

Connecting the Dots: Experience, Technology, and the Hybrid Work Environment

Research Findings

Data and analysis from our in-depth survey of hybrid worker IT experiences — and insights for improving them

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SUMMARY

Many surveys since 2020 looked at how forced remote and hybrid work affected employees, but few, if any, have focused on the role technology and IT support play in enabling this kind of work.

This whitepaper analyzes the 2022 OnePoll survey commissioned by Compucom to investigate the impact of workplace technology on the overall employee experience for hybrid and remote workers, paying particular attention to the responses of enterprise employees (companies with more than 1,000 people).

The results illustrate how daily sub-par interactions with technology can wear away at productivity and job satisfaction — and end up being a deal-breaker for employees. In contrast, offering workplace flexibility, then enabling employee productivity with great technology experiences helps companies retain and attract talent.



Connecting the Dots: Experience, Technology, and the Hybrid Work Environment

Research Findings

PURPOSE

In 2022, according to McKinsey, 58% of Americans had the opportunity to work from home at least once a week, and 35% had the option of five days per week (Dua et al., 2022). The pandemic forced remote work onto companies, and now there's no turning back: those wanting to be an employer of choice should note that 87% of workers provided the chance of flexible work take it (Dua et al., 2022).

Offering remote and hybrid work expands the available workforce for employers and makes a role attractive to employees. But a distributed workforce brings challenges – ensuring workers have a flexible workplace, are technology-enabled, self-sufficient, and well-supported should be the goal of any company wanting to manage the Employee Experience effectively.

Compucom commissioned a survey of 2,000 U.S. workers — 1,000 remote and hybrid workers and 1,000 IT workers — to understand the challenges they face with workplace technology on a typical workday and how it affects their attitude toward their job and employer. Those surveyed spanned different industries, age groups, regions of the United States, and company sizes, including those with 1,000-plus employees, which are more likely to outsource IT solutions.



KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR TODAY'S ENTERPRISE

Bad IT experiences have consequences

- Bad experiences with workplace technology waste an alarming amount of company time and money: these often relatively minor disruptions occur an average of four times a day, lasting a total of 21 minutes for enterprise workers, equating to 10.5 workdays a year
- When faced with technology issues, workers often switch to personal devices, raising cybersecurity risk: vulnerable endpoints could lead to costly cyberattacks
- The buildup of daily technology frustrations impacts the employee experience and kickstarts job searching: it could mean the loss of valuable employees
- **EX and CX go hand in hand:** a negative employee experience can lead to a poor customer experience, which could lead to customer churn

Technology affects employees' attitudes and productivity

- Employees expect employers to provide the right technology to do their jobs: many compare their work technology to their personal devices and find it lacking
- The average enterprise worker Is personally spending over \$560 on technology for work: bring-your-own-device (BYOD) policies are popular, but not an excuse to provide sub-par technology
- Investing in the technology employees need helps companies retain and compete for top talent: good technology is very highly valued by the majority and promotes employee satisfaction and retention
- Employees value device choice: they know best what tools they need to be productive

IT departments need help

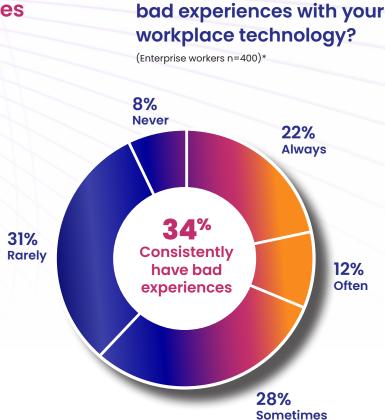
- IT support becomes central to the employee experience when things go wrong: delays in resolving issues frustrate employees further
- IT departments have been struggling since the pandemic: while they feel more appreciated since 2020, they are overburdened, which can affect morale and performance

EXPERIENCE

Let's talk about bad IT experiences

Negative employee experiences affected productivity and customer experience even before the worldwide response to the pandemic, and the 'Great Resignation' heightened our awareness of it. Innovative businesses prioritize creating a good employee experience, with the technology experience standing front and center of objectives across their organizations. Our respondents would concur – providing this is a must.

