

Chapter

8

Put it all together.

Now it's your turn to apply what you have learned to build Operate From Anywhere in your business.

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Operate From Anywhere: The Next Evolution of Remote Work

Recently, Forbes shared a survey that everyone can relate to:

Who led your digital transformation?

A. CEO

B. CIO

C. COVID-19

If you picked C, you're in good company. But now it's time for executives to take back the reins and lead a proactive, sustainable digital transformation.

One of the first and biggest steps in digital transformation is establishing effective communication and collaboration, and for most, that probably means moving away from disparate tools employed as a quick fix and choosing a **cloud communication platform** that can really do the job right.



Dion Hinchcliffe from Constellation Research recently **published research** which recognizes the heightened need for “the best digital communications tools to be not only available for their far-flung talent base but situated as effectively as possible for their newly remote workers to remain, and **in many cases become even more**, productive.” Constellation points to its research over the years which has shown that, “the digital communications experience has grown ever more fragmented and complex, to the considerable detriment of effective engagement and collaboration both between workers and between them and other key stakeholders such as customers or partners/suppliers.”

The events of 2020 didn't help in this regard. IT leaders had to improvise digital communications solutions that were good enough, at least on a temporary basis. But these temporary solutions uncovered several issues: gaps between employee communications and contact centre agent-customer communications; organizational and application silos as global teams chose different communications platforms; and sustainability questions about technological approach and long-term cost effectiveness under IT budget duress.

