



The Essential Guide for Setting Up a Hybrid Workspace

Hybrid work is more than extending greater flexibility to employees. It's no longer enough to solve for the challenges of enabling remote work or a safe re-entry into your facilities. Hybrid work is an opportunity for you to improve upon how your business fundamentally goes about getting work done. To get the most from your implementation of a hybrid work experience, you need a long-term strategy to enable people to work in mixed mode – whether in the office, at home, or elsewhere.

When planning out your hybrid work strategy, you will want to take into consideration all the factors involved to ensure you build the ideal hybrid work model that meets you where you are.

Here are some important questions to ask yourself before setting up a hybrid office:

1. What IT staff will we need?



In a small business, you've got to be savvy. You need to be able to quickly set up hybrid work to accommodate both your employees and customers. You don't have the time to add more complexity to your already busy days. You need solutions that are easy to deploy and manage while powerful enough to fend off cyberattacks. You don't have to become an expert in technology to work remotely, but you do need the right tools and advice. Working with one IT provider can give you access to a team of knowledgeable IT experts who can help make sure you limit downtime and remain secure and compliant.

2. How secure will we be?



Every small business needs to make security a priority because networks, systems, and users are bombarded with a continual stream of threats every day. Your business could be one data breach from oblivion. In fact, 60% of small businesses that suffer a breach go out of business within six months. Although security solutions are becoming more efficient at detecting threats, attackers are also becoming more sophisticated and persistent. Your security needs to extend to remote workers and their devices.

Look for a reliable network that:

- Allows secure endpoint access to your network
- Offers easy-to-use management and configuration
- Protects your sensitive data by verifying the identity of users, devices, and applications
- Defends against threats with cloud-delivered security
- Can detect and block cyberattacks

3. Is it easy for teams to communicate?



The ability to communicate is vital for any small business; disjointed and clumsy collaboration tools can make matters worse. Collaborating with teams in various locations is different than in person, but it's easy if everyone is using the same secure interface. When teams can work in multiple modes (voice, video, web, messaging), all in one place, they can be extremely productive. Your virtual workspace should make it possible to easily:

- Exchange messages and files across devices
- Search the space to find conversations and documents
- Privately message one person or create a group chat in seconds
- Use a digital whiteboard to brainstorm
- Launch video meetings



4. What network capabilities are most important for our business?

It really depends on how you want to run your business. Maybe your current network is not robust enough. And, in this connected world, your business depends on a secure network more than ever before. You need to stay connected to your suppliers, your employees, and of course—your customers. Are you a digital business that exists solely in the cloud? Then a subscription-based, cloud-managed networking solution would probably be best for your business. Or you may prefer to purchase equipment up-front and manage updates without a subscription. Just be sure to choose products that are smart and offer embedded security and analytics capabilities.



5. How much technical support will we need?

Most small businesses have dynamic 24x7 requirements as employees are constantly moving on and off the network from different locations, switching between devices and applications. All the technology needs to work to keep the business running. Any time lost to redesign, integration, or rewiring and cabling is a loss of productive time for employees and revenue for the business. The possibility of a network failure and resulting business disruption is a risk you can't afford to take. Look for solutions that have technical support and training.

We know the various options and approaches available for a hybrid workspace setup can seem complicated and confusing. You want simple, clear information in easy-to-understand language to help you make better, informed decisions. Well now you have it. In this guide, we share our tried-and-true principles and tips so you can get started working your way today.

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