LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR EMPLOYEE SUCCESS:

Why a Defined Digital Workplace Strategy Is Key

EVERY COMPANY IN THE WORLD IS UNDERGOING A DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, racing at breakneck speed to determine how it can make its products or services more relevant to a new generation of customers. But in a world where even toothpaste companies must carefully consider how consumers will interface with their brand, organizations must figure out how to attract, empower, and retain the right type of employees and provide them with the tools they need in order to be successful.

"Your employees are also consumers, and they have access to all these new experiences in their lives," says Fouad El Naggar, vice president of product management at Citrix and CEO and cofounder of Sapho (now part of Citrix). "These experiences create expectations for them as employees and a deep cognitive dissonance when they walk through the front door of their workplace and feel like they have walked through a time portal back to the 1990s."
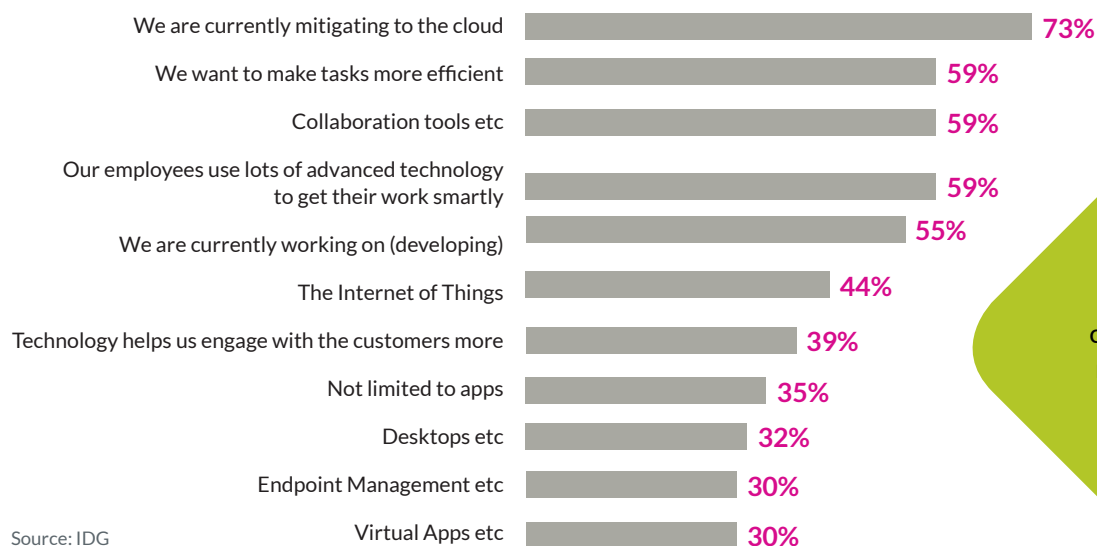
Winning companies and forward-facing CIOs will eliminate this cognitive dissonance and recognize that investing in a digital workplace strategy isn't a luxury; it is table stakes. So what are the essential elements of a digital workplace strategy?

In a survey of IT decision-makers conducted by IDG and Citrix, the importance of investing in the right technology tools became clear. When asked to describe their organization's current and planned digital workplace technology strategy, 73% said they are migrating to the cloud, 59% are focused on collaboration tools, 59% said their employees use a variety of advanced technology, and 44% cited the Internet of Things (IoT).

> " IT owns the keys to the kingdom. As a result, it's not possible to deliver a superior employee experience without IT's involvement. "
>
> — Fouad El Naggar, Vice President of Product Management, Citrix and CEO and cofounder of Sapho

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FIGURE 1. **What's Driving the Digital Workplace Technology Strategy**

We are currently mitigating to the cloud	73%
We want to make tasks more efficient	59%
Collaboration tools etc	59%
Our employees use lots of advanced technology to get their work smartly	59%
We are currently working on (developing)	55%
The Internet of Things	44%
Technology helps us engage with the customers more	39%
Not limited to apps	35%
Desktops etc	32%
Endpoint Management etc	30%
Virtual Apps etc	30%

Source: IDG

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The Tools That Rule the Workplace

For all of today's technological advances, traditional tools still dominate the work environment: 81% of the respondents have videoconferencing in place to support a digital workplace strategy, followed by file-sharing tools (70%) and scheduling software (64%).

However, many organizations are planning or researching more-advanced technologies, including virtual/augmented reality (29%), wearables (28%), and robotic process automation (25%).

That's good news, according to El Naggar. "In terms of engagement, legacy IT tools and bad processes and workflows have a deleterious impact, in the sense

that they create blockers to success," he says. "These investments are supposed to empower employees to be their best but instead become blockers and friction points that demotivate employees."

Worse yet, poor processes and workflows built around legacy IT force employees to shift focus from critical tasks to weaving through application sprawl and sifting through bloated systems for information—activities that "ultimately kill employee contribution levels and a company's bottom line," warns El Naggar.

That's why organizations with an eye to the future and a well-crafted digital workplace strategy should take advantage of workplace technologies that enhance employee experience.

