

# HOW A BEST-IN-CLASS DIGITAL WORK EXPERIENCE CAN TRANSFORM EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Brought to you by VMware and Okta

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## Introduction

### The new digital battleground for employee experiences

There are five billion millennials and Gen Z workers in the world today, and by 2025 they will be 75% of the workforce.<sup>1</sup> The new worker is a digital native, educated by the Amazons, Googles and Apples of the world. This generation, now the largest population in the workforce in the U.S. and other giant economies like India and China, has significantly different expectations about what companies have to offer them in the workplace. They have much higher expectations from technology than the baby boomers they are replacing. As “digital natives,” millennials rank a superior digital experience as a major consideration when weighing new employment options.

Today, the user experience is of utmost importance across all the technologies we use in our personal lives. So, when users get to work, they want and expect the same delightful, productive experience across multiple devices—whether they are logging in at the office, at home, or on the road.

In fact, in a recent Forbes study, 55% of digital workspace users said that having best-of-breed business apps makes an organization a more desirable place to work, beyond compensation and benefits.<sup>2</sup>

And HR and IT have a huge opportunity to support this change.

### How did this shift happen?

The biggest factor driving this shift is that software is not only eating the world (as Marc Andreessen famously said more than 10 years ago), software is eating the workplace, and all forms of work are becoming software enabled. Screen time has become the bulk of work time. Vox.com reports that the average worker is in front of their screen 5.5 hours per day.<sup>3</sup>

For this reason, the digital employee experience is often the single biggest component of the overall employee experience, and it is the biggest battleground if you seek to attract and retain the top talent.

### Delivering a next-generation digital employee experience goes beyond traditional IT playbooks

Improving the employee experience is now a board-level priority. Radius has found that nearly 1,800 firms have a team dedicated to improving that experience.<sup>4</sup> Enhancing employee experience is a critical factor for supporting recruitment and retention.

While CIOs may believe they already have a better than average digital employee experience, employees don't agree. Forbes found that 72% of CIOs think their firm's employee digital experience is pioneering or in a leadership position, but only 40% of employees actually think so. Nearly twice as many employees (45%) think their digital

1 “Generation Z will outnumber Millennials this year,” World Economic Forum, August 2018.

2 “The Impact of the Digital Workforce,” Forbes Insights, 2017.

3 “The productivity pit: how Slack is ruining work,” Vox.com, May 2019.

4 “The Rise of a New Role: Digital Employee Experience,” Radius, June 2019.



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experience is middle of the pack as compared to the CIOs (23%).<sup>5</sup> Therefore, it falls to the CIO and IT team to build a digital workspace that truly meets employee demands, and for that they need to go beyond traditional approaches like BYOD.

As the number of apps in use increases, complexity and frustration rises. Okta's Businesses at Work report has found that customers are deploying, on average, 163 apps.<sup>6</sup> And in the past four years, the number of apps deployed has increased 68%.<sup>7</sup> Employees who must constantly sign in or out, or jump from platform to platform, are not happy. New capabilities such as delivering a password-less experience are met with cheers.

Removing friction is essential to a positive employee experience. And doing that isn't all that hard. The data shows clearly that moving to a modern digital workspace is a game changer. Deploying a modern digital workspace that provides password-less access and makes it easy to get needed applications is a problem IT can solve. Fixing the digital workspace platform goes a long way toward solving digital experience problems. The Forbes survey tells us that more than three quarters of apps that employees use are provided by the organization.<sup>8</sup> If the organization improves provisioning, it changes the playing field.

#### **Improving recruitment and retention with the digital employee experience**

The digital workspace impacts recruitment. Sites like Glassdoor and Indeed offer unprecedented visibility into the employee experience, and recruits use them more often. The quality, or lack thereof, of the digital workspace is now a major topic in reviews. Less than a quarter of employees say that they have the apps to get their job done.<sup>9</sup> And even fewer (21%) say it's easy to get new apps. Onboarding is also a

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, Forbes Insights.

