



2022 Report:

The need for improved digital employee experience

How technology enables better employee retention and productivity



Welcome to the 2022 Digital Employee Experience Report

Today, only 13% of employees are happy to work exclusively in the office, while the remainder prefer to work either partly or fully remote. However, while the morale and productivity benefits of a flexible work environment are without doubt, the technical and operational considerations continue to present major challenges, especially employee experience.

Ivanti surveyed¹ **10,000 IT professionals, executives and end users** around the world, across a broad range of industries, to gauge their opinions on the current state of the digital employee experience (DEX). The aim of the survey was to **evaluate the level of prioritization and adoption of DEX** and the ways in which it shapes the daily working experiences of employees.

This report discusses some of the most important insights from the survey, what they mean to IT leaders and C-level executives, and their roles in facilitating DEX. It also explores the **reasons behind the challenges** they face and shares insights into **how to overcome them** in a quest to better support employees, improve security and governance, and retain top talent.

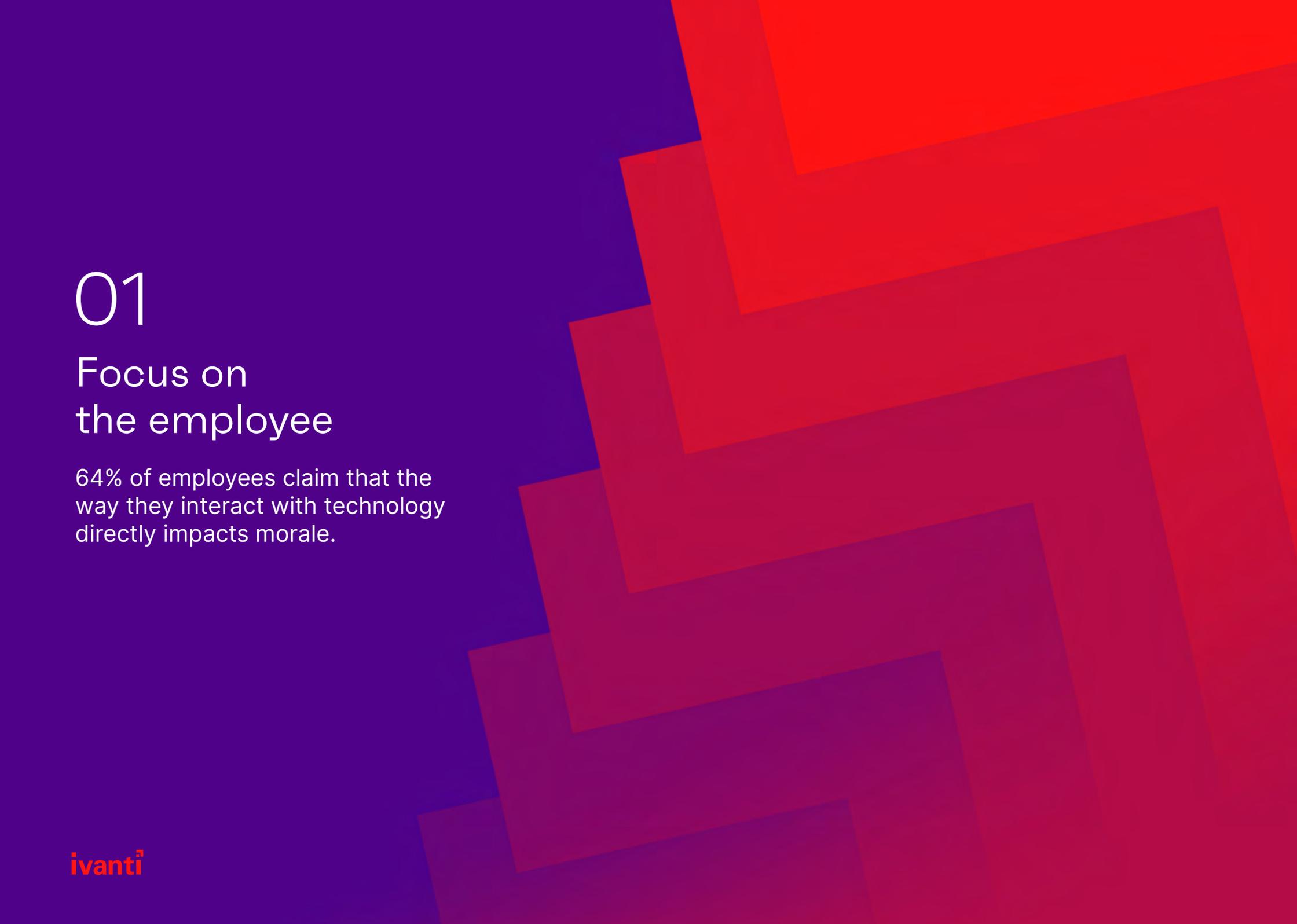


In this report

01	Focus on the employee	
	The state of the digital employee experience	5
	Misaligned perceptions	7
	The hybrid workplace	10
	The productivity impact	12
02	Common tensions	
	Increasing cyber risk	15
	Growing demand for support	16
	The silo mentality	19
	Better together: security and employee experience	20
03	Reimagining the employee experience	
	Maintaining visibility and governance	24
	Measuring digital employee experience	26
	Addressing workforce expectations	28
	Enhancing the employee experience	29

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01

Focus on the employee

64% of employees claim that the way they interact with technology directly impacts morale.

The state of the digital employee experience

Flexible work models have been well-established among forward-thinking organizations for years, but the COVID-19 pandemic has certainly accelerated long-term adoption of remote work across all industries. Undeniably, technology is the main driver of this cultural change, but conflicting views remain between the C-suite, HR and IT stakeholders, and employees concerning the future of work.



69% of global knowledge workers now work remotely at least 25% of the time.

It might be easy to blame this divide on the role of HR and business leadership, but the reality is that the problem most often starts with technology or, more accurately, the digital employee experience. DEX focuses on **the way employees interact with technology in their jobs**. If they lack the right tools to work effectively in a remote or hybrid environment, then productivity and morale will both suffer. Our results support that, with 49% of knowledge workers considering the digital tools and environment provided by their organization frustrating, 65% believing they would be more productive if they had better technology at their disposal, and a quarter considering a **lack of suitable tech** to be a contributing reason for **quitting their jobs**. These are even higher for IT professionals and the C-suite.

