MINIMAL VIABLE REMOTE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

OUR EXPERIENCE ENSURING A RELIABLE AND PROTECTED HOME WORKING ENVIRONMENT AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY

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The "work from home" scenario is not something new to modern organizations. The latest developments around the world are bringing this topic back to the table. The COVID-19 pandemic has made the remote working a must-have, rather than a nice to have practice, as it used to be. However, this situation raises the question of productivity when working from home.

We believe that the digital world can bring people together even better, without putting their essential data at risk of a potential breach. With a dedicated workspace where you can concentrate, it becomes easier to unlock the benefits of remote work. In a survey of 7,000 workers last year by FlexJobs, 65% said they're more productive working from home, citing benefits like fewer interruptions from colleagues, minimal office politics, and reduced stress from commuting.

To make remote working effective, every organization needs to rethink at least a few things – the technology instruments they utilize to do their day-to-day job; the processes in place, and how they could embrace remote working; the employee mentality. We at Telelink Business Services have been stimulating remote work for quite some time and have helped quite a few companies on this journey. Not only from a technology perspective, but from a processes and people perspective as well.

Even though we were "prepared", COVID-19 has made us work extra for the last couple of weeks to enable all our processes and adapt to the new reality.

We believe that as a technology company, the best way to support our society and our economy is by enabling them to utilize modern technology in the best possible way. One of the areas we believe we could be useful is enabling companies to work remote. Thus, our commitment in that respect to provide technical assistance and consultancy free of charge to any company that may need such help.

HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

Home office doesn't mean less productivity or connectivity than corporate offices. The variety of different devices (laptops, tablets, smartphones), combined with the right solutions for collaboration, productivity and information security could grant a seamless and protected workflow, without a difference from the conservative office environment.

Although there are a lot of technical solutions that enables us to work from home, we at Telelink Business Services (TBS) find cloud solutions grant the best balance between productivity, usability, security and adoption. Moreover, they give us the means to share with external parties without compromising security.

There are lots of companies in a process of transition to the cloud or thinking about that move. No matter the scale or the industry we believe that the right planning, complemented with wise and motivated decision of the right tools can easily shift your workflow from physical to digital. There are hundreds of examples in the public sector, academic institutions or businesses that can work fully digital without losing productivity or traction within the teams or with the customers and partners (Check Forbes 100 Digital Companies)

Our team has outlined three key pillars, which once in place, can provide a satisfying and protected remote work experience. Those three pillars are fast and easy to implement and are based on solutions that have 3 to 6 months free of charge periods.

DIGITAL MEETINGS & COMMUNICATION

The average middle level manager today spends around 35% of their time in meetings. For those higher up the corporate ladder, this figure can go as high as 50%. The current situation demands even more time spent in collaborating and aligning. So, the first step that an organization of any size should think of is how to shift meetings from physical to digital.

Nowadays you can find a plethora of different solutions that enables digital collaboration. We spent more than a year testing different solution in our day-to-day operations, and we chose - Microsoft Teams + Cisco WebEx Meeting, which we have been using for almost year and a half.

WHY WE CHOOSE MICROSOFT TEAMS

- Ease of use / simplicity
- Supported on all widely used endpoint devices
- Same experience on all different platforms
- Integration with Microsoft Office products
- High definition audio and video conferencing
- Presentation and application sharing
- Chat, call, and meet across devices, including mobile
- File sharing in chat
- Rich text capability
- Whiteboard embedded (ability to draw during the meeting)
- Always available history as well as a possibility for recording
- Open federation capabilities ("anybody" could contact us)
- Cloud based

WHY WE CHOOSE WEBEX DEVICES

Cisco has the best and richest portfolio of solutions for equipping conference rooms and design thinking areas. We integrated Cisco WebEx with Microsoft Teams and are in a process of equipping all our rooms and design thinking areas with the proper solution for the size and purpose. The result is astonishing:
- No delays in a meeting start
- No remote controls in the rooms (TV is switching on when you enter the room and off when you exit)
- Control the whole environment + conference from a tablet on the table
- Easy share both wireless and wired
- Perfect video and audio quality

Microsoft Teams is free of charge for the next 6 months and we can provide technical assistance free of charge.

CONNECTION TO THE OFFICE RESOURCES

TBS has started the path to the cloud before more than 2 years, but we still have some of our digital content and instruments available only on our office infrastructure. We tend to believe that every organization, no matter where it is on the journey to the cloud, is in the same situation and will require a secure and stable connection to internal on-prem resources.

To accommodate that need, we rely on Cisco AnyConnect. It ensures an always-on secure connection to the office resources and gives us the capability to monitor and restrict access based on different criteria. It has a lightweight client for all widely available endpoint operating systems and provides a seamless user experience, no matter where it is used.

Currently, Cisco is providing Cisco AnyConnect licenses free of charge for a period of 3 months, and we offer free of charge technical assistance to anyone who needs it.

SECURE REMOTE WORKING

Security is not the number one priority in the current situation. Everybody is looking at how to enable his/her employees to work from home immediately. In such a situation's security is underestimated, and standard anti-virus solutions are insufficient.

Some organizations have already taken care of remote worker's security and others who were focused mainly on securing the office environment. The second need a quick, easy to install and configure solution that can provide at least moderate security to all remote workers that utilize both on-prem corporate and cloud solutions.

From our standpoint, the best balance between ease of installation and effect on protection is delivered by DNS-layer security solutions. Cisco Umbrella is such a solution. It will provide 72%+ efficiency and it can be deployed in a matter of hours, not days or weeks.

Through the years we have carried out several big Umbrella deployments and the feedback is quite positive. We are currently strengthening our own remote workers' security with that tool, so we recommend it to anyone who seeks a fast and effective solution.

Currently, Cisco is providing Cisco Umbrella free of charge for 3 months, and we offer free of charge technical assistance to anyone who needs it

STAY SAFE! STAY CONNECTED

We believe that in times when we should stay separated, we could be even better connected. The right solutions and trusted partner matters. At TBS, we consider it essential to help each other in challenging times, and we are willing to work free of charge for the things described above for a period of 3 months.

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