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# Improving Technical Support is Vital in Delivering Great Employee Experiences



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# Summary

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## Catalyst

The world of work looks very different after the events of 2020. The pandemic has made businesses reprioritize their digital transformation agendas to meet the needs of a workforce that is working more remotely. Improving technical support and the employee experience in general have become areas of key focus for businesses as the workforce has become more geographically dispersed. Improving employee experiences requires businesses to consider more than just the technology, however: employee sentiment and well-being are other key factors that must be considered. This report looks at why tools and practices that help improve technical support are so important in optimizing employee experiences. The report references data and insights from an employee experience survey Omdia recently conducted with organizations in the US.

## Omdia view

The sudden shift to more mobile and flexible work styles brought about by the pandemic challenged businesses to accelerate the speed and scale at which certain digital initiatives were delivered, including those that enable remote working and better communication and collaboration. While these objectives may have garnered the most media headlines, another important business need has also emerged over this challenging period, that of improving the way that employees are supported in their use of technology. As people work from new locations and with new technologies, IT support teams are accelerating efforts to improve the way they are supported. To achieve this, IT teams are looking to new capabilities and practices to help ensure support issues are resolved quickly and effectively.

Embracing new automated technologies will be vital in helping IT teams transform the way that technical support is delivered to a more remote workforce. Traditional support capabilities and approaches such as telephone-based support and knowledge resources will remain important, but these will increasingly need to be complemented by new automation and self-heal capabilities to optimize technical support efficiencies and improve employee experiences. It is this important impact on employee experience that makes support practices and technologies such valuable components in the broader digital workspace ecosystem.

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# Key findings

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- Improving employee support and experiences is an important business priority.
- Improving technical support will be vital to improving user experiences.
- People, process, and technology all play an important role in improving employee experience and technical support.

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# Improving employee support and experiences is an important business priority

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## Interest is growing in tools that help businesses improve technical support and employee experiences

The events of 2020 have highlighted the importance businesses must attach to delivering the best employee experience and technology support practices possible. In a recent employee experience survey conducted by Omdia to support this white paper, just under half of respondents advised that they planned to evaluate or implement end-user experience management (EUEM) capabilities by the end of 2021. Furthermore, only 5% said they have no plans to implement this type of solution. Undoubtedly, being able to better understand, measure, and positively affect employee experiences is becoming a priority for businesses, and interest is increasing in technologies and support practices that can support this objective.

The pandemic has had an impact on not only the locations that people work from but also the way they work. As employees have become more geographically dispersed, it has become more important for businesses to understand what employee experiences look like and how to measure them. Tools that help improve technical support and help businesses better understand and measure employee experiences are also becoming an important digital workplace capability. In Omdia's view, a true digital workplace is not delivered via one single solution but more via an ecosystem of different technology and service capabilities that, when combined, help improve employee productivity, with employee technical support capabilities being vital. **Figure 1** outlines some important digital workplace solutions and highlights the business adoption trends associated with these capabilities.

**Figure 1: Digital workplace capabilities that businesses either currently deliver or plan to deliver within 18 months**

**Which digital workplace capabilities does your organization deliver in support of employees?**

Digital workspace capability	Currently deliver	Plan to deliver within 18 months
Cloud-based productivity applications (Microsoft Office 365, Google G Suite, Zoho, etc.)	75%	20%
Laptops and smartphones for most staff to support remote working	69%	22%
Technology to measure users' digital experience	65%	23%
Digital communication and collaboration tools	64%	30%
Real-time monitoring of service performance	60%	30%
Dedicated IT support self-service app for end users	60%	28%
IT services supported by and IT service management platform (ServiceNow, BMC Helix, etc.)	59%	24%
Mobile device and app management via an enterprise mobility tool	57%	31%
Autonomous incident remediation via a virtual agent and/or automated chatbot	48%	32%
Zero-trust security	45%	32%

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Source: Omdia

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# Improving technical support will be vital to improving user experiences