This brings us to the question of who is **ultimately responsible for DEX**. While prioritization needs to occur in the boardroom, IT is the best-equipped to implement and manage it. Given that technology is the enabler of DEX and the hybrid workforce, it also stands to reason that **C-level executives must increase their focus on DEX and empower IT to take ownership of it**. The digital experience must accommodate the varied needs of employees, and the responsibility to deliver falls right in IT's court. This presents an **opportunity for IT leaders to become strategic players** in shaping how their organizations work by adopting a secure-by-design digital transformation.

A donut chart with a red segment representing 13% and a grey segment representing 87%. The number '13%' is written in white in the center of the chart.

Just 13% of knowledge workers prefer to work exclusively from the office, yet 56% of CXOs still feel that employees need to be in the office to be productive.

“I am considering quitting my current job in part due to the apps and tech tools available”

– all respondents



65% of employees and 71% of IT professionals agree they could be more productive if they had different tools.

Misaligned perceptions

There is a widespread divide between what business leaders think and what employees see. Since DEX is tightly related to the experience that employees have when interacting with tech, it plays an integral role in the culture of hybrid work.

Yet when a **fifth of employees claim tech issues and resolution times** are the biggest challenges in their digital workplace experience, there is evidently something wrong. While IT shares the employees' view and wants to provide effective support, they often end up hindered by the volume of support tickets or lack of context needed to resolve problems quickly.

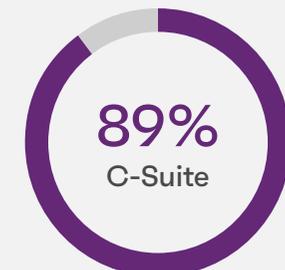
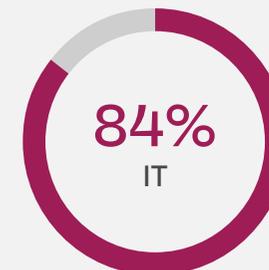
In light of this situation, it is time for IT leaders to revisit their priorities. Currently, only 21% of them consider the end user experience to be the **main priority when selecting new tech tools**. This focus, however, must come from the top. As long as employee experience falls at the bottom of the C-suite agenda, IT will continue deprioritizing it on theirs. Simple investment in IT service improvement will not result in onboarding tools that are fit for purpose to improve DEX. In other words, to succeed in providing better IT service, DEX must become top of mind. That requires leadership, IT and employee priorities to be aligned.

62% of CXOs report that leadership prioritizes profitability over employee experience



“I need to rely on technology more to get my job done”

– all respondents

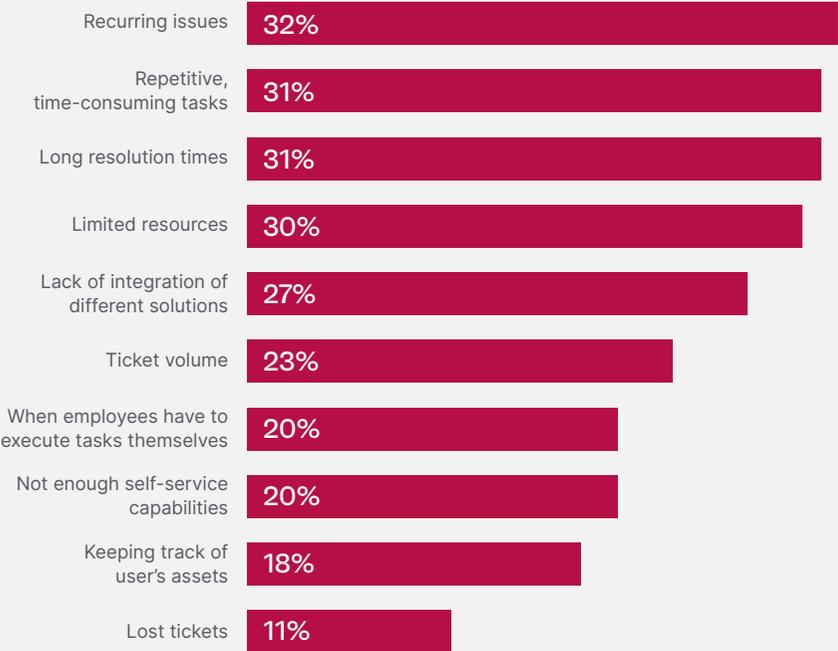


Biggest challenges in regard to digital work environment identified by surveyed employees

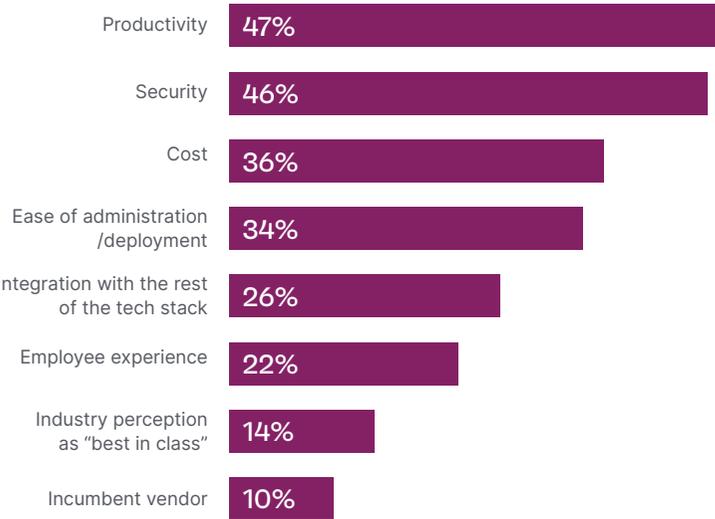
- 28% Too many emails/chats
- 27% Not enough connection to co-workers
- 23% Software/apps not working properly
- 21% IT takes a long time to solve an issue
- 19% Work devices not working properly
- 18% Less visibility into the organization
- 14% Lack of boundaries from co-workers caused by always-on tech



What do IT professionals perceive to be the biggest challenges to service employees?



