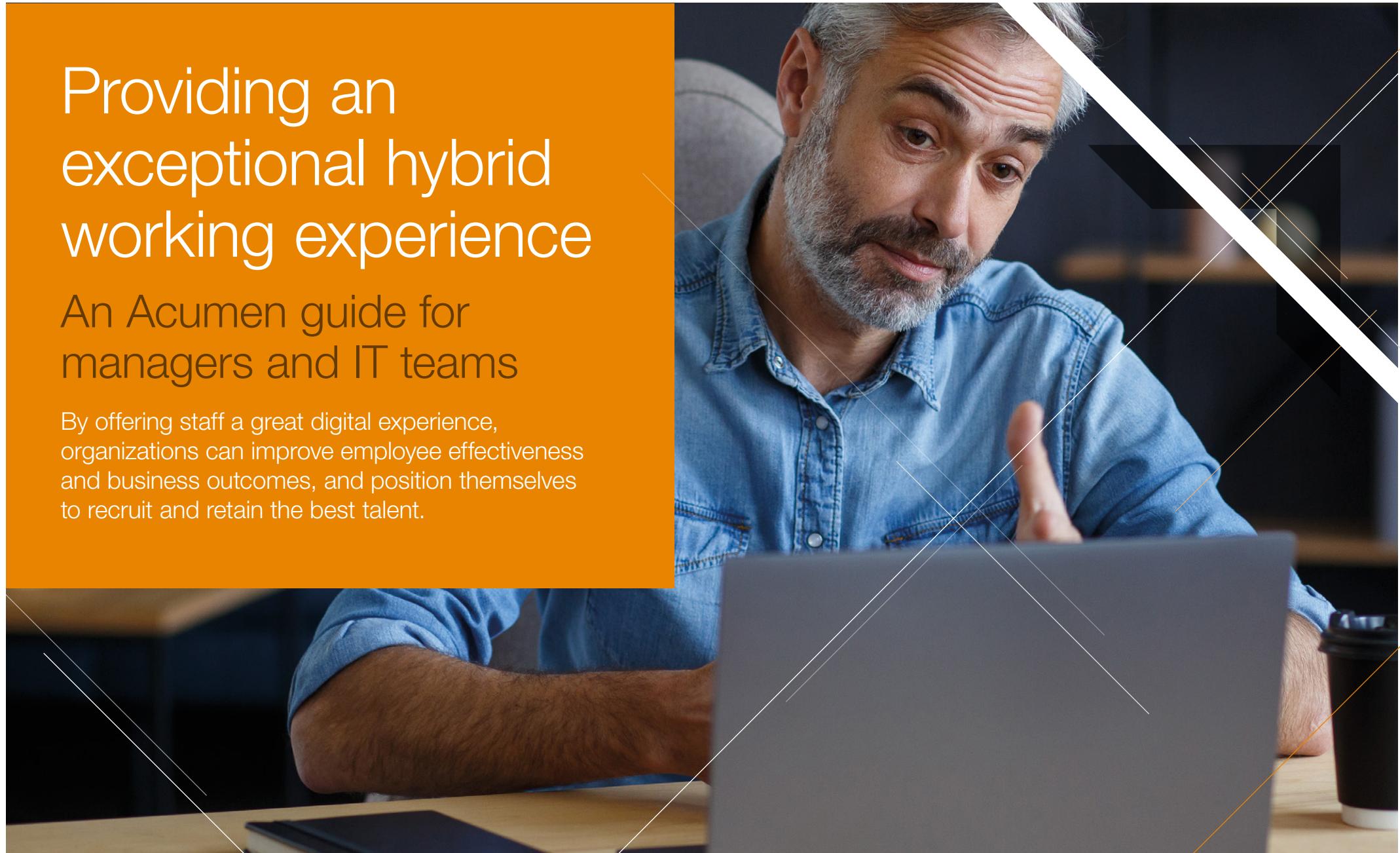


Providing an exceptional hybrid working experience

An Acumen guide for managers and IT teams

By offering staff a great digital experience, organizations can improve employee effectiveness and business outcomes, and position themselves to recruit and retain the best talent.



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Introduction

The move to remote and flexible working was already well underway before the pandemic came along and accelerated it. In those sectors, businesses and roles where it is feasible, employers will increasingly want to give employees as much choice as possible about where and when they work. It's widely acknowledged that this is the way to achieve a satisfied, effective and creative workforce, with a great work-life balance.

This makes the option of remote and flexible working an important tool in attracting and retaining the most sought-after talent. Unsurprisingly, researchers and analysts¹ are predicting that in the wake of Covid-19, the workforce in some industries and professions will remain, if not fully home-based, a hybrid one, typically working from home (or otherwise away from the office) for several days per week.

The pressure is now on for employers, and specifically their IT teams, to deliver a positive remote workplace and service experience that

enhances employee satisfaction, effectiveness and empowerment, while maintaining corporate security, stability and success.

