

Why hybrid working success needs flexible communication technology

Owing to The Great Resignation, businesses and how they run have changed drastically. We no longer need physical offices for all businesses to function, a designated desk and chair and several cables cluttered around the office. In 2022, we have finally acknowledged the importance of having flexibility in our work lives and this begins and ends with a company's communication tools.

The importance of business communication and the tools that enable it cannot be understated. As seen in our *Chatterbox Matrix*, businesses in places like Watford and Macclesfield are amongst the chattiest in the UK, meaning easy and reliable communication tools will be key to their day-to-day activity. So how can businesses big and small implement hybrid working whilst retaining efficient and productive comms?

Making hybrid working work for you

The past few years have changed working culture dramatically and one thing is certain; hybrid working is here to stay. However, this new way of working is not without its challenges to overcome.

Having a dispersed team impacts ease of communication between colleagues. What was once a quick chat by the water cooler, suddenly becomes a nightmare of diary navigation and time zone management. This in turn can have a negative effect on productivity, as team collaboration becomes harder to achieve, ideas and creativity are stunted and the process of feedback is slower.

Your workplace culture could be another casualty in the remote working era. According to the *State of Hybrid Work Report 2022*, a third (33%) of office workers find building relationships with remote colleagues harder, with 47% suggesting this is because small talk is not as frequent.

You may have already noticed that the common theme of these issues is communication. Specifically a lack of easy, efficient and frequent internal business comms directly caused by the distance hybrid working creates between your staff. Yet, despite these challenges it *is* still possible to make hybrid working a success for your business, both in terms of keeping current employees happy and attracting new ones.

Mind the gap

We now know that the key to successful hybrid working is easy and efficient communication, but what can you do to improve this for your business?

Choosing the right tools or platforms to meet your internal communication needs is a good place to start. They can help bridge the gap being felt by you and your employees as a result of having a semi-permanent office presence. Business communication technology has advanced a lot since the days of fax machines and desk phones, which means that there are numerous options that can and will provide the solution to your hybrid working struggles.

Cloud-based business phone systems are the next evolution of the traditional desk phone. Voice-over Internet Protocol (VoIP) is revolutionising how businesses make calls, all while empowering a remote team.

With no need for a wired landline connection, cloud-based VoIP tools and platforms are highly flexible solutions that best enable hybrid or remote working. The agility of working from anywhere, at any time is not only made

feasible for your employees but is also an upgrade on the rigid hardware of old.

A 'Chit Chat' upgrade

More than just replacing your old hardware, cloud-based communication tools can be a significant upgrade for your business comms thanks to the additional features these systems can offer.

In addition to the enhanced flexibility your employees will enjoy, they will also never have to worry about taking notes during or after a call again. Call recording automatically logs everything you need as a note to the call or contact.

Though using apps and platforms does lessen the chance of missing an all-important call, if you do, voicemail capabilities are available just like on any normal landline or mobile. What's more, some apps can even offer voicemail transcripts to save you having to listen back to the recording.

Another useful benefit of this tech is the ability to derive detailed call analytics. VoIP systems automatically log and report all call activity across your team, so you'll be able to identify your most prolific users, most dialled numbers, missed call patterns or overall team performance. Productivity doesn't need to slip without a permanent office presence, but if it does you'll be able to track and address the issue with ease.

And finally, if you're not quite ready to go fully remote and still need a physical phone presence, some cloud-based phone systems can even sync up with your desk phones so that your business comms can be hybrid too.

Final thoughts...

Hybrid working doesn't need to be a challenging transition or even a cost to your business productivity. As long as your employees can continue to communicate and collaborate with ease, then a remote working model can be successful.

Adopting the right tools that meet your business needs and the needs of your employees will enable you to offer greater flexibility to current and future staff, helping you attract and retain the very best talent and stay one step ahead of the competition now and in the future.

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