Defining The Future Of The Workplace

APOGEE

Contents

Defining The Future Of The Workplace

The Covid-19 pandemic has left a lasting legacy on the expectations of workforces across the globe. Even after lockdown restrictions eased, businesses needed to pivot towards hybrid working practices to meet the flexibility demanded by their employees. A survey by the Chartered Institute of Management discovered that more than **80%** of firms had adopted hybrid working in February 2022, the most since the onset of the pandemic. Younger, digitally native employees are also expecting to work with the latest technologies, having grown up with IoT devices and always-on connectivity.

Sustainability is also entering the forefront of corporate strategy for firms as the UK Government looks to implement policies and proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the economy by **2050**. Managers of firms are therefore under pressure to take into account these emerging trends and incorporate them into their plans to help shape the hybrid workplace of the future.

To assess the landscape, Apogee's research polled 100 IT directors/managers in small and midsize businesses and 100 IT directors/managers in the public sector to gather their thoughts on what the future of the workplace will look like, and identify their current readiness to support the future workforce. The questions asked fell under the umbrella of three key areas: technology, cyber security and sustainability. Among the specific areas covered included future plans regarding technology integration, how organisations are meeting evolving expectations and the state of sustainability in their operations.

More than 80% of firms had adopted hybrid working in February 2022

The Private Sector

Technology

Under the technology set of questions posed in the research, the findings show that almost two-thirds (63%) of IT directors are not very confident in their estate's ability to fully support a hybrid workforce, but over seven-in-ten organisations (71%) are not placing IT investment at the top of the priority list.

Additionally, due to limitations with the current IT setup, almost nine-in-ten (89%) have identified that it is preventing effective collaboration, with almost half admitting that remote staff don't have access to the same solutions as office workers (48%).

This finding is contrasting with the fact that the top expectation among the workforce is the ability to collaborate effectively with technology (38%), while the opportunity to work flexibly is the second highest expectation (31%). In terms of desire to use new technologies, companies identify cloud technology (54%) as the chosen solution, ahead of remote management (37%) and collaboration solutions (32%), with enhanced security (43%) and efficiency (40%) identified as the main benefits.

Security

With remote workers already at a disadvantage within organisations, security is also creating further concerns for the modern workforce, with a quarter (25%) identifying security challenges with remote and hybrid working, affecting IT transformation progress. Securing the hybrid/remote workforce is also low on the priority list, with only 14% stating this. Concerningly, almost one-in-three (29%) directors say that they only audit their IT estate between once a month and once every 4-6 months, leaving networks and devices vulnerable to cyber-attack.

To add to security worries, only 34% of businesses have endpoint security and 26% have device encryption in place, while under one-in-five (19%) have an end-of-life plan for their devices to improve security among their hybrid workforce. Only 30% intend on implementing an end-of-life plan in the future. These solutions are ultimately critical for organisations to put up a fortified barrier against sophisticated cyber hackers. Additionally, as many as 64% of respondents are not very confident in their IT estate's ability to meet compliance requirements.

Only 34%
of businesses have endpoint security

Find out how to tighten your endpoint security

Sustainability

Among the sustainable measures being introduced into IT departments, respondents identify a reduction in paper footprint (35%), widespread remote and/or hybrid policies (26%) and reduction of energy with fewer in-house machines (20%) as the main methods. Uptake of sustainable practices is therefore low generally, while hybrid working, a critical demand of modern day employees, falls behind the reduction of paper footprint on the priority list. Private businesses must take additional steps to enhance their green credentials and communicate these initiatives to sustainability-focused **employees**.

Impact on attraction and retention of new talent

These challenges are leading organisations to struggle to attract new talent, with 45% identifying the latest technology/devices as the top method to bring in staff, and over a third (34%) identify career development as a top priority for attracting and retaining staff. This is adding to the existing pressure on businesses which are already struggling with skilled staff shortages. In fact, over a quarter (29%) report that employees are stretched across too many monitoring responsibilities (29%) and slow resolution of IT issues is also a key frustration (25%).

35%
of IT departments identify paper reduction as their top sustainable measure

Find out how to offset your paper footprint

The Public Sector

Technology

With the same questions then posed to public sector organisations, the findings revealed some striking similarities and differences. Almost three-quarters of IT directors (74%) are not very confident in their IT estate being able to support a hybrid workforce, but almost seven-in-ten (69%) are not placing investment at the top of the priority list. Additionally, limitations with the current IT setup mean that 93% have identified that it is preventing effective collaboration, and 42% of staff working remotely don't have the same access to solutions as office workers.