A full 83% of enterprise respondents said technology helps their productivity during the workday. But that reliance means bad IT experiences are bound to disrupt and reduce productive work, leaving workers frustrated. In fact, most of the top-reported frustrations involved bad IT interactions that impacted productivity and team collaboration.



How often do you have

While 39% of enterprise respondents rarely or never have bad experiences with workplace technology, 61% have issues at least sometimes, with more than 1/5 always having bad experiences (22%). The average enterprise respondent reported wasting 21 minutes per workday because of technology frustrations — which doesn't seem much until you realize how much that adds up over time and across an enterprise. Twenty-one minutes per workday works out to 10.5 workdays a year. Across an enterprise with 1,000 employees, that equates to 10,500 lost workdays a year.

An alarming majority (79%) of employees in the survey reported switching to their personal devices when encountering technical issues. This increased to 86% for the biggest cohort of the US workforce — millennials. This was slightly less but still concerning for enterprise workers, with almost 2/3 switching (66%). Depending on the degree of compliance with corporate security policies and how effectively endpoint security is managed, this could seriously increase a company's cybersecurity risk.

It's not surprising workers switch to their own devices, given that the average age of their workplace technology is over three years (3.5 years for enterprises). Some enterprise employees (14%) claim their technology is over seven years old.

How IT interactions affect attitudes and retention

Technology might not be the first factor companies consider for retaining and attracting employees, but that underestimates how vital being productive is to good employees. Frustrations with technology can build up over time and seriously affect how employees view their job and the company. The survey found that 62% of respondents had done one or more of looking, applying, or leaving for another job because of IT frustrations. When asked how much they valued having good technology for work, 91% appreciated it, with 65% saying they valued it very much.

Our survey data directly correlates and expands on what Forrester's Future of Work Survey 2021 saw: "highly engaged employees are more likely to be satisfied with their digital experience" (Hewitt & McKinnon, 2021). When employees can get their work done efficiently, they'll feel more satisfied with their job and have an improved work-life balance. Forrester further validated our findings, as well as our direct experience, in 2022 by showing that "60% of business and technology professionals indicate that improving the experience of employees is a key IT objective over the next 12 months, and we expect it to take a permanent place in the constellation of priorities from now on" (Hewitt & McKinnon, 2021).



of respondents have done one or more of looking, applying, or leaving for a new job because of IT frustrations

(n=2000)

Given States of respondents value having good work technology

(n=2000)



12% of enterprise respondents left their job because of IT frustrations. (n=400)

RECOMMENDED SOLUTION:

Make employees want to stay – measure, manage, and improve employee experience

Fix the pain points — ideally before the user is even aware

The technology issues reported in our survey weren't trivial. In fact, most of the top-reported frustrations involved bad IT interactions that impacted productivity, workplace flexibility, and team collaboration. Frustrating in themselves, these issues impact other parts of the overall employee experience, such as being a productive member of a team.

So how can you address and fix these pain points? We believe in a responsive rather than reactive approach, fixing problems before they become more significant issues. We design all of our offerings to measure, manage, and continuously improve technology experiences. It's all about the experience, and we can help your company define and refine your experience for your employees and, in turn, your customers. And we do that by focusing on your first customers – your employees.

Experience Management (XM)

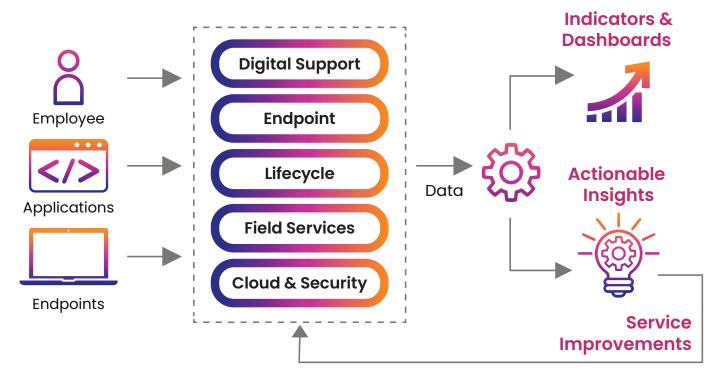
Experience Management allows in-depth insight into employees' technology experiences that has not been available before. Employers now have a view into employee sentiment, burnout, and frustration lost when the workforce moved into the home office. They also have great insight into how best to fix potential productivity pain points, sometimes before the user is even aware of the issue.