What do respondents perceive to be the main reasons a tech tool is chosen at their organization?



50% of employees use personal devices for work more often than before the Covid-19 pandemic.



The hybrid workplace

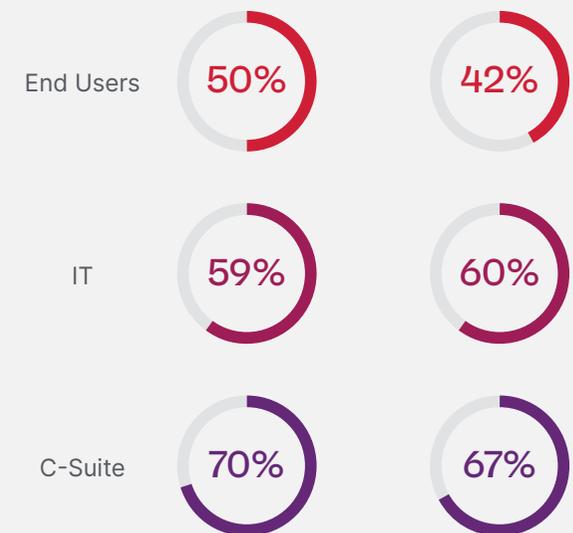
The blurring lines between personal and work environments that come with the hybrid work model are visible in the way employees engage with tech on all levels.

Working environments now span a wide variety of devices, many of which belong to employees themselves. The use of these personal devices for work increases even further among C-level and IT leaders. In fact, **67% of CXOs have personally invested in better tech** to increase their own productivity. The use of this personal tech stack varies significantly between regions of the world.

Innovation is undeniably the driving force behind the rise of hybrid work, but the unfortunate truth is that many organizations still experience major challenges in its adoption. Chief among these challenges are difficulties maintaining security protocols and governance over an ever-wider range of personal and business-owned devices. From the employee's perspective, an optimized hybrid work environment should allow them to **seamlessly switch between devices**, whether they are working in the office, remotely or even in transit.

I use personal devices for work more often

I have personally invested in better tech to work productively



However, many digital work environments have yet to offer the experience that people expect. Some of the most pervasive challenges include too many emails or chat messages (28%), a lack of connection to co-workers (27%), and software not working properly (23%).

In many environments, employees find themselves at the receiving end of all of these problems. The rapid evolution of work has only accelerated these difficulties, so it should come as no surprise that 30% of employees wish their employers would invest in better tech, including tools that work across all platforms.

What do employees wish their employer would incorporate into their DEX to increase their job satisfaction?

- 30% Upgrading my hardware
- 28% Improving the quality/responsiveness of the IT service desk
- 25% Improving IT self-service
- 24% More intuitive software and tools
- 24% Adopting tools that work across platforms
- 23% Making security requirements easier to manage
- 19% Less reliance on email
- 19% Automation
- 15% Improved HR self-service
- 11% No more video calls
- 11% Using cutting-edge technology
- 8% Implementing a BYOD policy



The productivity impact

For the C-suite, **employee productivity** is most commonly the number-one priority, while workplace culture and employee satisfaction fall further down the list. However, this is not the case everywhere, and our survey found considerable variation around the world.

One of the most important questions for IT leaders is whether their tech tools help or hinder DEX. Employee engagement depends on the availability of the right hardware and applications. If they lack those, productivity will take a serious hit and, in the worst-

case scenarios, workers can end up spending more time waiting on support than actually doing their jobs.

To maintain productivity and ease frustration for themselves, 42% of knowledge workers have **spent their own money** on new hardware and software, which they then use for work. However, while this might boost productivity in the shorter term, it also fuels an **increase in shadow IT**, where the organization lacks visibility into precisely which apps and devices are being used to access their networks.

When shadow IT becomes commonplace, risk increases, because IT loses oversight of which devices are accessing the corporate network. Furthermore, IT cannot readily support and secure devices they do not even know about. As such, employees who hoped to boost their productivity by investing in better tech end up being unable to get support when something goes wrong. At the same time, security issues abound in such an environment. To prevent this from happening, it is up to IT to **provide the connectivity and security infrastructure** necessary to let employees go about their work unhindered without increasing risk. ■

Top internal priorities in the eyes of the C-suite





80% of employees are required to work across multiple apps and systems to get their work done.

02

Common tensions

74% of employees claim to be more productive now than before the pandemic started, yet 56% of CXOs think employees need to be in the office to be productive.

Increasing cyber risk

Managing cyber risk is undeniably harder in the era of hybrid work. Whereas businesses used to operate solely within their own on-site infrastructure with an established secure perimeter, remote work means that the physical attack surface is now extremely difficult to define. In fact, it has largely been rendered irrelevant.

Easily one of the biggest challenges facing IT leaders today is the need to **enable a seamless end user experience while maintaining robust security**. In many cases, they have ended up caving into pressure from staff working remotely to relax remote access security measures. In other cases, they have chosen security over DEX to the point that 69% of end users

find themselves struggling to navigate unnecessarily convoluted and complex security measures.

The solution to this conundrum cannot be choosing between security and employee experience, since both hold equal weight in the overall success and resilience of the organization. In fact, 52% of CXOs identify cybersecurity as a top priority for improving DEX. Instead, IT leaders and the C-suite must focus on delivering a secure-by-design digital employee experience that prioritizes communication and visibility into digital assets and their various interdependencies and interconnections. In reality, it should not be about trying to balance the two, but about approaching them as **two inseparable elements of any digital transformation**.

49%

of CXOs have requested to bypass one or more security measures in the past year.

Respondents find that some security measures have been relaxed to enable remote access but in some cases they are required to deal with more security measures



Security measures have been relaxed to enable remote access



I am required to deal with more security measures

Growing demand for support

IT leaders want to facilitate the best possible digital employee experience, but it can be difficult to keep up in an era of rapid change, especially as employees are using a wider range of devices and environments to get their work done. More devices mean a greater burden on support, resulting in major incidents taking too long to resolve and IT lacking visibility and context into the problems their employees face.

