice and cloud environments work natively together without requiring constant patch-management from an overstretched internal team.



Case Study:

The Move to Integrated Technology Partners for Stewarts Care



Stewarts Care provides health, social care, education, employment, and community support services for people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

Working with Viatel Technology Group, Stewarts Care has consolidated key technology services including Managed IT, Teams Rooms, secure network connectivity, and started an AI journey designed to reduce administrative burden and free teams to spend more time with service users.

By trusting Viatel with the underlying technical foundations, Stewarts Care can stay focused on its mission while relying on a partner that understands its organisation, services, and long-term needs.



About Viatel Technology Group

Viatel Technology Group helps organisations across Ireland and the UK simplify how technology supports their business. By combining connectivity, digital services, cybersecurity and AI, Viatel makes it easier for customers to reduce complexity, strengthen resilience and move forward with confidence. Viatel's commitment to security and operational excellence is backed by rigorous compliance, including ISO27001, SOC 2 and PCI-DSS certifications, in line with obligations as a NIS2 Essential Entity. As a Platinum Deloitte Best Managed Company, Microsoft's Modern Work Partner of the Year and Cisco Premier Provider Worldwide, Viatel possesses the verified scale and expertise to protect critical operations. This enables our customers work and grow securely.



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