After reviewing some challenges that arise from the remote working trend, this guide provides practical advice for the IT teams who are expected to make it happen, and the leaders who will control the process. We reveal the capabilities that must be established to provide an excellent end-user experience for employees, as well as promoting their general wellbeing. That experience requires robust infrastructure



and application stability, optimized processes and workflow, and collaborative platforms that maintain and enhance employee effectiveness.

We then explain how workforce analytics tools can help you optimize the way your people and systems interact, eliminating friction and increasing employee effectiveness. You'll learn how to build exceptional – and, importantly, quantifiable – end-user experiences, supported by optimal computing performance.

¹ See for example. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/whats-next-for-remote-work-an-analysis-of-2000-tasks-800-jobs-and-nine-countries#>

The real challenge of hybrid working

Staff and distributed teams across the globe need constant access to services such as team collaboration, file sharing, web conferencing, telephony, virtual desktops, and access when on the go, working remotely or travelling between client meetings. Digital workplace initiatives are focused on meeting this need.

So far, so good – but many organizations are currently struggling because they have wrongly identified the real challenge of remote working. Too often, they think in terms of “monitoring” or policing employees’ working time and their productivity. This can easily become counterproductive, creating feelings of mutual mistrust and a toxic work culture that jeopardizes the ability to retain talent. It can also raise ethical red flags if the collection of information creates the feeling that employees are being spied on, especially in their own homes. Your organization could easily find itself featured in the news as an example of poor practice.



Optimize the way your people and systems interact, eliminating friction and increasing employee effectiveness.

Companies can get much better results by aiming to empower employees to be as effective as they can be. The vast majority of staff who are able to work remotely want to be productive, but they can be hampered by a range of issues, including non-performant systems or lack of training. IT's emphasis should be on making sure that technology helps rather than hinders them.

Evidence shows, IT should focus on two sets of questions

01:

- ▼ What is the employees' experience like?
- ▼ Do they have the technology needed to communicate with colleagues as easily as if they were in the office?
- ▼ Are they using this technology in a way that satisfies their social needs, or are they feeling isolated?
- ▼ Do they have the systems (hardware and software) they need to be effective, and are those systems performing as they should?
- ▼ Are they happy and relaxed, or frustrated and even heading towards burnout?
- ▼ Can HR easily check on employee wellbeing?



02:

- ▼ Can you measure the impact of Hybrid working on your business outcomes?
- ▼ Are any areas suffering from the fact that employees no longer have line-of-sight visibility of each other at the water cooler, in meeting rooms, and at their desks?
- ▼ If so, how can these gaps be overcome?
- ▼ Are there any additional risks – for example, in terms of IT and information security – and if so, how can they be managed?



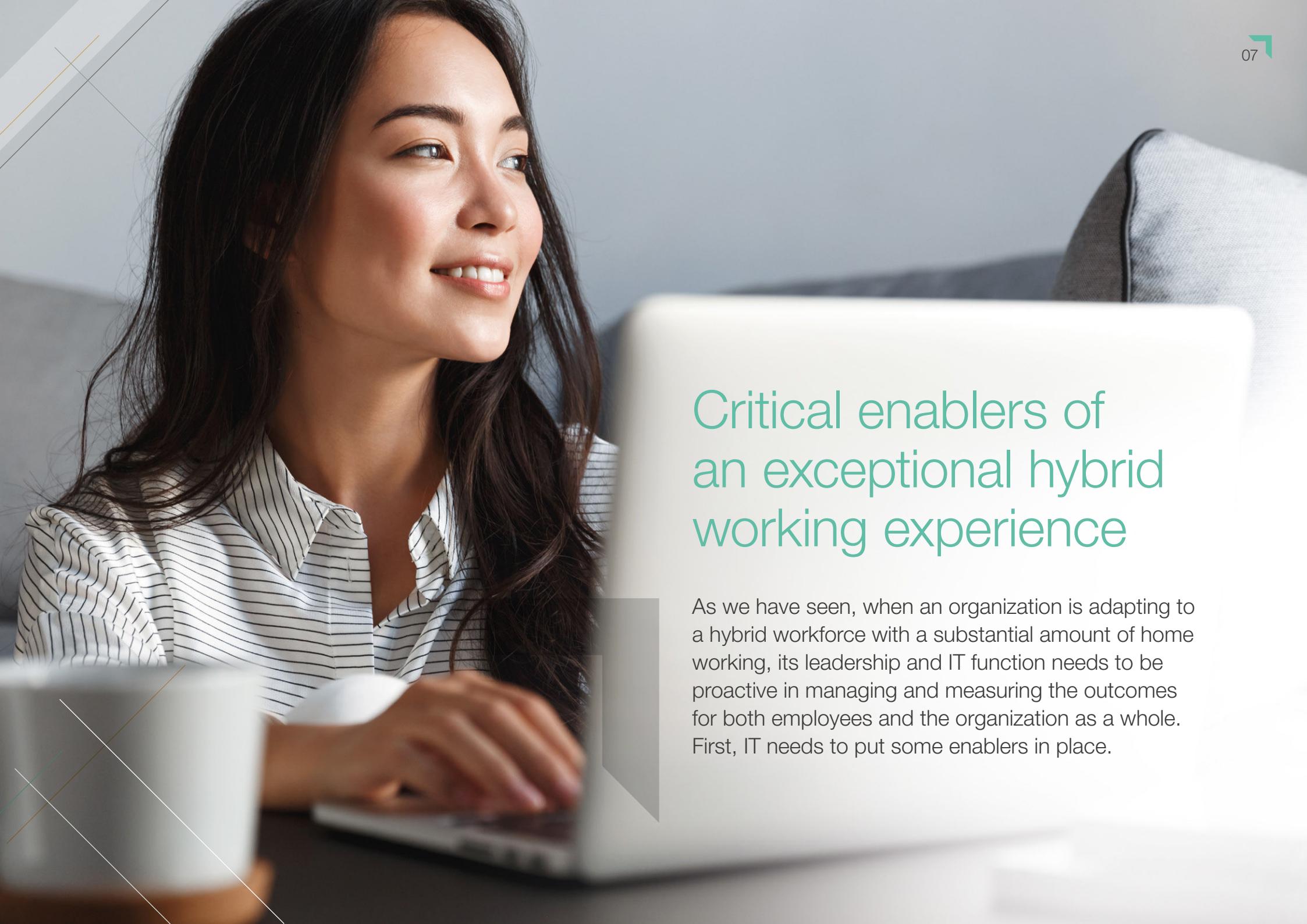
Even if they have set the right goals, many organizations currently lack the ability to capture, track and analyze granular data around how users interact with their hardware and software. Without this data, leaders cannot spot points of friction in the remote user experience. They miss opportunities to streamline processes and improve productivity and are unable to build and support successful digital workplace initiatives.

