DIGITAL WORKSPACE ECOSYSTEM ALLIANCE

The Digital Employee Experience (DEX)

eBook

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About the DWEA

The Digital Workspace Ecosystem Alliance (DWEA) is a consortium of technology leaders dedicated to helping organizations enable secure productivity for all of their people. Together we are committed to providing the vendor-neutral education and resources needed to empower organizations of all sizes to develop the Digital Workspace strategy that makes sense for their business. The DWEA is a 501(c)(6) not-for-profit organization dedicated to market education.

Eliminating the Virtual Desktop for a Better Digital Employee Experience (DEX)

Contributed By CAMEYO

"Context switching" is an interesting term in that it is often discussed in two separate ways – one that applies to human productivity and multitasking, and another that refers to software and computing.

When talking about context switching when it comes to human productivity, people are usually referring to the amount of time people lose when switching between different tasks throughout their workday. Research shows that there's a significant cost of context switching, in that it takes an average of 9.5 minutes to get back into a productive workflow after task switching. This is why so many time management and productivity experts suggest that, to truly achieve a state of deep work you should focus on a single task until it is complete. For bigger projects that will take a long time, people suggest things like breaking the task up with the Pomodoro technique, using time blocks, or the bundling of similar tasks to facilitate more focused work and tackle your to-do list.

Now, when we talk about context switching as it relates to the digital workspace, that refers to the disruption that is caused when someone has to switch from one environment to another in order to complete a new task. One common example of the cost of context switching when it comes to computing is the use of traditional virtual desktops environments.

The use of virtual desktops (whether legacy VDI or DaaS) skyrocketed during the pandemic as orgs needed a way to give their people access to the apps & data they need to do their work from any device, anywhere. In some cases those orgs needed to send their people home with whatever devices they could find (or afford), and in other cases they needed their people to work on their own personal devices. The issue that orgs then have is that you may have people on multiple different operating systems like Windows, MacOS, ChromeOS, and more – but those people still need access to the business-critical apps and data needed to do their jobs.

By implementing virtual desktops, this creates a bifurcated experience in which your team members may have some applications installed locally on their device, and they also likely access a lot of their apps via SaaS – but then they have to log into a separate virtual desktop environment to access their business-critical apps (like your ERP, CRM, EHR, etc.). When a user has to stop working in one environment and then start a new

process or application in another environment, that context switching takes a toll on your employees' productive time and leads to attention residue that makes it harder for your people to get their focus time back.

Context Switching and its Impact on Digital Transformation

As part of their digital transformation efforts, many organizations are looking to move more of their infrastructure and applications to the cloud. Similarly, there is an accelerated demand for cloud-first operating systems (OSs), like ChromeOS, due to the cost, manageability, and security benefits. In fact, analyst firm IDC recently released a study titled "Accelerating Enterprise Adoption of Cloud-First Operating Systems with Virtual App Delivery (VAD)," addressing that trend.

But at the end of the day, the traditional virtual desktop approach to delivering apps is inherently problematic for the long-term adoption of cloud-first OSs like ChromeOS or for the long-term management of hybrid device fleets (part Windows/part MacOS, for example) because it requires context switching that degrades the user experience & disrupts productivity.

For example – on ChromeOS, users access most of their apps as SaaS directly from Chrome or as PWAs. But when they need to access legacy Microsoft Windows, Linux, or internal web apps – the traditional virtual desktop model forces users to log in to a separate Windows OS-based environment. This context switching results in an awkward, bifurcated experience that (at best) annoys the user or (at worst) confuses them. In either case, it is an interruption to their workflow that distracts them from important tasks.

The context switching that virtual desktops force is one where users must switch back and forth between a modern, cloud-first computing model and the legacy model of a traditional Windows desktop. Virtual desktops and their reliance on the legacy Windows OS will always anchor organizations to the past, making it harder to fully adopt the future of computing.

Eliminating the Virtual Desktop for a Better Digital Employee Experience (DEX)

Cameyo has believed since day one that the future of computing is the elimination of the traditional desktop (the Windows OS, and therefore all legacy virtual desktops, too). Instead, Virtual App Delivery (VAD) technologies can make virtualization invisible to the end user, simply letting them access all of their apps the way they always have, as if they were installed locally, regardless of device. This is done by eliminating the virtual desktop altogether and simply letting users access their apps from any device/operating system with no change to their behavior.