<sup>6</sup> "Businesses at Work," Okta, 2019.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, Forbes Insights.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

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problem. The Forbes study found that only 17% of users strongly agree that new employees can access their key apps on day one.<sup>10</sup> A modern digital workspace resolves these issues.

On average, it takes 42 days to fill an open job, but for some specialties it can be three to four times as long.<sup>11</sup> And, with the amount of time most employees spend on devices, the digital employee experience has outsized impact. Modern digital workspaces that eliminate constant logins, user management of security tools and difficulties accessing apps, provide a fundamentally better experience.

So, how should an organization go about creating the optimal strategy and technology foundation for digitally enabling employees? It is incumbent upon senior management, HR and IT teams to work together. For example, Okta research shows that HR is now responsible for onboarding and offboarding employees with IT's support.<sup>12</sup> This is a change from past "IT-only" processes, and an excellent example of how IT and HR are teaming up. And the Harvard Business Review has noted that 75% of organizations will make improving the employee experience a common goal for HR and IT, further cementing their joint responsibility for the employee experience.<sup>13</sup> In addition, executives and line-of-business managers need to fully support enhancing the digital employee experience. The entire decision-making chain of executives in a company need to see digital workspaces as a sustainable competitive advantage for their employees, customers and partners.

## Key Components of a Next-Generation Digital Employee Experience

There are key features and capabilities that are essential in a digital workspace platform that transform the employee experience. These include:

- **Simplified onboarding and ongoing use**—First impressions count. The Forbes study should make 83% of IT departments cringe.<sup>14</sup> Both employees and employers want the first day to be a positive in terms of experience and contribution. Simpler and more effective onboarding is a key benefit of a digital workspace. A modern workspace presents all the resources a new employee requires with new devices being either factory provisioned with the resources specific to that user or quickly accessible through an application catalog. When the average number of apps is 163, as the Okta study found, automating the provisioning and securing the access is critical to helping focus IT on innovation rather than just delivery.<sup>15</sup> Modern management also makes it easier to roll out upgrades and enhancements to apps providing data on deployment statistics, enforcing security and compliance goals.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> "8 Recruiting Metrics You Should be Tracking in 2019," Hire Vue, March 2019.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, Okta.

<sup>13</sup> "5 Ways HR and IT Can Work Together to Create Great Employee Experiences," Harvard Business Review, June 2019.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, Forbes Insights.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, Okta.



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- **Improved experience for the entire modern workforce**—The modern workforce comprises contractors, temporary employees and partner firms, as well as full-time employees. The productivity of those other categories cannot be ignored. For example, UPS hires more than 100,000 seasonal workers, and they are required to use UPS apps to succeed. An optimized digital experience is just as important in hiring, retaining and improving the productivity of these non-traditional workers as it is for regular employees. In fact, many long-term employees may first enter the organization as temporary workers. When these workers become engaged with the firm and delighted by the ease of working with the digital systems, turning them into full-time employees is much easier.
- **Support for both device- and user-centric access management**—Choice is a key element of user productivity and satisfaction, and influences the user's perception of IT and therefore the organization. Enabling employees to use a combination of personal (BYOD) and corporate-owned devices can improve that perception, but brings challenges to data security. This can be overcome by implementing a zero-trust conditional access approach. With zero-trust, employees are able to access services and apps based on a combination of their device and identity without compromising security, and regardless of whether their identities are managed within Active Directory or some other means. A digital workspace approach incorporates compliance and security demands directly into the access platform. Organizations should be able to specify which method of authentication will be required depending on the resource being accessed, the device the request is coming from and even where that device is located, such as on a known or corporate network, or an unknown network or even geography. The ability to use both device and identity for access management provides the necessary flexibility.

