How will you protect the new hybrid workplace?

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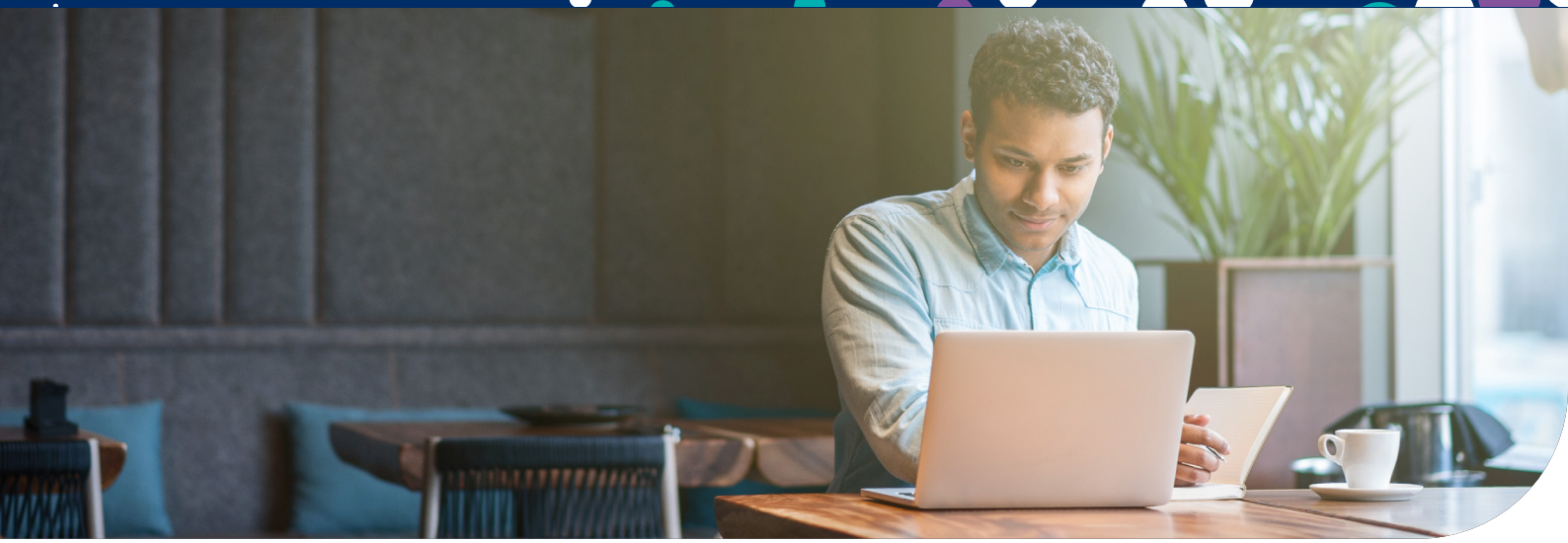

Before the pandemic, going to an office for work was the norm. Despite HR surveys consistently showing that employees wanted more flexible working, few organisations bothered to force the pace. Most businesses dragged their feet, citing concerns over loss of productivity and the costs and complexity involved in updating technology. Homeworking happened for some employees, but it tended to be one day a week. This meant the majority of employees spent most of their time in the office. Then COVID-19 flipped everything on its head, with companies having to transition to remote working, with security high on the agenda.

The future is hybrid

18 months on, employees have different expectations for their future working life. 77% of UK employees say that hybrid working, splitting their time between home and the office, is the best way forward after COVID-19. Organisations have also seen the light, and acknowledge that legacy working practices are no longer fit for purpose.

They've also learned that remote working doesn't cause productivity to nosedive. In fact, in some cases, employees reported that they are more productive while working at home.

At the same time, businesses have recognised there were savings to be made on office space and running costs. Many are now preparing for hybrid working to become standard practice. Some organisations are going even further, closing offices for good and making remote working permanent. Whichever path they choose, there are complexities around cyber security that must be overcome for the full potential of hybrid working to be realised.

