

GUIDE

LONG-TERM REMOTE WORKFORCE: EMBRACING THE NEW NORMAL

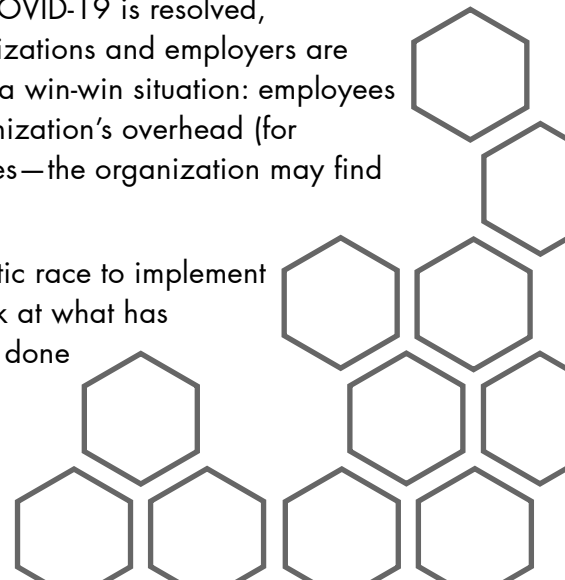
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NOW | TOMORROW | THE FUTURE

When the COVID-19 crisis hit, people were forced to stay home, hospitals were quickly overwhelmed, and the economy dissolved into a recession. Companies are working hard to support their employees, serve their clients and survive. IT leaders are in the forefront now more than ever. They are asking their teams to achieve long-term objectives in driving agility, scalability and efficiency for IT operations—in very short order. Many are proving their worth in spades.

It may be difficult to decipher what the “new normal” in IT will be after COVID-19 is resolved, especially once the general populace returns to office work. Many organizations and employers are already questioning the importance of the physical office. Teleworking is a win-win situation: employees gain more flexibility, employers gain more efficiency and lower the organization’s overhead (for example, less need for buildings), and—due to these improved efficiencies—the organization may find itself serving customers better.

The immediacy of the COVID-19 transition to remote work created a frantic race to implement short-term solutions. Now, it is helpful to step back for a moment and look at what has been done today, what will be done tomorrow, and then what should be done for the long-term.



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Solutions that emphasize remote workforce capabilities during this global pandemic are a given. The goal is to quickly accommodate employees that aren't able to use software applications previously only accessible from the office. Top priorities were enabling remote access to applications and securing employees' home environments with solutions such as:

- Virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI)
- VPN connectivity
- Identity access management (IAM)
- Browser-based application hosting (such as AWS AppStream 2.0)
- Digital communications platforms (Cisco Webex)
- Carrier services for mobile devices

In any uncertain economy, cash is king. For this reason, many organizations are looking to move from Capex to Opex spending for their IT ecosystem by using managed and cloud-based services. This enables your remote workforce and IT staff to focus on projects that are core to the business; no more wasting time troubleshooting IT disruptions. Tap your trusted service providers for -aaS offerings in these categories.

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Securing remote access to applications and data, and the security of those corresponding endpoints, is the number one objective of the moment. Beyond workforce collaboration solutions lie the ever-important issues of cybersecurity, compliance and preventing technology downtime. We've seen a rise in cybercrime due to so many people going remote, and we'll continue to see breaches and data exposure incidents make headlines. This is driving growth for managed security and data protection solutions.

As you move from focusing on getting remote work up and running, you'll move into the second phase which revolves around solving for IT disruptions, data protection, security and compliance for those solutions you should stand up. Things to consider include:

- Managed Security Services
- Backup as a Service (BaaS)
- Disaster Recovery as a Service (DRaaS)
- Cloud platforms for storage and production

There are also certainly less-obvious risks associated with combining personal life and work life. Secured landing zones for workloads, applications and datasets in the cloud may be the answer for ongoing resiliency, since IT can easily implement role-based user access not just for frequently used applications, but the underlying technology infrastructure by leveraging the cloud. For example, InterVision offers AWS Managed Service (AMS), a prescriptive, managed cloud environment

designed for native cloud features, compliance and security all monitored and optimized 24x7. For companies trying to migrate quickly and optimize for ROI as fast as possible, this is an ideal scenario especially since InterVision's solution serves the previously underserved midmarket.

Learn more about AWS Managed Services by InterVision

FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE

The path forward after the COVID-19 virus subsides will take some time to fully formulate, some organizations may not survive, and many families will be impacted beyond words. Having empathy for people as employees, parents, and friends are crucial. Teamwork both at work, at home, and within our communities will get us through into a new normalcy.

Business will need to regain their footing to support their clients, provide for their employees, and regain full profitability. The important emphasis for long-term planning will be optimization, as this will help to recoup lost profits during the crisis, as well as facilitate in new staff hires and any necessary expansions. It will also be important to help existing employees, who will have been overworked and highly stressed—they must have time to recover mentally! To do this doesn't just include technology; your workforce will need to learn:

- How to avoid ongoing risks like spear phishing and malware
- How to recognize new cyber exploits that emerge due to the outbreak
- How to ensure everyone has the right devices to perform their roles

Once your organization is in the cloud, your business can begin the work of optimizing performance, storage, deployments, accessibility and spending. This will allow you to leverage other innovative solutions such as:

- Automation for speed and networking security
- Data lakes for clean data accumulation and analytics
- Machine learning and artificial intelligence to drive increased business value

Indeed, business intelligence will further reinforce transformation as a critical foundation to meet the challenges of a post-COVID-19 world.

Because of their ongoing strategic partnership, experience in the education space, and expertise in cloud solutions, InterVision is one the first calls I made.

—Brian Orlauski
Dean of Information Technology
Mt. San Jacinto College

NOTE: An earlier version of this guide's content originally appeared in *Business Journals Leadership Trust*

To learn more about any of these mentioned solutions, reach out to an InterVision expert at www.intervision.com or call 844.622.5710