The following is an overview of the steps that make up XM:

- 1. Gather useful and accurate user experience data endpoint telemetry, service metrics, event sensors, targeted surveys, user-sentiment analysis.
- 2. Generate performance indicators from the data.
- 3. Develop insights from collected data, including the use of Artificial Intelligence/ Machine Learning (AI/ML) analytics.
- 4. Build dimensions to see the big picture of employee experience Compucom's analysts designed four Experience Management dimensions geared to the hybrid workplace to measure and improve how services are enabling:
 - Technology-enabled workers
 - Self-sufficient workers
 - Well-supported workers
 - A flexible workplace
- 5. Take action to improve employee experience service changes such as automation, knowledgebase content, self-serve responses, endpoint policies, and operational activities across the range of offerings.

Compucom's Experience Management Approach

Compucom seeks to understand and improve how users consume and perceive IT services and has made Experience Management foundational to all managed services. Applying these concepts across all IT managed services is a game changer. It allows data from the full breadth of services to help determine the best opportunities for meaningful enhancements.



Compucom's Experience Management Dashboard

Our dashboard view provides a snapshot of the overall technology experience of the customer versus other organizations by taking inputs from diverse sources. It also provides possible remedial actions such as enhancing technology adoption or migration to modern endpoint management.



TECHNOLOGY

Technology directly affects an employee's attitude and productivity

Technology drives an employee's daily workplace experience. When it comes to delivering on business initiatives, meeting and beating company goals, or just keeping the business running through the day-to-day BAU (business as usual), they are the real experts, the ones you count on, down in the trenches, doing the work.

Knowing this, imagine the surprise when our survey revealed that 57% of respondents had personally paid more than \$500 on technology for their job. The average spend was \$545 and was higher for enterprise workers, who reported spending an average of \$563. Considering that these same respondents expected their company to pay between \$600 and \$850 on technology for their job, you can see the discrepancy. Workers are self-funding an additional 66% to 90% over what they believe their company should pay for the technology they need to get their jobs done efficiently and effectively.

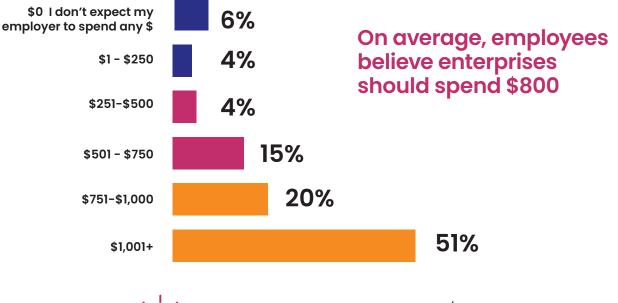
The result – using personal technology for work is now commonplace. And while the familiarity, convenience, and simplicity (fewer devices to juggle) are appealing, there can be drawbacks to these bring-your-own-device (BYOD) strategies, especially when the policy is unclear, unenforced or unenforceable, or workers use their own technology without the company knowing. Compliance with policies that protect the network is crucial for security. Companies with BYOD policies should also make sure they are not causing resentment by shifting the financial burden of work technology to the workers.

Who provides technology for work?

