



Redefining “business as usual”: The importance of hybrid cloud in enabling the future of work



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Businesses today are facing a new world of work that requires hybrid cloud technology to keep employees working as productively as possible, regardless of where they're located or what devices they are using. Welcome to the new “business as usual.”

Build an organization that's resilient enough to support the new future of work

A seismic shift from the traditional, office-based routine has unfolded rapidly before our eyes: With nearly half of the American workforce working from home in the first half of 2020¹ and an estimated 25–30% of the global workforce expected to work from home multiple days per week by the end of 2021², organizations the world over are having to redefine “business as usual.”

While most enterprise-level organizations had some degree of contingency planning in place for one-time or regional events, many have learned painful lessons about their level of preparedness for a longer-lasting, global disruption that's expected to impact how people do business for the foreseeable future.

Whether it's unreliable network options for dispersed teams, mission-critical applications being hosted exclusively in on-premises datacenters, or a whole host of other challenges, too many organizations have recognized after the fact that their IT infrastructure is simply too constrained to support this new future of work.

No one can predict when (or how) the next major disruption will affect their business, but they can take steps to get ready in advance—building greater business resiliency by using hybrid cloud technology to securely extend on-premises software deployments, thereby enabling employees to work efficiently and effectively from anywhere, at any time, using any device.



Prioritize infrastructure adaptability for long-term business sustainability

Though no business will ever be completely prepared for every contingency, organizations that prioritize adaptability, flexibility and scalability in their infrastructure are more likely to come out on the winning side after longer-term disruption in the marketplace.

In contrast, infrastructure-constrained organizations (particularly ones that maintain the majority of their workloads and mission-critical applications in on-premises datacenters) may find it much more difficult to recover after the next big upheaval.

The key difference between the two is the business resiliency they've built into the culture and functioning of their organizations.



During the pandemic, almost 60% of American adults that were working from home out of necessity now say that they would like to work from home “as much as possible.”³

Some of their top reasons include:



They’ve achieved new heights of productivity away from meetings and office chitchat.



Not having a commute reduces their carbon footprint and saves time and money.



Some working parents appreciate more time with their children.



Their job satisfaction (while working from home) has increased.



They have less exposure to bugs and flus going around the office.

Which of these organizations sounds most like your business?

FACTORS	ORGANIZATION #1	ORGANIZATION #2
Description	Hosts the majority of mission-critical workloads, business apps and more in on-premises datacenters	Manages a combination of virtualized desktops and apps in the public cloud and some mission-critical workloads in on-premises datacenters
IT Team Focus	Significant effort expended on day-to-day infrastructural and control plane management, leaving little time to focus on apps and desktops that keep the business running most productively	Control and management planes are offloaded to cloud partner(s), freeing up IT teams' time to focus on functionality that improves employee experience
Access to Innovation	IT leaders are constrained by the hardware and software they can get their hands on; must remain vigilant about new features, functionality and solutions, which they must also install themselves	Control and management planes come fully loaded and are kept up to date by cloud partner(s) with most recent versions, features and security patches
Security	Up to in-house IT personnel to stay on top of new cyberthreats and keep systems up to date with most recent patches and protective protocols	Combine in-house IT personnel with massive, cloud-provider ecosystem of security experts responsible for infrastructural protection—strengthening your overall security posture
Scalability	Infrastructure constraints dictated by vendor lock-in make cost-effective scalability difficult	Infinite, cost-effective scalability, with the ability to modulate the level of computing power and performance needed for specific workloads; burst to cloud only when needed, maximizing ROI for existing on-premises hardware
Business Continuity	Business continuity dependent on the IT teams' ability to pivot during disruption; in some cases, limited physical access to on-premises resources can affect continuity efforts	Uninterrupted business continuity; centralized management plane enables quick stand-up of additional workloads on any hypervisor or cloud provider resource location without having to recover core components
Time to Value	Longer upfront procurement times for physical hardware; on-boarding of new equipment and users is limited by personnel available to do the work	Speedy stand-up of additional workloads and simplified user on-boarding saves time and allows IT leaders to focus on more strategic initiatives
Investment	Significant, one-time CapEx investment, with ongoing, staged CapEx funds required to build out infrastructure and keep it running over time	"Pay as you go" benefit of running workloads in the public cloud considered an OpEx investment

Leverage hybrid cloud hosting for greater business resiliency during times of change

In their *2020 Strategy Road Map for Business Continuity Management*⁴, Gartner defines “resilient organizations” as “those that rebound and prosper after business disruptions, because they’re resistant to the impacts... as well as adaptive, elastic and sustainable.”