With Virtual App Delivery (VAD), your end users simply log into their devices (regardless of OS) and can access all of their apps either from the browser or as PWAs. Even legacy Windows, Linux, and internal web apps can be deployed as PWAs with VAD, so the end user simply clicks on the app icon in the taskbar/shelf and the app launches in its own window. To the end user, VAD doesn't exist – they simply click an app icon from their device and work the way they've always worked (rather than logging into a Windows OS-based virtual desktop before launching their apps).

So if giving your employees the best, most productive experience - no matter where they are and what device they're using - is a priority to your organization, consider re-thinking the virtual desktop paradigm and providing seamless, secure access to all of their apps (without the desktop) instead.

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Enhancing the Employee Experience: The Impact of Printing in the Digital Workspace

Contributed By **tricerat**

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, the way we work has undergone a significant transformation. The traditional office setup has given way to the digital workspace, where employees collaborate, communicate, and create in virtual environments. As we embrace this digital age, one might wonder: does printing still have a place in the modern workplace, and how does it impact the overall employee experience?

The Digital Workspace: A New Frontier

The digital workspace encompasses a range of technologies, tools, and strategies that facilitate remote work, collaboration, and productivity. Cloud-based applications, virtual meetings, and instant messaging platforms have become integral components of this new way of working. However, amidst all the virtual interactions, the tangible act of printing has not been rendered obsolete. It has evolved to complement the digital workflow.

The Relevance of Printing

While much of our work is now conducted on screens, there are instances where printing remains essential. Think of critical documents that need physical signatures,

visual aids for presentations, or the simple satisfaction of annotating a physical copy. These scenarios highlight the continued relevance of printing in today's workspace, where a blend of physical and digital mediums enhances efficiency and engagement.

Impact on Employee Experience

1. Flexibility and Convenience

In the digital workspace, employees are no longer bound by the confines of a physical office. Remote work has become commonplace, offering flexibility and freedom. Printing aligns with this new reality by allowing employees to produce essential documents from their home offices or co-working spaces, bridging the gap between the virtual and physical worlds.

2. Cognitive Engagement

Numerous studies have highlighted the benefits of incorporating both digital and physical modalities in learning and comprehension. The same principle applies to the workspace. The act of printing a document can lead to increased cognitive engagement, as employees interact with information on a different level than they would on a screen. This can result in improved retention and understanding of critical information.

3. Personalization and Creativity

In a world saturated with digital content, printed materials stand out. They allow for a personal touch that digital documents often lack. From customized training materials to personalized thank-you notes, printed materials can convey a sense of care and effort, fostering a positive emotional connection between employees and their organization.

4. Collaborative Power

While digital collaboration tools are incredibly effective, there's something about gathering around a printed document that fosters more intimate and focused discussions. Printed materials enable face-to-face brainstorming sessions, where team members can physically markup documents, exchange ideas, and establish a stronger sense of camaraderie.

5. Balance and Well-being

Constant screen exposure can lead to digital fatigue and negatively impact employee well-being. Printing offers a respite from screens, allowing employees to review documents, take notes, and interact with information without straining their eyes. This balance between digital and physical activities can contribute to improved overall well-being.

Embracing the Symbiosis

In the digital workspace, printing and digital technologies seamlessly coexist, addressing distinct needs and preferences. Organizations that recognize the value of this symbiotic relationship can harness the benefits of both worlds, creating a well-rounded employee experience that transcends the limitations of either medium alone.

As we navigate this ever-evolving landscape, it's evident that printing remains significant, having adapted and evolved to play a vital role in the digital workspace. By embracing this synergy, organizations can enhance the employee experience, promoting engagement, flexibility, creativity, and holistic well-being. So, as you hit print in the future, keep in mind that you're not only generating a document; you're actively contributing to the dynamic and thriving digital workspace of today.