Even more seriously, senior leaders and HR teams will miss the early signs that poorly architected infrastructure, applications and lack of support are creating inefficient working practices that put pressure on staff who are trying to balance the demands of work with a home environment. People may, for example, put in longer working hours to compensate for lack of adequate systems or of collaborative input from colleagues. That can have a significant impact on staff health and wellbeing, leading inevitably to loss of key talent to the organization. Inevitably, the business will start to notice effects like lower customer satisfaction and/or falling sales.

In the next section, we'll look at some enablers that IT leaders need to put in place to enable the organization to overcome issues like these and deliver first-class employee experience.

Empower employees
to be as effective as
they can be.



A close-up photograph of a young woman with long dark hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a white button-down shirt with thin black vertical stripes. Her hands are visible, resting on the keyboard of a silver laptop. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be a home office or living room setting.

Critical enablers of an exceptional hybrid working experience

As we have seen, when an organization is adapting to a hybrid workforce with a substantial amount of home working, its leadership and IT function needs to be proactive in managing and measuring the outcomes for both employees and the organization as a whole. First, IT needs to put some enablers in place.



Help HR use technology to safeguard individual wellbeing

It's increasingly understood that different individuals respond very differently to remote working, depending on both their personalities and their circumstances². Therefore, it's vital for HR to carry out regular checks on individual wellbeing. This is not work that can be fully automated, because it calls for human empathy plus professional skills and insights. However, technology can help HR professionals spot warning signs that an employee is struggling (e.g. because they are feeling isolated) so that they can investigate and arrange help. This help might be as simple as providing training in the use of tools, or it could mean promoting greater interaction between colleagues. Where needed, employees can also be offered tips and tools to help them achieve a better work-life balance – for example, the “fake commute”³.



Continually enhance and measure employee experience

Aim to provide collaborative, work-anywhere digital workplaces that enable and encourage collaboration, and engaging digital experiences that increase employee satisfaction. Make sure employees feel as supported and connected as possible, and that management gets early warning of any feelings of isolation or burnout.



Track how well technology is supporting business goals

Measure, maintain and improve digital agility, constantly assessing performance against the KPIs. Check that the use and performance of collaboration apps like Office 365, Teams and Zoom meet business requirements. Ensure that everyone is following the correct security precautions.



Provide visibility for management

Give managers accurate status updates on employee experience and effectiveness based on data from all relevant endpoints (there are likely to be thousands of them) across your entire IT estate. Use these results to report against the business's key performance indicators (KPIs). Provide configurable dashboards, KPI scores, and data analytics with roll-up and drill down so that decision-makers can access the right information at the right time.



Assess and benchmark current capabilities and infrastructure

Establish a baseline assessment of your current IT landscape that allows IT leaders to understand both the existing remote infrastructure and the workforce's ability to absorb change and utilize IT.

