

As we move toward a future in which hybrid work is the norm, enterprises must take an experience-centric approach to workplaces to meet objectives relating to employee experience, workplace security, and environmental sustainability. The device as a service model is well-equipped to deliver on these key enterprise expectations.

An Experience-Centric View to Creating a Secure, Sustainable, and Modern Future Workplace

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Introduction

The uncertainty and disruption experienced over the last couple of years has fundamentally changed the way work gets done, and the way enterprises and employees view the workplace. Indeed, IDC believes that the future of work is hybrid, with the ability to work seamlessly from any location of choice (or even circumstance) being a critical attribute of a resilient future workplace; and this view is validated by data from the real world. IDC's *Future Enterprise Resiliency and Spending Survey (December 2021)* reveals that almost 45% of global enterprise respondents expect that "remote and hybrid work models will be an embedded part of accepted work practices" going forward.

And the way this hybrid workplace evolves will be shaped by a few key considerations and organizational priorities, chief among them being —

- **Experience:** 47% of respondents in *IDC's Asia/Pacific Enterprise Services Sourcing Survey 2021* identified delivery of "highly personalized workplace experiences" as a key requirement to look for in a next-generation workplace.
- **Sustainability:** IDC predicts that "by 2023, 60% of the G2000 companies will have environmental sustainability parameters firmly embedded in their business KPIs".
- **Security:** "Ensuring the security of all corporate resources across all locations" was identified as the joint top challenge that enterprises faced in implementing a hybrid work model in the *IDC Future Enterprise Resiliency and Spending Survey (December 2021)*

