



Secure. Remote. Work.

How to create a secure
remote work environment
that drives productivity



What's Inside...

- 3 Are You Ready for the Work-At-Home Revolution?
- 4 5 Ways to Secure for Remote Work
- 6 Communicate with Remote Employees
- 7 Build Relationships Remotely
- 8 Collaborate with Remote Employees
- 9 Run Meetings Differently
- 10 New Tools for a Great Meeting
- 11 Secure Your Meetings
- 12 Secure Sharing Outside the Company
- 13 Establish Governance
- 14 Enhance User Experience
- 15 Measure Engagement
- 16 Take Action





Are you ready for the work-at-home revolution?

As employees continue to work remotely, companies are looking for ways to adapt their businesses, ensuring productivity and security in the new working environment. Learn how to bring your remote team together in a secure workspace that provides the tools your employees need to do their job effectively. Help your team feel less remote by enabling communication and collaboration from anywhere without compromising privacy and security.

5 Ways to Secure for Remote Work

Reduce your company's risk while increasing the flexibility of your employees' work

1 Identity: Prevent attackers from entering your environment by protecting your employee's user account information. You can prevent identity theft by verifying who someone is before they access your network. Tools for protecting identity:

Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) protects accounts from phishing attacks that take advantage of weak or stolen passwords

Advanced Threat Protection (ATP) protects users from malicious software hidden in files, including files stored in OneDrive

2 Data: Protect your company from stolen information by applying levels of trust to sensitive data as it flows through your company. It is also critical to know what data you have, where you have it stored, and who has access to the data.

Data Protection should cover video, audio, documents, notes, chat and desktop sharing



3 Devices: Employees are now using personally owned devices, such as cell phones and laptops, to access company networks and information. You must find a way to secure these devices to protect your company while allowing your employees to work from anywhere, anytime. Tools for managing personal devices:

Intune: provides end-point protection to keep devices free of malware and ensure the device complies with company policies

4 Applications: Be aware of applications interacting with your company environment such as Box, Webex Teams, and Zoom, and apply protection policies.

Cloud App Security (CAS) is used to protect the environment from potentially malicious cloud apps, as well as to understand what external applications are interacting with your enterprise

5 Access: It is critical to control who has access to internal data, monitor what an employees does with that information, and verify identities to enter environments.

Defender ATP helps enterprise networks prevent, detect, investigate, and respond to advanced threats

Self-Serve Password Reset lets users change passwords when the account has potentially been compromised



Communicate with Remote Employees

It is critical to enhance communication with remote employees across the organization to provide a more engaging work-from-home experience. There are many ways to communicate with remote employees, from social feeds to email. The most effective way to communicate en masse is by implementing an intranet portal as a central location for employees to find whatever information is needed.

Improve remote employee communication by:

Personalizing:

Provide employees a way to personalize their user experience by subscribing to content, personalized navigation, and contextual dashboards.

Targeting:

Publish content that is targeted to a group based on job function, department or office location and send emergency notifications or alert messaging.

Self-Service:

Give employees the ability to find and consume information on their own time with a self-serve platform.

Connecting:

Communicate company news in multiple forms across various channels so that a message is heard and received in ways employees want to connect. Some channels to utilize are Teams chat, Yammer posts, website portal headers, and more.



Build Relationships Remotely

When employees are working remotely, it is critical to be able to build relationships with coworkers by understanding their skills and strengths, as well as reporting structures, job functions, departments and locations. Creating an easy-to-use employee profile and search tool is one of the most requested tools for enabling those employee connections and sustaining culture.

In addition, you can stay connected with virtual employee engagement programs such as:

- **Socializing** with online games, video and photo contests, virtual happy hours
- **Networking** with video coffee breaks
- **Team-building activities** with virtual Bingo, online scavenger hunts

Companies with the best culture maintain communication as if everyone were in an office environment and make a conscious decision to use tools to promote community.



Collaborate with Remote Employees

Collaboration is key to success and even more important when working remotely. There are many ways to innovate the way employees work together for continuous productivity.

Tools to enable remote employee collaboration:

Conversations:

Start group chats for a threaded conversations to execute projects. Stop sending emails; instead, utilize a discussion workspace to document the ideation process and vote on next steps.

Editing:

Give employees the ability to simultaneously edit documents together in real time.

Search

Improve collaboration by making it easier and faster to find content for projects.

Access control:

Track user permissions which enable employees access to files without having to worry about security.