² See for example <https://pressreleases.responsesource.com/news/100840/new-research-reveals-lessons-for-leaders-in-protecting-mental-health/>

³ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/emilsayegh/2021/02/03/a-little-taste-of-old-normal--virtual-commute/?sh=22197616387d>



Optimize technology deployments

Make sure that whenever you deploy new IT solutions, you are able to adequately measure progress, highlighting any obstacles that arise. If you can instantly see where gaps, risks and challenges with adoption exist, you can proactively correct your course. Make sure you have access to analytics that will reveal broad, consolidated activity patterns, whether at team, segment, country, region or global level. This will facilitate resource planning.



Actively drive adoption

Promote and track application use. See which employees, teams, roles and locations require help, and identify which solutions need intervention to increase adoption. Utilize the insights gained to target campaigns that will boost adoption. Continually monitor usage data to track adoption progress as a result of these campaigns.



Remove blockers to increased effectiveness

Evaluate user journeys – the sequence of steps that employees follow as they interact with technology to carry out a particular task – and identify inefficiencies that are hindering digital growth. Remove friction in workforce-system interactions and optimize processes that enhance effectiveness.



Promote continuous improvement

Evaluate your return on investment (ROI) in technology in terms of real business value. Make sure that for each completed implementation or intervention, you have ongoing access to the metrics that you need to continue tracking in order to keep ROI on track and identify further optimization opportunities.

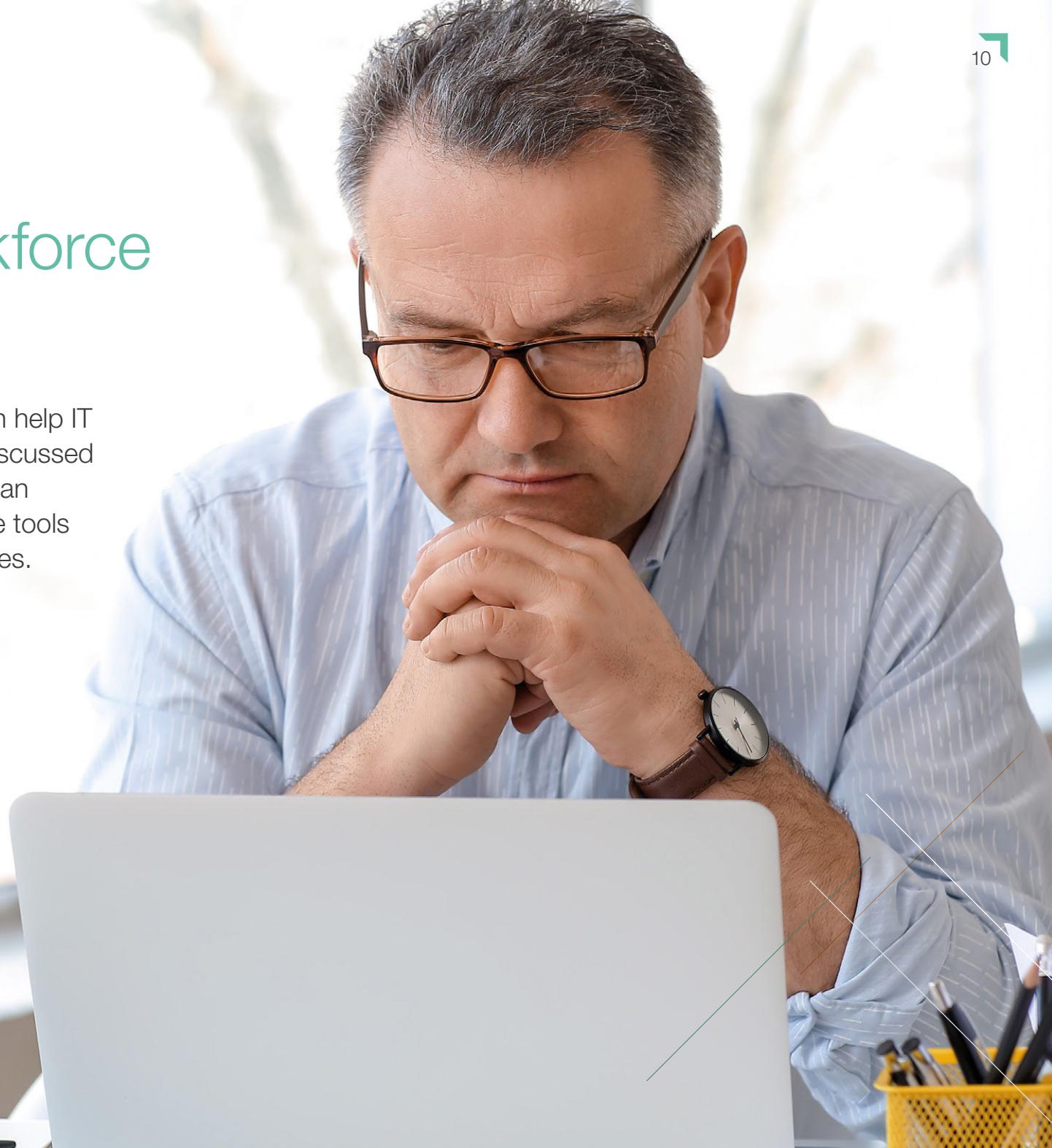


Measure and analyze changes to team dynamics

Use relational analytics to understand how the hybrid working effect may have changed team and individual dynamics; new influencers and ideators may emerge, cross-team efficacies may evolve, and new pools of innovation might develop. Use metrics to measure and understand these shifting dynamics and align them appropriately throughout the business.

