

eGUIDE

THE HYBRID WORKFORCE

**A GUIDE TO ENABLING DISTRIBUTED
WORKERS IN THE HYBRID ERA**

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INTRODUCTION

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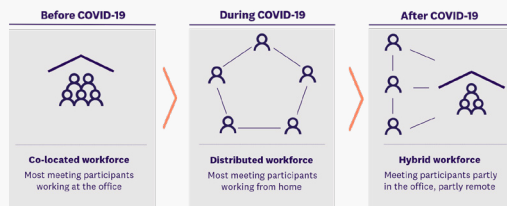
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INTRODUCTION

The move to remote working forced upon us several years' worth of digital collaboration in a single year. While the office gathered dust, we opened the door to a world of possibilities for flexible, digital ways of connecting across distances.

That doesn't mean the physical office has become obsolete. In the new hybrid workplace, the office is set to become a collaboration arena for people to participate in rich collaboration experiences, build rapport with colleagues and engage in training and education.

According to Microsoft's Work Trend Index, over 80% of managers expect more flexible home-office policies postpandemic, and more than 70% of employees expect to take advantage.



We're starting to see the full effects of using digital collaboration tools like Cisco Webex, Microsoft Teams and Zoom which have all reported exponential growth in their daily users statistics over the past 18 months.

In other words, people have realised we're no longer bound to traditional notions of time and space when it comes to when, where, and how we work.

Make no mistake; the transition now from a distributed workforce to the hybrid workforce isn't a prediction anymore. It's here.

The real question is:

How do we use that to our advantage; how do we best enable them and maintain a level playing field?



TRENDS

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TRENDS

First, you need to make sure you keep your most valuable asset — people. To put this in perspective, consider the following facts from a recent study.

In other words, to enable your distributed workforce, you need to keep them first. That first fact is a direct result of the second: if you refuse to adapt, if you stick to the old model and soldier on with closed eyes, you risk losing your talent to more progressive companies.

And why not? Why should people stick with Company A if they can produce the same results with Company B - but in a flexible way that makes them more productive and simultaneously awards them more free time? Or lets them move from the expensive city to an inexpensive town? Or vice versa?

41%

of the global workforce considers leaving their employer in 2021¹

46%

claim they are likely to move for an opportunity to work remotely²

58%

expect to continue working at least two days a week from home³

The point is:

Your approach to hybrid working will ultimately impact who stays, who goes, and what talent you can attract.

HOW TO INVEST

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HOW TO INVEST

Assuming you decide to (wisely) embrace the modern practice, the next challenge becomes how to invest. Many companies take shortcuts —or rather, they close their eyes again and throw technology at the problem, hoping it will go away so they can focus on their main mission.

Google is a great example of the opposite. In the early 2000s, they pioneered the office space by replacing the common cubicles with open creative zones, adding absurd effects like ping-pong tables, swimming pools, cafés and more. Outrageous at the time, quite commonplace today.

But they didn't set out to revolutionise the workplace for everyone else's benefit.

Google put enormous effort into analysing their workflow and how to best stimulate their creativity in their specific field before making any changes, and the changes were engineered specifically for their own benefit. In other words, we can't just copy Google and expect productivity to skyrocket.

The same goes for digital collaboration. You need to invest a significant amount of time and resources into understanding how we can facilitate an optimal workflow.

The only way to do that is to evaluate how you work best, what you do, and the physical environments available to you. Then, and only then, should you look for technology that fits the bill.

Remember, it goes:

People - Process - Technology. The answer to People and Process always determines Technology.

Your collaboration solutions must adapt to your hybrid workflow, not the other way around.

PLATFORMS, SOFTWARE AND CLOUD

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PLATFORMS, SOFTWARE AND CLOUD

After you've analysed your dependencies and workflows – on your own or with a trusted advisor - it's time to look at UC platform(s).

Do you go with Cisco Webex? Microsoft Teams? Zoom? Google Meet? Pexip? or a mix of these. There are a multitude of solutions out there, and new ones emerging. Making the right choice is vital.

A primary consideration is how easily your solution can be standardized throughout your organization. What is your competency level with tech? Does it work with the hardware in every office? What about international offices? Do you need to collaborate

with external clients? Are you Microsoft O365 users? All of these questions and many more will come into play.

Whichever platform(s) you choose will also determine a lot of the options available - including Cloud Services - so the key here is to do diligent research.

ABOUT CLOUD

It's absolutely essential you consider Cloud Services. The chance to create, save, and share files in the cloud has an extreme upside in a hybrid workplace - as was shown when cloud spending increased by 37% to \$29 billion during the first quarter of 2020.

Your choice will - among other things - depend on the level of security you require. Can you run applications in the cloud? Or do you need on-prem deployments for extra security?

Different platforms will offer different solutions with varying degrees of usefulness to your specific situation, so you need to ensure they can deliver now and scale over time.



THE HARDWARE JUNGLE

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THE HARDWARE JUNGLE

Next, it's time to start navigating the hardware jungle. Unfortunately, this market is even more saturated with options and has fewer standardized solutions.

