

September 2021

6 strategies for hybrid work success

365 days. 3 global surveys. 3,935 workers.
6 transformative strategies.

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Entering the era of hybrid work

We're undergoing a dramatic shift in how people work and collaborate. In the early days of the pandemic, businesses quickly transitioned to remote work and virtual collaboration to stay productive. Now, after realizing the benefits of remote work, most employees want to either continue working remotely, or embrace hybrid work. At the same time, businesses recognize that they can be successful with either a remote or hybrid work model.

The workplace is no longer just the corporate office—it's an ecosystem of people migrating between working from home, in coworking spaces, coffee shops and, yes, the office. This shift challenges us to rethink what work means, and the experiences people need to be productive wherever they are.

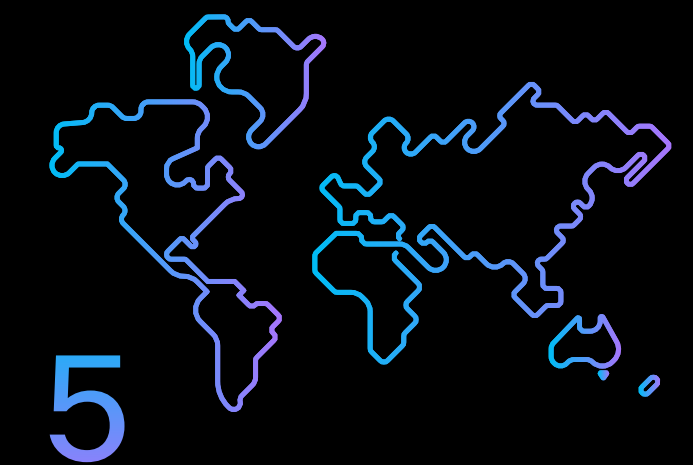
Now it's time to plan for hybrid work by design.

This report is the culmination of three global surveys that ran between July 2020 and July 2021 to understand how the pandemic has changed the nature of work and collaboration. 3,935 knowledge workers at all seniority levels across five continents were surveyed by Dimensional Research.*

* The Rise of the Hybrid Workplace, Dimensional Research, October 2020
The State of Remote Work, Dimensional Research, July 2020
Entering the Era of Hybrid Work, Dimensional Research, August 2020

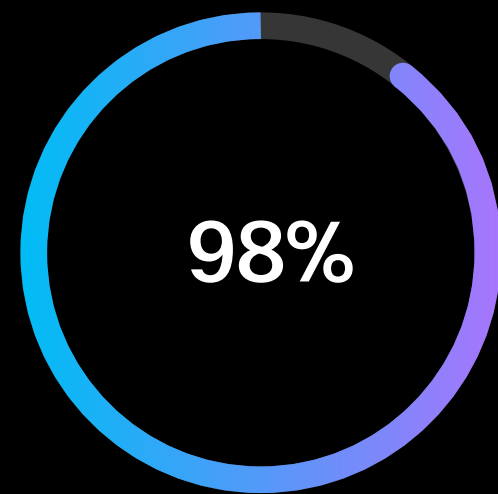
 x 3,935

knowledge workers at all seniority levels across



5 continents were surveyed for this report

According to **employees** surveyed about post-pandemic work:



believe that future meetings will include remote participants

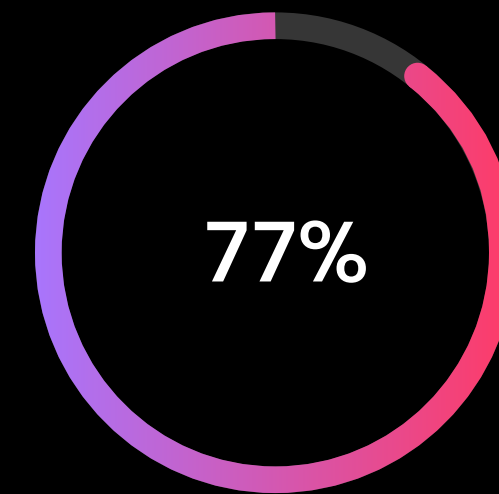
97%

want changes to the office to make it safer before they return

57%

expect to be in the office fewer than 10 days each month

According to **businesses** surveyed about post-pandemic work:



of large organizations plan to offer employees greater flexibility

97%

are increasing video conferencing enabled spaces in the office

53%

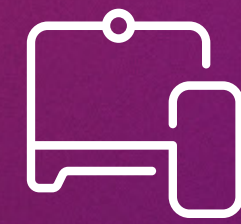
plan to optimize their office footprint

Hybrid work by design

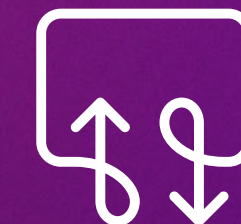
Hybrid work is a people-centric approach to managing the workforce. It gives employees the freedom and flexibility to choose to work however and wherever they're most productive. Work is no longer based on command-and-control models—it's based on flexibility, empathy, and inclusivity—so employees can bring the best version of themselves to work every day.

The blend of in-office and remote working is the new reality, and it brings significant challenges. And even greater opportunities.

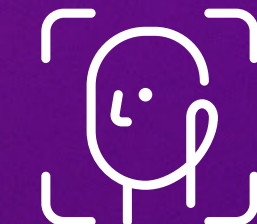
So, how do you meet the challenge and take advantage of the opportunity? These 6 strategies will help you create a thriving hybrid workplace.



**Build a hybrid
work culture**



**Drive connected
remote work**



**Cultivate inclusive,
video-first
collaboration**



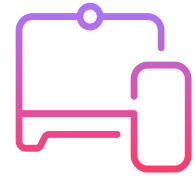
**Bring people
back to the
office, safely**



**Secure and
manage
hybrid work**



**Future-proof
your business**



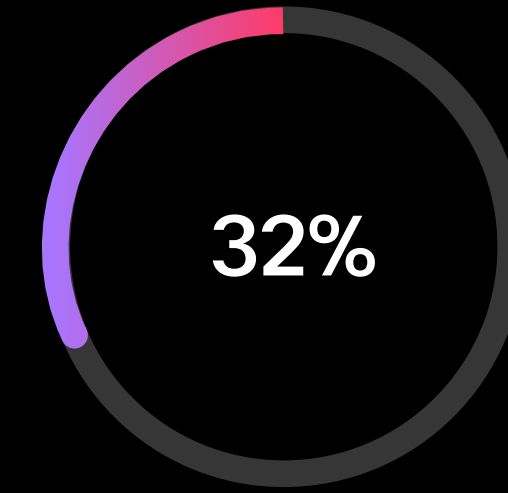
Build a hybrid work culture

When it comes to extending flexibility, organizations have concerns about maintaining culture, community, and productivity. After all, if a sense of purpose and culture diminish, it can lead to a lack of motivation and ultimately, higher turnover. Without connection to the company purpose or community, employees are more likely to feel isolated.

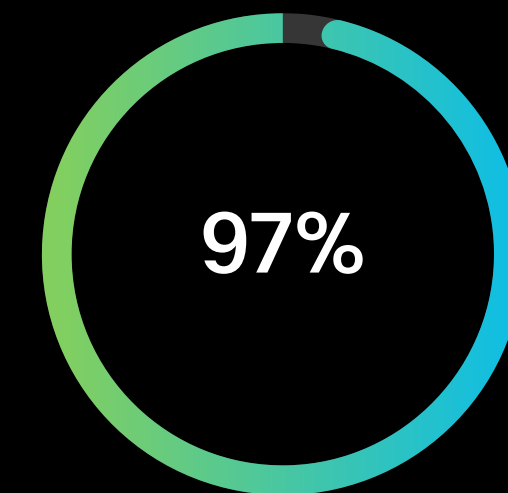
Therefore, building a strong culture based on flexibility, empathy, and inclusivity will be one of the most important ways to succeed in hybrid working.

By bringing the office and virtual worlds together, organizations can have the best of both. This gives people the choice to decide where they want to work without losing the personal connections and team building so crucial to company culture.

