

MAKE WORKING FROM ANYWHERE WORK

How to provide an in-office network experience for a hybrid workforce

Today's office is wherever employees work

What began as a temporary shift to work-from-home during the global health crisis has evolved into a hybrid workforce with a new set of demands on your network. For many businesses, a work-from-anywhere team now extends from corporate offices to employees' homes, coworking spaces or wherever employees need to travel and do work. And this shift to a flexible office culture shows no signs of slowing down.

A recent survey found that 88 percent of employees want to work from anywhere at least some of the time.¹ Most workers today want companies to provide the flexibility to choose the work style that suits them best. In fact, research shows that 91 percent of knowledge workers* want the flexibility not to return to the office on a full-time basis.² From the perspective of attracting talent, eight in 10 employees looking for a new job say it's important that their next position offers the opportunity to live — and work — anywhere.³

In this new environment, the latest networking technologies better support a hybrid work experience that keeps team members productive and networks, data and transactions secure. These same technologies also provide remote employees access to the same resources as their in-office counterparts. This guide will explore four emerging challenges your company is likely to face as the workforce becomes more distributed.

*Knowledge worker: A person employed to produce or analyze ideas and information.



of employees want to work from home at least some of the time.⁴



Challenge 1

Modernizing the network for a hybrid workforce

Wherever employees do business, networks must meet increasing requirements for bandwidth, latency management, application support and security. Additionally, remote workers need secure and seamless access to critical applications and resources in the cloud or the data center. Support for a successful work-anywhere workforce should include:

- Simple and secure network accessibility.
- Optimized network performance for bandwidth-intensive activities like video conferencing.
- Enhanced security for proliferating endpoints and devices.
- Threat identification and protection across all locations.
- Multi-factor authentication and secure virtual private network (VPN) tunnels to both the network and cloud service providers (CSPs).

Most networks have incorporated solutions for some or all of these challenges in the past. However, legacy hardware and services can quickly become rigid, expensive to operate and difficult for IT to manage when a large share of employees transition to working off site.

Find a partner that makes working from anywhere less work

A service provider with the right capabilities can seamlessly connect, manage and scale your network to meet changing requirements. Spectrum Enterprise provides the infrastructure to ensure remote employees can safely and easily access the applications and data they need, where and when they need them.

We simplify the deployment and management of a fast-evolving network with Managed Network Edge. Powered by the Cisco Meraki platform, this all-in-one solution encompasses connectivity, equipment, security and maintenance as a managed service. We have the in-house expertise to provide the network configuration and ongoing support your organization needs for a dynamic, hybrid workforce. As your single-networking partner, we can unburden your business from the management of network components and updates so your IT team can focus on more important business objectives.

Challenge 2

Keeping pace with changing network requirements and emerging security risks

A distributed team requires network security that is just as effective at a home office or a hotel as it is in your headquarters. Compounding this challenge, distributed workers frequently access networks from a variety of personal devices, including their smartphones, increasing the threat surface for cyberattacks. One survey found that 39 percent of remote workers use personal devices to access corporate data, often via services and applications hosted in the public cloud.⁵



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All-in-one networking plus unified communications

Create a complete solution for your mobile workforce. Spectrum Enterprise offers Managed Network Edge with our fully managed, cloud-based unified communications solution. You can complete your network transformation on a single platform that offers simplified management of your voice, collaboration, video calls and data sharing.



of employees say cloud-based collaboration and software tools are essential to their jobs.⁸

Internet of Things devices, including virtual assistants, video camera-enabled doorbells and even smart TVs, can offer more potential pathways for hackers to gain access and do harm in your employees' work-from-home environments. Your organization must establish complete control of the traffic allowed to enter the network from internet-connected sources and ensure personal and business data are kept separate.

Adopt solutions that protect remote connections

Depending on your needs, Spectrum Enterprise has multiple ways to help you securely connect your distributed workforce with Managed Network Edge.

For road warriors, the Remote Access capability of Managed Network Edge provides secure, easy-to-manage VPN connections to your network. The software-based solution encrypts and directs internet-bound traffic through your company's network to ensure it is subject to the same policies and security safeguards as traffic originating on site.

Extending the security protections of your network to remote employees can also be as simple as plugging in a device. Teleworker, our easy-to-install network appliance, provides a secure hardware gateway between a remote worker's devices and Managed Network Edge. Great for work-at-home employees, it enables an in-office network experience, consistent security safeguards, network performance management and prioritization for voice and data bandwidth. This also extends the visibility, control and IT policy enforcement of the corporate network to an employee's remote environment. Businesses may also purchase a Spectrum Business Internet connection to use with Teleworker for employees who do not want to use their personal internet service for work.