While a significant majority of respondents claim that **IT support has improved** in response to remote work, employees have also found themselves **facing more technical issues** than before (45%). This has resulted in employees seeking different (and often riskier) ways to solve the issues they are facing, with almost half running online searches or turning to colleagues and friends for help before reaching out to IT.

Tackling growing demand on support is then critical to improving digital employee experience. However, being able to offer prompt and reliable support requires a **scalable approach augmented by innovative technology** that automates the resolution of recurring issues and provides real-time visibility into all assets that make up the work environment. However, when automation and AI join DEX at the bottom of priority list, the challenges remain.

41%

of knowledge workers claim they have a harder time getting support for tech issues.

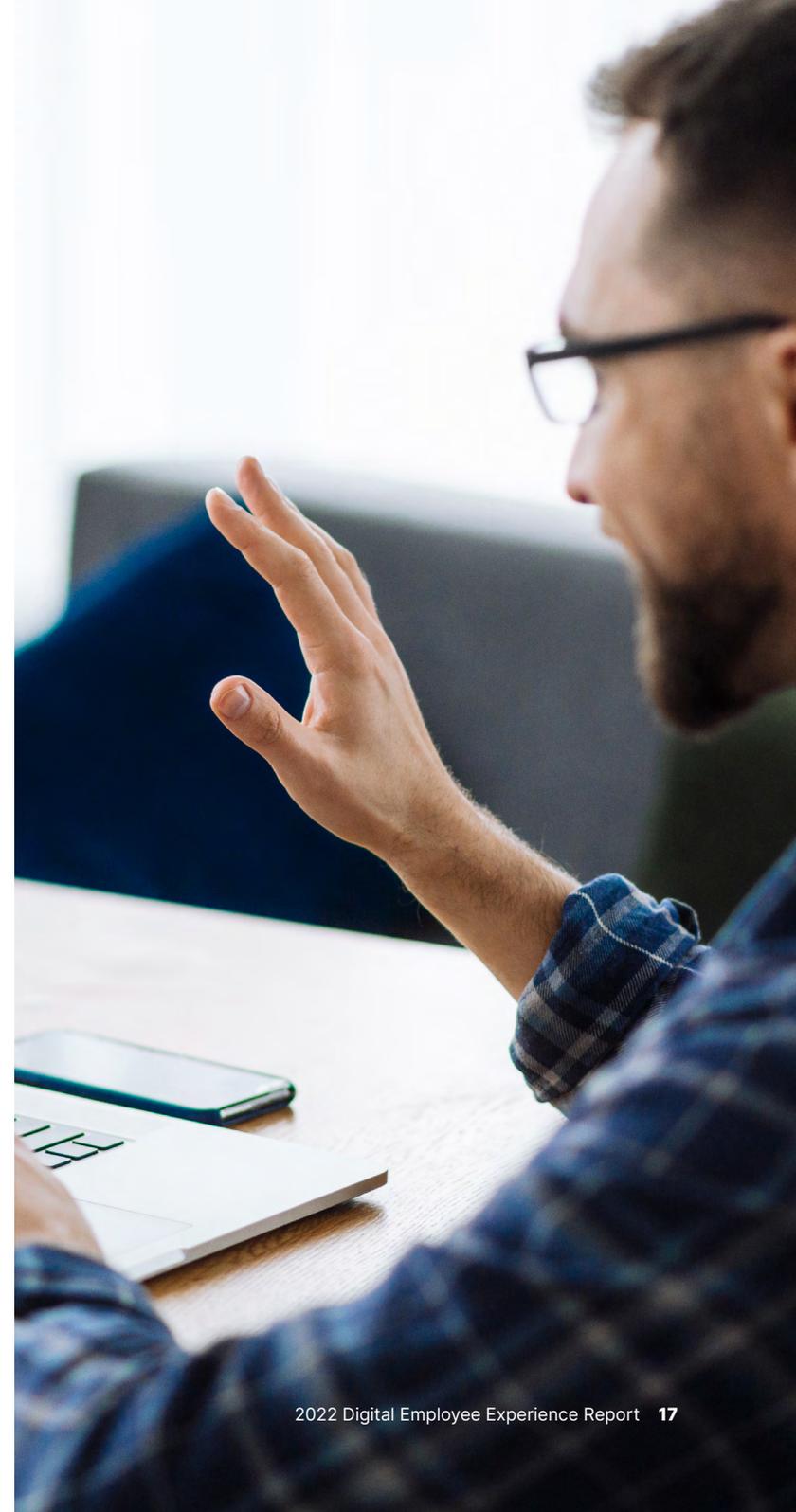
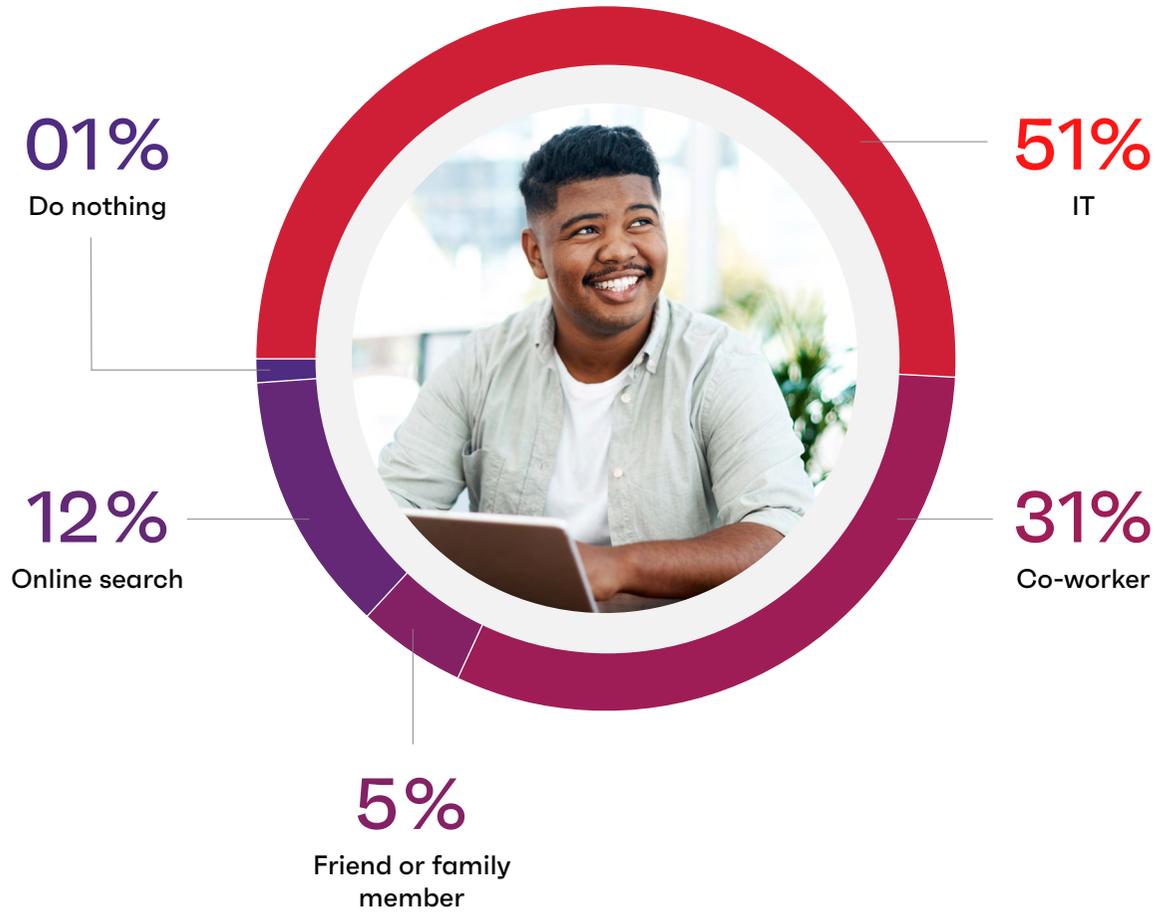
74%