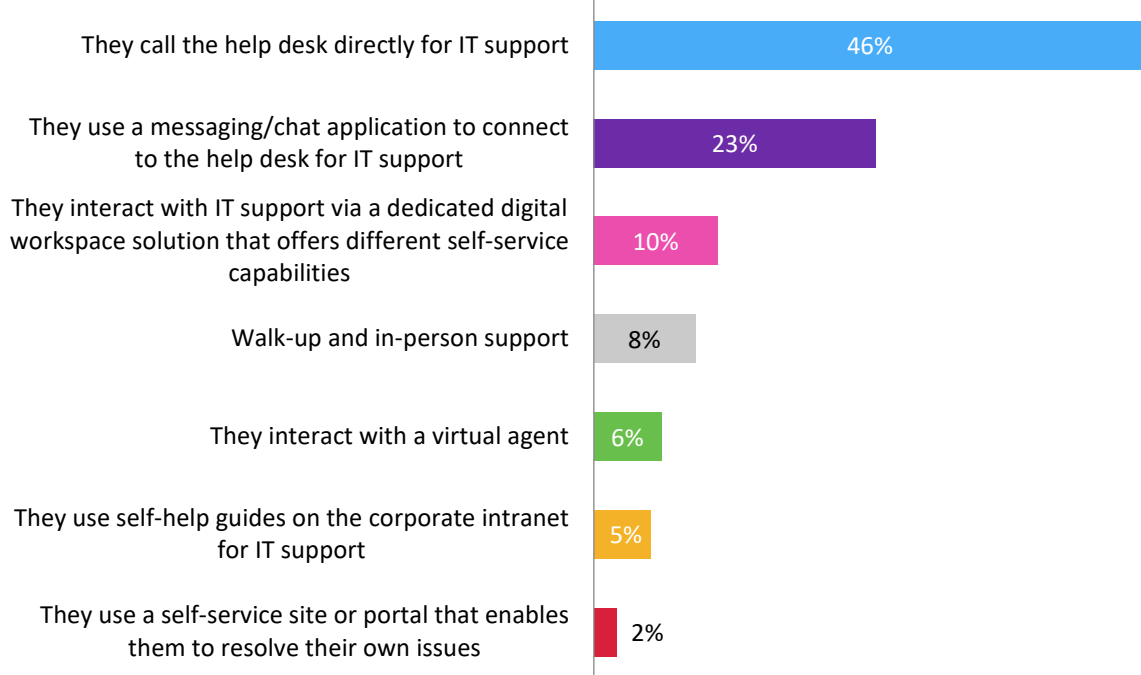
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## IT support approaches need to evolve to keep pace with modern employee demands

Traditional technical support methods are being disrupted by new ways of working, and IT support approaches need to evolve to keep pace with modern work styles. The most common method by which IT service desks currently deliver technical support to end users is via the telephone (46%), followed by support being delivered via a messaging/chat application (23%) (see **Figure 2**). Positive user experiences are certainly delivered via this traditional support method, but it is not the most efficient channel, especially as work styles change and become more mobile. Self-service capabilities have been around for many years now, but Omdia's research shows they are still not achieving optimal utilization, with only 10% of respondents saying self-service was the primary method of delivering technical support.

Figure 2: How employees interact with technical support teams

**Which would you say is currently the primary method by which your employees are commonly supported by IT and the help desk?**



Note: n=107

Source: Omdia

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The more disruptive methods of delivering technical support, including self-help capabilities and the use of a virtual agent, still have a lot of potential to grow adoption. Enterprises yet to explore these more advanced support capabilities should look to see how they could enhance existing support practices, because these technologies offer a lot of potential to improve the employee experience.

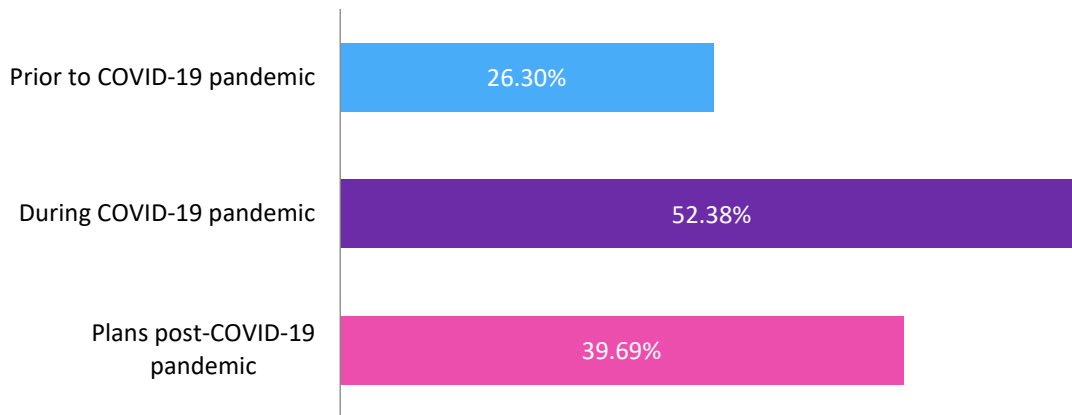
## As remote work becomes the norm, it is important that businesses embrace new technical support capabilities