As work has expanded outside the walls of the office, keeping the culture intact requires a shift in the way we think about shared purpose. Colleagues need to work together, whether they are in a room together or virtual, and build connections.



of professionals say their connection to the company culture has suffered while working remotely



believe hybrid work requires new technology to improve collaboration

Consider the following approaches:

Offer flexibility and choice

95%

say they will go into the office for activities like team building, collaboration, and making connections with peers

With a hybrid work model, people can choose to work in the place where they'll be most productive that day. This could mean working remotely when they need to focus, or going into the office or coworking space for team building and a sense of community.

Lead with empathy

38%

indicate they are experiencing increased levels of burnout since they started working remotely

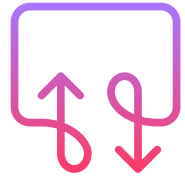
If we learned one thing over this last year, it's that employees need empathy for their health and well-being. Many people have experienced burnout or fatigue. Many may be anxious about returning to the office. Empathy needs to be a core pillar of your hybrid work strategy.

Ensure everyone is included

64%

worry about being treated the same as their colleagues who are in the office full-time

Developing a shared purpose and sense of belonging means everyone has to feel they have an equal opportunity to be heard. Technology can help everyone feel included by offering various ways for people to engage, including roundtables that give everyone the opportunity to speak, virtual hand raises, real-time translation, transcription, chat, and polling. Taking advantage of these features will help remote participants feel included.



Drive connected remote work

Include everyone, even when they're remote. This is a cornerstone of hybrid work. Employees need natural and authentic interactions, just as they would in person. To make this possible, the home office needs to become an extension of the headquarters.

While remote working has largely been a success over the past year, there are challenges that need to be addressed as organizations begin shifting to a hybrid work model.

Remote work challenges take two forms:

1. Personal challenges:

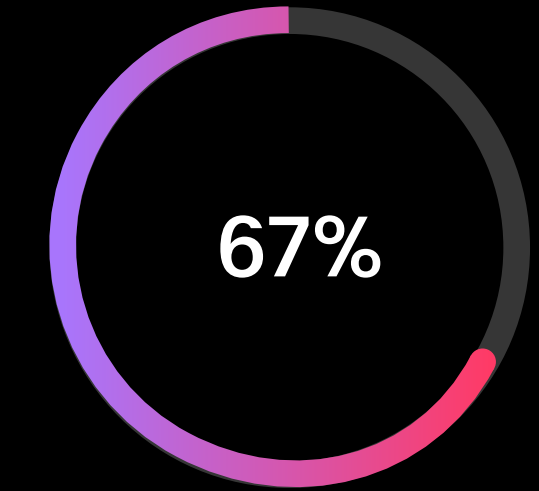
- 56% say separating work and home life when working from home is challenging.
- 49% indicate that working remotely makes them feel isolated.
- 47% say their level of fatigue has increased since they started working from home.

While 67% say working from home gives them greater flexibility, and 47% say that their

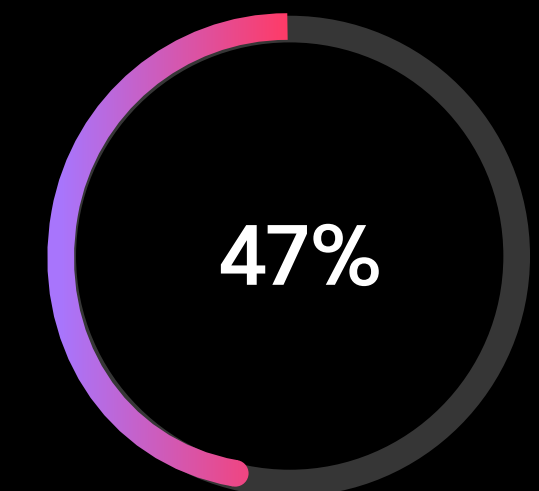
productivity has increased, there has been a toll on people's personal lives. Addressing these challenges involves updating company policies, creating an empathetic hybrid work culture, and the use of technology.