(Enterprise workers n=400)* Employer-provided tech only 73% A mix of employer-provided tech + personal 19% Employer provides tech but 5% Employer does not provide tech 3%

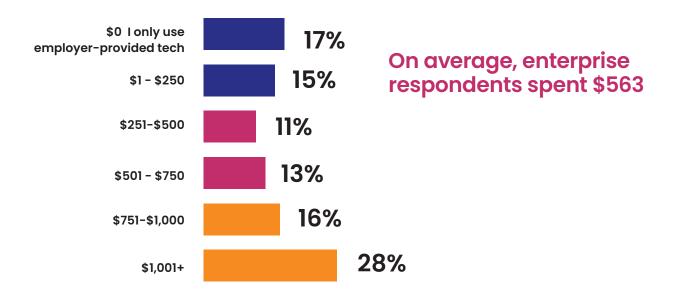
Enterprise employees' expectations vs. reality

86% of respondents expect enterprises to spend over \$500 on technology needed for their work (Enterprise workers n=400)*



Gen X had the highest expectations, with 1/3 expecting employers to spend over \$1000. Region also had influence: 66% of workers living in the Northeast expected employers to spend over \$750. (n=2000)

57% of enterprise respondents have personally spent more than \$500 on technology needed for their work (Enterprise workers n=400)*

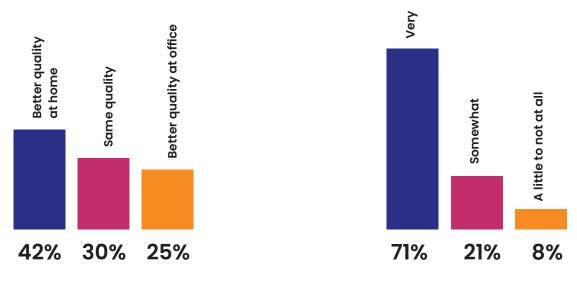


How does your home technology compare to the technology you use

How much do you value having good technology

for work? (Enterprise workers n=400)*

in the office? (Enterprise workers n=400)*

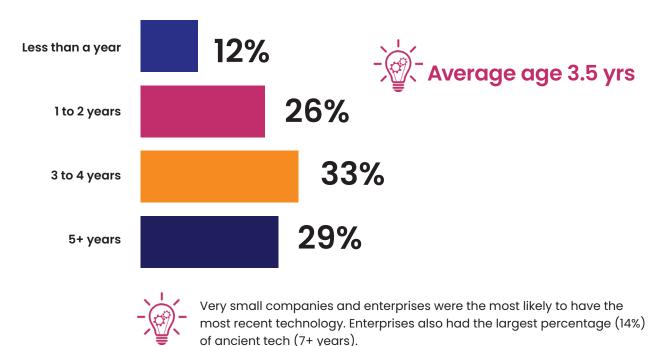




Gen Z and millennials had better home technology (41% and 47% compared to 31% and 18% for Gen X and baby boomers) (n=2000)

How old is the main technology you use (e.g. your computer)?

(Enterprise workers n=400)*



RECOMMENDED SOLUTION: Provide technology that employees will value

Deliver a great experience – Get the right technology to the right people

Keeping track of all the possible technology preferences workers have is tough. It helps if you can categorize them. Personas do just that. Personas – a detailed definition of a group of employees who require the same or a similar set of technologies, services, applications, data access, and support – help identify the appropriate tools each employee needs to be productive.

Giving managers and their employees the appropriate options to choose from when provisioning the types of devices, services, and peripherals they use – both in the office and working from home – results in the employee getting the best setup to be productive.

Keep critical technology updated and well-managed

The survey showed that the most significant problem IT professionals saw with their company's technology was its age. Older, outdated, and obsolete devices are harder to manage and maintain. To provide employees with the latest technology with an optimal refresh cycle, you can count on Compucom's over 35 years of experience in consultative technology services and end-to-end Device Lifecycle Services.

The right MSP will be able to provide a holistic view of your corporate technology coupled with insights into Digital Employee Experience (DEX) and Experience Management to help determine ideal solutions. Once the technology needs and the optimal employee experience are determined, they can help you put an end-to-end Device Lifecycle Services plan in place including:

- Procurement and fulfillment
- Configuration and deployment
- IT asset management
- Repair, refurbishment, and redeployment
- IT asset disposition

Additionally, when considering BYOD policies, your company can benefit from using an MSP to supply Virtual Desktop Services, which handle the provisioning and management of virtual desktops while ensuring security protocols are followed. For example, Windows-based devices can benefit from cloud-based Azure Virtual Desktop (AVD) or Microsoft Cloud PC to update operating systems and manage applications efficiently and securely.

