

How to shape a future-proof digital workspace?



**Business
Services**



The world is changing rapidly. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic organizations are embracing the digital transformation journey at a faster pace than before. These organizations acknowledge the importance of agile working and the necessity of digital workspace technologies to accelerate innovation and create competitive edge.

The first lockdown at the beginning of 2020 drove many organizations into hurried, temporary solutions to enable remote working. However, in 2021 the majority of employees are now able to work from home, it is now time to enhance flexibility, security and productivity. Shaping a future-proof digital workspace at this moment will ensure organizations gain a long-term advantage.



“Through 2024, businesses will be forced to bring forward digital business transformation plans by at least five years as a survival plan to adapt to a post-COVID-19 world that involves permanently higher adoption of remote work and digital touchpoints.”

Source: Gartner, Forecast Analysis: Remote Work IT Spending, Worldwide (5 January 2021)

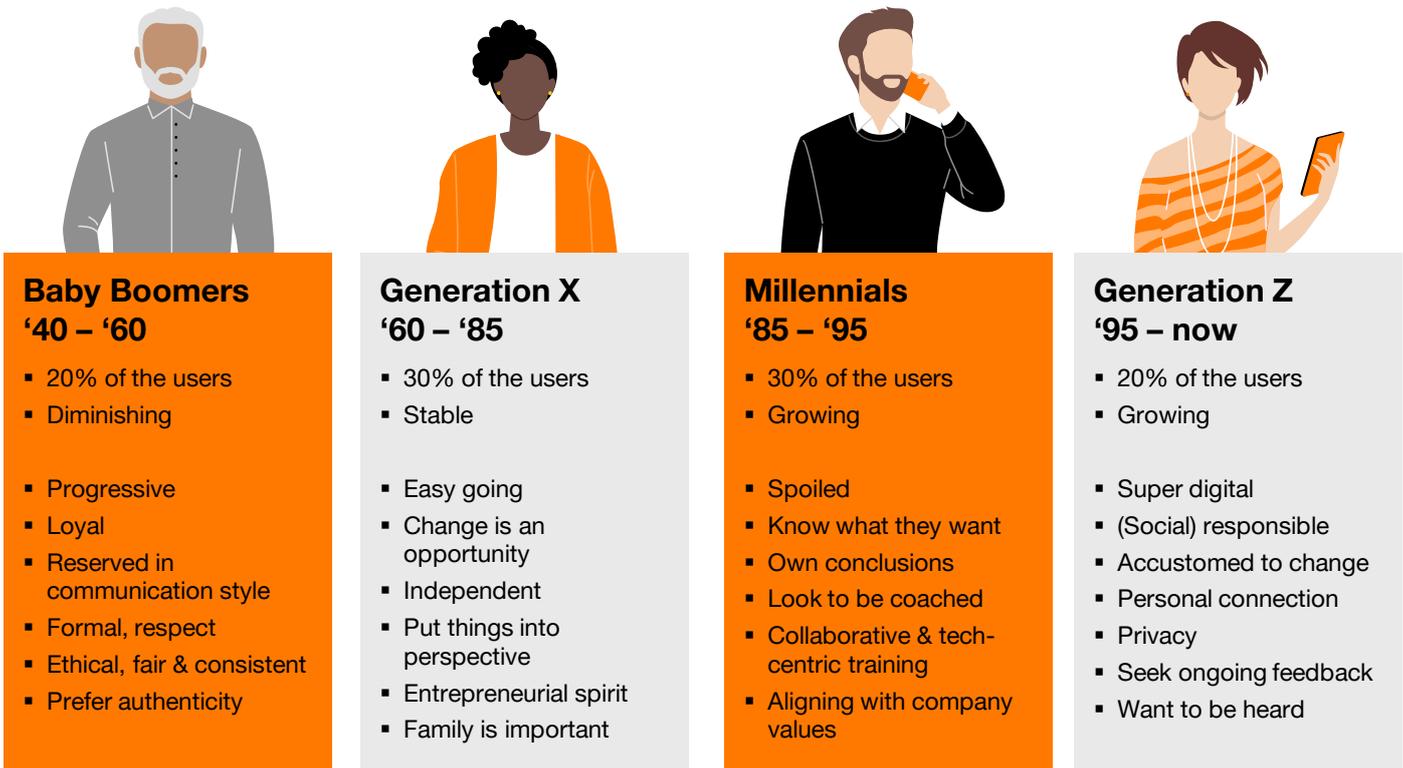
Bursting the bubble – stop thinking technology

For digital transformation to be successful, providing the right tools to enable your employees to do their jobs in an effective, efficient way is key. Therefore, employee experience needs to be a priority for IT, rather than deployment of technology. CIOs should put digital workspace initiatives at the top of their agendas as they need to enhance employee experience and increase security and productivity. Putting employees first will be your best move towards business success.