Of respondents at least partially agree that their company has improved IT support in response to remote work

47%

Of respondents at least partially agree they have had more tech issues than before the pandemic

When in need of support, who do employees turn to first?



The main strategic priorities identified by IT professionals for their team in the next year

- 48% IT infrastructure
- 47% IT cost optimization
- 45% Cybersecurity
- 36% Cloud
- 32% Recruiting/retaining IT talent
- 29% Remote work/collaboration
- 26% Simplification of the IT landscape
- 24% Digital customer experience
- 23% Automating repetitive tasks
- 23% Digital employee experience
- 20% AI/ML tools





25%

Just 25% of CXOs identify workplace culture as their business's main internal priority, and only 20% assign budgets to it for improving the employee digital experience.

The silo mentality

For many people, including business executives, it is easy to dismiss digital transformation as a purely technical challenge and, therefore, the sole responsibility of the IT department. That said, this misconception also leaves IT directors believing they are unable to have a cultural impact on the organization, with 56% feeling that their teams are appreciated for the value they deliver to employees.² However, the digital employee experience is also as much about company culture as it is about technology. After all, without the right tech, it gets harder to drive real and meaningful change in the Everywhere Workplace.

With the hybrid workplace comes greater empowerment across all organizational levels. However, this degree of freedom and flexibility can also result in a silo mentality and duplication of work. For example, having to deal with too many emails and chat messages (28%) is a common complaint among employees, while constant connectivity (14%) and the disparity between apps and environments (17%) result in workers putting in longer hours than before the pandemic.

Although business leadership is largely responsible for **driving cultural change**, it is up to IT to provide the tooling and support necessary to facilitate that change. More often than not, the lack of communication between teams falls to technical barriers. Imagine an employee working from an Excel spreadsheet on their laptop, taking customer meetings on an iPad and reviewing results on their smartphone. A uniform operating environment that can facilitate seamless collaboration is a must for DEX delivery across a hybrid workforce.

Overcoming these challenges requires close alignment between business leadership and IT to better **integrate people, processes and technology**. Collaboration has been identified as a budget assignment priority among almost 31% of C-level respondents, but there is still some way to go to enable smooth, secure and transparent operations across an ever-wider tech stack.

Better together: security and employee experience

Some knowledge workers, particularly remote and hybrid ones, feel that security measures are a burden, even if they do appreciate their necessity. However, the more complex and multifaceted security measures become, the more likely employees are to try to circumvent them so they can get on with their work. This certainly does not mean that IT can afford to compromise on security, but they should **focus on minimizing the burden on end users**. The key to success should be proactive security measures that enable a better employee experience.

Information security is a top budget priority for most CXOs (52%), especially those in the US and the UK, but **making security easier to manage** is significantly further down the list. These findings make clear the need for security to be deeply interwoven into the DEX.

The best and most effective security experience is one that the **end user barely even sees**. For example, the zero sign-on (ZSO) process consolidates access to all workplace apps under a single login, so that end users do not have to remember multiple sets of login credentials. Bolster this with a zero trust security (ZTS) model, and you have a security strategy that provides both greater protection and a smoother end user experience.

A mature DEX is inherently better for security and allows IT to retain complete visibility into and control over their environments. By **making security an integral part of the employee experience**, it is possible to greatly enhance both. ■





Prioritization of security by the C-suite across the globe

	Total	US	UK	FR	DE	NL	AU	JP	ZH
									
Cybersecurity	52%	70%	64%	58%	48%	42%	38%	55%	43%
Making security easier to manage (e.g. implementing single sign-on)	33%	27%	35%	28%	37%	22%	35%	30%	47%



69% of employees feel they need to deal with more security measures in a hybrid work environment.

03

Reimagining the employee experience

Only 47% of IT professionals agree completely that their organizations have full visibility into every device that attempts to access their networks.

Maintaining visibility and governance

The growing variety of devices and networks that hybrid workers use has greatly expanded the inventory of assets that IT teams need to manage or, at the very least, monitor. After all, **you can't protect what you don't know about.**

The clear starting point for any digital employee experience is to **establish visibility over your environment.** When technology stacks were largely internal and confined to the office, this was much easier. Today, however, the IT estate spans a vast range of on-premises and private and public cloud resources, mobile devices and employee-owned devices.

