

CHARTERHOUSE

Back to the Future of Office Working

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Returning to a Hybrid Office

The office is back.

After months of shutdown and remote operations, thousands of UK businesses are unlocking their offices and discovering a new way of working. Change is driven by attitude shifts from employers, customers and staff. Customers and employees like the convenience of virtual interaction but crave the sociability of face-to-face. Employers need to balance staff wellbeing with maintaining business efficiency and strong customer service.

The result is a fast-growing demand for hybrid working, a blend of on-premise and remote working that requires virtual collaboration to be effective both inside and outside the office.



of company leaders plan to **allow employees to work remotely** some of the time

Gartner 2020



of UK workers would like **1 or more paid workdays at home** each week

VoxEU 2021



The Office of the Future.

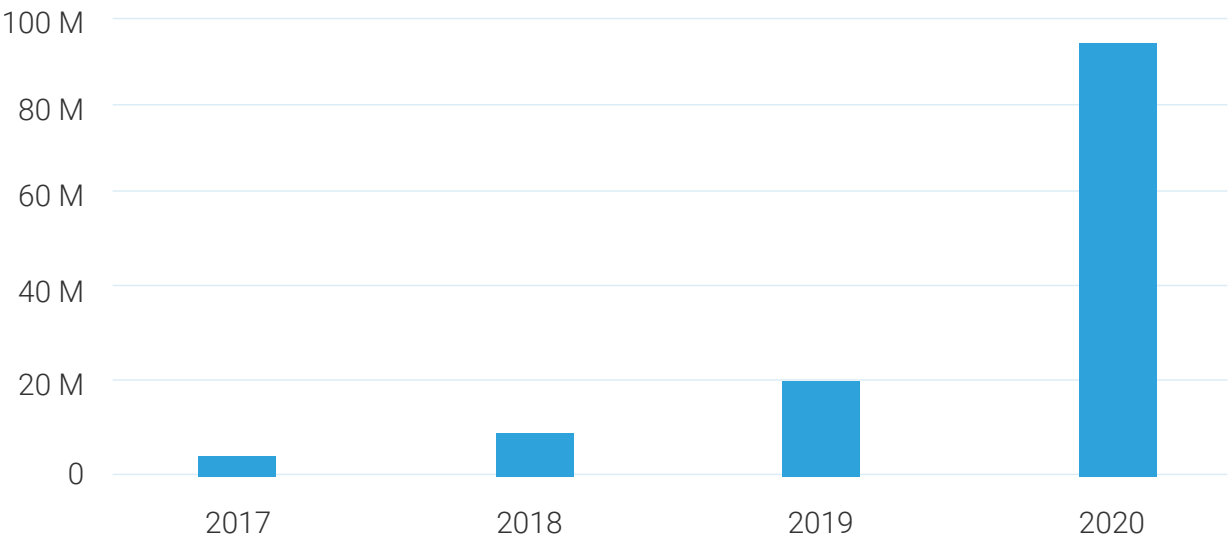
Today, many are seeing virtual collaboration as a cornerstone of the office of the future.

This e-book explores how business owners can build themselves a brighter future by adapting their networks, communications and security to take full advantage of modern workplace capabilities.

Welcome to a New Age of Work

Nine-to-five is history. Daily commutes a thing of the past. For millions of UK workers, what seemed so predictable before March 2020 is unthinkable now. Today, we've adjusted to a different way of life and a different way of working. Operating from the home-office. Easy, remote collaboration. Virtual huddles and presentations. Instant real-time access to the right people and rich content.

Flexibility to work from anywhere.



Microsoft Teams added **95 million** users in 2020, as it became one of the most popular apps'

Business of Apps 2021

Taking Virtual Collaboration to the Office

But, when restrictions end, we want these benefits to continue by taking virtual capability back to our newly opened offices. Here we can carry on delighting our customers via familiar collaboration platforms like Microsoft Teams and Zoom. And we can use the same technologies to support our hybrid work requirements and communicate effortlessly between colleagues across office and remote locations.