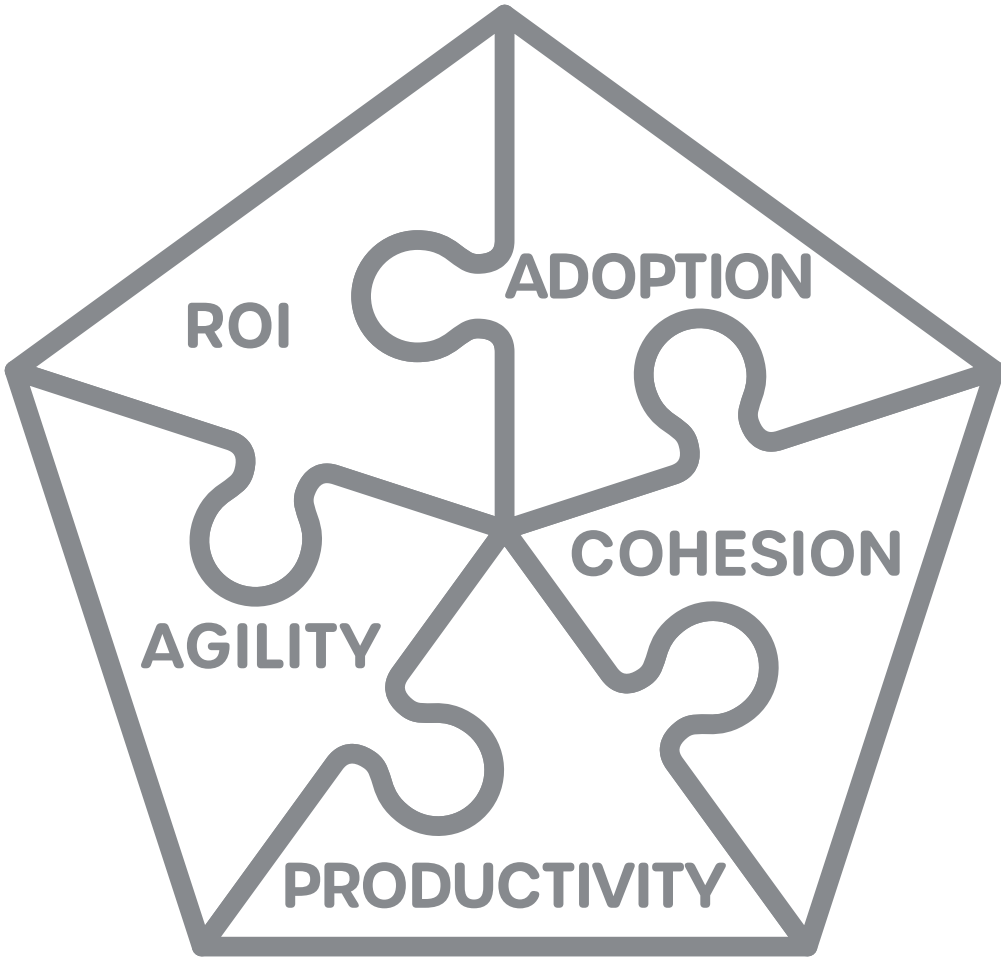


The average team currently uses 6 approaches to support project collaboration and at least 4 different communication tools. 48% of organizations say their top collaboration hurdle is ineffective communication between team members.

Source: [This is What Communications Silos are Costing Companies](#)

Time for an integrated communications plan.

Constellation Research's work points to several key elements of value that digital transformation leaders derive from **more integrated communications**, including:





Improved productivity.

A single platform for communications, collaboration, and contact centre empowers employees to operate more independently and more productively as individuals or as part of a team. Unifying these tools also provides greater organizational transparency as it simplifies the management, monitoring, and tracking of a dispersed workforce to understand the dynamics that contribute to productivity.

“The Key to gaining these benefits is not to acquire more point communications and roll them out to workers, but instead think about them in a more organized and consumption-focused away.”

Dion Hinchcliffe

VP & Principal Analyst, Constellation Research



Lower operational costs.

In addition to vendor consolidation, a cloud platform dramatically cuts on-premises maintenance costs and reduces global phone bills. 8x8 customers see an average of a 30% drop in total cost of ownership over three years compared to on-premises, siloed legacy solutions.



Less training/support.

An integrated solution significantly reduces the time and effort associated with implementation, learning, management and troubleshooting. This approach allowed Laureate International University, for example, to transition their professors and staff, as well as their contact centre specialists, to remote work in 2020 with zero impact to student/professor/staff interaction. But their adoption of a cloud platform was particularly beneficial from a student perspective, as their services team was able to focus on the student experience and organizational needs instead of being mired in development work.



Higher adoption of communications solutions.

At the start of 2020, 90% of IT leaders declared they'd cease purchasing on-premises communications tools within a year. The need to be agile and untethered has only accelerated the move to the cloud. And the cloud has only accelerated the adoption of innovative, integrated solutions, as organizations can easily go from zero to up and running within 48 hours—especially with a little help from their technology partner.



More team cohesion.

Gains associated with teams communicating and collaborating more easily can be seen on both the employee and customer side. For example, when corporate and contact centre teams use the same **communications platform**, those contact centres see a 50% increase in agent productivity, a 2.9x average handle time improvement year-over-year, and an 80% decrease in customer complaints according to **Aberdeen Research**. Acer is a company that has proven success when it comes to connecting corporate and contact centre employees through an operate from anywhere platform.



“Moving to the cloud has made us more nimble and agile. It makes it easier for us to adapt to a changing business conditions. But along with what we’ve benefited from some technology upgrades and new capabilities, especially on the contact centre side.”

Mark Groveunder

Senior VP, IT and Customer Service, Acer



The final benefit of more integrated communications that Hinchcliffe notes in his research is less **cognitive overload**. He reasons, “when too much mental effort needs to be put into finding the right tools and/or channel to communicate in, the quality of work itself suffers. Creating more centralized, streamlined, and usable communication experiences can offload workers to focus better on their business activities.”

Time to go beyond good enough.

At the start of the pandemic, “good enough” point solutions appeared to offer quick relief to the many organizations struggling to support a new remote workforce model. Communications tools were rolled out quickly. But then, almost as quickly, new costs and associated risks were identified. What is the impact on employee performance and productivity? Will shadow IT spiral out of control? If so, how will we ensure consistency, manageability and the right behaviors across the organization? How do we measure the effectiveness of these tools? How do they impact our customer experience? What about reliability, scalability and security?



Time to turn to the future.

