The Digital Workplace Imperative
Thanks to a wide array of rapidly evolving digital technologies, the world is advancing at an exponential rate, transforming the way we live and work. Today’s always-connected employees expect the freedom to choose when, where and how they work. They’re working remotely from home and on the road, often in multiple time zones and outside of fixed work hours. Wherever and whenever employees work, they’re turning to multiple devices to get the job done, with collaboration and connection increasingly vital to their productivity.

Indeed, the modern workplace is no longer a physical place, but rather an activity. As one executive put it, “We look at [work] as a verb rather than a noun. Work is something you do, not necessarily something you go to.”

For example, a Deloitte study of Swiss workers found that a majority use digital technologies and devices to accomplish their work. And as mundane tasks increasingly become automated, they’re focusing on knowledge-intensive, non-routine work—heavily relying on social interaction and creativity to be productive. Yet while the nature of work has shifted, many employers haven’t provided their people with the right user experiences and collaboration tools they need for their success.

As CIO, how do you enhance and personalize the technology experience to accommodate every employee’s need? How do you provide anytime, anywhere access to data from any device? And how do you foster an increasingly collaborative and productive work environment without compromising security?
Adapting to this new way of work is a C-suite imperative. And it’s on the agenda of every CIO tasked with providing the faster, smarter and inspired user experiences their employees desire. In fact, 87 percent of CIOs believe that digitally empowering their employees can drive at least 5 percent additional revenue growth over three years, according to a Forbes/VMware Insights survey. 4

Yet while CIOs clearly see the value of a digitally empowered workforce, keeping up with the growing requirements is no easy task. It’s important that CIOs support the workstyle needs of all their employees, especially the increasing number of “digital natives” who grew up in the digital age and expect to work at full speed using the latest technology. They must meet the demand to connect and collaborate from anywhere, increasing IT agility at the same time they lower costs. They need to streamline management of a wide array of devices and tools while maximizing security and compliance. And they’re required to to enable a fast developing array of emerging technologies as they continue to improve the way people work.

To complicate matters, CIOs are trying to get on top of all this at a time when there’s an acute worldwide shortage of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) job candidates—and huge competition for their attention. Technology talent shortages are now the top emerging risk organizations face globally, with an alarming 63 percent of companies citing the talent gap issue as a key concern for their organization, according to Gartner. 5

What’s more, research shows employees and executives are highly inclined to leave a company if they’re not given the opportunity to develop their digital skills. 6

“Organizations face huge challenges from the pace of business change, accelerating privacy regulations and the digitalization of their industries. A common denominator here is that addressing these top business challenges involves hiring new talent that is in incredibly short supply.”

—MATT SHINKMAN, MANAGING VICE PRESIDENT AND RISK PRACTICE LEADER, GARTNER 9

80% of employees say they prefer working for digital leaders. 7

42% of millennials are likely to quit a job if the technology available to them is substandard. 8

A Top Priority for Every CIO: Attracting & Retaining Talent

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The problem is that the growing lack of IT uniformity has made it increasingly difficult to manage IT environments, which, in turn, hinders business agility. As emerging technologies, applications and tools enter our work environments, modern workplaces have evolved into a complex web of technologies all designed to help us be more productive and enhance performance. The technology sprawl that’s ensued is often without governance and ownership, leading to a fragmented and frustrating experience for employees—and increasing the risk that they will jump ship to work for a more digitally mature competitor.
The Solution: A Modern, Digital Workplace

As the competition for talent intensifies, it’s critical that enterprises hire the talent necessary to power their digital future. And to do that, CIOs must take control over the ever-expanding universe of workplace technology and deliver a cohesive and seamless user experience. They need to develop a holistic approach to building a connected ecosystem that gives employees the creative and productive edge wherever and however they want to work. And they’re required to adopt an intelligent, unified architecture for managing all the devices, apps and operating systems employees rely on for their productivity.

Today’s employees are demanding a highly personalized consumer-like technology experience, and enterprises must respond with flexible, user-centric tools and services. Routine tasks should be automated to free up employees for more value-added work. And the organization’s data and intellectual property secured without hampering productivity.

The first thing to remember is that workforce transformation is driven by people, not just technology. The aim is to provide a culture with technology that supports the talent you have, enhances the way they want to work, and helps them be more productive. With that in mind, the most successful companies find out as much as possible about their employees and the way they’re working—and do so on an ongoing basis.

As you define your digital workplace, there are several questions you should ask:

- Who are your employees and what do they want?
- Do your employees understand your organization, its direction and purpose, and how they contribute to its goals?
- What technologies are already in your digital workplace?
- Where are there gaps between employee needs and available tools?
- Do your systems integrate and work together effectively?
- Can every employee securely connect to the information and tools they require, regardless of device or location?

With a thorough understanding of what your employees need and a strategy for unifying today’s increasingly sprawling IT environment, you can deliver the digital workplace your talent requires—boosting productivity, increasing digital dexterity, and helping to attract and retain the talent necessary to succeed in the digital age.
“Instead of focusing on technology first, we are shifting to a new way of working and thinking. First, understand and simplify the business process and workflows. Second, modernize and standardize the business process architecture. And third, provide a technology solution that enables a consistent, customer-centric experience throughout the customer’s journey.”

—STEVE SCIARAPPO, INTEL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY GROUP VP AND GM OF ENTERPRISE BUSINESS SOLUTIONS
A Unified Environment to Attract the Talent You Need

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