The challenge of security and access

There has been a noticeable uptick in cyber attacks since the start of the pandemic, with malicious actors trying to take advantage of gaps in security. Nearly 40% of European businesses said they'd experienced 25% more cyber threats after the pandemic started. This represents a significant increase in workload for IT security teams. Small wonder that cyber security is now top of the agenda. But any security measures have to be aligned to the needs of the hybrid workplace, and central to this is consistency of user experience. Organisations can't afford to have a two-tier workforce, with those in the office having better access to apps and systems than those working remotely. This means security has to embrace every employee, regardless of where they are working or which device they are working on.

Creating a futureproof solution for our customers

As a security partner to organisations of all sizes and types, we understand the challenges posed by today's sophisticated cyber threats and have an in-depth understanding of the solutions available.

The pandemic demanded a comprehensive, multi-layered approach to security and that's exactly what **Cisco Secure Remote Worker** provides. It's sound choice for organisations looking to shift to hybrid working with confidence. It can open up access for employees while ensuring robust security across the entire network.

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A single solution with a host of tools

The power of Cisco Secure Remote Worker lies in the visibility and control it gives to IT teams, enabling remote management, closing security gaps and streamlining workflows. It's a simple way for businesses to leave behind the complexity of multiple vendor management and centre on a solution that's scalable, flexible and forward looking – ideal when the working world is still in flux.

So, what are the components of Cisco Secure Remote Worker? And how does it solve key challenges, such as access control, data protection and phishing?

Multifactor authentication to verify employees

Only 27% of organisations are currently using multi-factor authentication (MFA) devices when accessing any application. Given the unrelenting pressure of cyber attacks, this has to change. **Cisco Duo** introduces a zero-trust model, enabling organisations to verify users' identities and establish device trust before granting access to corporate applications. It also enables security teams to identify devices with suspect credentials. Considering 81% of breaches involve compromised credentials, this is a key capability. With multi-factor authentication in place, employees have the access they need to data, apps and systems, whether in the office or at home.

Protection that extends beyond the VPN

A secure VPN lets data flow securely between colleagues and company systems. **Cisco AnyConnect** makes this a frictionless experience on any device from any location, keeping the information and the business safe. But what happens when employees aren't on the VPN? **Cisco Umbrella** steps in to protect remote workers against internet threats. It works by enforcing security at the DNS-layer, so unwanted connections are never established and files are never downloaded. No more off-network blind spots.

An end for unprotected endpoints

Endpoints have become a particular favourite with cyber criminals, with the rapid move to remote working causing new vulnerabilities. IT teams have to be confident that this issue is permanently resolved so the businesses can move forward with hybrid working plans. **Cisco Secure Endpoint** (AMP for Endpoints) offers a fast, effective way to protect all devices on the network. It integrates with **Cisco SecureX,** a free platform that comes with Secure Remote Worker. Together, they reduce the attack surface, reduce incident response time by 85% and boost SecOps effectiveness by 86%.

Next Steps: Try Secure Remote Worker with Prodec

As a long-time Cisco Partner, Prodec has the in-house expertise and experience required to supply Cisco hardware, software and support services from Cisco's extensive portfolio of products and solutions. We've resolved security challenges for a number of customers with Secure Remote Worker, helping them progress with their hybrid workplace transformation. Contact us today to speak with one of our trusted security experts.

About Prodec Networks

Founded in 1998, Prodec is well-practiced in supporting organisations of all sizes, and from all sectors, at every stage of their digital journey. By providing the very best technology advice, products and services, we help our customers to achieve digital transformations which increase their employees' engagement, enhance their customers' experiences, generate greater productivity and take their businesses to a whole new level.

Prodec specialises in integrating state-of-the-art technologies to offer businesses comprehensive, straightforward solutions, which are proactively supported and enable organisations to operate with ease.

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