Personas and Device Lifecycle Services are critical to ensuring and delivering a successful employee/technology experience. These services provide the consistency today's businesses require by offering best-fit, current technology when and how the employee needs it.

SUPPORT

IT departments have been struggling since the pandemic

We've all seen the business technology consequences of the pandemic. In the sudden switch to remote, workers had to rely on a blend of new and old technology and companies looked to IT to keep it all up and running smoothly. As our survey showed, the increased value of technology was not lost on workers, with 88% of enterprise respondents stating that COVID-19 and the new hybrid work model made them place somewhat or a lot more importance on their workplace technology.

On a positive note, 89% of IT pros in the survey said they felt much or somewhat more valued since 2020. For a department used to receiving no attention or only the negative kind — it must have felt refreshing to get a pat on the back for once.

Still, people have short memories. They slip into the "what have you done for me lately" mindset and forget that IT workers still face significant challenges supporting the hybrid workplace. The result – survey responses showed IT departments are feeling underappreciated and overburdened as they face new and increased responsibilities and a shortage of available talent.

Many of the 1,000 IT worker respondents (44%) related to the statement, "Fixing tech issues always requires more time than you think." And 41% agreed that "training and learning new platforms and applications for troubleshooting is endless."

Do these sentiments reflect a content workforce? Hardly. And their burn out doesn't just affect their department, it could lead to mistakes with impacts felt across an organization. Qualified IT professionals are scarce. If they aren't happy or feel under-appreciated, they may just spruce up those résumés, hoping the grass is greener elsewhere. So, what else did they say?

Over the past year, what's your experience with IT been like?

(Hybrid/remote workers n=1000)*

53% IT is easy to work with

48% IT has been more helpful over the past year

> **48%** IT is responsive

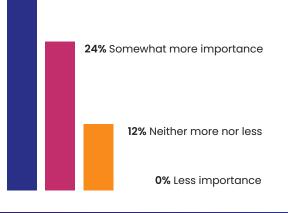
40% More than half the time, IT is able to solve my issue in a reasonable amount of time

21% IT is empathetic to my issues

Did COVID-19 make you place less or more importance on having good technology at work?

(Enterprise workers n=400)*

64% A lot more importance



Insight from IT employees – what problems do they see?

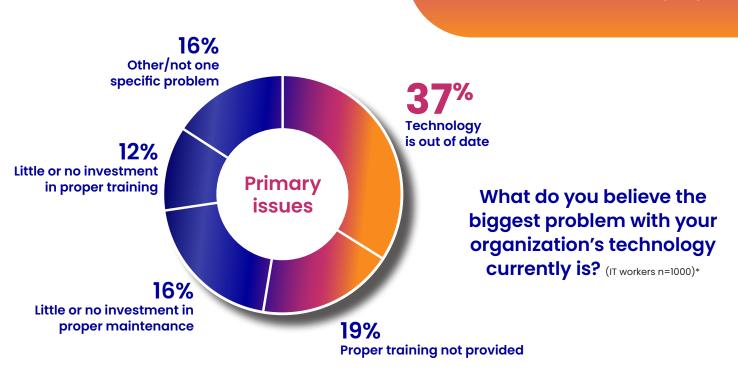
The survey asked for feedback from 1,000 IT professionals for their informed viewpoints on technology's role in retaining employees and insight into the issues they saw with their own company's technology. The biggest complaint about their companies' current technology was that it was outdated (37%). The survey participants almost unanimously agreed that:

- Employees should have more choice in the technology for their job
- The average company should be providing better technology
- If companies invested more in their technology, employee satisfaction and retention would increase



In his book Smarter Faster Better: The Transformative Power of Real Productivity, Charles Duhigg relates the story of a car manufacturer's profound turnaround of a failing plant through adoption of "commitment culture." The philosophy is based on the idea that if you put people in a position to succeed, they will. It encourages leadership to view workers as experts of their own work and the best source for process improvement suggestions (Duhigg, 2016, pp. 142–144).