In 2020, 88% of remote workers and teams struggled to ensure consistency of practice, with the same number highlighting the increased risk of misunderstandings. This is the sum of all the elements we have covered so far, added to the hardware challenge.

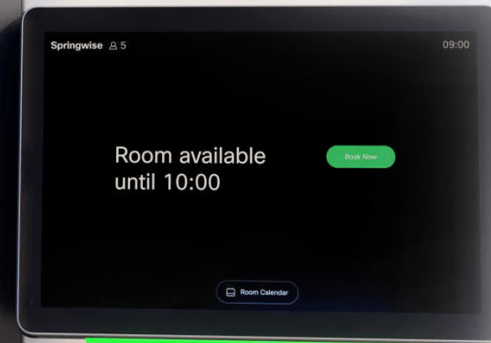
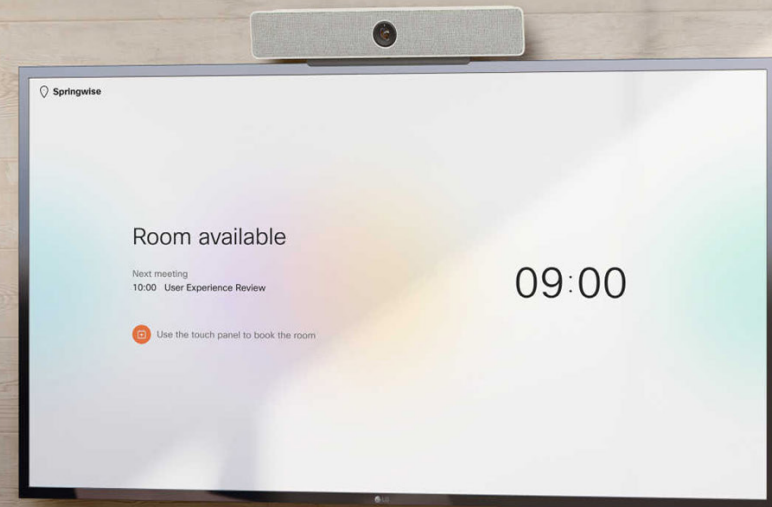
Luckily, your scope has been narrowed through your **People - Process - Technology** analysis and your choice in platforms and software. You know how you work, how much you plan to collaborate digitally, and on which platforms.

Now you can consider hardware (including its compatibility with your existing endpoints), and whether to standardize or customize.

Standardize if you can. The world of technology can be tough to inhabit at the best of times, and especially challenging when each office has a multitude of competitive brands. Imagine an office with randomly assigned Macs and PCs. The same thing applies to collaboration hardware; the more familiar you find the technology, and the more you drive towards standardization, the easier it is to adopt and master.

And that is your main goal:

Adoption and mastery of the right tools to enable a hybrid workflow.



FINDING YOUR WAY

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FINDING YOUR WAY

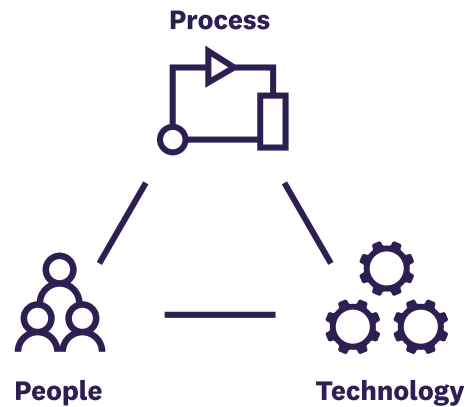
Whichever path you take to enable your distributed workforce in the hybrid era, the first step is to take it seriously - the competition most likely will.

Second, you need to make an effort to understand how you work, where, which tools are best suited to how and where, and if you can standardize the sum of those answers throughout your business.

If you don't have the time to find those answers, use a trusted advisor. An independent provider whose goal is to enable people to work together in different places and spaces from everywhere.

Because one thing is for certain:

“The future of work is hybrid. Businesses will NEED to support a mix of of in-office and remote workers.” Cisco



Sources

1. Microsoft Blog: One year in: 7 urgent trends for leaders in the shift to hybrid work By Jared Spataro, Corporate Vice President for Microsoft 365
2. THE RISE OF THE HYBRID WORKPLACE: A Global Survey of Executives, Employee Experience Experts, and Knowledge Workers, Dimensional Research
3. Going remote: Leading dispersed teams, Supercharging Creativity eBook, Institute of Leadership & Management Photography by Cisco



Working together. Everywhere.

Why Kinly?

Bringing people & technology together for better productivity wherever the work happens – Because great things happen when people work together.

01 EXPERIENCED

Dedicated expertise in planning, supplying, integrating and managing market-leading visual collaboration services.

02 PROVEN

Globally recognised businesses relying on us for secure and flexible meeting and collaboration services.

03 INDEPENDENT

A leading partner with the world's top vendors to deliver the best choice of solutions for public and private sector businesses.

04 SCALE

An end-to-end provider of workspace transformation services worldwide.