

# The (new) future of work: A global study

## We were curious...

For decades, Lenovo has created solutions based on extensive research into how people work, digital trends, and enterprise IT challenges. The global pandemic — which packed digital transformation that might have taken years into a matter of weeks — presented a unique opportunity to learn how companies responded to such a seismic shift in how the world works.

**We wanted to know:** How were companies adapting to the abrupt change of remote work? What were the challenges? How were IT teams responding to them?

## So we listened and learned

Lenovo's "Future of Work and Digital Transformation" study engaged more than 8,000 employees and IT leaders from 4,126 companies in 14 markets worldwide. The employees had worked in a traditional office pre-pandemic but were currently working from home, and the IT leaders had made pandemic-related work location or policy changes.

The following insights gained from the study, combined with Lenovo's enterprise technology expertise, can help companies of all sizes prepare for what's next.

### Lenovo engaged more than...

**8,000**

employees and IT leaders

**4,126**

companies

**14**

markets worldwide





## Is work from home working?

Yes! While employees miss personal face-to-face connections with their colleagues, they also experienced many positive benefits to working from home, including an increase in job satisfaction and productivity.

## There's a generational divide, but it's a net positive

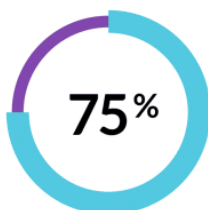
Employees aged 18 to 34 enjoy working from home just as much as their colleagues who are 35 or older, but the younger group has more difficulty keeping work and home separate and are more likely to want to return to the office when the pandemic is over. This suggests that younger employees feel they won't have the same advancement opportunities if they are fully remote.

### Benefits of remote work



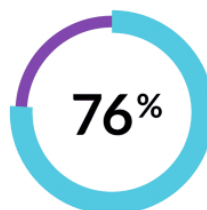
#### Productivity

More than half of the survey respondents feel more productive working from home.



#### Job satisfaction

Nearly three-quarters say the flexibility to work from home makes them more satisfied with their job.



#### Focus time

76% say no commute means more time in the workday.

## And there's room for IT improvement

Employees report home internet connections can be slow (36%) or intermittent (29%), and getting IT support quickly is a problem for employees in medium-sized (50%) and small/very small (42%) businesses.



### Home internet speed



36%  
Slow

29%  
Intermittent



### Rapid IT support



50%  
Medium-sized  
businesses

42%  
Small-sized  
businesses

**It is harder to provide our employees with the right level of IT support.**

*IT leader located in Singapore*

## Where are we headed?

Are we staying home forever?

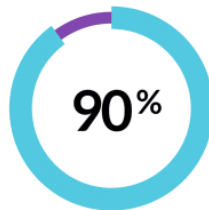
Or going back to the office?

The answer is a resounding “both.”

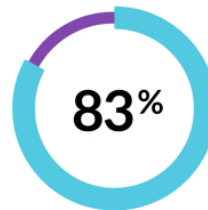
### Hybrid is happening



60% of employees want to work from home at least half the time.



9 out of 10 still want face-to-face connections and to go to the office some of the time.



83% of IT leaders expect at least half of work in the future to happen outside a traditional office.

## The office as we knew it is gone

The office is no longer the only place where work gets done. It has evolved into a place where teams connect and collaborate, leaving home (or anywhere, for that matter) as a place for deep, focused work. This blended style will require a reimagining of collaboration and enterprise technology.

**Working remotely does not provide the same satisfaction of collaborating with my team.**

*Employee located in Australia*

## How do we get there?

Lenovo's "Future of Work and Digital Transformation" study shows that technology has made the transition to working from anywhere not only possible, but positive. IT leaders can continue to support their teams in the forward transition in several ways:

## Make business continuity mission-critical

IT leaders feel more prepared for another pandemic than they do against data threats. For 40% of large businesses, data security is a top priority when considering digital transformation solutions. Companies of all sizes will need to grapple with the integration of partner security services and commit to a more agile approach.

- 8 in 10 IT leaders have put strategies in place to keep the business running, no matter what.
- Continuity plans include cloud-based data backup (45%), physical data backup (39%), and data security training (35%).

## Top continuity plan protections put in place during the pandemic



### Cloud-based data backup

Cloud storage rose to the top of the continuity list for businesses of all sizes, solving for data volume increases as well as the surge of remote workers who need to access files offsite.



**Moving everything to the cloud is now absolutely necessary.  
Having vital programs and data in one place is a liability.**

*IT leader located in US*

Businesses may also want to consider always-connected PCs with integrated LTE or 5G as a way to be more secure and eliminate employee reliance on home Wi-Fi networks. Small businesses that don't have robust IT support teams should look into smarter devices, services, and software solutions that can self-diagnose and preempt IT issues.

## Communicate the value of company subsidies

Company subsidies are going unused. Nearly 8 in 10 IT leaders say their companies will cover the cost of most devices and accessories for working from home; however, less than half of the surveyed employees have taken them up on it. Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of employees (nearly 80% overall and 87% of those aged 18–34) use their own smartphones for work-related tasks like voice and video calls, email, and work chat.