Ensuring a business is harnessing the full potential of its workforce requires a change of view. As a trusted digital workspace partner, we strongly recommend IT departments to stop thinking technology and start understanding the business outcomes for each and every person within your organization. IT should stop seeing remote workers as a generic set of users, since they’ve got very specific needs based on function and seniority, job goals, age and technical skills. To actually empower your workforce, it’s necessary to connect IT needs to individual tasks and needs.

Understanding generational difference in the workspace

The working environment has gone through a major transformation over the last decades, particularly in terms of population in the workforce.



With four different generations making up today's workforce – with their specific demands to the way they want to work, how they learn, and what makes them happy – IT can no longer push a generic workspace. Only those organizations who look beyond generation are able to meet their employees' needs in a way it's beneficial to business success.

Why the youngest generation brings the biggest challenge

Those who are shaping the new digital workspaces are facing the biggest challenge in satisfying the youngest employees (Generation Z), since they're much more tech-savvy and are used to working in teams and accessing their data anyplace, anytime and on any device.

“Through 2024, remote workers will use at least four different device types for remote working, up from three devices in 2019.”

Source: Gartner, Forecast Analysis: Remote Work IT Spending, Worldwide (5 January 2021)

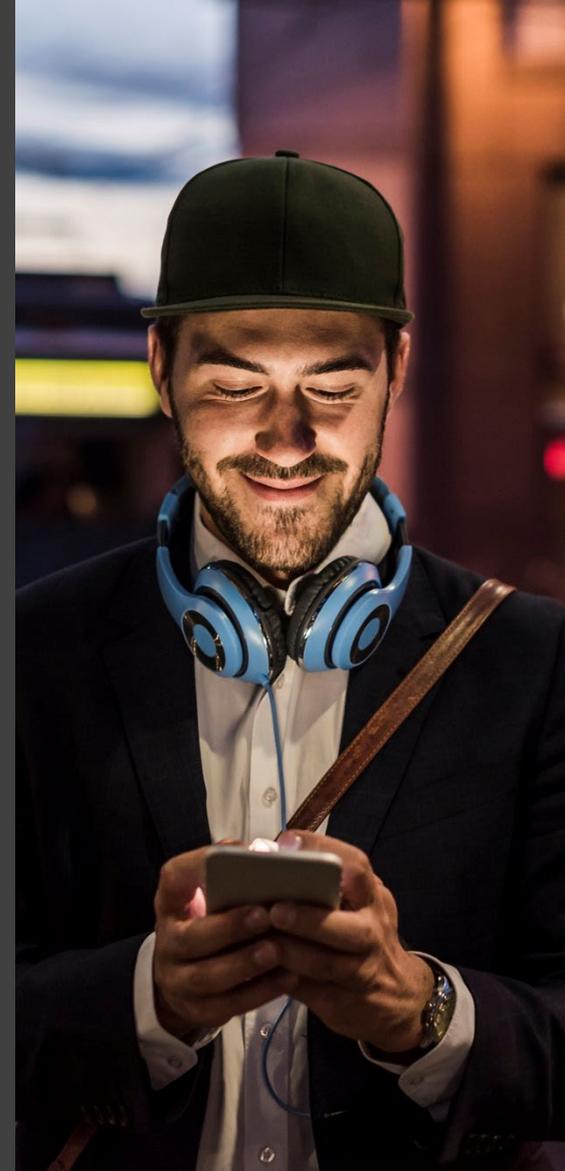
The figure consists of a dark grey text box on the left and four icons in a 2x2 grid on the right. The icons are: a desktop computer (top-left), a tablet (top-right, highlighted in orange), a smartphone (bottom-left), and a laptop (bottom-right).

Anyplace, anytime: overcoming the hurdles

As a result of rushing to connect remote workers a lot of organizations ended up with a sprawl of many different on-premises and online applications. Company (critical) data is spread across multiple locations and clouds all over the world which makes compliance and security difficult to manage as company owned data is not always stored on company owner services or assets and each SaaS application potentially comes with a different set of credentials.

By implementing a workspace portal as a single-entry point and creating one corporate identity per employee it is possible to increase security and compliancy. One single user identity ensures there is also one point to prohibit access to applications and data in case a user resigns or for other urgent reasons. This will optimize costs and improve security, services, and processes. But more important, it contributes significantly to an improved employee experience.