To maintain **visibility and control**, IT leaders need a full **view of their entire tech stacks**, including all devices, users, accounts, applications, services and data assets. Moreover, all data pertaining to these resources must be updated on a regular basis to allow support and service teams to quickly resolve issues by using valuable and relevant insights.

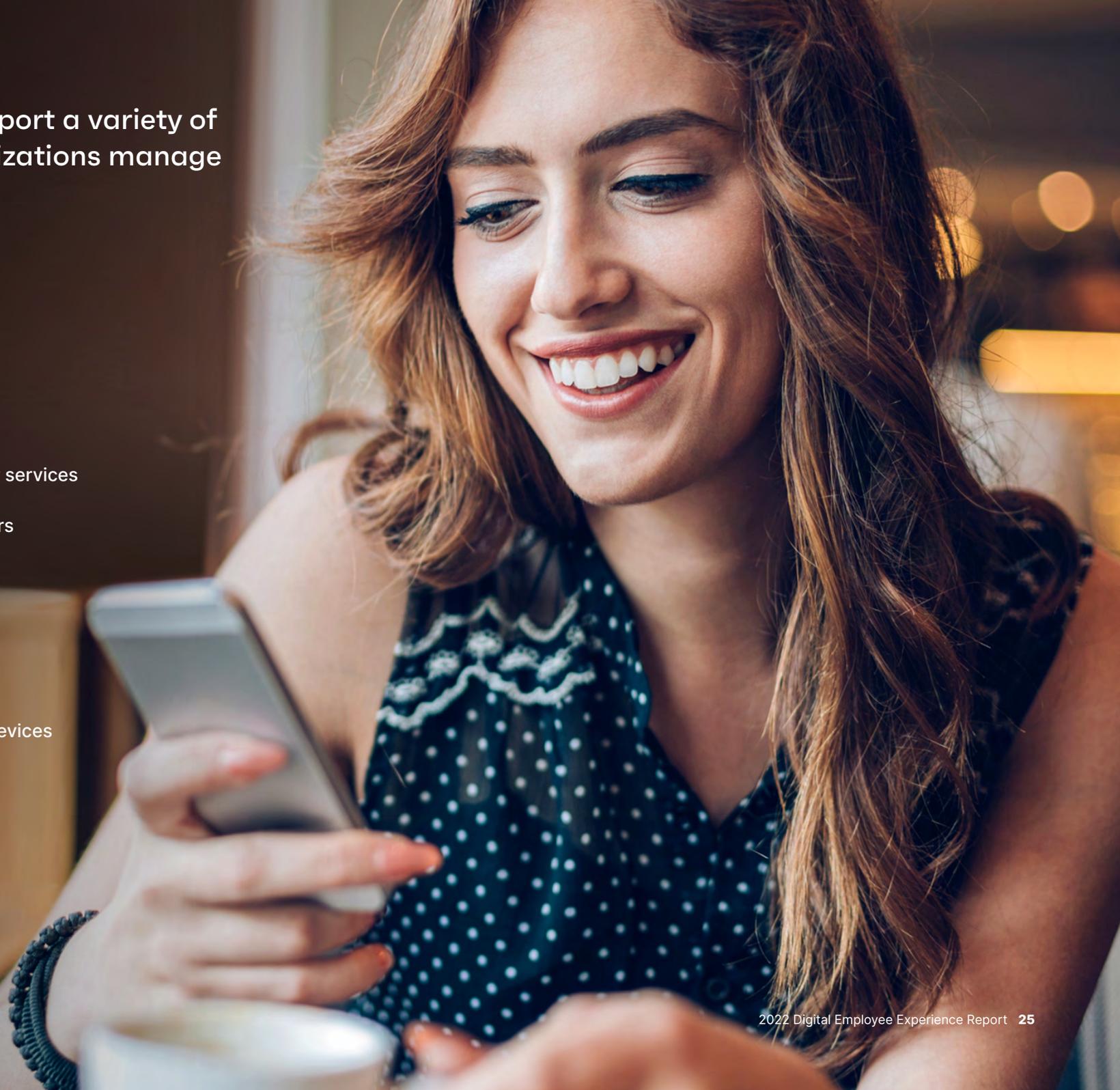


32% of IT professionals still use spreadsheets to track their devices.



IT professionals report a variety of assets their organizations manage

75%	Laptops
71%	Desktops
66%	Network devices
59%	Mobile phones
54%	Cloud resources or services
50%	Servers/datacenters
43%	Tablets
40%	Desk phones
23%	IoT devices
21%	Industry specific devices
16%	Non-IT devices
4%	Don't know

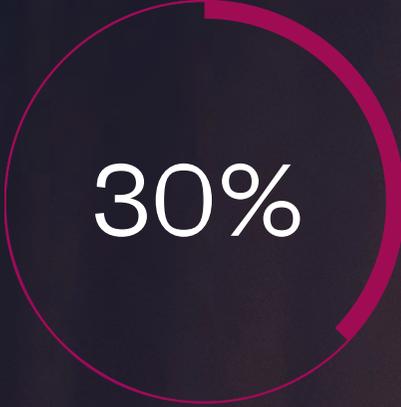


Measuring digital employee experience

IT leaders can't expect to improve what they can't measure, which is why they need insights into how the digital employee experience evolves over time. However, relying on limited indicators, like post-ticket surveys, is inefficient and limited in scope when trying to build a holistic picture.

The most common way to measure DEX is with employee engagement surveys conducted by HR (38%), which does not allow for the accurate evaluation of IT's impact on DEX.

Moreover, the traditional approaches to measuring employee experience are typically carried out on a sporadic, ad hoc basis rather than being "always on" and proactive in nature. Our survey found that the use of telemetric data for DEX feedback is very low across the globe — 10% in Japan and 19% in Australia and France.