Run Meetings Differently

The most underutilized tools to conduct effective online meetings:

Use video: Turn the camera on whenever possible. The lack of non-verbal cues is a leading factor in meeting fatigue. Now, more than ever, it is critical to gain a personal connection with remote employees and customers. Video calls also offer a peek into each other's lives — kids, pets, their home office — building deeper relationships.

Hand raise: It can be difficult not to interrupt each other in online meetings when you can't see body language. By clicking the hand raising icon, you signal a need to speak without disrupting the meeting. It is especially helpful to reduce interruptions during large conference calls.

Chat early and often! Communicate before a meeting to prepare everyone with an agenda. During the meeting, comment on what someone is saying or ask questions without interrupting. Afterwards, follow-up with ideas and plan for the next meeting.

Notes. Use the built-in meeting notes feature to take notes during a meeting and share with everyone invited to the call afterwards. This provides an archive for future meetings and project discussions.

Breakout rooms allow for larger video conference meetings to break apart into small groups that will make it easier to collaborate.

Whiteboard. Missing the free-form idea generating power of whiteboard sessions during your call? In online meetings, shape ideas with a free-form digital canvas whiteboard to write and draw together.

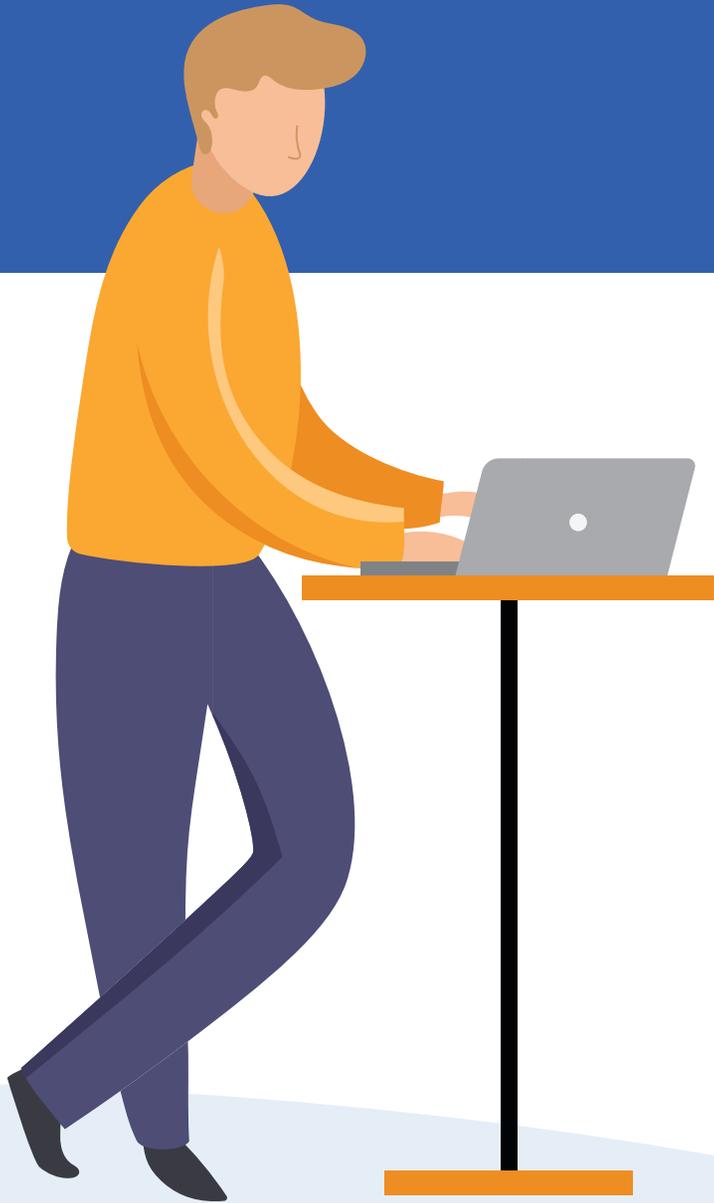
Record. Record all or part of your complex meeting discussions to give employees the ability to review next steps and provide a record of key discussions and decisions for others who can't attend a meeting.

60% feel less connected to colleagues ¹

 **30 minute mark** is when high levels of sustained concentration fatigue begin to set in



New Teams Tools for a Great Meeting



Video Conferencing:

- **Breakout rooms:** Allows a meeting organizer in larger audience meetings to split attendees into small groups to enable ideation and direct participation
- **Together mode:** Ditch the grid and place the participants on a video call together in a virtual space such as an auditorium, meeting room or coffee bar to feel more “real”
- **Dynamic view:** Control how content is shared and show participants in a meeting side by side
- **Chat bubbles:** Chats sent during a Teams meeting appear on the screens of all meeting participants to make the chat part the conversation

Whiteboard:

- **Sticky notes,** text, and drag-and-drop capabilities extend participation for those without access to a touchscreen.