The COVID-19 pandemic is causing businesses to reprioritize their digital transformation agendas, with remote working being an objective of high importance. Not only are more employees working remotely now, but businesses are planning to support increased levels of remote work over the long term, even after the pandemic. Omdia’s data shows that organizations expect that 40% of employees will continue to work in a more remote fashion after the pandemic, up from 26% before it, as shown in **Figure 3**.



Figure 3: Remote work styles are here for the long term

**What percentage of your total employee base was remote-working during the pandemic, and what percentage will continue to work in a more remote fashion after it?**



Note: n=107

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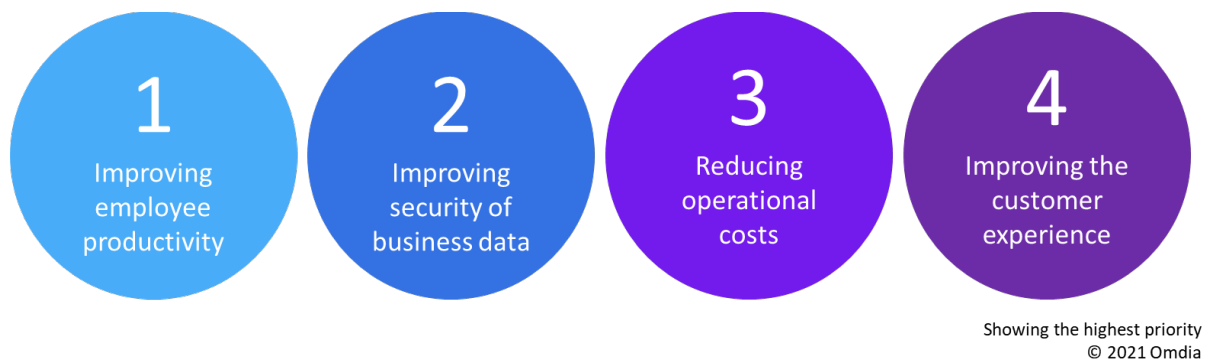
For larger organizations (those with 2,000–10,000 employees) the number of people expected to work in a more remote fashion after the pandemic is even greater at just over 50%. This permanent change in work styles will affect the way that businesses deliver technical support to users. This is already something businesses are finding challenging, with providing technical support to a more remote workforce being identified by organizations Omdia surveyed as the most challenging aspect of modern support. As people increasingly work in a more remote fashion, it is important that businesses embrace automation and self-remediation support capabilities such as virtual agents to be able to better scale and speed up support practices. Doing so will help businesses ensure they provide a range of different support options that collectively will help to deliver positive user experiences.

# People, process, and technology are all important in improving employee support

## Different business drivers are influencing investment around new technical support capabilities

Overall, improving employee productivity is the highest-ranked business driver currently influencing investment in new employee support capabilities. It is unsurprising that businesses want to invest in tools that can help people work better, especially given how work is changing. The priority attached to this objective is even higher than that given to security, evidence of how highly businesses will value employee productivity improvements in future, as shown in **Figure 4**.

**Figure 4: Priority business drivers influencing investment around new employee support capabilities**



Source: Omdia

The priorities do vary slightly based on organization size, with businesses that have between 2,000 and 10,000 employees highlighting security as the most important objective, followed by reducing

