



Unleashing the productivity of deep work from anywhere

Supporting knowledge workers wherever they are



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Smarter
technology
for all

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The feat of finding focus

Deep work — it's those times when we're feeling "in the zone" and completely absorbed by what's in front of us. It's where real progress is made. Big ideas, breakthroughs, and innovations happen. For anyone in the world of knowledge work, deep work is vital to overall productivity and long-term success.

The idea of "deep work" was introduced by computer scientist Cal Newport in a 2012 blog post and became the subject of his best-selling book in 2016, *Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World*. The concept of deep work is simple — it's the ability to focus without distraction on a single cognitively demanding task.

Research suggests that the average worker is only truly productive for about three hours a day, but it's those three hours of deep work that deliver results.¹

The trouble is, we live in an increasingly distracting world. We've got nearly the entire sum of human knowledge at our fingertips 24/7. Our email boxes fill up as quickly as we can empty them. And studies show 70% of employees keep their mobile phones "within eye contact" at all times at work.²

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Deep work

- Cognitively challenging
- High value
- Mission- or goal-focused
- Singularly focused
- Creates unique value

Example: Developing a new product launch plan



Shallow work

- Non-cognitively challenging
- Low value
- Logistical/administrative
- Distracted/multi-tasking
- Easily replicated

Example: Responding to emails

vs.



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The challenge of changing landscapes

Even the physical layout of the workplace itself has become more distracting. The “open office” layout that became so popular in the past few years, ostensibly as a way to “boost collaboration” (and, coincidentally, save on corporate real estate costs), has made concentration more difficult than ever. In fact, one study showed that when companies switched to open offices, face-to-face interactions actually fell by 70%.³

Employees often sought refuge from the increasing noise and commotion by using noise-canceling headphones, reserving and working in a conference room, or working from home. Another study indicated that employees around the globe are away from their desks 50% to 60% of the time.⁴

Then came the pandemic and the rapid implementation of work-from-home mandates in response. Those employees who hadn’t already been working from home suddenly had to find ways to be productive in makeshift home offices, surrounded in many cases by roommates, significant others, kids, and pets all attempting to acclimate to a new routine.

One study showed that when companies switched to open offices, face-to-face interactions actually fell by 70%.



It's not just working from home anymore

For knowledge workers, navigating this new way of working means finding new ways and new places to achieve the deep work conditions they need. The home office (makeshift or dedicated) may be a suitable haven for deep work at times, but employees often find they need to change things up to keep creativity and innovative thoughts flowing. That means working from anywhere — whether new locations at home or alternatives like a café or a vacation spot.

By all indications, the trend toward remote work is not going away. Even as offices begin to open up again, employees are going to be working outside the office for a long time to come, and the IT teams that support them will have to adapt accordingly.



Employees are going to be working outside the office for a long time to come.



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Work from anywhere by the numbers



62% of employees are working remotely due to COVID-19.⁵

The percentage of employees working from home can vary greatly by industry.⁶



57%

of employees in the financial industry can work from home



14%

of employees in transport/utilities can work from home

The average workday has expanded around the world since the pandemic:⁷

Three hours in the US



Two hours in the UK, France, Spain, and Canada



One hour in the Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, and Austria



Three in five US workers

who have been doing their jobs from home during the coronavirus pandemic would prefer to continue to work remotely as much as possible once public health restrictions are lifted.⁸



But 99%

of people say they'd like to work remotely at least some of the time for the rest of their careers.⁹

Navigating deep work from anywhere

So, what does this work-from-anywhere world look like from the perspective of getting deep work done? Digital interruptions are still ever-present, whether arriving by email, chat, text, social media messages, or phone calls. In-person interruptions may have shifted from coworkers to family members in the home office environment, but they're still a potential source of distraction.

At the same time, the inability to have those kinds of in-person, ad-hoc office conversations can result in more time lost than before as issues that could have been resolved with a quick hallway sidebar now require composing email or text communications and waiting for a response.

Indeed, personal interaction, whether scheduled meetings or impromptu face-to-face meetings, was cited as the biggest reason for employees wanting to return to the office — for at least a portion of their work week.¹⁰

Getting employees the support they need

Most employers have put significant effort into supporting their employees throughout the work-from-anywhere transition. This can include additional training for managers and funding or subsidizing mental health resources.