Record:

- **Live captions:** Know who is speaking during a meeting with speaker attribution and follow along with what is always being said
- **Transcripts:** After the meeting, a transcript file is automatically saved in a tab as a part of the meeting

Secure Your Meetings

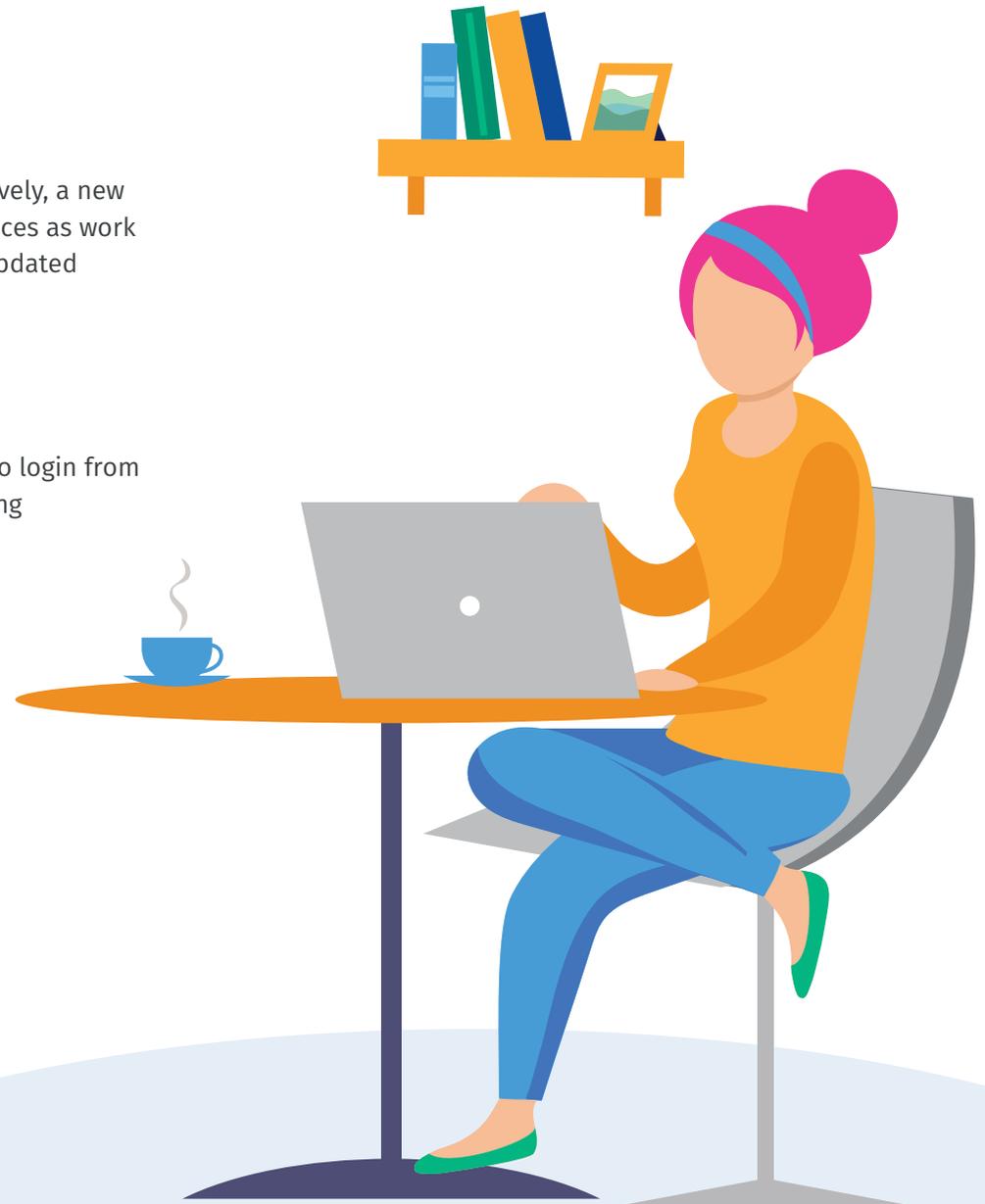
Most companies are requiring their employees to work from home exclusively, a new challenge for most organizations. Employees are using their personal devices as work devices more than ever, which brings risks without properly installed or updated security software.