IT as the Linchpin

Another important component of a digital workplace strategy: strong IT leadership. "IT owns the keys to the kingdom," says El Naggar. "As a result, it's not possible to deliver a superior employee experience without IT's involvement."

Savvy CIOs agree, according to survey findings. A solid 71% of the respondents believe that IT's role means controlling digital workplace strategy decision-making, and 64% said IT leaders determine which technologies align the most with strategy. Other responsibilities include:

■ Serving as the main decision-maker in digital workplace strategy (64%)

■ Adding security protection to software data (58%)

■ Working with the entire staff to develop a digital strategy (54%)

By embracing a leadership role, IT moves from being a cost center to a strategic business partner. Digital workplace investments that lead to better employee experiences can contribute to higher productivity

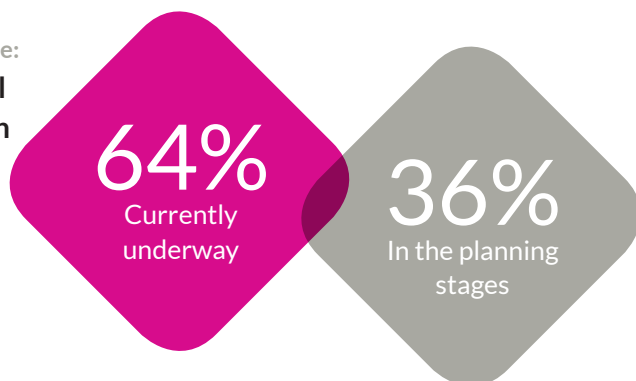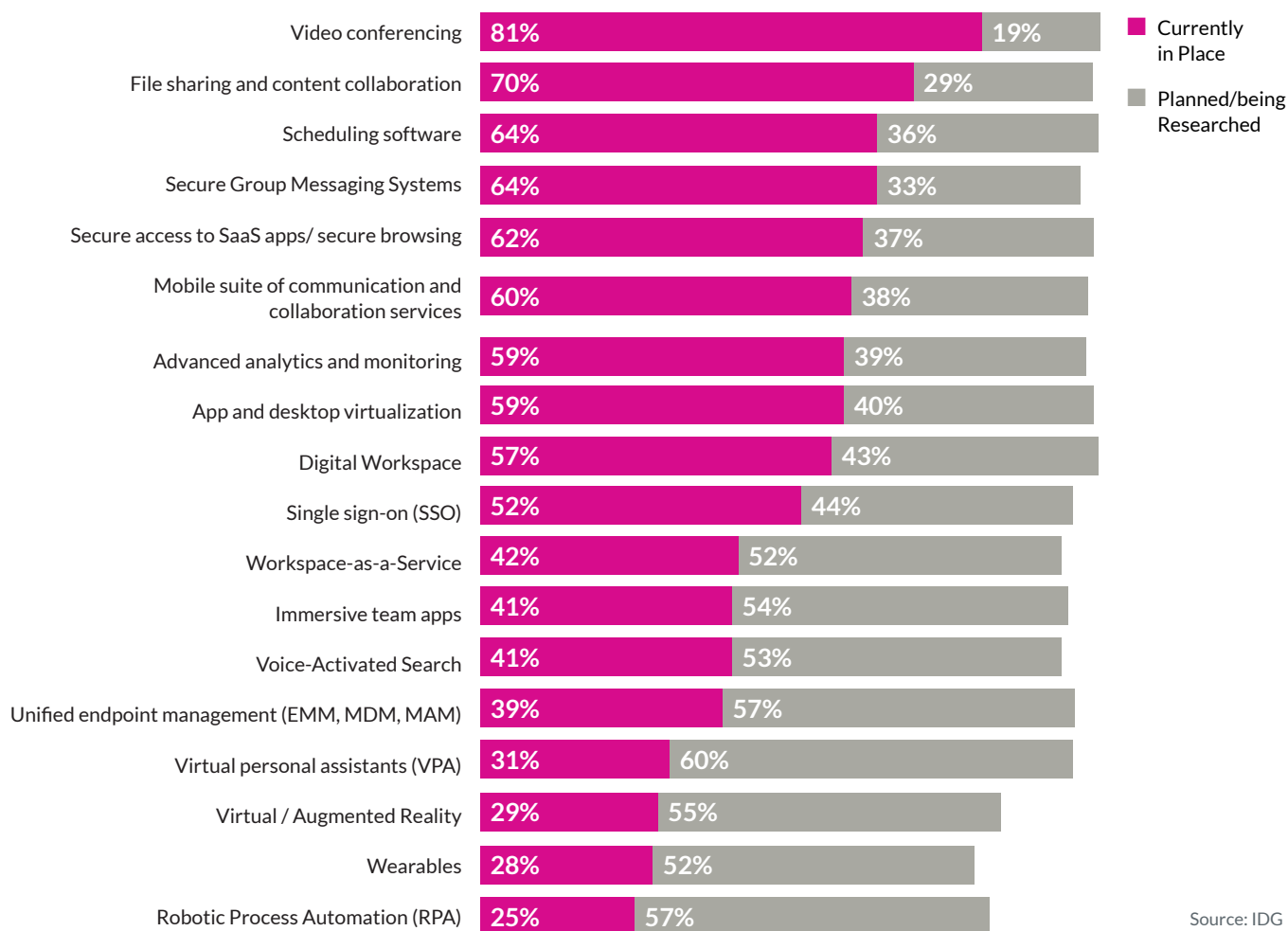**Respondent Profile:**