This proliferation of non-company devices and reliance on home networks makes data security an urgent concern. Better communicating what's available to employees and making the process to access subsidies more transparent could encourage workers to take advantage and keep their data safer.

### Most useful remote work solutions\*

**All-in-one hardware bundles**

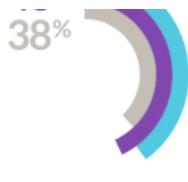
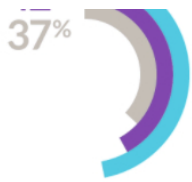


**Training/support**



**Flexible purchasing arrangements**





● Small    ● Medium    ● Large

\*By business size

## Provide new PC features and collaboration technology

The adoption of collaboration software has skyrocketed (only 3% of respondents don't use collaboration platforms), and two-thirds of employees say collaboration tools improve their productivity and efficiency. Employees also value advanced PC technologies. Among the top-ranking smart device features for employees in businesses of all sizes: AI-based noise cancellation during calls, webcam privacy shutters for when the camera's not in use, eye care for a display's natural low blue light, and better device cooling.

FEEDBACK

### Employees' favorite smart features



AI-based noise cancellation



Webcam privacy shutter



Eye care mode



Intelligent cooling

6% 5%

6% 4%

6% 4%

6% 4%

● Age 18-34    ● Age 35+

Employees expect the latest devices and features to be part of their work experience. Lenovo is here to help with modern solutions running Microsoft Windows 10 Pro and powered by the Intel® Evo™ vPro® platform, built for what IT needs and users want. A Lenovo DaaS solution can help even further by allowing IT leaders to get precisely what will meet their specific business requirements – or the changing preferences of their employees.



Windows 10

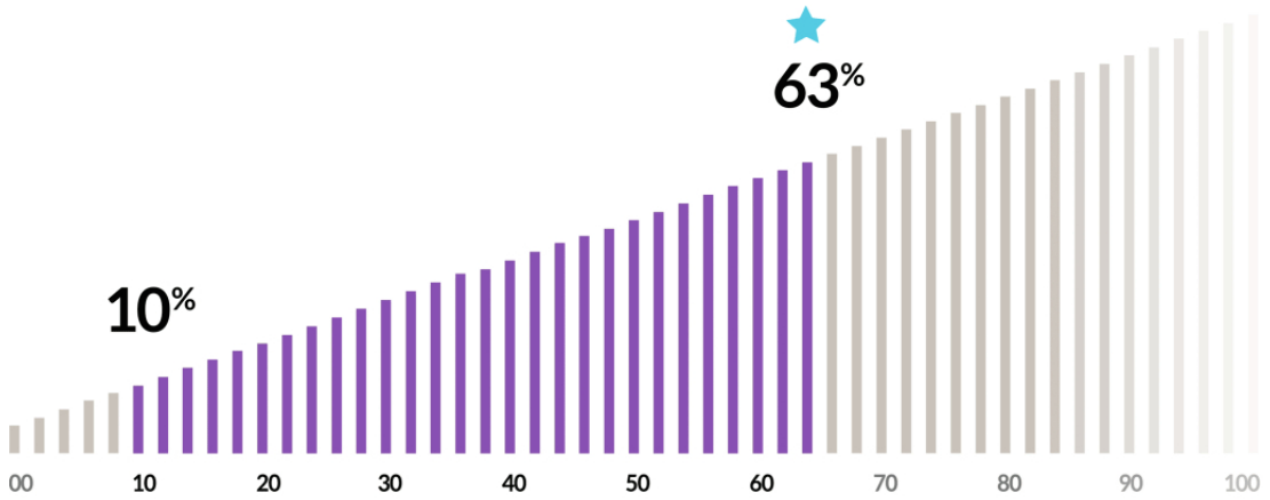
Lenovo recommends Windows 10 Pro for Business.

## Consider Device as a Service a rising star

While only one in 10 businesses is currently subscribed to Device as a Service (DaaS), a majority of IT leaders (63%) are

interested in doing so. The DaaS model relieves the burden of managing hardware lifecycles, frees up time for strategic projects, and gives IT the ability to scale hardware over time as needed — all of which will be essential in the post-pandemic hybrid work world.

### DaaS opportunity gap\*



10% currently subscribe to a DaaS solution

63% are interested in doing so in the future

\*Among businesses responding to the Lenovo study

## Welcome to the future of work — already in progress

The future of work is not an endpoint; it's a fluid state. Lenovo's "Future of Work and Digital Transformation" study gives us deeper insight into the evolution of the workforce and workplace so we can anticipate and innovate the smarter technology of tomorrow.

[Access the full study >](#)



## Get solutions for your future of work

Lenovo works closely with IT leaders to assess an existing infrastructure and tailor solutions to unique use cases, delivering joint solutions with Microsoft and Intel® that offer new levels of performance, security, and manageability. We're committed to and excited about the next normal — whatever and wherever that will be for your business.

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