What makes these organizations so resilient?

1

They tend to be diversified enough to adapt to quickly changing market dynamics.

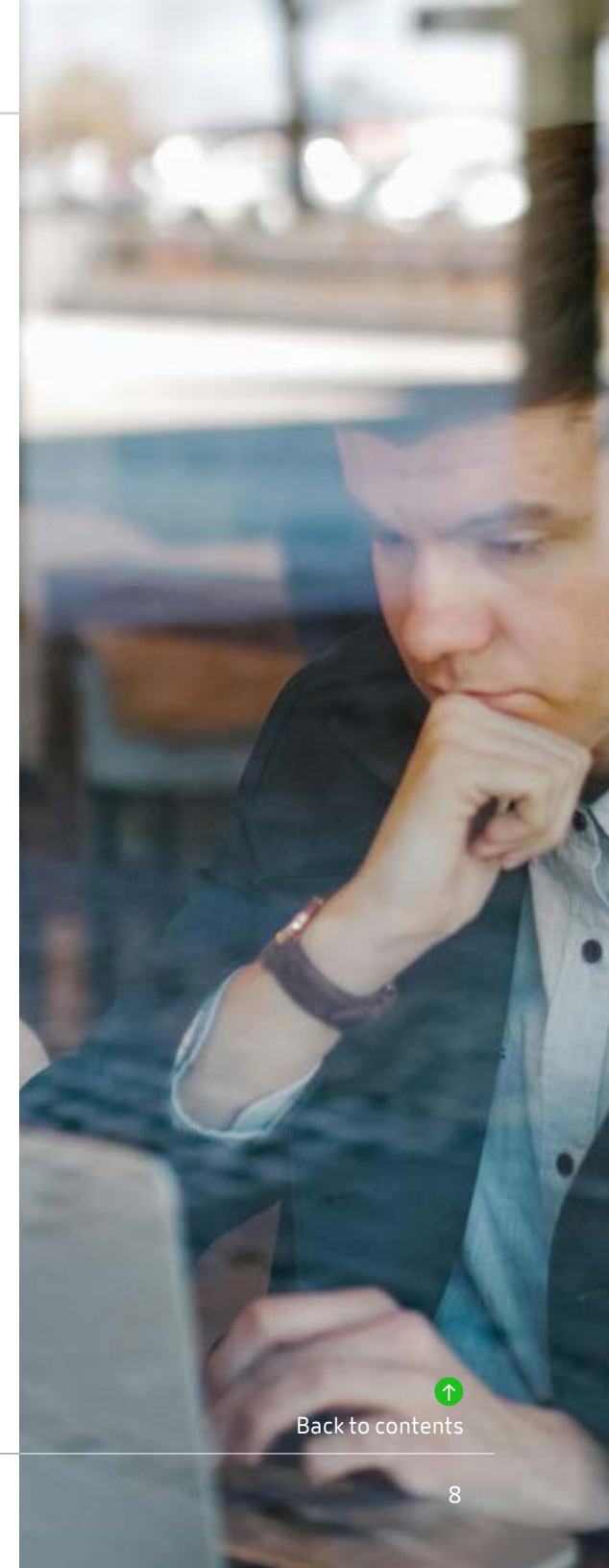
2

They often have rock-solid yet flexible business continuity plans in place that allow them to deliver against corporate objectives under all circumstances.

3

They invest in scalable infrastructure to maintain productivity in their dispersed teams.