Commitment culture is now taught in business schools (Duhigg, 2016, pp. 142-144). Trusting employees to know best how they can work productively pays off in results, job satisfaction, and commitment to a company.



The average company should be providing better technology

(IT workers n=1000)*

64%	30%	5%	1%
Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	- Somewhat disagree

If companies invested more in their technology, employee satisfaction and retention would increase (IT workers n=1000)*

60%	34%	5%	1%
Strongly	Somewhat	Neither agree	Somewhat
agree	agree	nor disagree	disagree

Employees should have more choice in the technology for their job

(IT workers n=1000)*

64%	30%	5%	1%
57	Somewhat	Neither agree	Somewhat
	agree	nor disagree	disagree

What do you wish people knew about your job

and your responsibilities? (IT workers n=1000)

- **45%** "It's easy to blame IT when things go wrong, but we're under-appreciated when things go right."
- **44%** "Systems and software require constant maintenance and upkeep."
- 44% "Fixing tech issues always requires more time than you think."
- **41%** "Training and learning new platforms and applications for troubleshooting is endless."
- **36%** "Simple requests aren't always simple."
- **31%** "The hours are unpredictable."
- **26%** "My job is not 9-5 I finish when the problems are solved."
- 23% "Sometimes we don't know the answers either."

36% "Simple" requests aren't always simple.

RECOMMENDED SOLUTION: Relieve the pressure on IT so they can focus on what's critical

As pressure builds, so does frustration. The importance of relieving the pressure your IT department most likely faces and ensuring your distributed workers get the support they need will help ensure that they all stay productive. But what's the best approach to get this done while considering the multitude of other variables that can affect your specific business?

Our experience has shown us that organizations have had measurable success when using a targeted approach to relieving stress in their IT departments. Typical IT departments spend much of their time supporting devices, end users, and infrastructure; offloading these tasks to an experienced managed services partner enables them to focus on other business-critical work. We have found that there are three key areas where Compucom's managed services expertise can help this situation by:

- Making it easier to manage, secure, and deploy devices for distributed users
- · Providing consistently available and responsive support
- Increasing capabilities through qualified IT staffing and staff augmentation

Make it easier to manage, secure, and deploy devices

After over 35 years of providing managed services for our customers, we have learned a lot. At the forefront of this experience is that businesses want to be able to manage, secure, and deploy their technology as easily as possible. In the past, this was challenging. Many companies deploy multiple platforms, legacy systems, and disparate technologies, that need to work together at all times.

The pandemic opened many eyes to the stark realization that not all technology is created equal and that in order to get business done in this "new normal," they had to find ways to make everything work together or upgrade/change the tools they had previously used. Pre-pandemic, many IT departments relied on Mobile Device Management (MDM), but this didn't take into account BYOD flexibility and the proliferation of smart devices with their data security requirements. Unified Endpoint Management (UEM) was introduced to address these issues and others, allowing organizations to:

- **Define an onboarding process:** Provide device provisioning and enrollment as part of a streamlined process
- Support BYOD: Deploy, configure, and secure resources and applications on any device
- Keep operating systems current: Push operating system quality and feature updates to end-user devices
- Control device features: Enable or disable device-specific features or settings
- **Protect enterprise data:** Maintain device and data security with compliance and conditional-access policies to protect your enterprise data
- Manage applications: Control software entitlement and distribution with application management
- Manage Windows device health: Proactively manage Windows device health with end-user device experience scoring, insights, and remediations

While UEM offers companies many advantages for managing, securing, and deploying assets, as we discussed earlier, those assets need to be maintained and connected. Our IT support approach is designed to keep your distributed users productive and connected while delivering an excellent overall experience.

Provide consistently available and responsive support

We know that balancing the right combination of live support with automation and self-help tools provides end users with the best channel to fit an issue's urgency level – delivering a great support experience while keeping your support costs low. We accomplish this through a combination of Digital Support and Field Services.