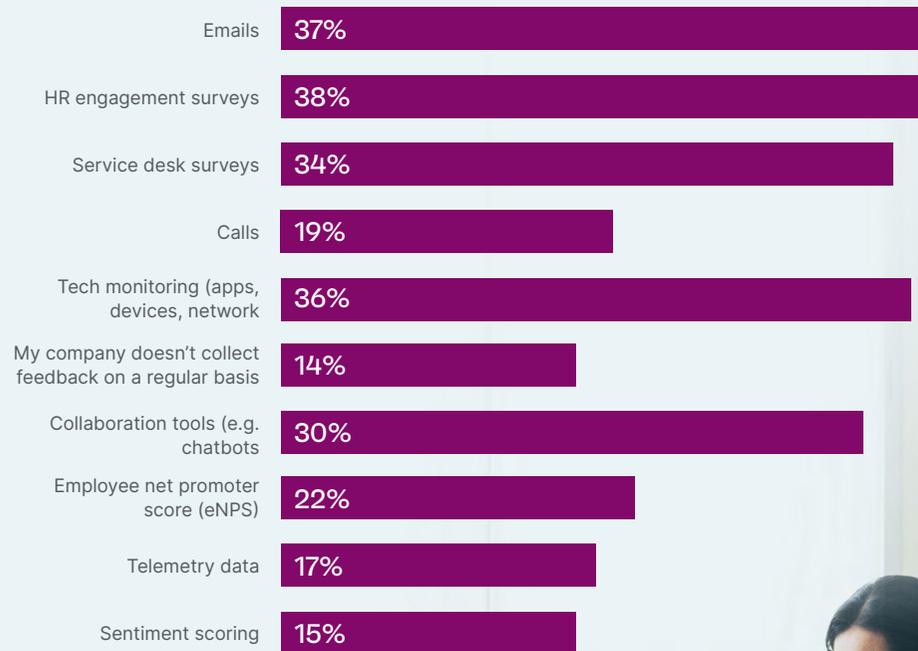


30%

30% of IT leaders have no process or metrics in place for evaluating digital employee experience, while 38% rely on HR engagement surveys.



Differences in how IT collects employee feedback about their experience with technology across the globe



Measuring employee experience must therefore be automated, with close attention paid to the KPIs that matter most to your organization. One way is to automate the collection and reporting of insights pertaining to the common issues affecting productivity. For example, slow devices, network connection issues, apps that suddenly crash and outdated software can be easily measured and reported in an automated fashion. Such reporting capabilities provide a significantly **more granular and comprehensive view** than solely relying on feedback from employees themselves.

A digital experience management solution gives **contextual visibility** into computing environments with both real-time data and insights into trends that develop over time. Constantly gathering data, such as latency time, bandwidth consumption, app performance and CPU usage from every endpoint helps IT leaders quickly identify potential and recurring issues that can impact DEX. Furthermore, with the ability to analyze these data points, you can calculate one of the most important metrics of all – your **DEX score**. This helps accurately quantify the productivity impact of the digital employee experience.

Addressing workforce expectations

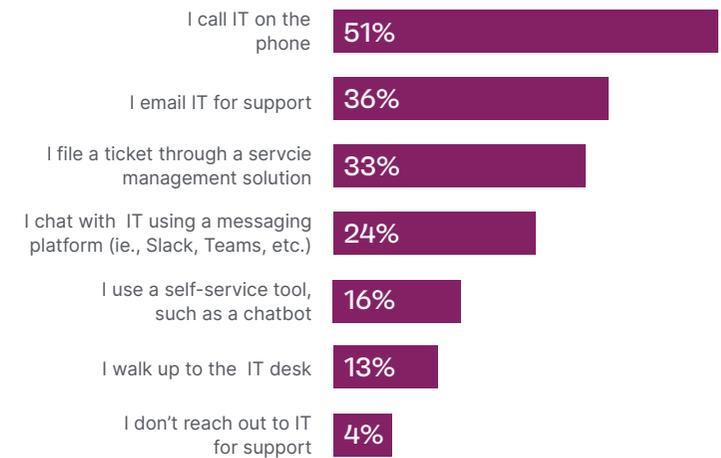
The study found that **56% of CXOs want their employees back in the office**. Despite this, all groups reported being more productive in the era of hybrid work, highlighting the fact that it is not so much the place of work that impacts productivity, but the experience that people have when interacting with technology. After all, 26% of employees have considered leaving their current job partly due to the available technology.

One of the overarching challenges of delivering a seamless DEX in an era of hybrid work is accommodating a **broad range of preferences and environments**. These can vary dramatically from one business and region to the next, further complicating

the way employees interact with support agents and provide feedback on their use of workplace tech.

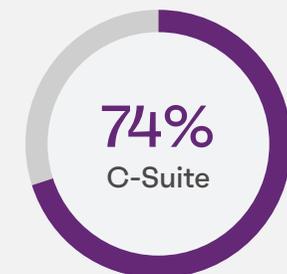
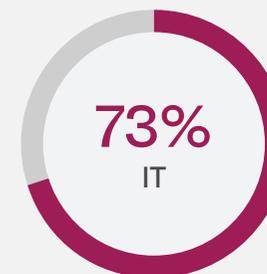
Ideally, employees should be able to engage IT teams through their preferred channels. On the other hand, IT needs to have context into the issues that their employees face. For example, if an employee sends a support request, IT will be much better equipped to address the problem if they have a complete view of the hardware and software in question. With the added power of **AI and automation**, contextual insights will allow them to proactively identify any degradation in productivity and the reasons behind it. To that extent, IT can even resolve some issues before end users are impacted.