97% agree that technology and company tactics can help reduce burnout, including:

- Intelligent reminders of when to take a break (52%)
- Recommends on how to optimize work schedules (47%)
- Company sanctioned meeting-free days (45%)



of professionals say that working from home gives them greater flexibility



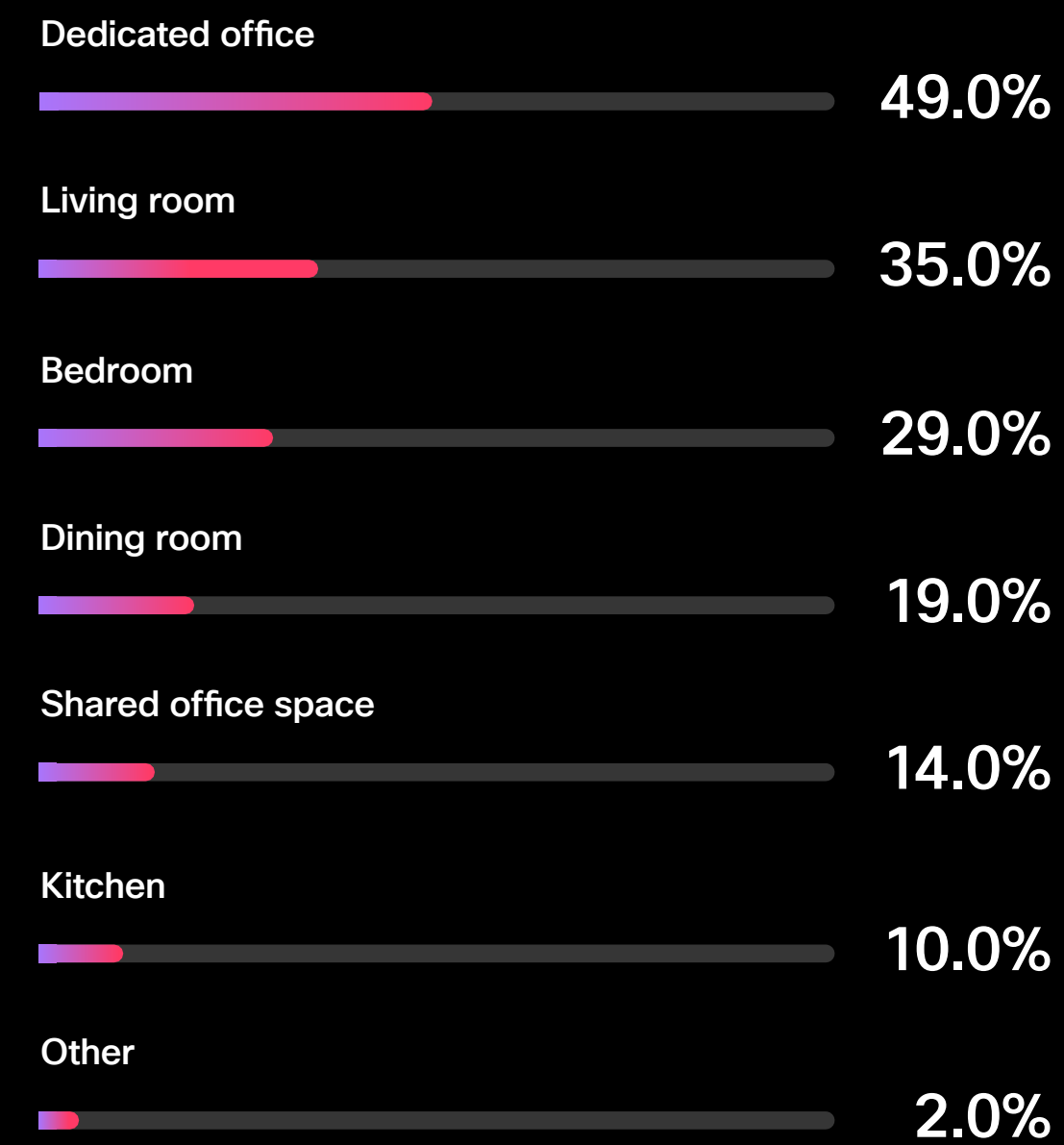
of professionals say that their productivity has increased