Digital Support

Digital Support is our term for a complete service desk solution. It used to be that an end user would call up a "helpline," and someone would answer the phone down the hall in IT. As technology advanced and our hybrid work world evolved, there came a need to meet the end user where they work. We developed our multi-channel solution to give users access to the help they need, where and when they need it. Some of the major components of this approach include:

• **Compucom Connect:** Connect is an end-user digital engagement platform with a suite of self-help and self-service features, including self-service password reset (SSPR), self-ticketing, and service requests; AI chat and intelligent search deliver self-help content from an extensive 18,000+ article knowledge base

- Agent Assisted: this service provides omnichannel support, with engagement through live voice, text, chat, web, and email
- Level 2 (L2) Remote Resolution: this service extends service desk capabilities with advanced tools and skills, drastically reducing the need for deskside visits

Of course, remote help isn't always enough to solve a problem. Sometimes only an onsite experienced professional can provide the knowledge and expertise hybrid employees require.

Field Services

Our Field Services solution gets skilled professionals to where they're needed, whether that means visiting users at home or in the office. Field Services include:

- Dedicated Support: skilled, certified technicians delivering Smart Hands support; installation, move, add, change, and disposal (IMACD); and deskside support related to applications, servers, desktops, laptops, printers, and other defined devices
- **Dispatch Support:** skilled, certified technicians travel to customers' hybrid locations, where and when needed, for resolutions that can't happen remotely; this includes Smart Hands, IMACD, and deskside support related to applications, servers, desktops, laptops, printers, and other defined devices

Our support model is all about providing your company and end users with options and flexibility. The last of the three key areas we've identified to relieve the pressure on your IT department is helping increase your capabilities through staffing and staff augmentation.

IT Staffing

IT staffing and staff augmentation can ramp up your teams with experienced professionals, expanding capabilities without the cost and hassle of hiring full-time employees. This predictable, cost-efficient staffing model aligns the right talent with your goals through precision on-demand recruiting and ongoing, dedicated resource management.

With over 25 years of experience providing IT staffing and staff augmentation to large and mid-sized companies across the U.S., our dedicated IT Staffing Division, eXcell, has pipelines of resources in design and research, software and security, infrastructure, and end-user support.

ABOUT COMPUCOM

For the hybrid workplace, make sure the user, device, and infrastructure are supported

When it comes to providing anywhere work, our Employee Experience & Technology Survey indicates there are obstacles to overcome. Partnering with a top-notch service provider can deliver proven solutions and tangible tactics for improving IT experiences. Compucom is an industry-leading end-to-end managed IT managed services provider whose solutions have received recent recognition from Avasant, Everest Group, ISG, and NelsonHall.

Compucom supports users, procures and supports their devices, and manages the attached services. Their portfolio of solutions provides uninterrupted productivity, self-service support, on-site field support, and full-lifecycle device management with a singular focus on optimizing the hybrid employee experience through:

- Technology choice giving employees the right tools to be effective
- Workplace flexibility providing a seamless experience no matter where they work
- Data security keeping business-critical data secure
- User-defined support ensuring effective support is always available

These four dimensions directly align with what the survey showed employees wanted – a say in their work technology, a digital workplace that lets them work productively from anywhere, and easily accessible support.

But how to know if managed services are continually meeting employees' needs and optimizing their experience, even when they are not in the office? The answer is — through Experience Measurement, which continually measures and improves all services based on the four hybrid work dimensions above. This means that continuous improvement of all services, driving toward the distributed workplace ideal, is built in.

