Logitech®

Power of Smarter Collaboration in the New Hybrid World

Approach

To thoroughly analyze and gauge the response towards the hybrid workplace, a 360-degree survey on workforce perception, reaction and future expectations was conducted.

A total of 3000 executives and employees from top and mid-tier enterprises and startups from varied industries from Asia contributed to the survey.

The survey helped us learn more about the various workplace strategies organizations adopted during the pandemic and how the future hybrid workplaces is expected to span out in the short and long term.

Power of
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With the widespread adoption of digital technologies and the pandemic greatly expediting disruption, the world skewed into a work-at-home model, which is now evolving into a progressive hybrid workplace. No one-size-fits-all framework is available and enterprises are inventing their own customised brand of hybrid workplace that best suits their business needs and culture.

Top-Management is finding permanency in these hybrid cultures to strike a perfect balance between business continuity, employee engagement and wellbeing.

Business leaders are adopting a role-centric perspective instead of letting levels and hierarchy determine what functions should work from home. This enables a variety of roles to be looked at as permanent work from home portfolios in functions like actuary, underwriting, and non-customer facing roles. Frontline employees like sales and customer executives, on the other hand, need adequate flexibility to mobilise in a safer manner.

Human resource leaders will continue to propel changes in recruitment practises, IT, employee engagement, stakeholder management, and communications more significantly in comparison to other functions as companies evolve into a people-centric culture.
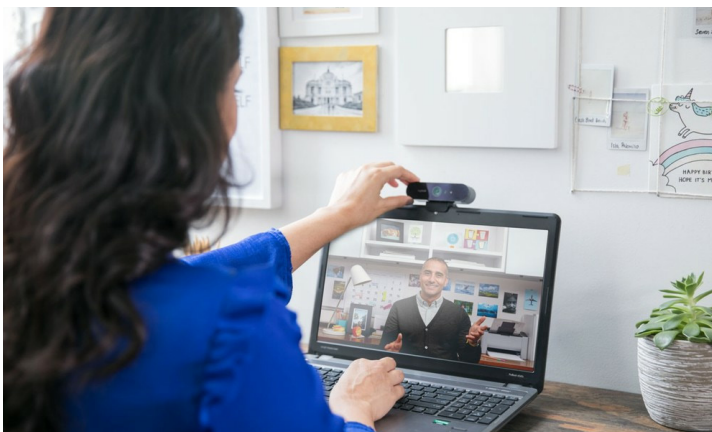
Role of Technology
in The Future of Work

Strategy and technology will be the decisive factor in determining how hybrid workplaces progress from here. It's critical for enterprises to invest and build capabilities, and leverage technology that empower their people to work effectively and efficiently. While remote work has of course, made organisations more affable towards technology, it's time they think beyond the video call meeting and make strides towards truly digitising their workplace.

There are also various productivity management tools available that help managers gauge the progress made by their team members on their goals. These tools also help the enterprise empower its employees with flexibility beyond the conventional fixed working hours. Other aspects like HR automation tools, superior and more automated collaboration systems etc., needs to be carefully considered before jumping onto the trend.

Productivity vs. Place

> " The question shouldn't be about the place but productivity. "

Though human resources policies and leadership have largely catered to onsite workers, new workplace systems are emerging. With more people inclining towards hybrid models, the ultimate question for enterprises must ponder should be over productivity and not place. About 30% of the total respondents in this survey suggested that they were more productive, engaged and positive working from home.

Why Is Hybrid Culture So Desirable?

The hybrid work culture brings together the best of both worlds. Organisations that resorted to a hybrid model during COVID-19 had shown better mental health, stronger work relationships and higher productivity rates in their employees. Also, employees in a hybrid system experienced less burnout than those who worked entirely onsite or entirely remotely.

The survey found that 25% of the respondents worked fully onsite throughout the pandemic phase and will remain this way despite their preferences. These workers, by convention, are employed in roles that require physical presence like retail, production and administrative work. Though a hybrid system might not work for these functions, the larger administrative and operating core can be reimagined with this idea.