The answers to these questions—and peace of mind—come from a platform approach with a technology partner you can trust. Work is no longer a place. Employees now work in applications, not offices. And forward-thinking IT leaders are looking to all-in-one collaboration apps like 8x8 Work to support all of their communications needs, from voice, to video, to messaging, both within an organization, and externally with customers through a collaborative contact centre.

At 8x8, we've thought about the intersection between communications and how you work—and how you operate your business. So we've future-proofed our solution with the flexibility to extend current and future capabilities onto new business processes via plug-and-play integrations.

“If IT and communications teams focus on enablement and usability through better underlying integration of communication tools, they will produce eminently more satisfied workers and better business results.”

Dion Hinchcliffe

VP & Principal Analyst, Constellation Research



We've thought about AI-driven team messaging so every employee can quickly find the right expert to answer a tough question. We've thought about how to embed communications into your existing business applications and systems of record like Salesforce.com or, as we highlighted recently, fully embedded **voice communications for Microsoft Teams**.

We've thought about how to support remote agents and how you can monitor, coach and train them in a remote work environment. We've thought about how to adhere to the strictest security protocols and compliance requirements.

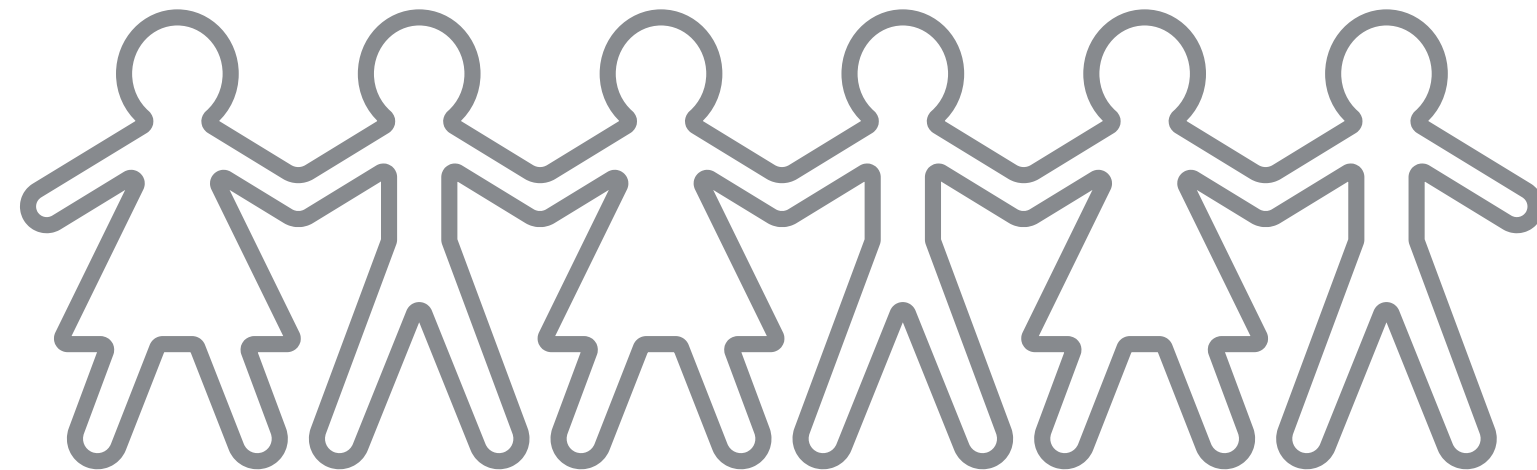
Time to come together.

You have a choice on your digital transformation journey: peace of mind, or just pieces.

At 8x8, we've put it all together: the solution your organization needs to communicate and collaborate more effectively, delivered through an essential app that allows you to take back the reins in your digital transformation.