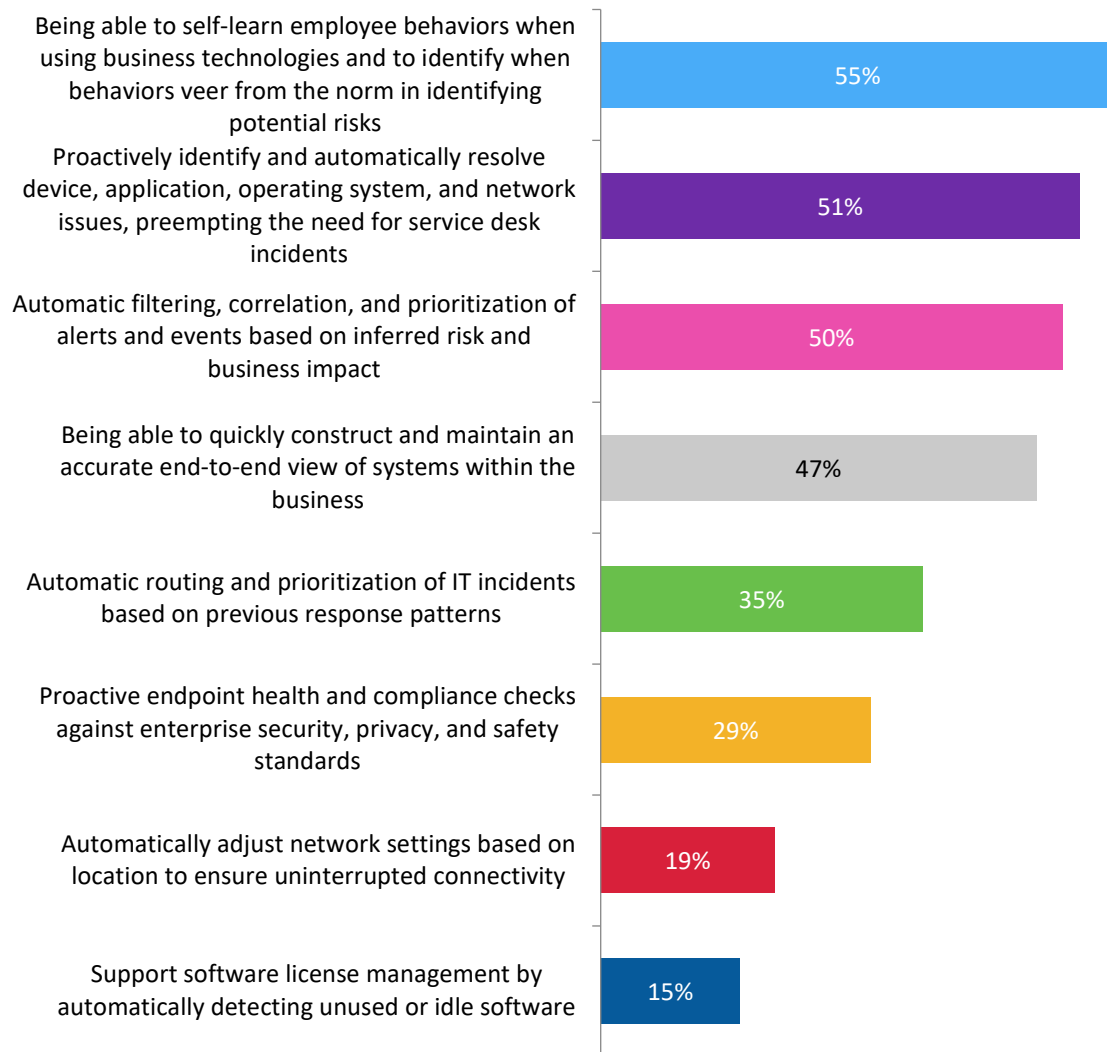
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costs and then improving employee productivity. Smaller organizations that have between 500 and 2,000 employees highlight a reduction in costs as the most important priority.

Our survey also explored what enterprises identify as the key benefits associated with investment in advanced artificial intelligence (AI) and automation support capabilities. Being able to identify when employee behaviors when using technology veer from the norm to identify potential risks is viewed as very important from a support perspective, with 55% of respondents highlighting this as the most important benefit. Additionally, having capabilities that help proactively identify and automatically resolve device, application, operating system, and network issues, preempting the need for service desk incidents, is another benefit seen as highly important by those surveyed, as shown in **Figure 5**.

Figure 5: Key benefits of improving digital employee experience management

**What benefits would your business most value from the use of advanced AI and automation capabilities in improving employee support?**



Note: n=107

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Source: Omdia

There is also recognition from businesses that employee experience is improved by understanding the employee journey and improving the systems and technologies people interact with in improving the way they get work done.