AT A GLANCE

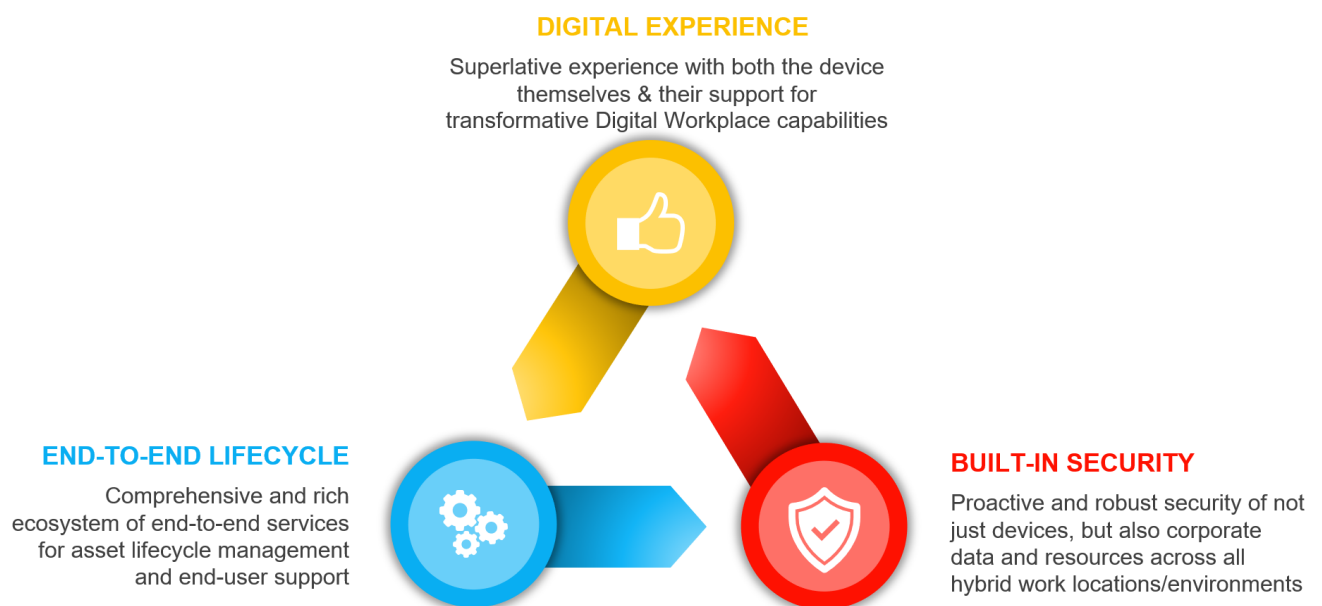
WHAT'S IMPORTANT

- End-user devices play a pivotal role in employee perceptions and experiences relating to the workplace, and by extension, to the enterprise itself.
- Enterprises need to take an experience-centric approach to the workplace that delivers on their key objectives relating to employee experience, workplace security, and environmental sustainability.
- The device as a service model is well-equipped to deliver on these key enterprise expectations.

Putting Experience at the Heart of the Enterprise Workplace Strategy

As the primary interface to the enterprise workplace, end-user devices have a pivotal role to play in employee perceptions and experiences relating to the workplace, and by extension, to the enterprise itself. With the blurring of boundaries between work and personal lives, end-users now expect consumer-grade experiences in their workplace interactions. These include considerations such as devices optimized for employees' specific user personas, out-of-the-box usability, quick and seamless issue resolution through multichannel service and support throughout the device life cycle, to name just a few. An experience-centric approach to the workplace consists of three key, interrelated dimensions:

Dimensions of an Experience-Centric Workplace



Source: IDC 2022

Digital Experience

The world is currently experiencing several significant workforce trends simultaneously — rapidly increasing proportions of millennials in the workforce, the great global resignation, and severe shortages of critical skills, to name just a few. These trends are forcing enterprises to reimagine employees' workplace experience right from onboarding and through all the stages of an employee's life cycle with a view to improving satisfaction and increasing employee retention. End-user corporate devices are often the first and most significant means for the workforce to engage with the organizational ecosystem, and their experience with these devices can make or break the broader enterprise workplace experience construct. Device-native attributes and characteristics that shape employee experience include quality hardware (camera, microphone/speakers, display, and other peripherals, device engineering and build quality), usability (touchscreen, natural interfaces, voice command recognition) and ergonomics (device form-factor, layout, weight, cable-free connectivity options). Well-engineered devices such as Microsoft's Surface family of products, or ~~Apple's MacBook~~ offerings have brought an aspirational quality to workplace devices and reset employee expectations of what their corporate devices should look like.

The ecosystem of services that supports these aspirational devices also plays a crucial part in delivering a superlative user experience. For instance, zero-touch deployment ensures a frictionless software and application installation, configuration, and upgrade experience. Automated, proactive, and predictive support services, delivered through a combination of technology, tools, and resources ensure a consistently high level of user satisfaction throughout the device life cycle.

Built-in Security

With the expansion of the "physical workplace" to include all manner of remote locations, the security of not just the corporate devices themselves, but also of corporate resources, assets, and intellectual property (IP) that the devices enable access to, have become issues of paramount importance. A robust approach to end-user security is invariably multilayered, with security capabilities of the device itself being the first line of defense. Device-led security needs to span hardware, firmware, and operating system to enable advanced security capabilities such as enhanced multifactor authentication (e.g., fingerprint + facial recognition), secure boot through trusted software, on-chip virtualization to protect memory and processes. This device-led security then needs to be complemented by robust environmental security mechanisms such as zero-touch deployments, software entitlements management, data loss prevention (DLP), antivirus, malware protection, spam filters, data archiving/replication and mobile device management (MDM), among others. Often, the most effective way these capabilities are operationalized in enterprise environments is through a robust partnership between the device manufacturer and its preferred partners for device lifecycle services. This ensures that they are together able to bring a tightly integrated set of device security capabilities and associated services to provide the best possible end-user and device-focused security coverage.