Employees Working-From-Home on Any Given Weekday

Findings from the survey showed that less than 50% of staff are working-from-home on any given weekday. By design or default, more businesses are initiating onsite work with people working in shifts or some other form of flexibility. We also found that there is a possible difference in opinions between employees and employers and amongst the workers on which roles can operate from home. For most organizations, the larger decision rests in the hands of the respective managers and their ability to bring their teams on-board.

The outstation staff who were compelled to travel back to their respective hometowns during the pandemic, are now finding it difficult to travel back to office due to safety and workplace comfort reasons.

Enterprise Readiness to Welcome Hybrid Working

On assessing the current organisational readiness to hybrid work, the survey indicates that 44% of companies are actively working on improving their current systems. The hybrid model is not enforcement but an evolution with a few misses and wrong turns, which can be corrected by positive policymaking. Enterprises of smaller stature are finding it less complex to secure a hybrid workplace, while the more prominent organisations with multiple branch offices are still evaluating different solutions to find the right balance.

Employers are currently monitoring the response of their workers on the optimum balance of workdays at home vs in-office. The majority of the employers are currently aiming for more than 2 days of in-office days to secure their distinct work culture

Consolidation Vs. Delegation of Collaborative Technology

About 84% of the respondents suggested that collaboration solutions are not limited to headquarters only. It indicated that the scope of investments in collaborative solutions is much wider, and the benefit is also given to smaller branches/stores.

The early stages of the pandemic saw a large influx of investments in collaborative tools, and now executives expect to increase spending on virtual collaboration tools for team collaboration and manager training. The organisations rooting for hybrid cultures are planning to invest more in areas that support hybrid working models like inclusive company apps, dedicated HR portals, collaboration tools and proactive team building activities.

The companies that may have been slow to adopt collaborative technologies that support remote work before or secure an operational structure around work-from-home are still playing catch-up. These companies will need more time to transform their workplace in the future.
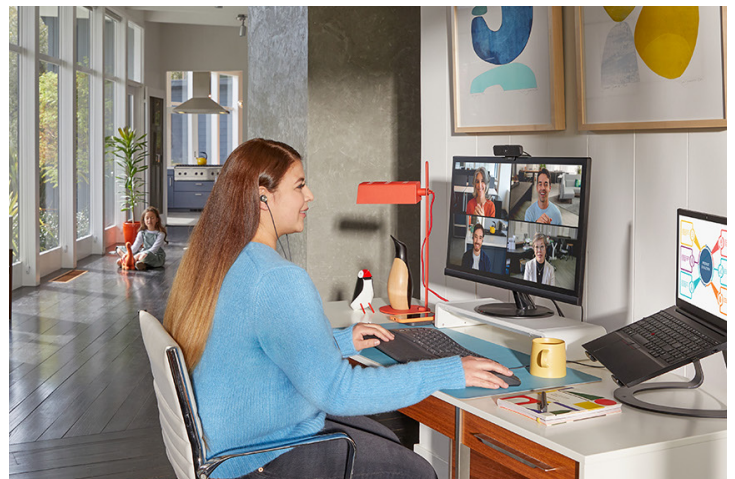
Status Quo On Collaborative Solutions

About 55% of the companies who successfully transitioned to the work-from-home model in the early pandemic find their ongoing collaborative solutions adequate. The remaining respondents believe there is potential for improvement or a complete change of their current solution in a hybrid setting.

Employers believe that robust collaboration tools and techniques are the cornerstones of any organisation's productivity growth in a hybrid setting. Uninterrupted and seamless communication channels and interdepartmental harmony are top leadership expectations from these tools.

Creating An Effective Collaboration Experience

77% of executives strongly believe that a successful fostering of an effective collaborative experience is the key to organisational growth. The respondents are positive when asked about any funds allocated from the IT budget over the same.