2. Household distractions and collaboration challenges:

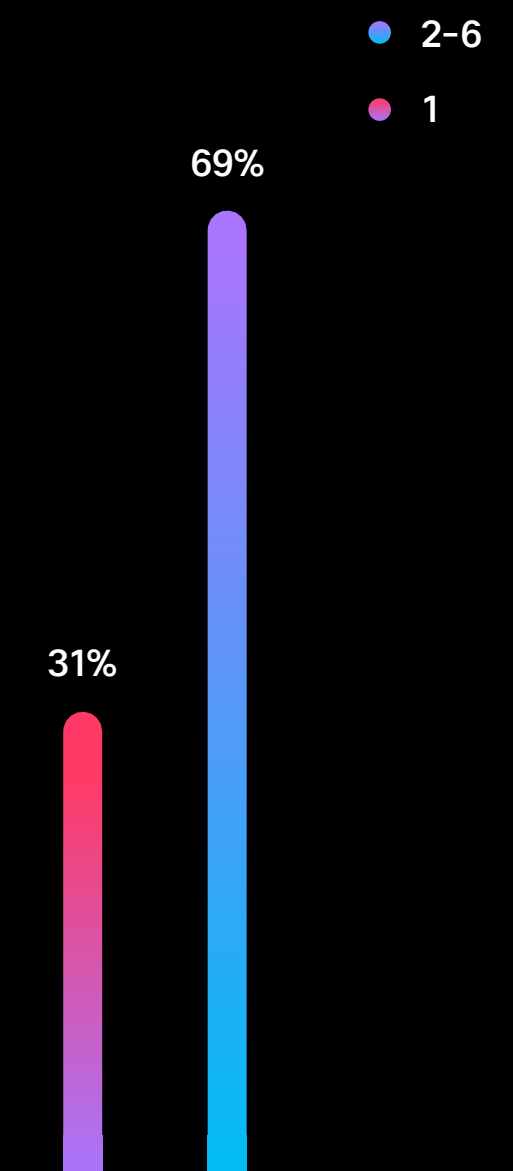
Not all home working situations are the same. Everyone is working in their own unique environment. Some might have a dedicated home office space with few distractions while others may be working from their bedroom, kitchen, or living room—or migrating in-between.

With a variety of environments and circumstances for each remote worker, you need to maintain collaboration and productivity despite distractions.

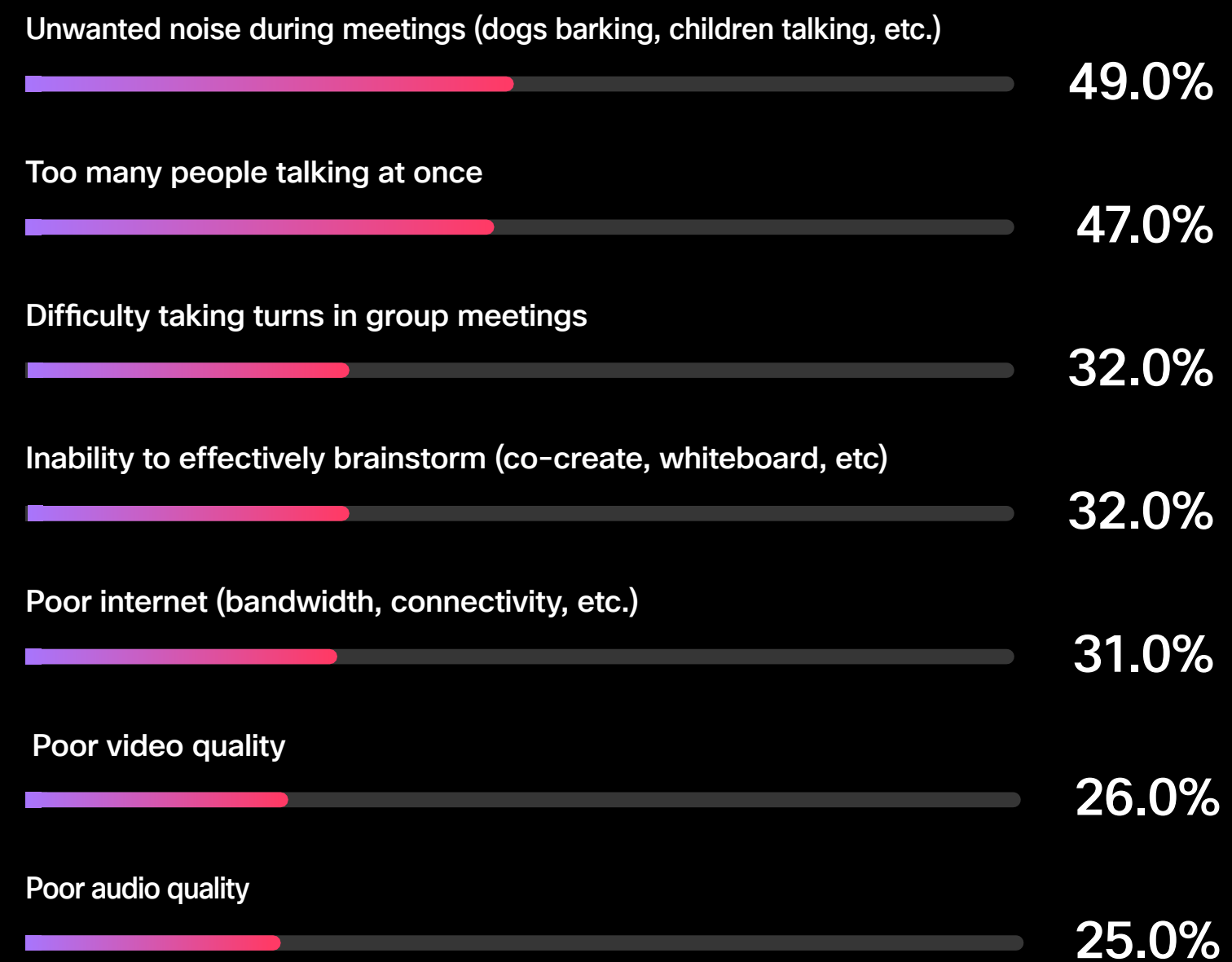
When working from home, where do you typically work?