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Automating App Modernization for a Better Employee Experience

Contributed By Rimo3

While technology is exciting, and new technologies even more so, the main reason we innovate is to make our lives easier and empower things that couldn't have been done before. A step often overlooked. Instead of asking why a migration needs to be done, there is often an instinct to dive headfirst into the newest, and shiniest, without looking at the ramifications. But I think the inverse can be said with application estates and many large-scale organizations. Do we really need to update that server? Do we really need to push that patch? Do we really need to move to Windows 11? Can we keep this server on this version? How long can we feasibly do this?

The concerns are fair. These changes are big, but many wait until problems start to arise before they even begin the process. This is a huge problem for the organization, efficiency, and the ease with which they can progress. When you put off these smaller patches or security updates, you're putting your users at risk. Each day that you don't update, and furthermore, if you don't know what each patch does to your application estate, you could be damaging productivity while the user waits for the application(s) they need for their projects to be fixed. These are big considerations, so what's the right decision?

I think we can all agree that the "push and pray" method isn't great for anyone involved. IT managers, who are historically understaffed and overstressed, get even more work that they must do before moving on to bigger more strategic efforts. Users, dev, sales, or marketing teams have other priorities in the company that they could be using their time for, rather than waiting for their application to get reconfigured or fixed. Can you see the conundrum? The technology applications run on need to be upgraded to allow more strategic efforts, but users need to continue their project uninhibited by failed migrations, incompatible packaging types, or use cases.

What can you do to avoid inconveniencing your users, employees, and organization? The furthering of tech is extremely important, but you need to know how each change will affect your users and your projects. You also need to know what makes sense to move, as well as which applications need to be addressed from a technical standpoint. Does your application work as an MSIX, or is it better suited as an App Vols? Which applications should be moved from SCCM to Intune right now, and which can wait? These are some of the questions you need answers to before you push a patch or migrate your estate. Otherwise, you'll either be heavily behind on your security compliance, or you'll be affecting your users.

And without sounding like too much of a pitch for Rimo3, these things are exactly what we enable. Using Rimo3, you can gain information on which applications will or will not work on your environment, using your unique configuration. On top of testing and packaging for a variety of platforms and packaging formats, we let you know how you can continue to move forward without impacting your users and productivity on a daily basis. When a new update or security patch comes out, you and your organization will be ready.

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Securing the Web User Experience Without Content Blocking

Contributed By **FORTINIUM**

Every Business Leader will agree – today employees need unified, easy-to-manage access to any information from any place or it will impact their productivity. The IT Security department on the other hand needs to ensure overall security, privacy, and compliance.

This article will show you how you can keep up the highest security despite complete

freedom of web usage… and ultimately provide your users with the perfect user experience in web usage.

Most well-known security tools today focus on three steps – threat identification, defense, and elimination. To do so, these tools rely on information regularly updated by the vendor to adapt to new threats or malicious websites as they get known. For optimal protection, the IT security team will segment their network for different risk zones depending on the type of services and data contained and then use the tools to apply different rules to these zones. As a result, users will end up with different behavior depending on where, what time, or on what device they connect causing a severe disruption of User Experience and Productivity.

The ultimate problem and limitation of this approach lie in 'recognition' and 'locking access.' Current tools must be able to RECOGNIZE a threat before they can act – followed by LOCKING access to that content. While this worked fine years ago with viruses embedded in files and similar approaches, there are now hundreds of new threats appearing daily on the web and it takes significant time for the tools to cover protection from these. To improve protection Black-/Whitelists are used to block entire websites – even though there may only be a single page on that site that really contains malware. Users are blocked from information potentially needed for work.

REMOTE BROWSER ISOLATION (RBI) uses a different approach bringing together ultimate security with maximum freedom of access to web content – no matter from where and on what device.

RBI will execute any website a user launches in a remote, isolated container. The user continues to see and operate the site in his browser, but any potentially embedded malware will execute in the remote container where it will not be able to access any data or user details. This means that you get absolute security, without blocking information.

The benefits of RBI Technology:

- No need to limit a user's ability to access websites
- No need to identify a threat
- No need for VPNs and other complex and expensive 3rd party tools
- Massive reduction of operational cost
- Massive improvement in user productivity
- ANY DEVICE. ANY PLACE.

THANKS

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NEXT STEPS

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