The survey found that employees who reported higher productivity are from companies who have been better at performing collaborative activities on new projects and serving customers. On the other hand, employees who reported lower productivity are the ones facing challenges collaborating with colleagues, accessing information and balancing work with home duties. This data might give a better picture on allocating funds, experiencing productivity benefits and knowing what the employees need in hybrid work cultures.

Companies Racing Towards Enhanced Collaborative Experience

The survey indicated that 63% of companies are in the process to deploy better collaboration solutions within the next 3 months. Other companies suggested that they need between 6 months to 12 months' time to figure out the right collaboration solutions partner and initiate deployment.

Executives feel that the right collaborative tools are the prime reason for the success of remote workplace models and a significant contributor in the employee sentiment holding on to the same. Employees believe proactive, collaborative solutions can replace the traditional office structures as they make work easier and better. The fact that employers can save operating costs by diverting funds dedicated to maintaining offices to employ better collaborative tools makes the argument even stronger. A hybrid workplace setup is expected to bank on both a significant cost-benefit and positive employee sentiment.

Ranking Priority of Video Collaboration for Various Business Functions

Video collaboration has become the heart of the work-from-home culture, and its potential is projected to carry forward in the hybrid version too. Its benefits far exceed that of just dialling in as it reduces multi-tasking, creates human connection, and lets you read body language and facial expressions. It reminds you who is in the meeting and increases the likelihood of actively participating.

Survey respondents ranked sales and customer support/service functions to be the prime beneficiaries of video collaboration more

than any other function. As it has become their go-to tool to ensure smooth workflow. Finance and HR/People & Culture were ranked second in the priority list. Leadership & team building was another aspect that gave precedence to video solutions over any other collaborative format.

Board meetings, discussions and brainstorming sessions have primarily benefited from features of screen share and virtual whiteboards. Easy access to meeting rooms through a link has also empowered collaboration from anywhere & everywhere vs the traditional in-room office meetings.

Other Functions Leveraging Video Collaboration

On asking the other functions & departments about their usage of video, the respondents indicated that IT, Marketing, Operations/Delivery, R&D/Manufacturing give equal priority to video collaboration tools.

From morning meetings to daily EOD reports and productivity assessments, video collaboration has proved its worth in every aspect of the business. Every department is leveraging video in some format and enabling better coordination of work. Training & development and skill-building is another aspect where video has ensured a smooth transfer of knowledge to employees in remote places. Highly functional features of video paired with the benefit of recording have made it easier to preserve discussions for future references and use.

HR departments are actively engaged in using videos for successful onboarding and employee recruitment, giving HR officers an alternate and more flexible mode for engaging with candidates in the post-pandemic phase.

Securing Business-Grade Video Conferencing Equipment

The survey suggested that many video conferencing providers have their own unique selling points and usability benefits are competing with each other.

We also found that a modern hybrid work culture will be governed and founded on reliable video-conferencing equipment. Adequate audio, multiple single screens in boardrooms and functional computer equipment will determine a successful business function in a hybrid setup. New upcoming video solutions like 360-degree cameras, real-time information access and cognitive AR/VR solutions can also play a part in the new hybrid structure.

The Most Crucial Features in a Credible Collaboration Solution

Survey respondents indicated that there are a variety of aspects organisations consider to assess collaborative solutions. Ultra HD video quality, all-in-one device (Camera+Speaker+Mic), plug & play and ease of use are the most critical parameters for evaluating any video collaborative tool. Global availability and reputation come second on the priority list for corporations.

Video conferencing hardware that is certified by a significant cloud collaboration platform is another critical aspect for consideration. This ensures seamless operation between hardware with the collaboration platform in any meeting setup.

Good video and audio quality is the foundation of a wholesome meeting experience and this requires the implementation of quality software and hardware. To foster a long-term hybrid work culture, organisations need to focus on good headsets and microphones for remote participants, sound levels checks, minimise background noise and good quality video. Price being third on the priority list indicates that organisations value collaboration higher up and wouldn't mind investing more if they have to.

