

Executive summary

Digital native businesses (DNBs) were born in the internet era and are built around the latest available technologies at birth.

Unencumbered by legacy technology and processes, digital natives – across a wide swathe of industries such as gaming, retail, and education – move at the speed of tech to keep up with customer demand to work, live, and play online.

According to technology research firm IDC, DNBs are forecasted to spend up to \$128.9 billion on technology by 2026.

In March through May 2024, Akamai conducted an online survey with third-party research firm TechnologyAdvice to find out the technology investment priorities of DNBs across Asia and what keeps their tech leaders up at night.

More than 200 tech leaders responded to the survey across Australia, Southeast Asia, India, and Greater China.

What are Asian DNBs' business priorities and technology concerns? What do these tech-driven companies look for in their solution providers? Are all digital natives cut from the same cloth?

Whether it is due to maturing market competition or a fast-growing consumer base, nearly 9 in 10 DNBs surveyed will prioritise efficiency and productivity in the next 12 months.

This corroborates industry data showing rapid cloud adoption among DNBs. The 2021–2026 estimated growth rate for tech spend on cloud-based solutions is 37%, ahead of non-cloud software (16%) and IT services (11%).

This cloud-native modular architecture built around microservices that operate independently and communicate through APIs enables DNBs in this region to rapidly scale and meet rising customer digitalisation.

However, this can very quickly become a complex matrix of software, systems, and services that threatens to expose DNBs to greater cyber vulnerability.

Regardless of where they are in their cloud journey, DNBs in the region are acutely conscious that security is the biggest gap in their cloud infrastructure's performance.

In fact, their increasingly complex IT infrastructure may prove to be the Achilles' heel in enhancing their cybersecurity posture as a majority cite this challenge ahead of budget or compliance issues.

Such growing pains around increasing tech complexity may also be a cautionary tale for those considering cloud adoption or looking to migrate further into the cloud.

Find out actionable strategies to mitigate these risks in this paper.