From University of Sydney to Danish municipality Albertslund, University College London to CEVT (owner of Volvo and Lotus brands)—the most resilient organizations we work with use hybrid cloud infrastructure to future-proof their business activities and provide greater resiliency with which to withstand business disruptions.



Hybrid cloud environments, when combined with other technological innovations, like Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops, offer unparalleled benefits to all sizes and types of organizations, including:



More efficient and agile operations



**Increased employee productivity
(especially for an increasing number of remote workers)**



**Added security and reduction of the risks
sometimes associated with remote work**

Streamline your IT systems for a more efficient and agile business



Agility and efficiency are calling cards of most resilient organizations. They got that way, in part, by building business processes and infrastructure that can flex to meet the ever-changing needs of their customers and staff, even during times of disruption or upheaval.

When you extend your legacy infrastructure with modern IT functionality, including virtualized apps and desktops, you're investing in a resilient ecosystem that's capable of supporting more users at more locations now, while also building a more reliable and scalable system for the future.

In this way, you're setting the foundation to quickly and easily manage all of your resources from one or more cloud-based locations, away from your datacenter—an added benefit for those times when you're unable to physically access on-premises servers and other infrastructure.

Plus, with streamlined management of all of the moving parts of your IT ecosystem, enhanced security controls, quick provisioning of remote users, and pass-through of policies, configurations and settings, your business resiliency is guaranteed, no matter what disruptions come your way.

“Users get better performance and lower latency. Because the services are managed in the cloud, everything is fully maintained and we get the stability of operations we needed, at any time of day. We get ‘stable’ as standard. Citrix also helps us with security and GDPR compliance.”

—Claus Tom Christensen, IT Architect,
Albertslund Municipality, Denmark

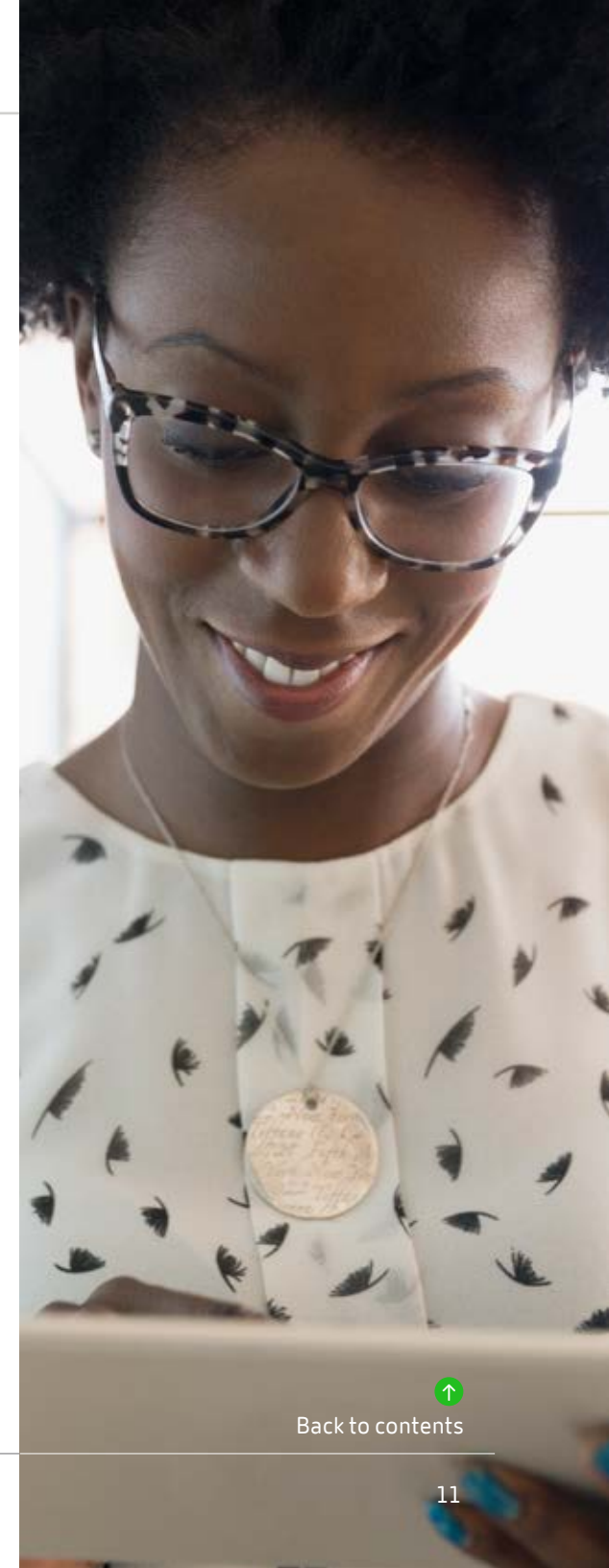
Deliver user experiences that enhance productivity