Security best practices for remote work:

Multi-factor authentication: When working remotely, if you attempt to login from a risky location, you will be required to validate prior to joining the meeting

Conditional access rules: If you log in from an untrusted location or a known bad location, you can make sure specific criteria is met before allowing access

SSPR (self-service password reset): When your user account is at risk, you will receive a notification for your password to be reset



Secure Sharing Outside the Company

In addition to maintaining secure internal communications, employees need to be able to securely communicate and collaborate with those outside of the company such as customers, partners, and vendors. Files can be shared externally using OneDrive and Teams for short-term needs. For ongoing sharing needs, an extranet provides a persistent sharing environment.

Keys to securely sharing externally:

Security: Control access to secure files by authorizing outside users to enter the environment.

Audit: Continuously audit the external sharing of your remote employees, as well as view the actions performed to prevent threats and reduce risk.

Manage: Create and implement a plan to manage the sharing of information to control the risk associated with information flow. Always have the ability to remove sharing privileges when an employee is no longer with the company.



Establish Governance

The Microsoft clouds (M365, Azure and Dynamics) offer an unparalleled set of capabilities for licensed users. The ability for users to easily collaborate, create, and share information has never been greater, even with the shift to a mostly remote workforce. This is especially challenging for IT departments that walk the line between compliance and risk management. Establishing governance in your organization will enforce policies and monitoring for the resources and capabilities provided to your users, ensuring that they are used responsibly to enhance the prosperity and viability of your organization.

Governance policies help organize your company's creation and management of files and teams to reduce the chaos with these approaches:

Modern Workplace Provisioning:

Controlling the provisioning of groups is important for providing a smooth remote collaboration experience. Manage the creation of M365 Groups to control the creation of associated resources such as Teams and SharePoint sites to prevent overlap and remove inactive groups.

Information Management:

Monitoring the lifecycle of your information is essential for the management of risk. Manage assets policies for retention, sharing, automation and enforcement to improve information security.

Governance Committee:

M365 Governance is an ongoing activity requiring your organization to respond to continuous improvements and functionality updates. Establish a governance committee to help your company stay-up-to-date on the latest improvements and make adoption and policy changes as needed.



Enhance User Experience

Help your employees adapt to existing business conditions by creating a user experience that streamlines multiple aspects of work. Integrating applications into Microsoft Teams will enable business continuity with automated processes and save time with all your tools in one platform.

Improve remote productivity by integrating the applications into Microsoft Teams:

- **Power Automate** creates and manages workflows to automate repetitive tasks for your team to focus on more important tasks
- **Power Apps** has a suite of apps, connectors, and services for a faster application development to create custom business applications
- **Power BI** has a collection of apps, connectors, and software to store your data and display insights as dashboard analytics and reports



Measure Engagement

How do you manage Secure Remote Work? You measure it!

It is critical to understand which remotely working employees are engaging with the organization, what tools and content are being used, and analyze their work habits and patterns. Gaining these insights will help your organization make improvements for a productive and engaged workforce. Analytics provide visibility to your remote employees' productivity:



Employee experience gives insight on how well we are collaborating on projects and if we are communicating effectively

Technology experience provides insights by assessing policies, device settings, and application performance within the organizational environment

Communications effectiveness ensures employees are reading important messages and finding messages they need

Examples of Activity to Measure:

- How long employees are engaging throughout the week and at which hours of the day
- Which sites and pages are most visited and who are the most active users
- What content is most searched and used and which searches are unsuccessful
 - Which job roles are using tools and what types of social interactions are happening



Take Action

The most challenging part of creating a secure remote work environment is the continual change, be it employee's needs or the tools we use. A modern workplace will continue to evolve.

Keep your employees work from home environment in shape with these key steps:

Monitor devices and tools to know where and how to streamline productivity

Measure your employee engagement to effectively communicate and collaborate

Secure your employee devices and environments by protecting company assets



About Catapult

Catapult has become a leader in modern digital solutions and services, specializing in digital transformation and cloud-based technologies. We were recognized as a 2020 US Top M365 Partner – Security and Compliance, 2019 Partner of the Year Finalist for Modern Desktop and the 2019 MSUS Partner Award Winner in Modern Workplace – Security and Compliance. We work on behalf of our clients to imagine, build, and sustain IT-enabled business solutions that people love to use. Established in 1993 and headquartered in Austin, Texas, Catapult provides services across North America.

Teams Modern Work



Teams



Exchange
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SharePoint



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Power BI



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