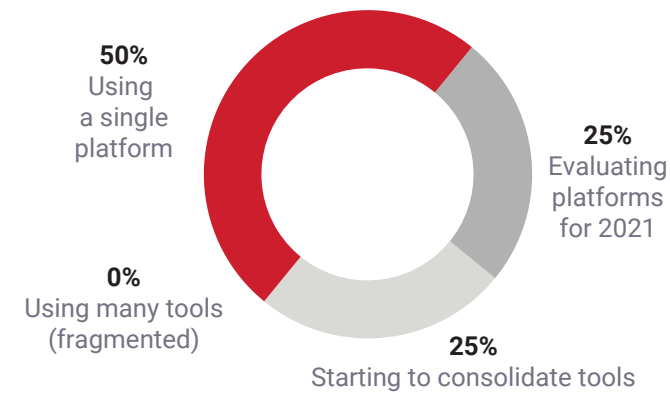
From technology retailers, to government agencies, to higher education institutions, forward-thinking brands are empowering their organization with voice, video, chat, contact centre and enterprise APIs to enable tremendous growth.

The benefits of an integrated communications solution are clear. 8x8 provides the essential all-in-one application. Let's get started together.

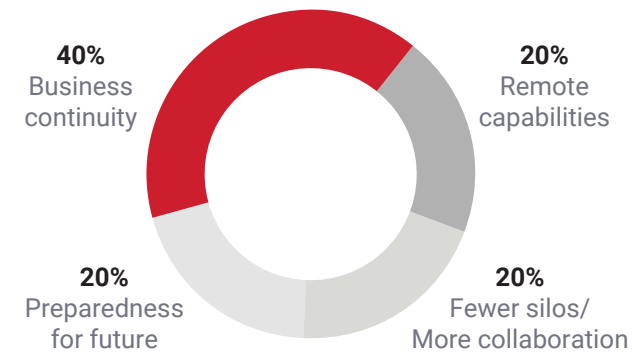


8x8 Poll Results

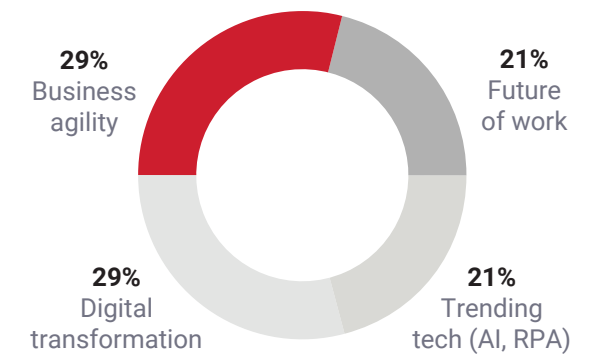
Where does your organization currently stand in its digital communications experience?



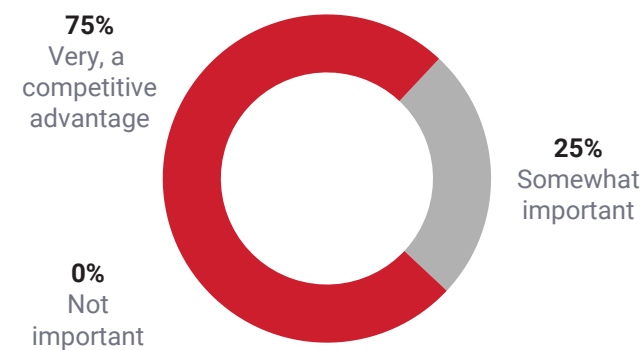
What is the biggest benefit of a cloud-based unified communications solution?



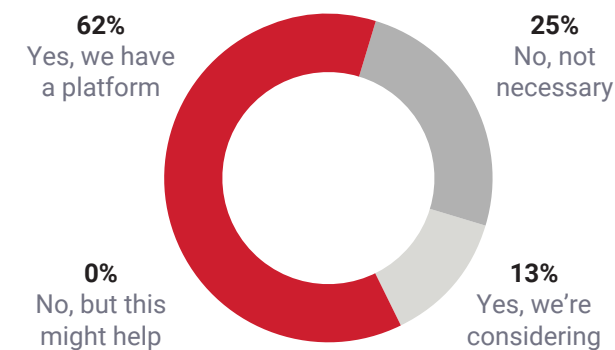
In 2020, business conversations focused on COVID-19 & the move to remote work. What do you think the next big focus will or should be?



How important is it for organizations to have a unified digital communications platform that spans corporate offices and the contact centre?



Have you considered using a communications platform that can integrate with your CRM or other applications?



Sources: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter

