

Leader's Guide

# BREAKING THROUGH IN A DO-FROM-ANYWHERE WORLD:

## How CIOs Can Support People-Centric Technology Strategies

The urgent pivot to work-from-anywhere has evolved into a much broader expectation of workplace flexibility. **But with these changes, CIOs are presented with a paradox:**

On the one hand, employees increasingly expect the flexibility and independence that comes with remote work.

On the other, as boundaries between professional and personal life fade, employees feel pressured to be "always on."

This is not a failing of remote work. Rather, it is the growing pains of digital transformation, but by championing an empathetic work culture, CIOs set their organizations up for greater success.

The Dell Technologies Breakthrough Study, based on research with 10,500 respondents from 40+ locations, reveals great opportunity for organizations enabling effective work from anywhere:

**80%** of respondents said the shift to distributed work creates a more inclusive working environment.

Forward-looking CIOs are empowering their employees with the right technologies and experiences to work from anywhere, which affirms they are valued and heard. This increase in happiness leads to better retention, collaboration, and innovation across teams.

Now is the time to step back and evaluate how you can create an optimal do-anything-from-anywhere culture. **Here's what you need to know.**



## To embrace the future of work, CIOs need to answer some important questions:

- ▶ How do we engrain the freedom to do anything from anywhere into our work culture?
- ▶ How do we ensure equal access to career opportunities regardless of physical location?
- ▶ How can we balance digital security with employee autonomy?
- ▶ How can we accommodate multiple work environments and life circumstances?

Your organization can break through by delivering do-from-anywhere experiences that best support the needs of your people. Specifically, you need to focus on:

1. **Modernizing IT**
2. **Building a secure foundation**
3. **Delivering intelligent experiences**



## A more flexible style of work is required

Employee expectations have evolved dramatically in recent years, and a **return to old styles of work is not the answer.**



“That’s not a model for progress. There is a lot to be learned from our experiences of working from home/anywhere over the last few years. Businesses should take advantage of this opportunity to listen to employees’ desire for ongoing flexibility and restructure work in ways that offer secure, equitable, productive, connected experiences from anywhere.”

**Jen Felch, Chief Digital Officer and CIO at Dell Technologies**



## 1. Modernizing your IT:

Equip your employees to do their best work from anywhere with essential flexibility and efficiency.

The technology employees interact with should complement and advance ideas and goals. Modernizing your IT environment means making employees' digital work experience smoother and easier.

It's about simplifying every aspect of technology provisioning, deployment, support and refreshes.

According to The Breakthrough Study, the way technology implementation affects employees is often overlooked. Employees aren't just looking for the best technology to help them do their work. **Seventy-six percent of employees are asking organizations for at least one of the following:**

- To choose their preferred working pattern and provided the necessary tools/infrastructure
- Greater clarity regarding an ongoing commitment to flexible working and how to make it work
- To be fully equipped to effectively and equitably manage remote teams

What's more, employees need genuine permission and protection to choose how they want to work. IT can partner with other departments, including HR, to bring the pieces together across your organization.

Empathetic support and empowerment from leadership are crucial to see the full benefits of new technology.

Glen Robson, CTO for Dell Technologies' Client Solutions Group urges firms to seek answers to the following questions: "Amidst all this change, explore: How do people work together? How do they consume media or collaborate using the technology they already have available to them?"

It's important not to let assumptions or ill-informed IT strategies be the reason why people can't grasp technologies that could hold the promise of a far superior experience. It could cost them the opportunity to participate in new levels of balance and productivity. And once you have those answers, employ the power of innovation across your strategy, technology, business, research and design teams to excel in employee satisfaction, productivity, talent acquisition and retention. These are your differentiators."

### **Q** 3 key questions for CIOs to consider if employees can do their best work from anywhere:

- ▶ How can I create a working environment that is both more flexible and more productive?
- ▶ Do employees feel empowered to choose their preferred working styles?
- ▶ Are employees set up for success with the right technologies and IT support experiences?