The role of workforce analytics

The right workforce analytics tools can help IT to deliver the enablers we have just discussed and to equip organizations to provide an exceptional employee experience. The tools should support the following capabilities.





Understand what employees are experiencing

Workforce analytics can help organizations check for potential **employee wellbeing** issues – for example, identifying where staff are in danger of burnout as a result of working excessively long hours. This can happen because the line between work and home has been erased, or because IT systems aren't supporting them as they should. Either way, the organization can provide help, whether it's by equipping the employees with better tools for separating work from leisure, or IT troubleshooting the technology.

It's important to assess **teamwork and collaboration** at, and across, various organizational levels, for example by looking at the level of interactions on collaborative platforms. This will highlight whether anyone is likely to be feeling isolated or unsupported so that corrective action can be taken.

For the IT team, this type of check can also assess how far the technology tools provided are supporting **employee effectiveness**. The analytics should highlight where technology can be enhanced, processes adjusted to remove friction and give a better experience or where more training or support in technology use should be provided.



Understand the organizational impact of employee experience

The analytics should help leaders measure the organizational and technical impact of major changes such as a move to remote working. For the IT team, they should again highlight opportunities to improve processes or technologies in order to increase organizational effectiveness and safeguard security.



Tune technology and working practices to improve employee experience and effectiveness

As well as looking at individual experience, workforce analytics tools should highlight general trends that indicate steps that the IT team can take to improve experience and effectiveness. For example, they might find that they need to personalize services and technology for different worker segments, or again arrange peer support for specific groups of workers who are facing challenges in using technology tools to complete work tasks.



Use technology to deliver additional business benefits

For IT management, the information from workforce analytics can help to **shape strategy**. The analytics should highlight opportunities to optimize costs by better aligning technology to business requirements, and digital initiatives to corporate objectives. This can be made easier by establishing KPIs that measure progress in improving employee experience, and using the resultant insights to optimize outcomes and minimize risk.

At a more detailed level, issues in need of resolution can be **prioritized** based on metrics about which are most widespread or have the greatest impact on employee effectiveness.

Acumen equips employers to optimize hybrid working

Acumen provides all the capabilities that we have just discussed. It's an intelligent platform that lets you manage your workforce and systems based on a deep understanding of how your people interact with your software and hardware. That understanding paves the way for a great employee experience plus other major benefits. In short, you can reduce complexity and cost, accelerate change, and future-proof your business.

Acumen collects accurate, detailed workforce, system and application metrics that deliver a consolidated, holistic view of users and their

system interaction journeys. Acumen's workforce optimization analytics offer powerful insights into aspects of the employee experience and work patterns that have rarely been fully understood before. KPIs and insights help IT teams optimize systems and processes by understanding how people work and how technology is impacting both the employee experience and their ability to get work done effectively.

Measure and validate technology adoption and map transformation initiatives to strategic outcomes to identify any gaps. Track your organization's digital agility – a key indicator that predicts how well positioned you are to respond to changing market forces.