Stage of Digital Transformation

Source: IDG

64% Currently underway

36% In the planning stages

Figure 2. Technologies in Place Versus Researched/Planned

Technology	Currently in Place	Planned/being Researched
Video conferencing	81%	19%
File sharing and content collaboration	70%	29%
Scheduling software	64%	36%
Secure Group Messaging Systems	64%	33%
Secure access to SaaS apps/ secure browsing	62%	37%
Mobile suite of communication and collaboration services	60%	38%
Advanced analytics and monitoring	59%	39%
App and desktop virtualization	59%	40%
Digital Workspace	57%	43%
Single sign-on (SSO)	52%	44%
Workspace-as-a-Service	42%	52%
Immersive team apps	41%	54%
Voice-Activated Search	41%	53%
Unified endpoint management (EMM, MDM, MAM)	39%	57%
Virtual personal assistants (VPA)	31%	60%
Virtual / Augmented Reality	29%	55%
Wearables	28%	52%
Robotic Process Automation (RPA)	25%	57%

Source: IDG

levels and reduced employee churn—measurable markers of IT's impact on the bottom line.

IT leaders at the C level, including chief digital officers (CDOs), chief information officers (CIOs), and chief technology officers (CTOs), are most likely to lead digital workplace efforts. But peers in various lines of business (LOBs), such as chief operating officers (COOs) and chief finance officers (CFOs), also have a significant impact. Indeed, 33% of the respondents reported that among today's LOB leaders, a CEO leads their digital workplace efforts. And 17% cited leaders at the vice president level as key contributors.

Three Best Practices for a Future-Forward Workplace

Digital technologies and strong leadership are the building blocks of a digital workplace strategy. But as new business demands and emerging technologies challenge the future-facing enterprise, the influence of a consistent and deeply embedded culture only grows. That's all the more reason to make sure these three best practices are in place at your organization.

1. MAKE COLLABORATION WORK

Intergroup collaboration is critical to delivering a superior employee experience. For instance, although IT oversees mission-critical activities such as securing systems and managing networks, HR is responsible for empowering employees so that a company reaps the best ROI in people. Only by working together can IT and HR ensure that IT systems continuously support the needs of employees.

"At most companies, major goals are not achievable by a single person," says El Naggar. "Rather, these projects require intense collaboration." One part of the equation involves establishing behavioral

norms, rules, and frameworks to govern how employees should work together.

The other part of the equation, says El Naggar, is to make sure the right tools are in place to enable this collaboration. After all, he says, "if you don't have both of these ingredients, by definition you will not have a good employee experience.

"Every second that someone spends doing busywork and brainless tasks or trying to find a conference room is a second that is taken away from working on individual projects," he says. This can lower employee engagement, and that can hurt the bottom line.

2. MOBILITY MATTERS

Nearly half (41%) of the respondents selected mobility as a digital workplace driver. Long gone are the days when competitive salaries, bonuses, and vacation days were enough to find and keep talent. Employees are consumers, after all—and consumers can access just about any service with the touch of a screen; workers expect the same systems and experiences. They want to work when, where, and how they want, using any device.

Mobility satisfies this need and enables users to access all their apps and files from a single interface for a consistent and better experience across any device. The importance of a single, unified interface cannot be overemphasized: These days employees are bombarded with notifications and distractions, requiring them to switch between systems to complete basic tasks. A single platform, on the other hand, can reduce stress and boost productivity, says El Naggar.

3. TAKE THE PULSE OF EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING

Last but not least, it's clear that technology is not the only consideration for developing a digital workplace strategy. Any company creating a digital workplace strategy needs to be conscious of the well-being of employees and its opportunity to improve this aspect of the employee experience. Survey respondents agree: They showed substantial support for coworking spaces (32%), health and wellness (30%), and facilities (30%).

These respondents have the backing of experts. "Employee health—and there are many academic studies that support this—is severely impacted by the digital workplace," says El Naggar. By reducing cognitive switching between systems to perform basic tasks, a digital workplace strategy can reduce the risk of burnout and enhance employee experience, he notes.

The Bottom Line

Clearly, a digital workplace is critical to attracting millennials, retaining talent, and staying competitive. But today's employees are also consumers, accustomed to instant access to systems and services, regardless of device or location. These everyday superior experiences can also create expectations for them as employees. Savvy CIOs are not only meeting these expectations but are also on track to surpass them with the aid of a digital workplace strategy, strong leadership, and best practices.

This research is commissioned by Citrix, redefining the employee experience through intelligent workspace solutions. Learn more at **citrix.com/it**

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The IDG/Citrix survey sampled 138 US IT decision-makers (ITDMs) at the director level or above within companies that have begun or are actively planning digital transformation initiatives. The survey was conducted in April 2019.

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