Digital Workplace Infrastructure and Operations Primer for 2021

2021 priorities for I&O leaders building digital workplaces include improving quality and increasing agility. This initiative helps map out a comprehensive strategy to automate operations, innovate with infrastructure and deliver a continuously improving digital workplace.

Scope

This initiative offers analysis of proven practices and strategies to modernize and automate operations, improve infrastructure, and adapt operations for improved agility and higher-quality outcomes.

In addition to infrastructure and operations leaders and business leaders, other IT roles involved in this initiative are:

- Security and risk management leaders
- Applications and software engineering leaders
- Chief information officers

Three areas of focus for this initiative include:

- Digital Workplace I&O Strategy: Craft strategic roadmaps and policies, refine best practices to support users, and revolutionize the delivery of goods and services through investments in frontline worker technologies.
- Digital Workplace Operations: Deliver superior experiences at scale through modern and automated endpoint operations, shared device ownership and support models, and use of workplace analytics data to inform continual improvement.
- Digital Workplace Infrastructure: Drive new ways of working through investments in flexible computing infrastructure, provide resilience in the face of change with SaaS tools for collaboration and communication, and drive improvements to the health, safety and engagement of frontline and first-line workers.
I&O leaders building or executing a digital workplace strategy have delivered innovations with speed and agility that, in many cases, have made a material difference in the fortunes of their organizations.
In organizations wracked by change and uncertainty, investments fueled by foresight and sound, supporting strategy saved the day.

Timely and well-informed decisions and investments have driven exceptional outcomes in challenging times:

- I&O organizations that embraced modern endpoint operations early seamlessly transitioned to supporting work-from-anywhere employees.

- Investments in cross-platform SaaS applications that allow teams to maintain identical — and in some cases, increased — levels of productivity despite the massive disruption of rapid office closures.

- IT organizations that invested in employing workplace analytics continued to resolve critical business issues despite impacts to staffing due to a crippled economy.

Investments in best-in-class digital workplace devices and infrastructure, paired with modern operations, allow IT to drive up its efficiency and work smarter with constrained resources. Sound IT strategy guides the use of digital workplace infrastructure to innovate key business processes.

The digital workplace infrastructure and operations initiative provides guidance that spans infrastructure and operational imperatives, and helps clients make smarter decisions, deliver higher-quality outcomes, and thrive in an era of redefined work, life, and global economics.

This initiative provides expert analysis of emerging and proven practices, and evaluation of emerging strategies, paired with guidance from peers, template tools and live content for organizations with digital workplace initiatives.

**Topics**

Technology areas that comprise the foundation of the digital workplace are broad and diverse, legacy and emergent; address specific applications and tasks; and are adaptable to reflect the requirements and preferences of advanced users. Those responsible for digital workplace infrastructure and operations (DWI&O) must prioritize investments over this broad and contradictory set of technologies. Those who can transform mobile and endpoint computing departments into innovative providers of business value will be well-positioned to be indispensable partners rather than cost centers.

Our research in this area addresses the following topics:

**Digital Workplace Infrastructure**

Infrastructure strategy research outlines strategies to modernize endpoint engineering to deliver scalable, flexible computing to users; make smarter technology platform investments to empower anywhere operations; and achieve balance between user and IT needs.
Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- What technologies can my organization invest in to enable work on any device, in any location?
- What impact will as-a-service infrastructure have on my digital workplace?
- What is the optimal mix of devices, platforms, infrastructure and tooling to continually improve a digital workplace?

Recommended Content

- Some recommended content may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.
- How Best to Equip Home Workers
- Compare the Costs of Replacing Desk Phones With Softphones in UC
- Market Guide for Enterprise Desktops and Notebooks

Planned Research

- Building the infrastructure to enable the new hybrid workplace
- Frontline worker use cases leveraging augmented reality/virtual reality/machine learning
- Market Guide for Desktop as a Service

Digital Workplace Operations

Operational strategy covers best practices for mastering cost intelligence, embracing analytics-based decision making for better IT outcomes, and improving governance and policy to allow IT to succeed at delivering a new work experience, safely, at scale.

Questions Your Peers Are Asking

- What role will workplace analytics play in future-of-work scenarios?
- How can I modernize my digital workplace while improving cost intelligence?
- What policy and governance are required to successfully enable the digital workplace?
- What role will AI/ML, automation/orchestration and new sources of workplace analytics data play in my digital workplace operations?

Recommended Content

- Some recommended content may not be available as part of your current Gartner subscription.
- Embrace Windows 10 Modern Management to Enable a Highly Distributed Digital Workplace
Planned Research
- Embracing workplace analytics to drive continuous improvement in I&O
- Operationalizing BYOD and new device ownership models
- The enterprise mobility sourcing continuum

Suggested First Steps
- 2020 Strategic Roadmap for Digital Workplace Infrastructure and Operations
- Enablement Mindset Is the Missing IT Ingredient to Improve Workforce Digital Dexterity and the Employee Experience
- Optimize End-User Services Through Segmentation of Work Settings
- Predicts 2021: Digital Workplace Infrastructure and Operations

Essential Reading
- Embrace Windows 10 Modern Management to Enable a Highly Distributed Digital Workplace
- Hype Cycle for Frontline Worker Technologies, 2020
- Hype Cycle for Digital Workplace Infrastructure and Operations, 2020
- Adapting the IT Operating Model to Deliver Indispensable Digital Workplace Services

Document Revision History
Digital Workplace Infrastructure and Operations Primer for 2020 - 24 January 2020
Mobile and Endpoint Technologies Primer for 2019 - 5 February 2019

Related Priorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital Workplace Infrastructure and Operations</td>
<td>The digital workplace infrastructure and operations (DWI&amp;O) initiative helps those responsible for mobile and endpoint technologies build the foundation on which a digital workplace is built.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative Name</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure and Operations Leaders</td>
<td>This initiative focuses on helping I&amp;O leaders not only deliver cost-effective services, but also play a critical role in making the enterprise more agile, efficient and resilient.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security and Risk Management Leaders</td>
<td>Our research helps organizations design, develop, govern and manage their specific security and risk management (SRM) programs to provide and protect their value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Center Infrastructure</td>
<td>Data center infrastructure focuses on the technologies and practices that leaders need to drive infrastructure-led disruption (ILD) while supporting business-critical applications and operations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security of Applications and Data</td>
<td>Gartner research on the security of applications and data provides critical guidance on software security assurance and on data security governance and protection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Operations</td>
<td>This initiative covers the people, processes, technologies, and services needed to identify and manage vulnerabilities, and to monitor, detect, and respond to cybersecurity threats and incidents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloud and Edge Infrastructure</td>
<td>This initiative informs the strategy, design, selection and implementation of infrastructure to support cloud computing, edge computing, IoT and networking services that connect them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Workplace Applications</td>
<td>Digital workplace applications deliver frictionless experiences and help employees create, collaborate and communicate. Organizations must align their business capabilities with the new work nucleus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure Security</td>
<td>The infrastructure security initiative provides guidance to secure endpoints, networks and server workloads, both on-premises and in the cloud.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Center Infrastructure (Tech Professionals)</td>
<td>Data center infrastructure projects require a holistic plan, stretching from devising an enterprise strategy to delivering business services and enabling outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security Tech &amp; Infrastructure (Tech Professionals)</td>
<td>This initiative describes the processes, technologies and services required to protect modern organizations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>