Acumen

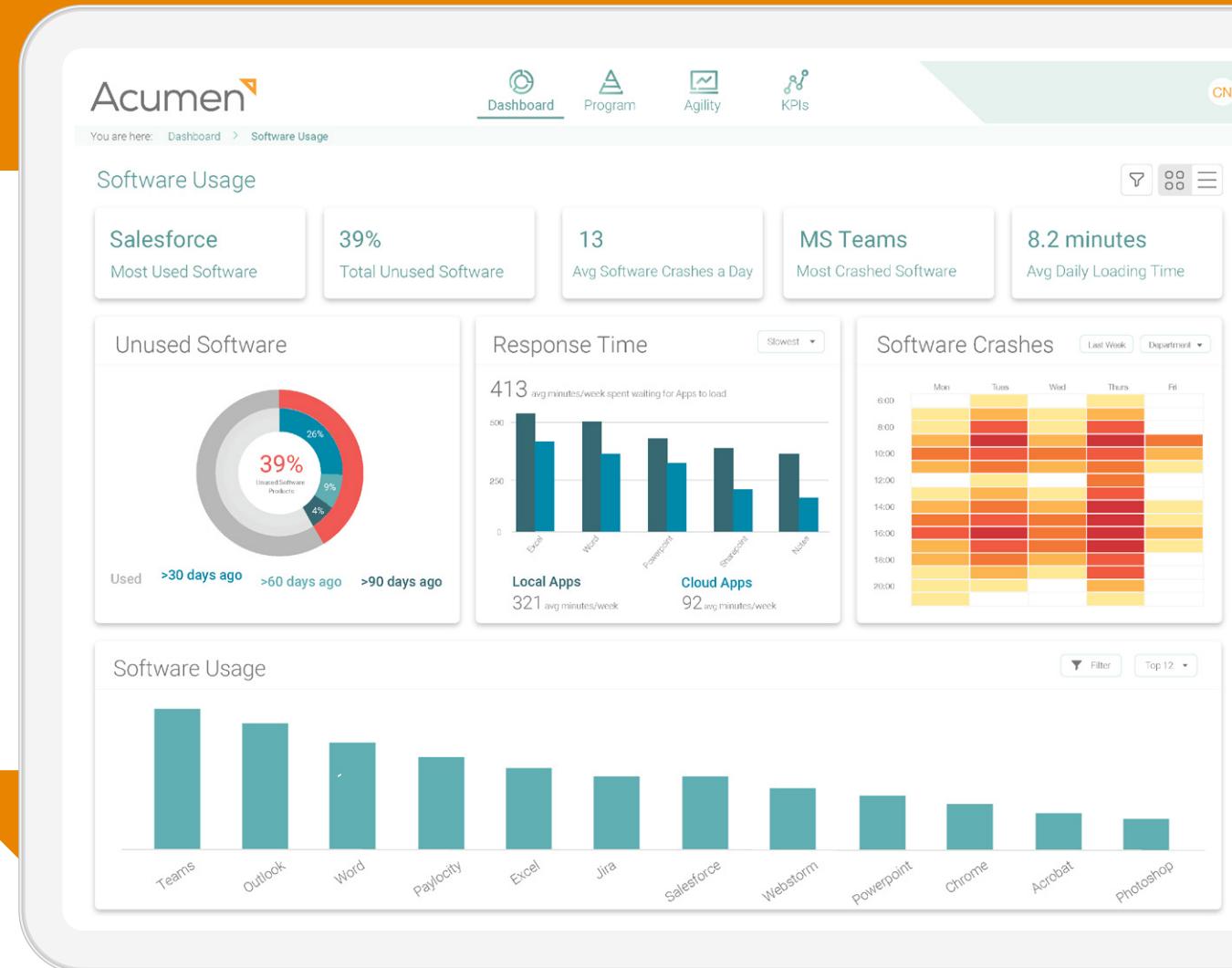


Seeing the big picture

With Acumen's insights, it becomes much easier for management to optimize systems and processes in order to eliminate friction and increase employee effectiveness. You can build and support a productive digital workplace, with all the benefits that implies. As a result, your business will become more agile and better able to meet its strategic objectives.

Acumen truly gives you the big picture – not just data on the reliability of systems or usage metrics, but also on how users behave and interact with systems and processes to provide deeper insights such as how effective their communication is. Can they talk to the people they need to, and connect to enough different people for effective working and personal wellbeing?

The knowledge you'll gain of work patterns helps protect employee wellbeing. For example, you can also find out whether someone is working long hours because they have to in order to get the job done, or for some other reason. We shine multiple lights on questions like this to help understand how effectively technology and processes are supporting employees.