True remote work comes with a host of advantages, including avoiding the productivity traps that commonly affect employees while on-site.⁵ But without the benefits of optimized voice, image and video virtualization offered by today's leading cloud-hosted virtual app and desktop solutions, your staff's productivity levels could actually be suffering when working remotely. And, studies have shown that all the stress your dispersed workforce feels about staying productive can in fact have a dampening effect on their output.⁶

When you host mission-critical workloads, apps and desktop tools in the hybrid cloud, you pave the way for your dispersed workforce to work from home as efficiently and effectively as they could in the office. That's because, with hybrid cloud hosting combined with virtualized desktop infrastructure (VDI), you benefit from optimized bandwidth and access to resources, built in.

The result: Employees get the high-definition user experience they've come to expect when working on-site (including streamlined log-in, seamless app and desktop functionality across all devices, and robust printing and voice, image and video optimization) without the same distractions inherent in working from the office.



“Our aim is to provide staff with the IT toolkit they need to [be] the best they can be... to enable employees to set their own work-life balance, to work where they want, when they want, on any device... It also means they can submit jobs overnight, from home, and pick up the results in the morning.”

—Mattias Brandt, Citrix Product Owner, CEVT (part of the Zhejiang Geely Holding Group, owner of Volvo and Lotus auto brands)

Secure employees and their activities, regardless of location or device



As many have discovered, organizations simply weren't set up to support the degree of remote work⁷ that's been necessitated by business disruptions brought about by Mother Nature, cyberthreats and more. Yet, work must go on.

As a result, more than a third of employees are using web browsers installed on their own devices (which are not managed by their IT teams) to access web-based, SaaS applications.⁸

The problem? When employees log into corporate systems through non-corporate-provisioned laptops, smartphones and other devices, they're inadvertently making life easier for cybercriminals, who are doubling (and by some reports, tripling or quadrupling⁹) their efforts to infiltrate corporate networks. That's because an astounding 75% of employees polled don't know how to prevent cybersecurity breaches.¹⁰ Combine that behavior with the increase in traditional Virtual Private Network (VPN) usage—which are much more difficult to keep updated when they're being used by remote workers all day, every day—and you've got some serious security risks on your hands.

If you're looking to offer more secure and reliable network access to your remote workforce, consider switching out your traditional VPN for a security solution that's based on zero trust fundamentals, like granular access for authorized users based on identity, time, device posture and other contextual factors. With these types of solutions, you get a fully-managed, globally available cloud service that auto-scales to match any surges in remote work as they occur—tightening the reins on access security while giving your employees their choice of where they work, when and on which device.



“As organizations use VPNs for telework, more vulnerabilities are being found and targeted by malicious cyber actors.”¹¹





Enlist virtualization technology in the cloud to keep dispersed teams productive

Gone are the days when mobile work was a choice. Now and in the future, “business as usual” is the ability to work seamlessly from anywhere, over any network, and on multiple devices. To assure long-term success in this new environment, IT leaders must build resiliency into the foundations of their organizations. Virtualization technology like Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops, especially when hosted in the hybrid cloud, delivers the flexibility, security and infinitely scalable performance that supports the diverse ways that employees do their jobs.

Learn more about Citrix’s market-leading solutions for virtual app and desktop delivery in a hybrid and multi-cloud world.

Book a Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops demo

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