Ideally from their endpoint they will log onto the company workspace portal where they will find all the (SaaS) applications, company data and collaboration tools they need to do their job. The portal allows employees to access everything they need to work securely from any location regardless of the device. The digital workspace puts a stop to losing time (on average an employee loses almost an hour per day) by switching between systems and applications, so it largely determines the effectiveness of the workforce.



Employee experience starts at onboarding

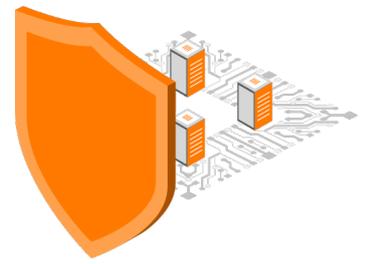
The digital workspace not only helps workers to become more efficient than ever before it also has a positive effect on employee satisfaction, a goal which every company strives for.

To increase employee satisfaction IT departments should be aware that employee experience starts at the onboarding moment.

Since starting as a new employee comes with a lot of new impressions, worrying about access to all kind of systems or getting your devices up-and-running should not be one of them. Therefore, IT has to make sure that user onboarding is a smooth process of enrolling a device – either a company provided or a personal device – and automatically configuring it with all access and applications needed. Implementing a digital workspace with a single-entry point of access to all required applications regardless of their type or location (on-premise, cloud) contributes to this and increases productivity, efficiency, and employee satisfaction. Furthermore, this same workspace portal supports seamlessly management of the joiner, mover and leaver processes.

Overall it may be said, that adopting a tailored approach helps to ‘burst the IT bubble’ and to shape a robust work environment which is able to provide every employee the tools they need – e.g. messaging, collaboration, working with business applications, data access – wherever and whenever they need. Don’t forget: the user is king.

Technical key takeaways for building a future-proof digital workspace



Security

Moving from the office as our primary location of work to remote access we will face new security challenges. The workstation of the employee is no longer protected by physical access control, firewalls, intrusion detection systems and other IT surveillance. This implies the digital workspace needs a different security approach.

According to Gartner analysts by the end of 2020 around 5% of the users will be served predominantly by zero trust network access (ZTNA) and increasing towards 40% in 2024. End-to-end security from the device, through portals towards the application landscape will become essential.

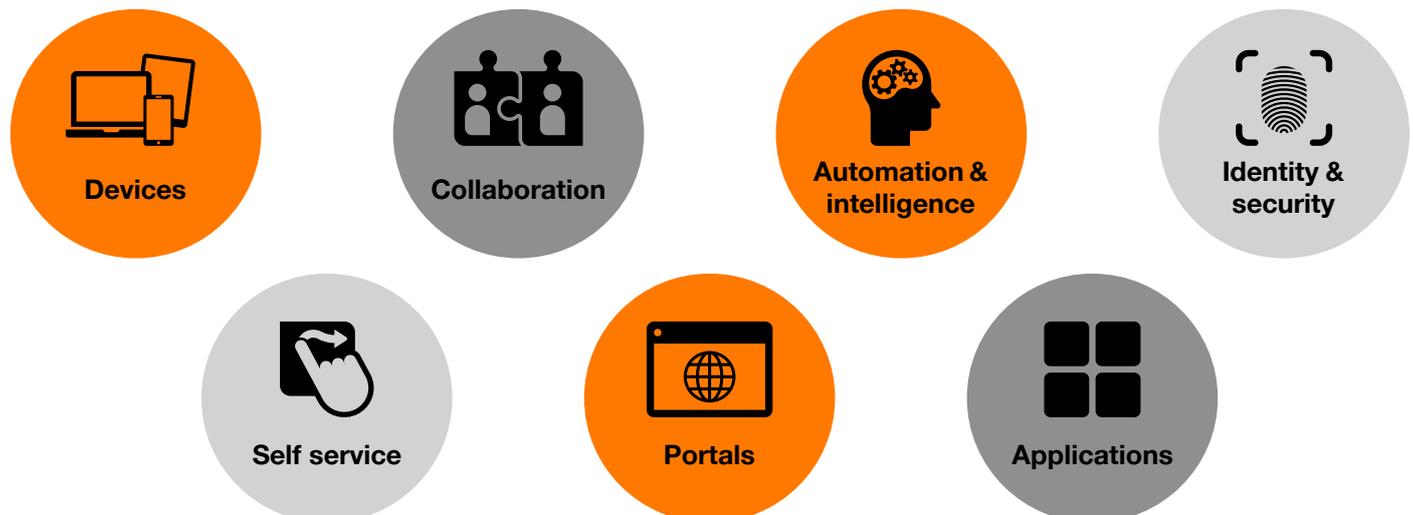
However, Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) is now mainly used for accessing apps and data outside the office, it should be the standard way to way to authenticate. Single Sign On (SSO) solutions are essential in contributing to a great employee experience.