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- **Password-free days**—For a substantial number of employees and workers, constant demands for login credentials every time they move between apps or request access to files is a major, and time-wasting, annoyance. And forcing password changes only adds to the aggravation. Yet, for all the intrusiveness into the workday, those demands don't really increase security. Next-generation digital workspaces will change the game by delivering single sign-on (SSO) more widely across the platform, as well as user-centric workspaces that also reduce the need to enter passwords all day long. Every employee will love a password-free day!
- **Support for a digital “connection” with employees**—Digital systems have become the most common way that employees interact with the business. This includes ways not directly related to their work. HR portals were an early example of this. Employees are using them to seek financial advice, health information, and distance learning. A best-in-class digital system will enhance both personal and work-related tasks. This makes employees feel connected in ways that go beyond their work processes to other aspects of their lives. In many firms, these are the value-adds that result in a better employee experience.

### The VMware + Okta Digital Employee Experience in Action

Together, VMware Workspace ONE and Okta enable customers to deliver a seamless, secure, scalable and simple approach to solving the end-to-end onboarding and offboarding processes. The employee experience is dramatically upgraded as users can now focus on being productive and getting work done.

The combined solution seamlessly merges the HR system integration and account provisioning strengths of Okta with the application provisioning, device enrollment and content presentation strengths of Workspace ONE. As new employees move from candidate to “offer accepted” in the HRIS, Okta can automatically create identities and provision application accounts depending on the group or role of the new employee. When the user becomes active on day one, by signing in to their Workspace ONE digital workspace on any of their devices—be it a BYO iPad, a corporate phone or Windows 10 laptop—the resources they need are provisioned to the device where applicable or available through Workspace ONE Intelligent Hub, complete with the SSO integration from the Okta Integration Network.

With VMware and Okta, organizations can utilize both device- and user-centric app provisioning and security. Administrators get a 360-degree perspective on their environments, allowing them to make the most informed access decisions. Detailed conditional access policies can be set within Okta and enforced by Workspace ONE.

The joint solution allows an organization to leverage the improved employee experience delivered by Workspace ONE for user populations that are not managed in Active Directory. This may be through the user of Okta Universal Directory or other “sources of truth,” such as the HR system.

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This partnership also delivers:

- Improved password lifecycle management: Includes self-service password resets for both Okta and Workspace ONE
- Enhanced security with Okta Adaptive MFA: The ability to allow users to enroll in multifactor authentication
- Policy, application configuration, entitlement and user synchronization available through a single Okta interface
- A single workflow to make adding Okta applications to Workspace ONE simple
- This platform provides both the current functionality and longer-term strategic design necessary to up-level the employee experience, in its broadest sense.

## Conclusion

### Summary and Key Takeaways

For employees, the digital workspace is how their devices, applications and security are tied together to enable them to work in the way they want, when they want, from where they want. Reducing friction and frustration through modern digital workspace is among the most effective ways to empower the employee experience.

A positive employee experience is also critical to finding and retaining talent. As Millennials and Gen Z workers increasingly constitute the majority of the workforce, they will view the quality of the digital employee experience with outsized importance. The importance of improving the experience is reinforced by management's requirement that IT and HR jointly address the issue. As Harvard Business Review noted, HR and IT must ignite the spark that drives the evolution of the employee experience.<sup>16</sup>

To support talent acquisition and retention, the digital environment must be a competitive differentiator. Job seekers will make decisions based on the quality of their digital employee experience. As the workforce becomes younger, and the digital natives constitute a larger percentage of employees, they will be either attracted to or repelled by the quality of their digital employee experience.

For this reason, organizations are focusing on delivering optimized digital workspaces that eliminate mundane tasks such as constant logins, complex access processes and onerous security processes. The goal is to reduce the friction of getting useful work done. In addition, it is essential that employees feel that the systems help them improve productivity.

VMware and Okta have joined forces to provide a best-in-class approach to the digital workspace and improve the employee experience, while empowering IT teams to scale that experience to the next level.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, Harvard Business Review.



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