Number of locations worked



Commonly experienced issues during video meetings from home



The answer is to think about how you can support employees when they're working remotely, and what technology they need to effectively collaborate. Features like intelligent noise removal and virtual backgrounds can make your workforce feel more comfortable being on audio and video regardless of their environment.

To improve connected remote work, start by acknowledging these variables. Your hybrid work culture should always account for sudden disruptions—whether team members need to step away, turn off video, or go on mute for a short time—and treat it with empathy.



Cultivate inclusive, video-first collaboration

One reality of the hybrid workplace is that virtually every company meeting will feature remote participants. So, how do you make sure every contributor feels engaged and included? It starts and ends with your video conferencing solution.

Video is a powerful and efficient tool for breaking down physical barriers between remote teams and solving the challenges of remote work.

Research shows that 60% to 70% of communication is nonverbal*, so body language and facial expressions matter. Video reveals these nonverbal

cues, making meetings more productive. For example, visual cues show when someone is likely to speak or ask a question, so participants are less likely to talk over one another.

Today, 58% of the workforce regularly turns video on when joining meetings from home. While this may indicate a growing sense of video fatigue, it also shows that a core segment of workers want to regularly engage through video. The right solutions will help workers feel more comfortable with remote meetings.

* Birdwhistell, Ray, "Kinesics and Context: Essays on Body Motion Communication" University of Pennsylvania Press 1970