Looking to the future

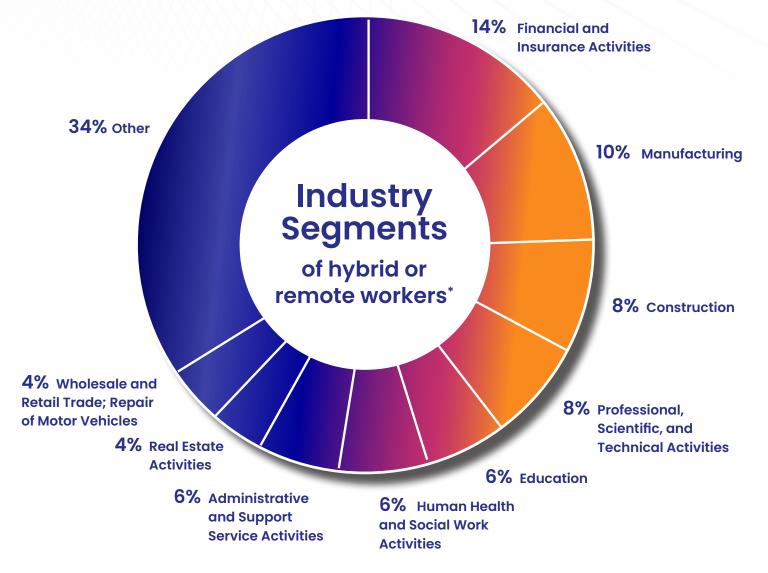
Despite the news of impending recession and layoffs at high-profile companies, Forrester predicts in 2023, "smart firms will invest in employee experience (EX)" and advises firms, "Don't slow down your EX investments in the face of economic tightening because you will pay for it in labor retentions and low-engagement costs" (Tynan et al., 2022). Compucom has designed all its offerings around EX and Experience Management. By partnering with Compucom, companies will meet the needs of today's work-from-anywhere workplace and are set to meet the evolving challenges of the future digital workforce.

APPENDIX

Profile of the respondents

The workplaces

The survey included mainly full-time hybrid and remote workers, leaning heavily toward hybrid (3:1). A wide range of industries were represented, including typically blue-collar work such as construction to white-collar professional, scientific, and technical activities; by design, IT workers made up half the respondents. Respondents lived in all five main regions of the United States.



The workers

The sample skewed male (65%), likely because of the selection being 50% IT workers and the current under-representation of women in the tech workforce (25% globally) (Hupfer et al., 2022). A majority were millennials (63%), with Gen X making up the next highest demographic (29%), followed by Gen Z and baby boomers (6% and 5%). This breakdown is somewhat in line with the current ratios of cohorts in the U.S. workforce (Lettink, 2019).

Enterprise-specific demographics

The survey included 400 enterprise workers from 14 different industries. They were more likely to be fully remote (31%) than those from smaller companies and more often female (by 4%). Enterprise respondents were older: they had more Gen X and baby boomer workers (29% and 23%), and fewer millennials and Gen Z employees (18% and 7%). Regions of the U.S. for this large subset were evenly split, with each representing close to 1/5 of respondents (19%-23%).

1% non-binary/

Gender

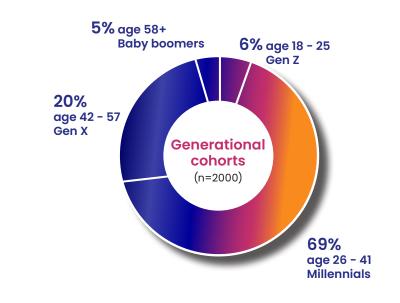
(n=2000)

prefer not to say



U.S. Workforce Cohorts prediction for 2025

Millennials will be the highest cohort in the U.S. workforce (44%). They are highly represented in IT (38% of all web developers in the U.S. are aged 25 to 34). Gen Z will make up 12%, Gen X will be 29%, and baby boomers, now approaching or well into retirement age, will be 15% (Lettink, 2019).





Women (34%) were more likely than men (19%) to be fully remote. (n=2000)

65%

male



Millennials were most likely to be hybrid than remote workers (77%), followed by Gen X (69%), and Gen Z (61%). Only 29% of baby boomers were hybrid. (n=2000)

34%

female

End notes

About the survey

The survey was commissioned by Compucom and conducted by OnePoll (www.onepoll.com) on August 23 to 29, 2022. OnePoll recruits targeted panelists online through a double opt-in research platform. There were 2,000 total respondents (1,000 hybrid and remote workers and 1,000 IT workers), including 400 respondents working at enterprises (companies with more than 1,000 employees). All results were further broken down by age group, gender, region, company size, and who provides work technology. Throughout this whitepaper, 'n' represents the sample size of results.

Citations

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