Regardless of which remote connectivity solution you choose, security and firmware updates are automated across the Managed Network Edge platform. This protects the network all the way to the switch with consistent security capabilities across your locations:

- Advanced firewall.
- Unified threat management.
- URL content filtering.
- Advanced malware and intrusion protection.
- Alarm notifications.

Challenge 3

Inconsistent performance from cloud applications

Productivity in any work environment increasingly depends on consistent network performance for third-party applications and data in the cloud. For example, 97 percent of employees say that access to cloud-based collaboration and software tools is essential to their jobs.⁷ Especially in response to the needs of hybrid and mobile workers, organizations must transform their networks to keep up with the demand for these tools across different channels and physical locations.

Streamline connections to cloud service providers (CSPs)

The Virtual Edge capability of Managed Network Edge delivers simple and secure connectivity to business-critical cloud applications with automated VPN connections to virtual instances of CSPs such as Amazon Web Services, the Google Cloud Platform and Microsoft Azure. This capability enables you to easily connect remote and on-site personnel to the public cloud while leveraging management tools to enhance performance.

Challenge 4

Time-intensive management with limited visibility

Do you struggle to know exactly what hardware and software are on your network and their level of security? Is it difficult to identify, troubleshoot and quickly resolve all network and application performance issues with your current IT team?

You're not alone. Many networks rely on products from multiple vendors to support work-from-anywhere employees. These can require competing IT workloads that include managing disparate applications, cloud platforms, firewall deployments, endpoint protection and threat detection. Legacy network components can come with an array of dashboards that don't talk to each other, creating additional work for IT organizations that are often shorthanded.

Cut through the complexity with a single trusted partner

Spectrum Enterprise can help you manage your entire network from a centralized, intuitive and easy-to-use portal with one partner to call for support.

By bringing together dedicated fiber internet, routing, switching, WiFi, cameras, security and other networking functions, Managed Network Edge offers instant, end-to-end visibility through a single, online portal. The cloud-based platform makes it simple to view network health, troubleshoot issues and monitor bandwidth consumption by user or application. An integrated software solution also incorporates real-time, application-aware bandwidth prioritization for apps like voice services. All of these capabilities allow lean IT teams to make faster, better decisions that increase network performance for employees wherever they work.

As a trusted national network services provider, Spectrum Enterprise has the resources to optimize and manage all of your networking, connectivity, unified communications and collaboration needs. Our managed services remove the uncertainty of capital expenses from the network while providing ongoing maintenance, automated security updates and 24/7/365 U.S.-based support.



Why Spectrum Enterprise?

As your technology partner, Spectrum Enterprise is focused on the performance and integrity of your entire network — and your company’s success. We offer fully managed services or co-managed solutions that give you the exact level of control your organization requires. Our experts apply a consultative approach to tailoring solutions that meet your unique needs both now and into the future.

Maintaining and growing your network has never been so simple. Managed Network Edge combines flexible solutions that span networking, security, remote access and complete network visibility in one seamless package. We provide the connectivity, equipment and management you need in a turnkey platform that scales with the growth of your work-from-anywhere workforce.

[Learn more](#)

1. [“Ride the Remote Revolution to Future-Proof Your Business,”](#) Lenovo, March 22, 2021.
2. [“Entering the Era of Hybrid Work: Understanding How the Workplace Must Evolve,”](#) Cisco, September 2021.
3. Liesl Nielsen, [“Report: Here’s How the Pandemic Changed the Future of Work,”](#) Qualtrics, April 12, 2021.
4. [“Ride the Remote Revolution to Future-Proof Your Business,”](#) Lenovo, March 22, 2021.
5. [“Trend Micro Head in the Clouds Study,”](#) Trend Micro, September 2020.
6. Ibid.
7. [“Ride the Remote Revolution to Future-Proof Your Business,”](#) Lenovo, March 22, 2021.
8. Ibid.

About Spectrum Enterprise

Spectrum Enterprise, a part of Charter Communications, Inc., is a national provider of scalable, fiber technology solutions serving many of America’s largest businesses and communications service providers. The broad Spectrum Enterprise portfolio includes [networking and managed services solutions](#): [Internet access](#), [Ethernet access and networks](#), [Voice](#) and [TV solutions](#). The Spectrum Enterprise team of experts works closely with clients to achieve greater business success by providing solutions designed to meet their evolving needs. For more information, visit [enterprise.spectrum.com](#).

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