Those who frequently use video are

2.6x

more likely to say they've experienced increased empathy from colleagues

2.4x

more likely to say it's easier to collaborate

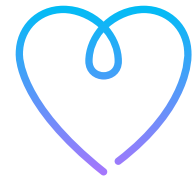
Those who rarely use video are

3.2x

more likely to say they are unhappy with their current company

2.7x

less likely to feel connected to the company strategy



Bring people back to the office, safely

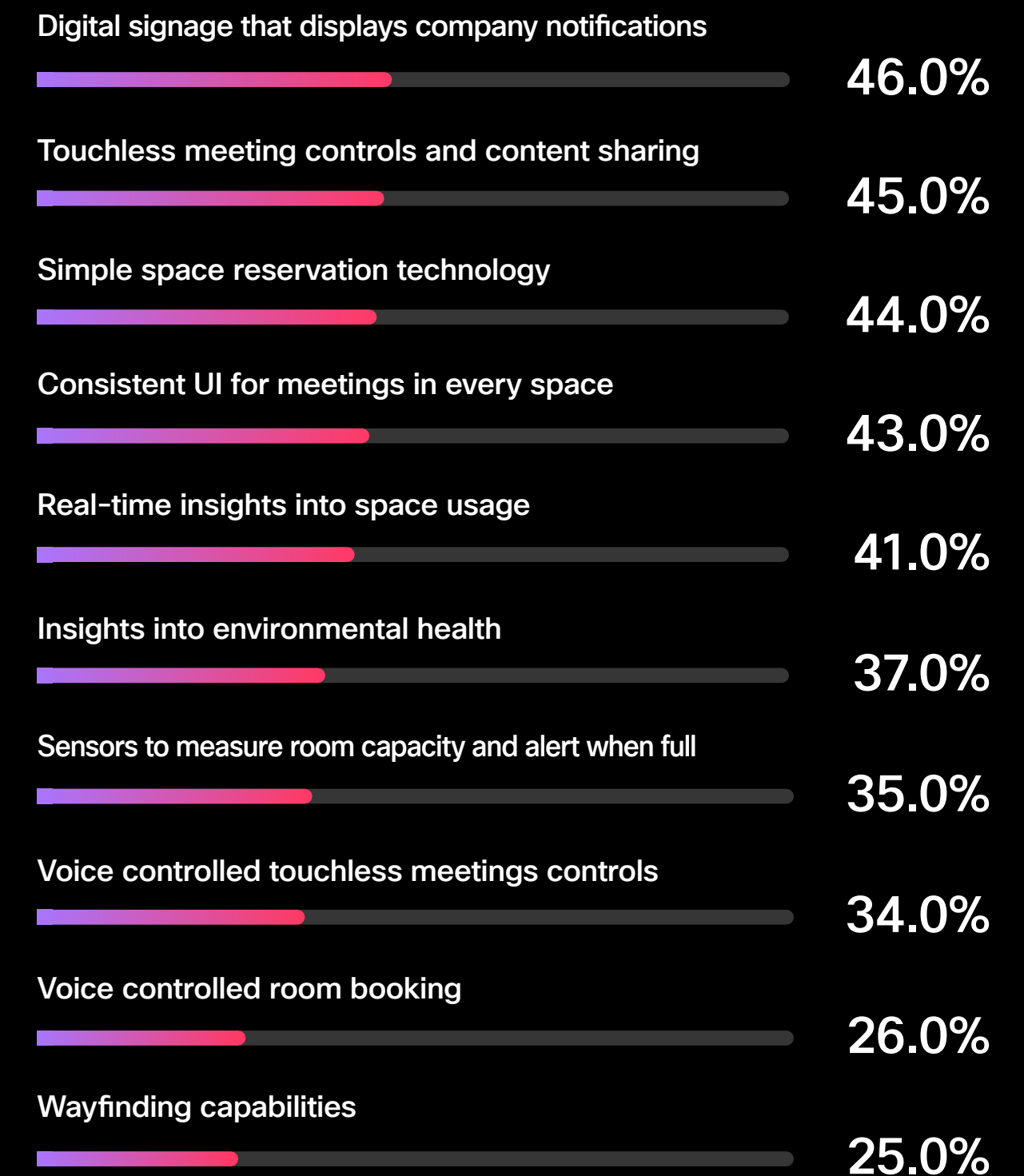
The office is the central hub for people to collaborate in person, build rapport with colleagues, and for training and education.

For most organizations, the return to the office will be phased, with business-critical employees initially given access to the building, before opening up to colleagues. Social distancing, frequent cleaning, and limiting occupancy will be the first things to be incorporated into office operations.

As more workers return to the office, how do you make sure every employee understands the guidelines, knows which rooms were recently cleaned, or if there are too many people occupying a space to meet social distancing requirements?

In the hybrid workplace model, a rotating cast of office workers should be expected. This means the traditional workplace will no longer cut it. The implementation of intelligent technology can help employees understand new guidelines, provide alerts when spaces are too crowded, and find the right space to work.