Hybrid Working: Is Your Office Ready?

But, if hybrid working means the promise of universal virtual collaboration, are your networking, communications and security up to the task of delivering it reliably across all your office locations and teams?

Businesses face a number of challenges:

- **Customer Expectations**

Your customers have grown used to the upsides of collaborating virtually with your staff and want those benefits to continue as offices reopen. **Your customers will expect to receive a seamless experience** when collaborating with your people, whether sat at their office desk, in a meeting room or working from the kitchen table at home.

- **Keeping Employees Onside**

Over the past year, many employees have embraced the flexibility of home working and relative ease of online meetings. Some will view a return to office commuting with mixed emotions. **Employers need to ensure that office infrastructure provides them with the right support**, enables hybrid working models and delivers effective virtual collaboration both on and off the premises.

- **Future Proofing**

Uncertainty is likely to remain for some time to come and organisations need to be ready for any eventuality. Hybrid working is predicted to be the norm for the foreseeable future, but the threat of further restrictions and office shutdowns is never far away. **Business owners need to de-risk by optimising their people, systems and processes for easy and effective virtual collaboration.**

- **Staying Cyber-Secure**

Hybrid working brings a growth in information sharing, a more distributed workforce (both in terms of location and the mix of devices they use) and the prospect of more endpoint devices coming to and from the office more often. **This creates a broader risk landscape and the need for cybersecurity measures to stay one step ahead of new potential threats.**

- **WiFi Coverage**

The dawn of hybrid working will motivate many organisations to reconfigure their office layouts. While some may down-size their premises to accommodate smaller daily headcounts, others will expand into larger workspaces, repurpose premises or introduce hot-desking. **New office footprints, additional huddle spaces and extra meeting areas will drive demand** for higher performance WiFi that eliminates blind-spots and optimises network availability office-wide. WiFi that really works.

- **Network Overload**

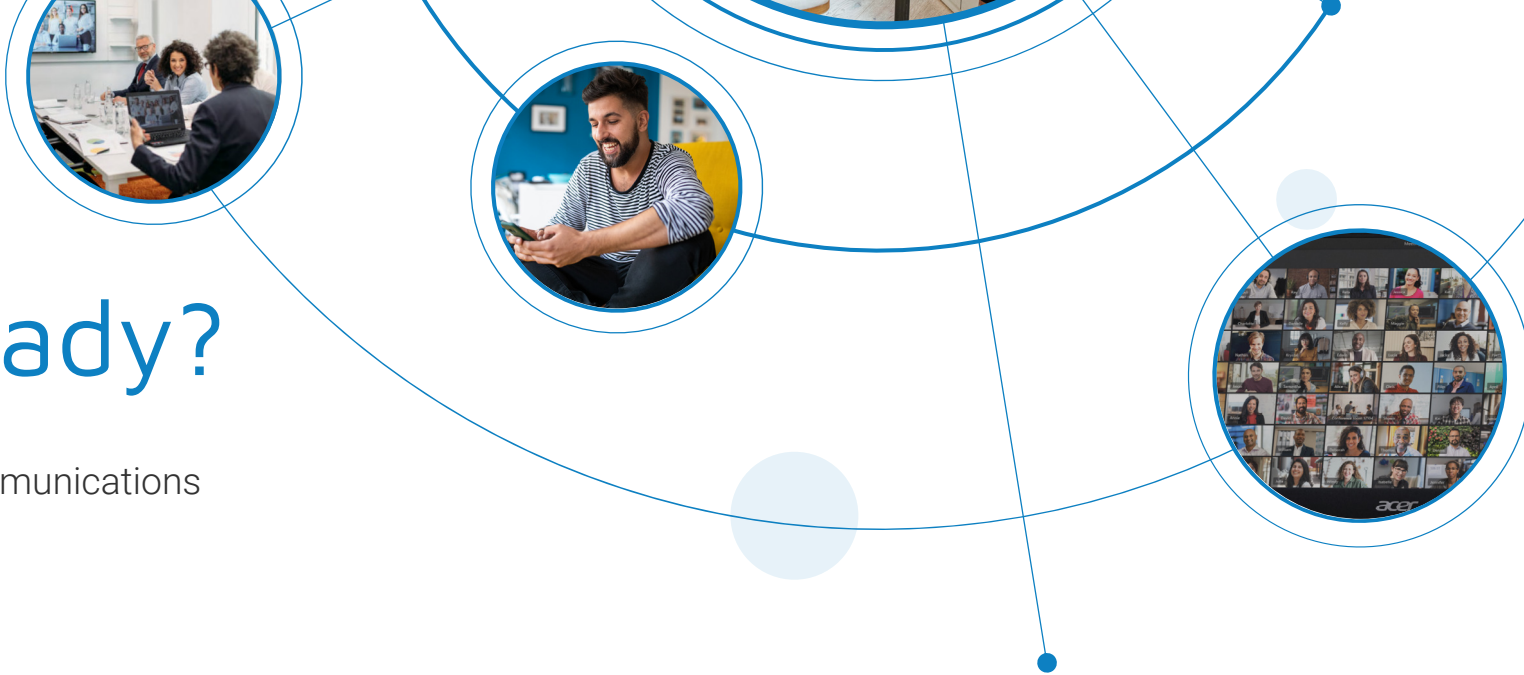
Whilst some organisations have recruited more staff and acquired more devices, return to the office will see employees importing virtual meeting behaviours from home. Simultaneous **live video streaming and transfer of data across multiple devices and users will quickly consume available bandwidth and potentially overstretch or break networks.**