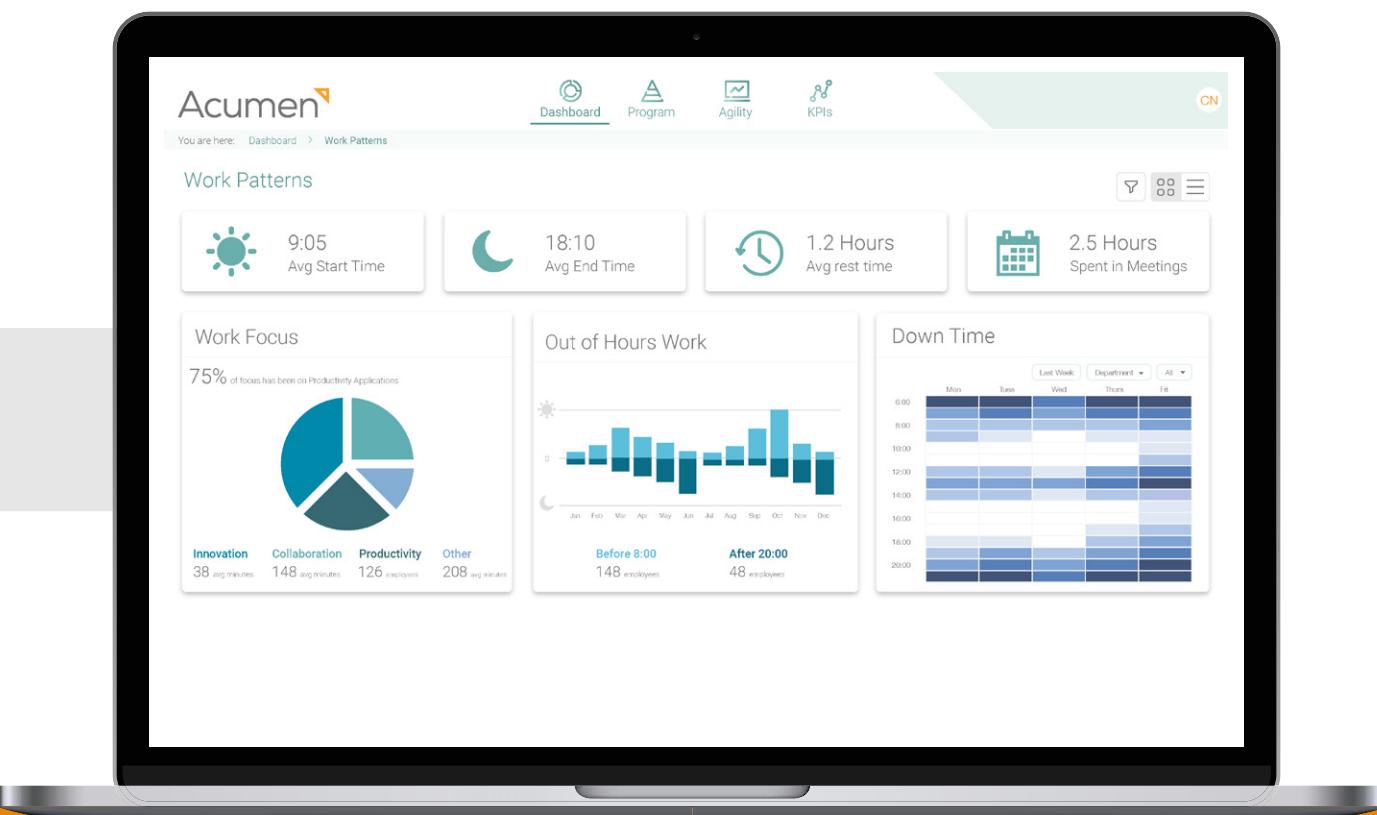
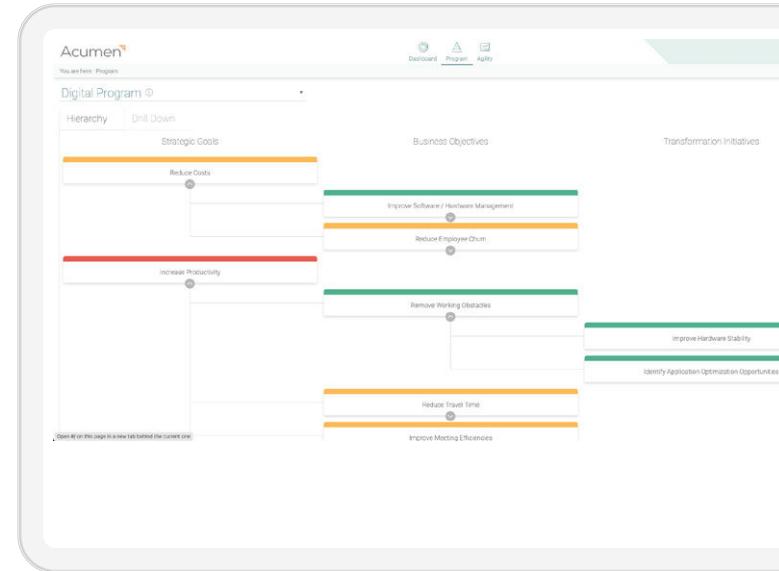


Acumen

Linking detailed metrics to business goals

Acumen provides measurement and validation of digital initiatives, such as technology adoption, and maps transformation initiatives to strategic outcomes to identify any gaps.

You can bring together multiple projects or views to create a single view of status with respect to an overall strategic goal, for example to reduce employee turnover by 5% and retain the best talent. This “golden thread” reporting maps low-level metrics and KPIs on to high-level business goals so that management can focus on what’s really important to the business, and on how remote working affects it, and base decisions on this knowledge.



For example, the Aggregate Prominence KPI gives you evidence of user connectedness and engagement with departments across the organization. This KPI is derived from the number of unique departments, teams, roles and external contacts that a user engages with each week (excluding their own department, team and role). Measuring it helps to highlight problems for investigation by HR and IT, and then to monitor objectively whether the remedies put in place have had the desired result – e.g. whether teams have started to work in a more collaborative and connected way. This type of measurement usefully complements personal interventions and contacts by managers.

The Acumen software interface displays a dashboard for 'Work Anywhere'. At the top, there are navigation tabs: Dashboard, Program (selected), Agility, and KPIs. A green circular progress bar indicates a value of 160, with a '+3' badge. To the right is a line chart titled 'Track Initiative' showing trends from Q1 to Q4 for Initiative, People, and Technology. Below these are five bar charts under the heading 'KPIs': Communication Efficiency, Meeting Efficiency, Out of Hours Working, Aggregate Prominence, and Email Engagement. Each chart shows data for E1, E3, E5 accounts across different time periods.