“By 2024, at least 40% of all remote access usage will be served predominantly by zero trust network access (ZTNA), up from less than 5% at the end of 2020.

Source: Gartner, Forecast Analysis: Remote Work IT Spending, Worldwide (5 January 2021)

Moving from ‘device centric’ to ‘user centric’

The digital workspace has evolved to a comprehensive eco system providing a variety of functions.



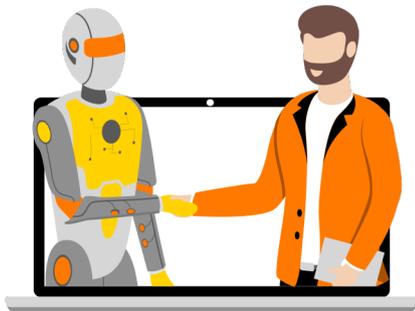
Historically, the endpoint of the user was the primary device to work from. The device was delivering the workspace and provided the desktop experience. IT first managed the device, then present the applications as an image. This was very cumbersome to manage with a proliferation of images to match both the different users and the different devices. This complexity led to a trend to outsource the management of these processes to third parties.

Nowadays, the persona of the user has become more important. Rather than delivering the applications to a device, the applications are securely made available to a workspace portal that can be accessed from multiple devices.

Other IT trends to keep in mind

Collaboration tools

Collaboration tools accelerate the ability to work in multiple business teams. During the day an individual may work in multiple teams focused on delivering business outcomes. Each team needs access to specific data and resources to achieve its outcomes.

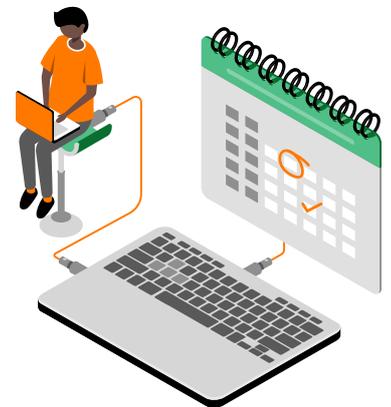


Automation & intelligence

Automation & intelligence is a growing proportion of the modern digital workspace where trends are detected followed by automated corrective actions to prevent errors for other users. When application crashes are increasing after an update, the distribution of the update is paused and rolled back until the application issues have been resolved.

Modern management

Managing the digital workspace will be more efficient with the help of modern management technologies. For example, it is now possible to send an employee a laptop directly from the distributor. They can log on to the device and using zero touch technologies and all settings, security and the specific applications for that employee are configured into their digital portal populated with applications, tools, access to data and self-service portals suited to their persona. Users are up and running and productive from day one.



More as a Service

Elements of the digital workspace are increasingly being delivered as a service. More and more services are subscription based with a lot of automated delivery of standard features and little need for customization.

Immersive workspace

In the near future more organizations will focus on 'immersive workspaces', where different forms of 'reality' come together to allow people to develop and work together in a futuristic way. Starting with virtual assistants and chatbots, which can make your working life easier, but above all more productive. These immersive trends are also supporting the digital workspace.



Transforming the IT service model

Digital transformation is not only about transforming the business. Revision of the IT service model is key in achieving success.

As focusing on business outcomes is central in delivering a future-proof digital workspace it is necessary to align user experience, IT performance and IT support in eXperience Level Agreements (XLA).

Furthermore, digital transformation requires a strong focus of IT on enabling the business and driving innovation. Therefore, IT should consider implementing peer support (by identifying application experts) and self-service to decrease functional support.

In addition they should take outsourcing into account. By using the skills of a third party for designing and supporting a future-proof digital workspace, company resources will be able to strongly focus on supporting their business instead of spending valuable time on dealing with all the complexities associated with the digital workspace.



Learn more.

Sign up for a free, 2-hour consultation where we'll discuss your challenges, the latest digital workspace innovations and map out a draft for your digital workspace transformation journey.



How it works?

1. Request a free, 2-hour consultation

Simply fill out our online form to get started with your free consultation

2. Intake interview

Once we have received your request we will get in touch with you to schedule an online intake appointment to understand your situation in a more complete way and assess your goals.

3. Innovation consult

Our innovation coaches are ready to give you free advice for two hours (online/in person). Learn how to shape a future-proof digital workspace that gives your organization a long-term competitive advantage.