- **Virtual Meeting Rooms**

Office meeting spaces must meet the needs of virtual team working by supporting use of Microsoft Teams and other online collaboration solutions. Audio-visual hardware, WiFi and meeting control tools may need upgrading to repurpose meeting rooms for a reliable, high quality virtual meeting experience.

- **Unified Communications**

Recent global disruption has fragmented office teams, forcing workers to operate remotely and use a variety of devices and channels to stay in touch. Hybrid working will underscore the need for businesses to bring together all their voice and data comms under a unified communications platform for improved teamworking, management, analysis and security.



Transformation to the Hybrid Office



Spaces Optimised for Virtual Team working

Traditionally, meeting rooms have played a pivotal role in hosting internal presentations, brainstorm and discussions, as well as external meetings with customers, suppliers and other partners.

But as global changes in working practices over the past 12 months have driven adoption of a new generation of meeting solutions centred around Microsoft Teams and Zoom, the implication for office meeting rooms is that existing standards-based video technologies have quickly become obsolete and unusable.

The office meeting spaces of the future need to accommodate a blend of in-person and virtual team working. External participants in office meetings will almost certainly be using Microsoft Teams or Zoom. Meeting rooms must be equipped to support these virtual collaboration platforms rather than rely on outdated video conferencing solutions.



Robust Networking for Heavier Traffic

If your network was fit for purpose 12 months ago, it may be falling behind as your office undergoes subtle transformations which together create significant extra demand. **Widespread simultaneous use of Microsoft Teams and other virtual collaboration tools can impose heavier load onto overstretched networks.**

Reconfigured office layouts can expose users to WiFi hot-spots and poor reception. Future-proofing for ongoing disruption can force decisions about migrating to cloud. All this motivates a rethink of whether your approach to networking is robust enough for a new hybrid-working-centric world.



Tighter Security for a Broader Risk Landscape

Reopening offices are often changing offices. Premises may be expanding, workforce numbers growing and IT strategy and infrastructure realigning to a redirection of business need.

Hybrid working places many more user devices outside the firewall more often and enlarges the potential attack surface. Endpoints switch between home and office networks on a daily basis. **Virtual collaboration increases online data transfer exponentially.** All this amplifies cyber-risk and the need for a fundamental re-evaluation of IT security.



