IT Leaders Guide to Creating a Robust Digital Workplace

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Refreshing Employee Engagement in an Era of Changing Business Dynamics

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"It is not the strongest or the most intelligent who will survive but those who can best manage change." - Charles Darwin

In the wake of the global pandemic, COVID-19, the above words seem to echo in the business context, now more than ever. And managing the organization's most crucial resource, employees, is no exception. We live in an era where trends change in the blink of an eye. Social distancing has created a springboard into the digital space and a ripple effect that will alter things forever. To be effective in creating business value, organizations must transform into an agile, employee-centric innovator with even more efficient processes and service delivery.

At the Gartner Workplace Summit 2019, we learned why the C-suite has a digital workplace imperative and how organizations that invest in employee experience can improve employee engagement scores by up to 10 percentage points. New ways of working include a redesigned digital workplace and ensuring that employees, including those working remotely, have the tools, technologies, and information necessary for doing their jobs seamlessly.



Not surprisingly, one of the primary takeaways from the summit was that all stakeholders should have ownership of the digital workplace transformation initiatives. "Digital workplace initiatives cannot be treated exclusively as an IT initiative," said Carol Rozwell, distinguished research vice president at Gartner. "When initiatives are executed as a series of technology rollouts, employee engagement and addressing the associated cultural change are left behind. Digital workplace success is impossible without such collaboration."

Creating an Effective Digital Workplace

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The big winners post-COVID-19 will be those that optimize their digital workplace and accelerate digital experiences. With employee engagement trends changing drastically with the addition of new generation workforce, forward-thinking business leaders must keep themselves updated and start by answering some questions.

- What is the current estimate of the company's technology performance or efficiency, and can it be improved?
- Is the company falling behind its competitors, and why?
- Can new technology be brought into the company to remedy problems and issues?

Once organizations have the answers to these questions, they should start by involving employees in determining what technology will best address the problem and are right for their work. Corporate IT departments should be accountable for **involving end-users in signing off on the system design and leading the implementation.**

Significant factors in creating an engaged workforce

31%

Giving employees more opportunity to have input on work processes and how they are accomplished

28%

Easy access to the information employees need to do their jobs and make decisions

Significant barriers to creating an engaged workforce

39%

The new software does not easily integrate with existing information systems 36%

Employees are not consulted when choosing new software applications Further, what sets a digital workplace apart is its approach to establishing relevance and sharing knowledge. Successful organizations focus on eradicating information silos. Consolidating your company's knowledge silos into a single index is the best way to facilitate quick access to information. With an added layer of AI-powered relevance and search capabilities, you can guarantee that your employees are getting the most appropriate information, according to the context and intent of their query, for every interaction.

Having a **Knowledge Management System** in place that intuitively and easily allows pertinent employees to easily navigate the digital workplace and share their knowledge with others will ensure success.



^{*} Insights from the Harvard Business Review Analytic Services Report sponsored by Freshworks

Enabling the Digital Workplace - The Role of IT

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Building an influential design culture around employee experience is crucial for meeting the business demands and keeping the corporate data secure. IT teams must design and deliver the digital workplace that employees will use, taking into account the devices employees use throughout the day and the locations they will be working from.

If employees and teams believe that IT is a hindrance in a way that slows them down, they are more likely to avoid adopting the digital workplace tools and services designed to make their work easier. To avoid these issues and capitalize on the new ways that employees work, organizations and their IT teams should consider these five elements while choosing an application for their digital workplace:



Accessibility

Employees need the flexibility to select the most effective way to access business applications anytime and from anyplace. Multiple device support is the only way to deliver a consistent experience in a perimeter-less work environment by having a real-time context of the devices used to access the application. It also ensures a consistently excellent user experience that is also highly secure.



Collaboration

Employees lie at the center of organizational performance and drive the business's success or failure. Thus while creating a digital workplace, IT teams should select an application that supports collaboration and connectivity while enabling compliance and mitigating repetitive tasks.





Digital security

The convergence of mobile and cloud computing technologies has created data security issues worldwide. However, new platforms now allow businesses to store information securely in the cloud and make it accessible from various devices. The correct application enables offline data access and seamless peer-to-peer activities among devices.



Automation

As the digital workplace expands, managing security and user experience becomes more complex. To handle the scale, automation is critical - from onboarding a new device or employee to automating remediation steps to ensure an employee's device is compliant with policy. All of this should be possible without generating help tickets that require manual intervention. Automation ensures minimal operational costs while removing gaps that could result from leaving devices in non-compliant states for too long or inconsistently applying security policies.



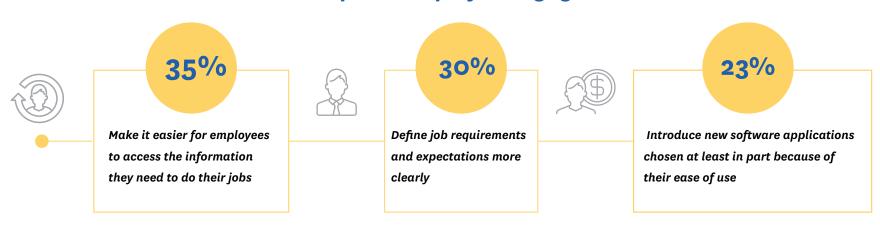
Gamification

A benchmark study on trends and best practices in performance management indicates that 31% of businesses have adopted gamification in engaging their workforce through the use of their enterprise platforms. While enterprise gamification's primary goal is to improve employee engagement, it taps the basic desires of the end user's impulse, which revolves around the idea of status and achievement.

How Are IT Teams Enabling ••••• Employee Engagement?

Productivity flourishes when IT/ non-IT issues of employees get addressed efficiently and quickly. To keep the communication processes streamlined and engagement level climbing, organizations should take a more in-depth look into the technological pain points that employees might encounter regularly.

What steps has your organization recently taken, or does it plan to take in the next 18 months, to improve employee engagement?



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Testimonials

An infrastructure of support begins with strong IT service management (ITSM). Modern, practical workplace technology, like request processes, supports high levels of employee engagement. Leaders must locate wherein the process, employees experience additional pain points and then work to find sustainable and scalable solutions. Here are some ways that IT leaders have prioritized solutions that elevated employee engagement:



Lauren NunnallyDirector of Support
Swinerton Builders

The Swinerton Family of Companies, United States, initiates a change to their Service Management as their leadership team appreciate what matters to their employees Freshservice has changed the way our teams function and improved their work-life, as well as their performance.

Read the full case study



Ben Greeno
IT Director
Judson University

Judson University, United States, sees greater team collaboration and saves time

efficiency by changing the conversation from 'I need more people to be successful' to 'my people are successful because they can focus on what they mean to do.'

Read the full case study



Romel Dababneh
Corporate IT Operations Manager
Aramex

United Arab Emirates-based Aramex improves agent productivity by 50% to foster a culture of innovation

We wanted to get rid of the elephant in the room and move to the cloud. The simplicity and obviousness of the interface made it the preferred choice for the agent and the user.

Read the full case study



Keeping employees engaged in their work is a constant challenge, especially when workers are distracted by external developments. But the benefits of employee engagement, including potential improvements to productivity and customer satisfaction, make the efforts to drive it worthwhile. Technology is playing a critical role in driving employee engagement within organizations, and IT is at the forefront in ensuring employees are equipped with the right technology to excel in the new normal.

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