## The key characteristics of a digital employee experience management solution

Now more than ever, it is vital to support employees in the effective use of business systems and to ensure they have access to the resources they need to work productively. Effective technical support is an important element here, but support practices must evolve to become more proactive to meet the needs of a more flexible workforce. The strong link that effective technical support has to employee experience and productivity also makes capabilities that support improvements here an important part of a broader digital workspace strategy and technology ecosystem. Supporting this need is an emerging category of digital employee experience management solutions that often use AI and automation capabilities to proactively detect and remediate technical support issues that end users experience. These tools act on alerts generated via the different devices, applications, and networks that employees work with, enabling the quicker identification and resolution of incidents by end users and IT support teams.

## It is vital to better integrate technical support practices and systems

When the systems that businesses will most value in improving employee experiences and technical support over the next 12–18 months are explored, better enabling mobile workers is most highly ranked. Unifying support tools currently in use across the business to save costs and deliver more streamlined technical support experiences was also viewed as being very important by respondents.

**Figure 6: Top four systems businesses value in improving employee experiences and support**



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Source: Omdia

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This will be an important objective going forward as businesses look to rationalize the number of solutions used to deliver the best technical support possible. IT infrastructure monitoring tools, service management solutions, and endpoint management solutions are just three examples of the types of tools that technical support teams rely on to deliver end-user support. Consolidating alerts and events generated by these solutions will help deliver a more integrated view of the incidents and issues people are experiencing across the different devices and applications they interact with at work. These integrated insights will be invaluable in improving overall support approaches, especially when AI and machine learning capabilities are also used to make the process of incident identification and remediation even quicker.

## Optimizing employee experience requires businesses to look beyond just the technology

Another employee support aspect that businesses are finding challenging is improving employee well-being. Often, employee experience initiatives and metrics that enterprises rely on only focus solely on how satisfied people are when using business technologies and apps. This is an important perspective, because getting a true view of what the employee experience looks like requires organizations to consider not only how satisfied people are in the use of business technologies and systems but also their general well-being and sentiment. Developing this more comprehensive view of employee experience will be especially important as workforces become more remote. Building this perspective will require new metrics and ways of measuring employee experience, so technology will play an important role.

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# The Digitate ignio AI.Digital Workspace solution

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Digitate ignio AI.Digital Workspace is a solution that offers many of the capabilities discussed in this white paper, supporting businesses looking to improve technical support:

- ignio AI.Digital Workspace can collate information gathered across the devices, applications, operating systems and networks that employees interact with when working. This provides technical support teams with important context around issues that end users experience, helping make incident resolution faster and more efficient.
- The ignio self-heal app can be installed directly on the devices that employees use for work and delivers autonomous resolution capabilities to support compliance checks, application troubleshooting, and general device health and performance tuning.
- ignio AI.Digital Workspace also supports technical support teams with an enterprise dashboard that delivers insights on devices being used by employees and any issues they may be experiencing. Proactive recommendations on resolving issues are also delivered via the Enterprise Dashboard.

Collectively, these capabilities are important in helping organizations support employees in a more proactive and contextualized fashion. As people increasingly work away from the traditional office environment, they will increasingly gravitate toward using new portals of support that can help them resolve any issues quickly and efficiently.

Digitate's solution supports a variety of different personas:

- The solution helps improve employee experiences and the experience people have when interacting with IT.
- For IT operations and service desk teams, Digitate ignio AI.Digital Workspace helps improve support-practice efficiencies in addition to optimizing endpoint security and compliance.
- Improving technical support in turn can help businesses improve the overall customer experience being delivered, thus helping them deliver more efficient and impactful business outcomes.

# Appendix

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## Methodology

Omdia conducted a survey of 100 key decision makers for advanced employee support and digital workspace. The survey was conducted in November 2020 and was targeted to only qualified respondents in USA. The survey covered a range of different verticals and was evenly split between SME, mid-market, and large enterprise customers.

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We create business advantage for our customers by providing actionable insight to support business planning, product development, and go-to-market initiatives.

Our unique combination of authoritative data, market analysis, and vertical industry expertise is designed to empower decision-making, helping our clients profit from new technologies and capitalize on evolving business models.

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## About Digitate

<https://digitate.com/>

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