

KEY FINDINGS

Welcome to 2020. We're not quite in the age of the flying cars yet, however, we are now firmly in the era of artificial intelligence (A.I.) in many homes and businesses across America. From manufacturing automation, inventory management to data analytics and office assistance, A.I. is taking on an increasingly active role in how businesses maximize their productivity and profitability, including among small- to medium-sized ones.

The latest Zix | AppRiver Cyberthreat Index for Business Survey found this latest business technology trend may not be slowing down in the near future. On the other hand, many SMBs seem unfamiliar with the security implications that come along with A.I. The findings indicate education and awareness would be crucial as A.I. continues to proliferate.



Overwhelming majority of SMBs plan A.I. adoption

- Artificial Intelligence appears to be a compelling and relevant business tool for today's small-to-medium-sized businesses (SMBs), with 88% nationwide with diverse vertical representation reporting high level of interest in A.I. adoption for their business.
- Among executives and IT decision makers in larger-sized SMBs (150–250 employees), the interest level is further escalated. 99% in this business segment report they are interested in the adoption of A.I.
- Industry sectors that expressed most wide-spread interest in A.I. adoption include Technology and Telecom (98%), Financial Services and Insurance (95%), Government (94%), Manufacturing (94%), Education (91%), and Transportation and Logistics (91%). The vertical least interested in A.I. adoption is Nonprofit.

Nearly 7 in 10 unaware of security risks associated with A.I.

- Among SMBs of all sizes that are interested in the adoption of A.I., nearly 4 in 10 (38%) are not aware of potential cybersecurity risks that could accompany its use, and would reconsider its adoption after learning more of such risks.
- Another 30% are not currently aware of cybersecurity risks that A.I. could bring, but say they will likely still move forward with its adoption after learning about the risks.
- In other words, 68% of all who are interested in A.I. adoption are unaware of its potential security risks, making education crucial to many SMB executives.

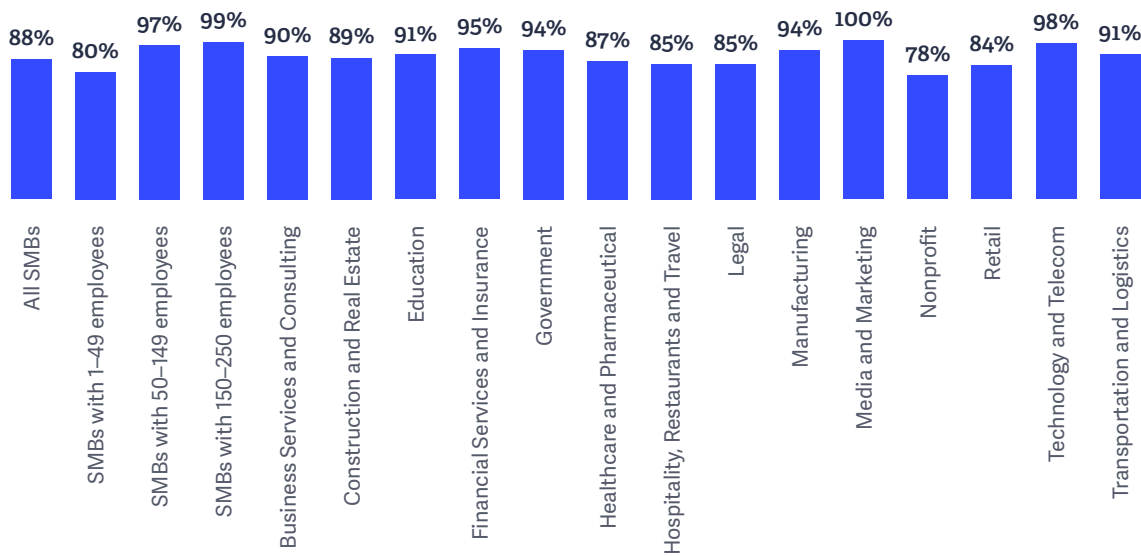
Majority of SMBs would adopt A.I. in spite of risks

- 32% say they already are aware A.I. carries potential cybersecurity risks, but will move forward with adoption as they believe the potential benefits and opportunities A.I. could bring to their business outweigh its risks.
- Including those who are currently unaware of A.I. security risk potentials but are eager for its adoption regardless, 62% of all who are interested will continue to consider A.I. adoption in spite of its potential risks.
- In each of fourteen key verticals represented in the survey, IT decision makers who plan to pursue A.I. adoption in spite of its security risks outnumber those who would reconsider because of the risks.