But the most meaningful way employers can support remote workers, according to a recent survey, is simply by maintaining frequent, high-quality communication with their employees, providing clear guidance on policies, and soliciting employee input and feedback.¹¹

The second most cited way employers can support employees was through company-provided or -subsidized technology, including:



Hardware
(laptops, monitors, headphones, etc.)



High-bandwidth Wi-Fi



Collaboration platforms



Office furniture

Like any technology solution, though, it has to be the right solution to support particular tasks and goals — which, in this case, is enabling deep work.

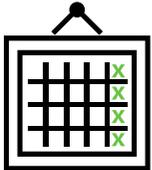
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Digging into deep work

Before talking about technology, it's important to acknowledge one of the foundational elements of accomplishing deep work: *deliberately setting aside time for it*. Scheduling specific blocks of time for concentrated focus requires discipline and being intentional.

There are multiple ways to approach scheduling deep work, from setting aside an hour each day to splitting days in half to dedicating entire weeks or even months at a time.¹² Finding the right one can depend on the nature of the work to be done, schedules, deadlines, and individual employee work styles. The important thing is to establish a routine that works, with measurable goals, and stick to it.



One team at Microsoft committed to “Recharge Fridays” — days free of meetings so employees can focus.

Blocking out time for deep work often requires setting expectations and communication boundaries with coworkers; for example, clarifying that non-emergency emails and texts will be responded to only at particular times during the day. Some teams are designating a day of the week to “no meetings,” allowing for more consecutive hours without interruption. For example, one team at Microsoft committed to “Recharge Fridays” — days free of meetings so employees can focus.

It's also important to recognize that no one can dedicate 100% of their time to intense concentration. Employees should also plan time to accomplish the kinds of non-cognitively challenging (shallow) tasks that occur throughout the day.

The right setting for doing deep work should be conducive to focused thinking and as free of distractions as possible. But what's “right” can change depending on an employee's situation and the type of work required. Some days employees might want a solitary space to focus in total isolation; other days it may be a more communal setting that will spark inspiration. That's part of why “work from home” has evolved to “work from anywhere.”

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Hardware for hard focus

When the time comes to focus, all the supporting hardware should be as transparent as possible from the user's perspective. That starts with ensuring the computing hardware is suitable for the types of tasks an employee is expected to accomplish. Nothing takes the steam out of concentration like waiting for devices that can't keep up.

Having the right amount of screen real estate to work with is another critical component of productivity and even collaboration. One way employees can dedicate more screen space to critical work is by offloading administrative tasks to a secondary device.

Ergonomics are just as important for deep work in a work-from-anywhere setting as they are in an office, so desks, chairs, monitors, keyboards, and the like should all be arranged for maximum comfort and minimal stress.

LENOVO THINKVISION[™] MONITORS LIKE THE P32p-20

feature anti-glare panels that scatter light and stay flicker-free, and its TÜV Eye Comfort and TÜV Low Blue Light certifications support healthier eyes.

THE LENOVO THINKSMART VIEW

is a first-of-its-kind collaborative smart device that helps employees free up both screen real estate and processor cycles with things like Microsoft Teams meetings, calendar management, and emails.



Certified for

Microsoft
Teams

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Deep working together

Deep work can be even more effective when it's a team effort. Effective collaboration is vital to creativity and innovation in the world of knowledge work, and employees need easy ways to connect with colleagues.

The same guidelines for individual deep work apply — schedule a specific time with specific objectives, find a location that suits the type of work to be done, and eliminate as many distractions as possible.



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COLLABORATING OUTSIDE THE OFFICE

Lenovo ThinkPad® Windows 10 Pro laptops provide a host of integrated features that support effective teamwork, including:

- Premium UHD, OLED, and Dolby Vision® display options¹³
- Enhanced audio experience
- Modern Standby¹⁴ always-on, always-connected experience,¹⁴ fast resume, and Wake on Voice¹⁴
- Webcam privacy shutter



COLLABORATING IN CONFERENCE ROOM SETTINGS

Lenovo ThinkSmart Hub provides an all-in-one meeting room solution (hardware, software, services, and support) preconfigured for Microsoft Teams Rooms.

- One-touch, on-time starts for meetings
- 360° microphone array and Dolby® Audio
- Scalable across different room sizes
- Lenovo ThinkShield advanced threat protection, plus locking cable door
- Windows 10 IoT Enterprise and Intel vPro® platform built-in manageability

Keep the productivity going

With no onsite help desk ready to assist with technology issues, remote workers need resources to solve problems quickly, and IT teams need to expand their toolboxes to manage mobile devices in the field. Lenovo can help IT professionals leverage powerful tools to maintain employee productivity wherever it needs to happen.