# 72%

of respondents said that the wider adoption of remote work might expose their organization to cyberattacks

## 2. Building a secure foundation:

Connectivity from anywhere is a key part of enabling employees to work from anywhere. However, it's important to account for increased security risks. Distributed connectivity also leads to a wider attack surface area. With this understanding, 72% of respondents said the wider adoption of remote work may expose their company further to cyberattacks. In addition, 62% of respondents said employees are the weakest link across their cybersecurity defenses.

Protecting your organization's distributed people, devices and data—and safeguarding against the evolving vulnerabilities that are unique to digital and hybrid workplaces is crucial. The two main factors driving the urgency of this need are:

1. The proliferation of edges and entry points
2. Most employees are not experts in digital security

This is why security training is essential. As you evolve your security strategy, be sure you implement fail-safes, to make it difficult for employees to

inadvertently expose themselves and their company network to attack. This type of training not only benefits your organization, but your employees as well; no one wants to be infamous for falling for a phishing attack that takes the company website down.



“With the rising security threat, businesses need to arm their employees with the right knowledge and an understanding they can help thwart cybercriminals if they follow the security requirements their organization has put in place.

Businesses must also make that behavior the default through the deployment of intrinsically secure technologies and technology processes.”

**John Scimone, Senior Vice President and Chief Security Officer, Dell Technologies**

### Q 3 key questions CIOs should ask to assess if employees can work just as securely at home as in the office

- ▶ What solutions do we need to have in place to protect our data without sacrificing flexibility and freedom?
- ▶ How savvy are our employees in cybersecurity, and where would training be useful?
- ▶ Is our organization fully equipped to recover from a breach if one should happen?

Our study shows that half of respondents (49%) are overwhelmed by complex technologies and/or too much choice.



### 3. Delivering intelligent experiences:

It goes without saying that technology should be user-friendly—and yet too often the very technology that’s meant to make our working lives easier causes confusion and frustration. Now that you’re supporting a more distributed workforce, everything needs to be even more intuitive and intelligent.

Our study shows that half of respondents (49%) are overwhelmed by complex technologies and/or too much choice. They feel there may be too many solutions or too many settings to easily navigate.

By ensuring your users can easily and securely access the right devices, collaboration solutions and data capabilities when they need them, you empower your people to achieve more. Providing intelligent experiences means equipping your users for seamless productivity and collaboration, no matter where or how they perform their roles. Personalized and modern workspaces make this possible by ensuring users can work according to their specific styles and preferences, while still feeling connected to their peers in a digital landscape.

This includes providing intelligent, AI-based devices and understanding the needs of the different personas in your organization, so employees have the best possible work experience.

With technology centered on the needs of your people, you’ll not only lead your organization to thrive in the do-from-anywhere world but re-energize and excite your teams to build your next breakthroughs.



“The foundation of successful hybrid work models will involve personalized, consistent, disruption-free experiences, and will rely on a human-centric IT strategy. People will need easy access to the right tools to get the job done, wherever they are working for the day—whether that’s their kitchen table, the office, or from an undisclosed tropical location.”

**Brooke Huling, Vice President, Modern Compute Solutions Group, Dell Technologies**

#### 3 key questions CIOs need to ask to assess if employees can securely thrive in any setting

- ▶ Are the technology solutions we adopted in recent years actually working for our team?
- ▶ What resources are available when employees have trouble with technology?
- ▶ Is our distributed team able to communicate and collaborate as readily as if they were in person?



## Do-from-anywhere is the next evolution of flexible work

Remote and hybrid work has been a blessing in disguise for many organizations. In addition to giving your employees more flexibility and freedom, it can empower your HR organization to find top talent anywhere, not just within a certain radius from a physical office. With the right technology, processes and support systems in place, you are leading your organization and employees to embrace a bright future of work.

Building your next breakthrough requires the ability to innovate everywhere, with modern do-from-anywhere experiences. Placing your people at the center of work is how you'll achieve a competitive advantage.

With Dell Technologies by your side, you can optimize for the future and flourish in a hyper-connected world. We bring together the trusted partnerships, innovative technologies and end-to-end simplicity you need to serve all who depend on you, wherever they are.

Learn more at [dell.com/cio](https://dell.com/cio)

Learn more about the Breakthrough study and new insights at the intersection of people and technology at [dell.com/breakthrough](https://dell.com/breakthrough)

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