Much like the private sector, a top expectation among the workforce is the ability to collaborate effectively with technology (36%), which is on par with the need to work flexibly (36%). In the context of new technologies that public sector organisations intend to use over the next five years, 57% identify cloud technology, 35% say collaboration solutions and 34% cite remote management, with enhanced efficiency (44%) and security (40%) again noted as the top benefits.

Security

With remote workers already at a disadvantage, over a fifth (21%) of public sector businesses identify both security and productivity challenges from remote and hybrid working. Securing the hybrid/remote workforce is also low on the priority list (14%). 28% of directors report that employees fear a cyber breach when using sharing solutions, revealing how the current technology stack is likely to not be up to standard.

While auditing of the IT estate appears to be more regular with public sector organisations than private businesses, 18% still only audit their estate between once a month and once every 4-6 months. Additionally, only 35% of organisations have endpoint security and 31% have device encryption in place, while under 15% of public sector organisations have an end-of-life plan for their devices to improve security among their hybrid workforce.

Intent to adopt an end-of-life plan is also low for the public sector (20%), proving to be lower on the priority list than with private businesses, creating further security concerns. As many as over two-thirds (67%) are also not very confident in their IT estate meeting compliance requirements, leading to potential fines from regulatory bodies and increased levels of downtime.

74%
of IT directors are not very confident in their IT estate being able to support a hybrid workforce

Find out how well businesses are set up for Hybrid Working

Sustainability

While public sector organisations fare better than private businesses in terms of remote and/or hybrid working policies (33%), fewer have taken steps to reduce their paper footprint (23%). Therefore, despite the greater level of commitment to hybrid working, there is room for improvement when it comes to the adoption of sustainable initiatives across the sector.

Only 24%
of public sector organisations have taken steps to reduce their paper footprint

Impact on attraction and retention of new talent

Much like the private sector, public sector organisations are struggling to attract new talent, with just under half (49%) wanting to bring people in with the offer of a hybrid/remote working strategy, and 28% identify career development as a top priority for attracting and retaining staff.

Unfortunately for the public sector, staff shortages are also commonplace among organisations. In fact, a third (33%) identify increased IT downtime and slow resolution of IT issues (30%) as a consequence of lack of specialist staff.

The Making Of The Modern Workforce

Organisations, both in the private and public sector, are ultimately failing to invest in the technologies that meet the needs of the modern workforce, such as solutions to make hybrid and remote working possible and ensuring security of devices in an IoT-driven world.

Failing to address these problems will likely lead to talented and skilled staff leaving the organisation due to poor morale, and will also affect the ability to attract new talent in a market short on necessary skills. The severity of the shortage is evidenced by the fact that over **70%** of the technology industry is experiencing a skills shortfall, with UK tech job vacancies also growing by **191%** in 2022 as recruitment remains difficult.

To be at the centre of the making of the modern workforce, organisations should look towards the services of a managed workplace services provider. Apogee combines over 30 years of expertise in technology support and service delivery with the innovation and security of HP, allowing organisations to instead focus on their core business objectives. Our services cover areas such as managed print, outsourced documents and hybrid mail services and managed IT, meeting the wide-reaching requirements of modern businesses. **Take a look** at our portfolio of services here or **get in touch** with one of our experts today.

70%

of the technology industry is experiencing a skills shortfall

An end-to-end, 'all in one' solution can help organisations meet the whole spectrum of evolving workforce needs. Apogee brings together over 30 years of expertise in technology support and service delivery withthe innovation and security of HP, which allowsorganisations to focus on their core business objectives. From print management to data sanitisation, we meet the requirements ofmodern businesses.

Check out our services or
talk to an expert today

APOGEE

An HP Company

With over 30 years of expertise and innovation, our goal is to transform the way organisations operate. This unique approach provides clients with the perfect combination of secure print, document and IT hardware and software, supported by our market-leading service operation to create a flexible workplace. As an independent subsidiary of HP Inc, Apogee has the advantage of being part of one of the world's leading technology companies, with instant access to the latest innovation all supported by our market leading service operations.