Microsoft Remote Desktop

provides seamless, secure access to manage remote devices.

Intel vPro® platform devices can be managed even when powered down.



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Deployment of new or replacement devices is another area where Lenovo can help streamline and simplify the process to keep remote employees up and running.

- Lenovo Ready to Provision (RTP) custom preloads mean swifter deployments and greater flexibility.
- Lenovo BIOS Services provide customized settings for your devices according to your specified security and network needs.
- Microsoft Windows Autopilot delivers zero-touch deployments.



The ThinkSmart Manager software application makes remote management of ThinkSmart devices easy from any location.

- See the whole ThinkSmart network in one console view.
- Deploy devices and configure rooms, networks, and hardware.
- View real-time status reports and solve issues before users report a problem.
- Effortlessly update agent software across multiple devices.



Lenovo Premier Support provides remote employees direct access to expert Lenovo technicians with just a phone call. No telephone trees to navigate, no scripted responses. Just trained professionals ready to help. No matter where employees are working, Lenovo has them covered with:

- Comprehensive hardware, peripheral, and OEM software support¹⁵
- Global coverage in more than 100 markets with local language support
- Dedicated technical support available 24/7/365
- Warranty claims including parts and labor, onsite labor^{16,17} and parts prioritization^{17,18}
- Single point of contact for simplified end-to-end case management
- Comprehensive suite of reporting tools^{17,19}

Empowering deep work from a work-from-anywhere world

The ability to perform deep work is essential to enterprise success. Without it, there's no innovation, no progress, no breakthroughs. And while the pandemic has changed the way we'll work going forward, technology is enabling knowledge workers and the IT teams who support them to continue delivering results in this time of uncertainty.

As one technology writer recently put it, "This new workplace flexibility is not about saving money, nor long-term social distancing. In the end, it's an investment in employee well-being, productivity, and ultimately, profitability."²⁰

And, if recent studies are any indication, this new work-from-anywhere approach seems to be working — **productivity has increased 47% since remote working became the norm.**²¹

Contact your [Lenovo representative](#) or visit [Lenovo online](#) today to learn more about unleashing the productivity of deep work from anywhere.

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Get smarter with Lenovo ThinkSmart™



Contact your Lenovo Account Representative
or local Business Partner



Visit techtoday.lenovo.com/smartoffice



SOURCES

- 1 <https://www.inc.com/melanie-curtin/in-an-8-hour-day-the-average-worker-is-productive-for-this-many-hours.html>
- 2 <http://www.perillon.com/blog/mobile-statistics-devices-at-work>
- 3 <https://hbr.org/2019/11/the-truth-about-open-offices?registration=success>
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- 9 <https://resumelab.com/job-search/remote-work-statistics>
- 10 <https://www.gensler.com/research-insight/workplace-surveys/us-work-from-home-survey/2020>
- 11 <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/five-ways-leaders-can-support-remote-work/>
- 12 <https://doist.com/blog/deep-work/>
- 13 A UHD OLED display with Dolby Vision support is optional on ThinkPad X13 Yoga. A UHD display with Dolby Vision support is optional on all ThinkPad T series with Intel processors.
- 14 Modern Standby is available on all ThinkPad T and X series models. Wake on Voice is optional on ThinkPad T series and X series. Always-on, always-connected may require separately purchased Wi-Fi or WWAN connectivity. Connection speeds will vary due to location, environment, network conditions, and other factors.
- 15 Support limited to select software applications on a best-effort basis. Does not include how-to or technical assistance for enterprise software applications or custom, industry-specific software.
- 16 If Lenovo determines the issue is covered by warranty and cannot be resolved over the phone or through a customer replaceable part, repair will be made onsite where service is available. Otherwise, best available service delivery will be used. Calls received after 4:00 p.m. local time will require an additional business day for service dispatch.
- 17 Not available in all markets.
- 18 Out-of-stock parts could delay service delivery.
- 19 Various levels available. Select criteria apply. Contact your local sales representative for more details.
- 20 <https://techcrunch.com/2020/05/18/work-from-home-is-dead-long-live-work-from-anywhere/>
- 21 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/chriswestfall/2020/05/20/new-survey-shows-47-increase-in-productivity-3-things-you-must-do-when-working-from-home/#3fccd3e880dc>

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