How employees most often get help from IT



“I am more productive now than before the pandemic started”

— all respondents

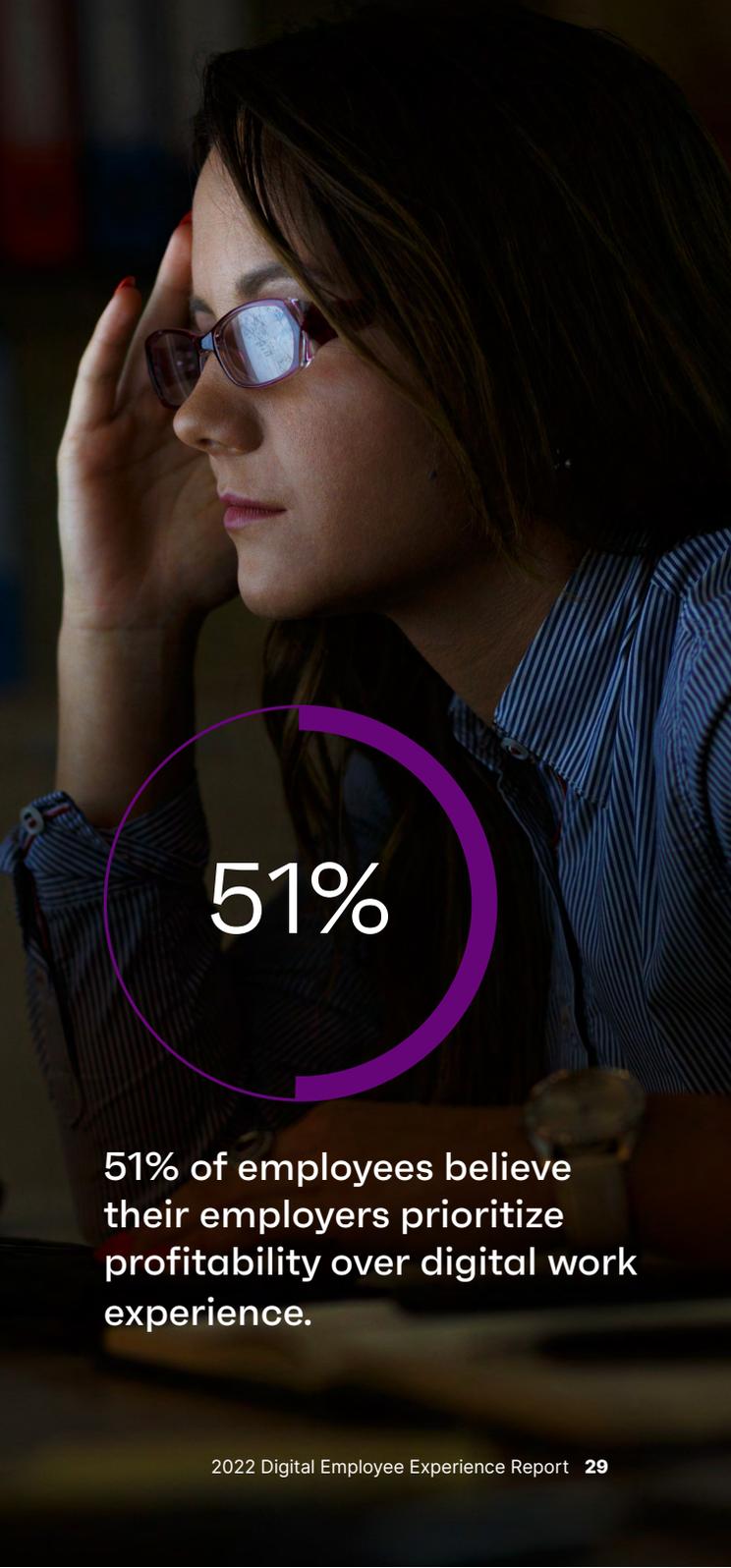


Enhancing the employee experience

Thanks to the availability of innovative new technologies that both enable and support hybrid workforces, IT now has the opportunity to **make a positive impact** on broader organizational strategy. By taking ownership of the digital employee experience and working closely with the C-suite to accomplish common goals, **IT can drive better business outcomes** – from employee productivity to workforce retention. Best of all, they are already well-equipped with the expertise and position needed to influence it.

To make it happen, IT leaders must **focus on breaking down barriers** to adoption by deploying solutions that are easy to use and allow them to retain visibility into their environments. The applied security measures must both be highly robust yet not place an unnecessary burden on the end user. Finally, they must leverage AI and automation for more repetitive tasks and the resolution of recurring issues.

DEX might still lie at the bottom of the list of priorities as far as CXOs are concerned, but that also presents an opportunity for IT to revisit their focus and make a real and lasting impact. After all, the **Everywhere Workspace is undeniably the future of work**, and digital experience is its number-one enabler. ■



51%

51% of employees believe their employers prioritize profitability over digital work experience.

“Hybrid work is the obvious way forward – when it is organized and enabled properly.

The tensions that have been felt during the wide adoption of remote work can be eased when employers provide equitable structure for employee work arrangements. Business leaders have an interest in gathering employees together in the office to provide in-person collaboration, but that is in direct conflict with the reality that most employees want to continue working remotely, at least some of the time, due to the flexibility that remote work provides. For the last few years, those who have been able to work from anywhere have been enjoying myriad benefits, including saving commute time, with many workers saving an average of nearly an hour each way – not to mention better work/life balance. Leaders must renew their focus on how employees experience work – not just the location of the work but also the technology they provide to facilitate that work. Leaders who don’t prioritize the ‘digital employee experience’ risk lower employee retention and not realizing the full potential of productivity and innovation that remote workers have to offer.”



Nicholas Bloom
William Eberle Professor of Economics
at Stanford University

Conclusion

With the nature of work forever changed, the way employees interact with technology defines their success and the value they deliver in their organizations. IT now has an opportunity to reshape the employee experience in a way that drives **enhanced productivity and engagement** but, to make it happen, they must **bring the digital employee experience to the top** of their agenda. In doing so, they will be better positioned to strengthen their relationships with HR, deliver on core leadership goals and drive stronger business outcomes.

About Ivanti

Ivanti makes the Everywhere Workplace possible. In the Everywhere Workplace, employees use myriad devices to access IT applications and data over various networks to stay productive as they work from anywhere. The Ivanti Neurons automation platform connects the company’s industry-leading unified endpoint management, zero-trust security, and enterprise service management solutions, providing a unified IT platform that enables devices to self-heal and self-secure and empowers users to self-service. Over 40,000 customers, including 96 of the Fortune 100, have chosen Ivanti to discover, manage, secure, and service their IT assets from cloud to edge, and deliver excellent end-user experiences for employees, wherever and however they work. For more information, visit www.ivanti.com and follow @Golvanti.

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1. Survey of 10,000 IT professionals, C-level executives and end users, conducted in eight countries in May 2022 by MSI
2. "Top IT Trends for the Everywhere Workplace", 2021