Using omni-source data to support multiple needs

To provide these analytics, Acumen gathers information from a wide range of sources, including not just the applications that your employees are working with but also data from devices such as events, logs and telemetry. All this data is aggregated and analyzed in sophisticated ways using advanced algorithms to spot anomalies and trends.



With the resultant information and insights, Acumen can support a whole range of management objectives. For example:

- IT leaders can provide visibility of, and help to improve, employee experience while better addressing other key business goals, such as managing security risks by making sure everyone is using the right encryption and virus checking software. IT managers can anticipate hardware and software issues before they occur.
- Line-of-business managers can identify day-to-day issues such as someone having trouble using technology that they've been assigned to help with a particular part of their job. Remote workers don't have someone sitting next to them to help, but they can be put in touch with a champion for that application who can explain to them how to get the best out of it.
- HR can spot and deal with employee frustration and distress before it becomes serious and damages satisfaction, wellbeing or health. It's easy to see if someone is becoming too isolated and not getting enough contact with colleagues, for example. The behavioral analytics provided by Acumen can show where support is needed enabling managers to get an understanding of the possible underlying causes and establish corrective action.

Acumen

You are here: Agility > KPIs > O365 Account Optimization

O365 Account Optimization

Employees that use technology not just in the office on their assigned desktop or laptop, but on mobiles, or from their home PC's as well

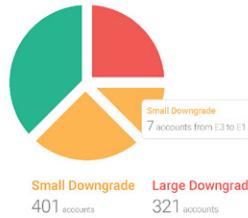
[View All Data](#)



Overview

Type: People KPI
Scope: Organization
Tag(s): #Productivity #CostSaving
Transformation Initiative(s): Communication Alignment
Trend: Decreasing

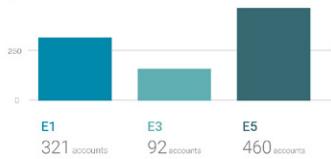
Optimization



Category	Accounts
Optimized	450 accounts
Small Downgrade	401 accounts
Large Downgrade	321 accounts

Account Summary

413 total O365 licenses



Plan Level	Accounts
E1	321 accounts
E3	92 accounts
E5	460 accounts

Details

- Departments
- Marketing
- Engineering
- Recruitment
- Payroll
- Sales
- Human Resources
- Design

Acumen collects accurate, detailed workforce, system and application metrics that deliver a consolidated, holistic view of users and their system interaction journeys.



Acumen

You are here: Dashboard > Work Patterns

Work Patterns

9:05 Avg Start Time

18:10 Avg End Time

1.2 Hours Avg rest time

2.5 Hours Spent in Meetings

Work Focus

75% of focus has been on Productivity Applications



Focus Category	Avg Minutes
Innovation	38 avg minutes
Collaboration	148 avg minutes
Productivity	126 avg minutes
Other	208 avg minutes

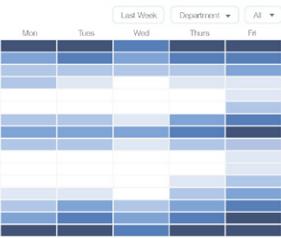
Out of Hours Work

Before 8:00 148 employees

After 20:00 48 employees

Down Time

Last Week Department All



How well do you understand your organization's hybrid working performance and employees' experience?



Do you know whether remote or hybrid working is currently giving your employees the right experience and your organization the right results?

See how easily and confidently you can answer this mini version of our Employee Experience Healthcheck using your current analytics.

If you're not confident you can answer all these questions accurately – or if you would like to receive a copy of our more detailed Employee Experience Healthcheck – please [get in touch](#).

Employee effectiveness at individual, team, department and process levels

- Are issues around technology resilience or process friction undermining employee effectiveness? How much time is being spent on which tasks, using which associated applications and processes?
- What technology or process workspace issues may be making work less efficient?

Technology

- Do employees have the infrastructure and software (in the right version) to enable them to be effective when working remotely?
- Can everyone reach out to their team via conferencing?
- Is everyone working securely, both in terms of their device and their network connections?

Adoption

- To what extent are employees using the software assigned for each task?
- Are there unmet support and training needs that can be addressed to help improve user adoption and effectiveness?
- Where could cost savings be made without adversely affecting experience?

Workforce profiling

- What is the Aggregate Prominence of each individual – that is, how connected, communicative and influential are they?
- Are people and teams working collaboratively? If so, with whom, and is that collaboration done efficiently?
- Who could provide additional support or training to help another worker or team to be more effective?
- Could assigning extra or different resources improve remote working? If so, how and where?

About Scalable

Our mission is to provide customers with the key data and insights needed to make their organizations more digitally agile, by enhancing performance and creating effective digital experiences for their customers and employees.

Scalable Software, an innovator in SaaS-based IT operations analytics and employee usage data since 2008, is uniquely placed to combine the power of both technology and employee experience metrics to deliver real-time visibility, insights and recommendations to enable better, faster decisions that enhance Digital Agility.

For more information visit: www.scalable.com or email: info@scalable.com