Technology that will help ease the transition back to the office





Secure and manage hybrid work

Secured

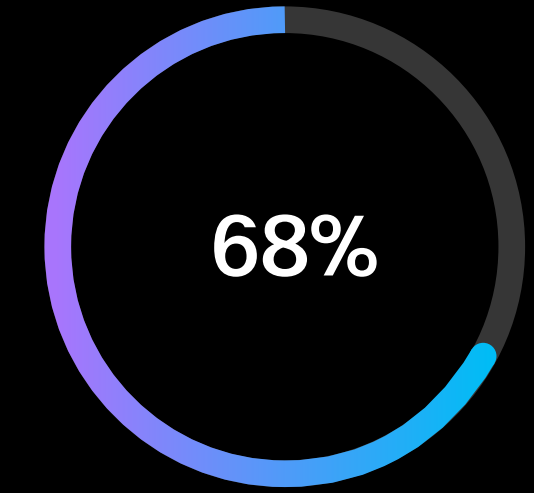
With people working from anywhere, business exposure to cyber threats has increased. To deal with increased cyber-attacks, your collaboration solution needs to be secure. You need a solution that protects user information without compromising those must-have features like secure search for stored and shared content.

Managed

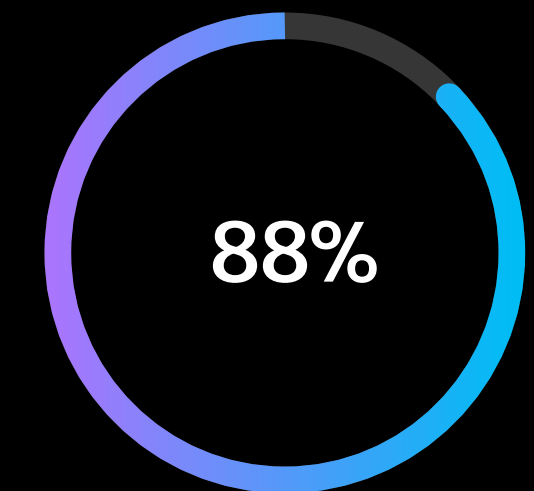
Successful hybrid work requires swift and simple IT device management.

Modern cloud infrastructures offer frictionless administration and real-time insights to give the best user experience, regardless of your team's location.

A single-pane-of-glass view into your meetings, messaging, calling solutions and devices will help to quickly pinpoint any issues that may hinder collaboration and productivity.

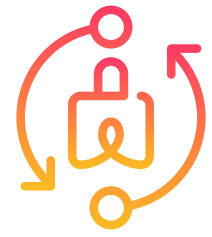


of IT admins worry about scaling hybrid work collaboration tools



say making data and remote work safe is important/very important for hybrid work*

* Accelerating Digital Agility, March 2021



Future-proof your business

The pandemic accelerated workplace transformation overnight as people shifted from office amenities to kitchen table virtual collaboration.

But what was once good enough, is no longer enough to continue to be successful. Organizations must now look beyond business continuity and embrace hybrid work by design. Future-proofing your business is as much about supporting the current workforce conditions, as it is being agile enough to adapt to new ones.

The workplace of the past was about being present in a physical location. The future is all about flexibility and blended in-person and remote collaboration. For the hybrid workplace to truly redefine your business, physical spaces must merge with virtual spaces, and technology is needed to assist people throughout their day.

Begin by looking at the existing friction points from home and office working, and consider how hybrid work will evolve. Understanding these potential pain points will be crucial to help

you find the technology you need to support the new world of work.

Your collaboration solutions—both software and devices—will be one of the most important considerations for the hybrid workplace. That's why Webex offers a complete, purpose-built solution designed for hybrid work.

[Learn more >](#)

As part of your hybrid work strategy, consider the following:

- Whether the technology your employees use gives a consistent experience at home and in the office
- What capabilities you need to enable hybrid work, and whether your existing tools deliver
- Whether you can monitor and manage devices and features easily from anywhere
- If your vendor invests in AI to remove distractions, aid frictionless collaboration, and increase employee productivity
- Whether the platform adds value beyond video conferencing