End to end Device Life cycle

The third dimension of a device-centric workplace strategy revolves around device lifecycle management and support. The gamut of device lifecycle activities includes device procurement, device management, device maintenance and support (spanning hardware, software, security, and connectivity), device refresh/evergreening and even financing options and models. Device lifecycle services are most effectively provided as an end-to-end fully managed service, termed device as a service (DaaS), which is executed as a long-term agreement between the enterprise and a single provider that orchestrates the entire set of activities previously identified. DaaS provides organizations with numerous operational, financial, and other organizational benefits (as detailed subsequently) and has emerged as a hugely popular paradigm among enterprises in our evolving hybrid-first, remote-first world. Findings from IDC's *Asia/Pacific Enterprise Services Sourcing Survey 2021* reveal that "device as a service offerings" is among the Top 3 capabilities desired from customers in the region from their digital workplace services providers.

Benefits of a Device as a Service Approach

A DaaS model offers customers numerous tangible benefits that can broadly be grouped into five categories:

- » **Financial benefits**, which include predictable subscription-based pricing with cost-effective services bundling enabled by the provider's economies of scale. Additionally, vendors often offer a diversity of engagement and payment models that allow enterprises to select the one that best meets their specific requirements.
- » **Operational benefits** such as quicker issue resolution (or even issue avoidance) through operational analytics and AI-enabled ops, and optimized and simplified IT operations management and support, and accelerated device refresh cadence leading to better performance and experience.

- » **Enhanced employee productivity and experience** through faster device refresh cadence/proactive evergreening to ensure that employees have access to the latest, most powerful, and feature-rich devices, and through integration, optimization, and automation of the workplace environment.
- » **Improved security and enterprise resilience** through shorter device refresh cycles, proactive software patching and updates, effective license and compliance management, and a comprehensive range of security and resiliency services.
- » Support of enterprise **environmental, social, and governance goals** through sustainable device sourcing, lifecycle management and disposal within an extended circular economy.

Considerations when Designing your Future Workplace Experience

Enterprises looking to build a hybrid-work-ready future workplace need to think through the three dimensions of an experience-centric workplace — device, security, and life cycle — as they plan their modernization journey. To undertake an effective legacy platform modernization journey, enterprises need to gain a fuller understanding of the following factors that have a significant bearing on the modernization effort, including:

- » Start with identifying the key business objectives that need to be served by the modernization effort — financial, operational, experiential, ESG, security, productivity — and quantify the desired benefits and outcomes.
- » Map the outcomes to end-user devices and workplace solutions with the capabilities to deliver these outcomes most effectively.
- » Determine the optimal set of services that can help your enterprise deliver a workplace experience that meets your key organizational objectives through the end-user devices and workplace solutions of your choice.

The end-to-end lifecycle services provided by a qualified DaaS vendor can help enterprises across all the three phases of their workplace modernization effort identified above. By bringing an integrated experience-centric approach to designing and delivering a hybrid-work ready modern workplace, DaaS vendors can help deliver on diverse objectives that serve the interests of stakeholders across the breadth of the enterprise.

Conclusion

As we move toward a future in which hybrid work is the norm, enterprises need to take a device-centric approach to workplaces that delivers on their key objectives relating to employee experience, workplace security, and environmental sustainability. Through such a device-centric approach to designing and delivering a hybrid-work-ready modern workplace, the device as a service model can deliver a range of benefits that meet a wide variety of organizational objectives.

About the Analyst



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Pushkaraksh Shanbhag is an Associate Research Director with the Asia/Pacific Software and IT Services Research group and contributes to IDC's Future of Digital Infrastructure research. Pushkaraksh's domain expertise and research coverage spans professional and managed cloud services, robotic and intelligent automation services (RPA/IA), digital workplace services and next-generation infrastructure.

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HCL FlexSpace: Surface as a service is redefining the new-age workplace experience to address the key challenges of hybrid working and the technologies that enterprises must invest in for the success of hybrid working. With its persona-aligned sustainable surface devices, zero-touch deployment, multilayered cloud to chip security, customized intelligent support and right business agility enabling enterprises to drive productivity, scalability, and seamless employee experience. HCL FlexSpace powered by Microsoft is a subscription-based catalog offering, which attempts to shift the focus from device management to value creation with its analytical and innovative value-added services for enterprises.

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