Spaces Optimised for Virtual Team Working

Enhanced Collaboration with Microsoft Teams Rooms

Microsoft Teams Rooms optimises meeting spaces for the needs of today's virtual communication and team working. Brought to you by Charterhouse, Teams Rooms tailors the choice and configuration of audio-visual equipment (screens, cameras, speakers and control devices) to match the room characteristics and deliver the best user experience, both in-room and online.

Inclusive to Everyone

Participants don't have to be physically in the room to feel fully engaged. Teams Rooms gives everyone an equal seat at the table.

Seamless and Content-Rich

Teams Rooms turns your meeting room into a shared virtual space with all the functionality of Microsoft Teams, including video, voice and messaging.

Easy To Set Up and Run

Meetings are simple to set up and join. Manage everything via a single, easy-to-use touch-screen control panel.

Extra Safety Features

Automatic alerts notify you if participant numbers exceed social distancing and help to keep your meeting room safe.

Flexible and Scalable

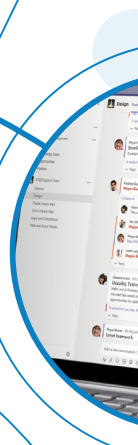
Audio-visual hardware and features are customised to match a wide range of room dynamics and dimensions.

Certified Hardware

From Microsoft-approved manufacturers including Crestron, Dell, HP, Lenovo, Logitech, Poly and Yealink.

End-to-End Solution

Charterhouse provides everything from room scoping to supply, installation and support of Teams Rooms equipment.



Robust Networking for Heavier Traffic



- **Every Business Needs Fast, Reliable Connectivity**

Whatever uncertainty the future brings, the vital and ongoing importance of effective networking has never been clearer. As organisations become increasingly app-centric and teams more dispersed, networks are a key enabler for new technologies to drive more efficient collaboration from anywhere.

High performance, reliable LAN, Wi-Fi and mobile solutions give you access to services from any location through diverse multi-carrier, multi-ISP and multi-technology solutions. Enterprise mobility solutions empower your workforce, while disaster recovery, backup and storage services ensure your data stays fully protected.

Tighter Security for a Broader Risk Landscape



- **Hybrid Working Amplifies Your Risk**

As remote working has become a necessity for organisations everywhere, keeping operations secure across all your networks and endpoints has never been more essential. The data your teams create, compile, store and share is an invaluable asset. Protecting it from unauthorised access by internal or external threats shields your organisation from the risk of financial loss, eroded customer confidence and damaged reputation. Meanwhile, it is vital your organisation adheres to the latest government and industry regulations as they increase in breadth and depth year on year.



- **Fusion Secure From Charterhouse**

Fusion Secure safeguards your organisation against the cyber threats of today and tomorrow and ensures ongoing security compliance. We assess weaknesses or gaps in your security posture and defend against known and unknown attacks. No preventive measure is a 'silver bullet' so, as part of a layered approach to cybersecurity, our solutions detect and respond to thwart successful attacks. Enhanced security and compliance gives your organisation the freedom to thrive in the new age of hybrid working.



CHARTERHOUSE

About Charterhouse

- **Empowering Your Connected Business**

Founded in 1993, Charterhouse Group is a multi award-winning solutions integrator of connectivity, communication and security solutions across the UK and around the globe. We deliver a broad portfolio with an integrated, market-leading proposition via strategic partnerships with the very best the world of technology has to offer. Charterhouse employees operate from various locations around the UK with one common goal: to deliver exceptional solutions and service to our customers.

- **Connecting You Across the UK and Worldwide**

Our team of accredited engineers and consultants cover a broad range of technologies, enabling us to deliver innovative solutions. Our commitment to exceptional service is backed by our methodical approach to systems design and implementation, which is centred around your business needs and priorities.

By delivering integrated solutions to companies throughout the UK and internationally, we have built a reputation for forming strong and long-lasting partnerships with our customers.

Securely connecting your organisation, is our business

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