Employee Demands & Expectations for a Better Work-From-Home Experience

The survey unveiled some critical aspects about the needs and wants of the employees and their ideas for a successful hybrid work model. The respondents stated that their employees require better equipment to be able to come to terms with a new hybrid model successfully.

Respondents suggested the following equipment to be highly desirable to enhance the work-at-home experience

Better Webcam	Comfortable Headset	Speakerphone for Hands-Free Calls	All-in-one Video Collaboration Device	Wireless Keyboard & Mouse	Wireless Earbuds

For a truly hybrid culture, investments in equipment needs to be done for both employees working from home and those coming to the office.

Executives also indicated the need for an inclusive collaboration system that secures the privacy of critical company information rather than using free alternatives.

Which Solutions Are Widely Accepted in The Market Today and Increasing Demands for Primary Video Conferencing Vendors?

The survey indicated that companies have a diversity of primary video conferencing software options to choose from. While every software has its own benefit and ease of use, companies prefer marquee solutions like Zoom, Microsoft Teams & Google Meets for daily collaboration.

The report also suggested that 68% of enterprises do not have primary video conferencing vendors. We expect companies to soon switch to a permanent video conferencing vendor to ensure smooth hybrid functioning without any major disruptions ahead.

Challenge
for Leadership

Remote work or hybrid workspace can give rise to disengagement among people due to working in silos and the lack of camaraderie and team spirit. Hence, employees can feel anxious, and a sense of job insecurity can seep in where they feel they are not important to the organisation.

Leadership and management need to captain the situation and involve their teams in the bigger picture. Communicating to employees about the importance of their work and their contribution to the larger organisational objective will be productive as well as motivating. A sense of purpose and belonging can help to kill feelings of insecurity.

The world around us has significantly changed in the COVID era, and physical workplaces are no longer adequate to fulfil employee satisfaction and yield optimum productivity. Organisations need to evolve; develop their own unique system and reimagine their people's practises and policies. They will help to build an engaged, secure, and productive workforce.

What's A Modern Forward-Looking Enterprise's Plan for The Hybrid Workspace?

The survey showed that while employees and employers might face a short-term disruption with traditional workplaces, a middle path between work-from-home and office workspaces will prevail - the Hybrid Workspace. The definition of office will change for different organisations and industries; for some it can act more like a meeting spot for the week; for others, it can still rebound to its conventional roots.

A modern, forward-looking organisation that values its employees will carefully assess its situation, nature of business, and its employees' needs and wants before making a decision. For that, a robust, well-planned system should be put in place, and additional investments to secure proper collaboration equipment from screens to speakers and webcams must be done on an organisational level.

From a Human Resource perspective, a comprehensive evaluation of the situation and rewriting of HR playbooks becomes essential. HR needs to formulate a schedule for employees to come to the office, take necessary precautions and develop new employee motivation instruments. Necessary incentives and flexibility will have to be given for such a system to survive for long.

While the above aspects can be internally reformed and achieved, partnering with a credible video collaboration provider will be essential to fabricate this hybrid system. The vendor will help with day-to-day conferencing and collaboration and provide productivity analysis and ensure crucial company hours are not misused. The use of data and comprehensive analysis to find maximum employee productivity and gauge insights from people and culture, collaborations, security and networking will fall under their role.

About Logitech

Logitech designs products that have an everyday place in people's lives, connecting them to the digital experiences they care about. More than 35 years ago, Logitech started connecting people through computers, and now it's a multi-brand company designing products that bring people together through music, gaming, video and computing. Brands of Logitech include Logitech, Ultimate Ears, Jaybird, Blue Microphones, ASTRO Gaming and Logitech G. Founded in 1981, and headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland, Logitech International is a Swiss public company listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange (LOGN) and on the Nasdaq Global Select Market (LOGI).

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