INFOGRAPHICS

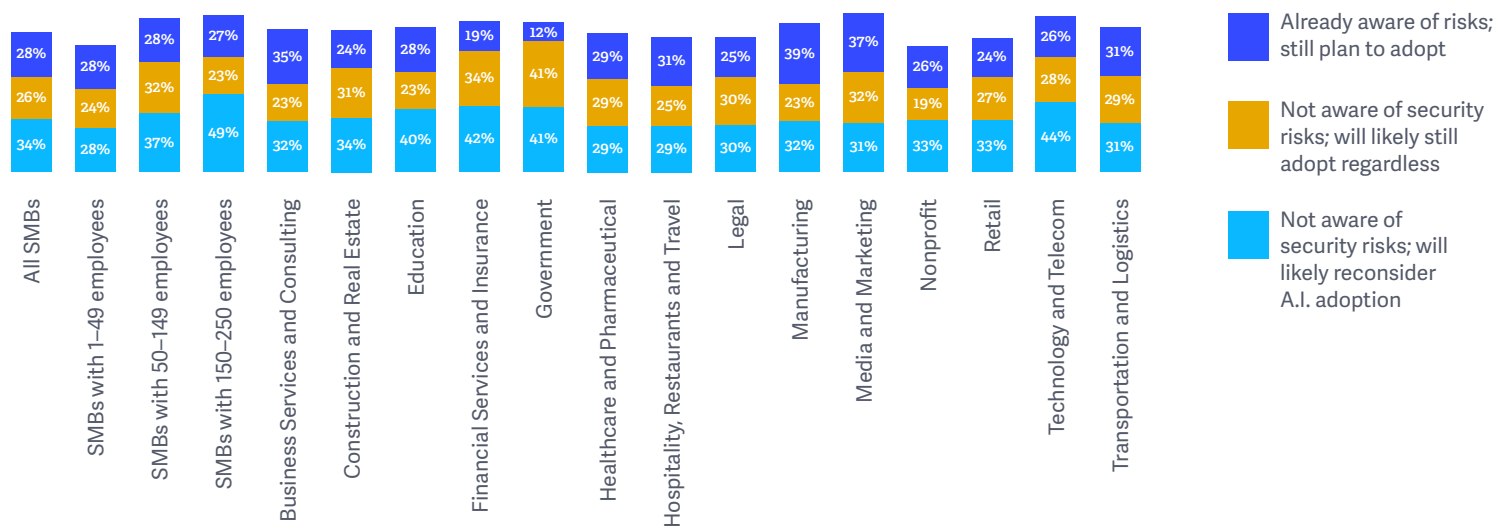
Nearly 9 in 10 (88%) small-to-medium-sized businesses interested in A.I. adoption for their business.

Percentages of businesses interested in A.I. adoption:



60%
of all SMBs — including 68% among those interested in A.I. adoption — are unaware there are security risks associated with the use of A.I.

Believing the benefits of A.I. outweigh its security risks, 54% of all SMBs — including 62% among those interested in A.I. adoption — plan to proceed with A.I. in spite of its potential security risks.

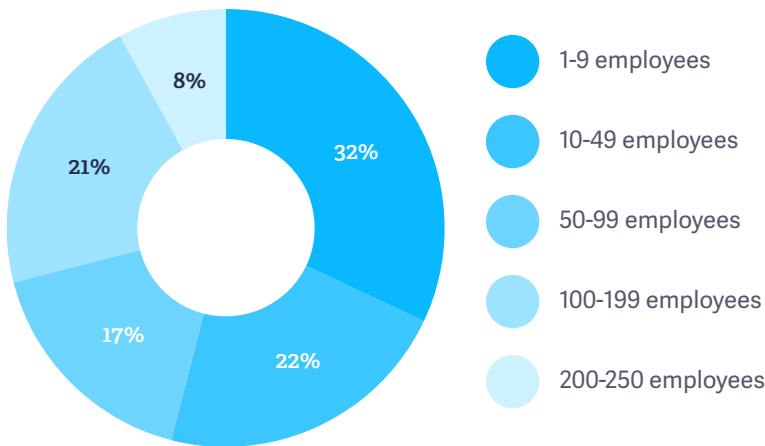


BACKGROUND

The Zix | AppRiver Cyberthreat Index for Business was developed by independent firms Idea Loft and Equation Research, in consultation with the University of West Florida Center for Cybersecurity, using survey data collected online in October 2019.

The survey has a +/- 3% margin of error. The national sample of respondents comprises 1,049 C-level executives and IT decision makers in small-to-medium-sized businesses and organizations with 1–250 employees (SMBs). 74% of these SMBs have compliance requirements. See [here](#) for more on the latest Cyberthreat Index for Business Report and Infographic.

Company Sizes



Industries

Respondents' industries include:

- Business Services and Consulting
- Construction and Real Estate
- Education
- Financial Services and Insurance
- Government
- Healthcare and Pharmaceutical
- Hospitality, Restaurants and Travel
- Legal
- Manufacturing
- Media and Marketing
- Nonprofit
- Retail
- Technology and Telecom
- Transportation and Logistics

Job Titles

