

Take a best-of-both-worlds approach to your business operations

By [Andrew Bourne](#)

14 Jul 2020

Companies around the globe have had to adopt remote working in a short period of time. Some have thrived and won't go back to the office model, with the likes of Twitter, Quora, and Slack all indicating that they'll either be fully remote or remote-first for the foreseeable future.



Andrew Bourne, Region Manager, Africa, Zoho

Others, however, have struggled with the transition and are hankering to get their teams back into the office. The ideal solution is probably somewhere in between these two extremes with employees able to work remotely when it is suitable and returning to the office as needed.

Here's how businesses can take a best-of-both-worlds approach to their operations:

- **Assess needs**

It's important to first weigh out the real benefits of a fully-staffed workplace. This helps decide what functions need to return onsite and which ones can continue being remote. Bearing in mind that due to comfort zones and habits, staff may feel the function needs to be onsite when in fact it may be more cost-effective or more efficient to do remotely.

For instance, if your teams collaborated really well and were far more creative in the office, office space is worth the investment. Similarly, employees may feel more comfortable approaching management face-to-face than over email or video call. There is also the issue of mental health. Remote work is not suitable to everyone, and some people may need human interaction to enable them to cope with being stuck at home. It may not be a daily interaction, it may just be a staff social event once a month, each circumstance or function should be assessed on a case-by-case basis to make the best decision for the future of the business.

- **Utilising technology**

Having a blended workforce that adds a significant amount of remote workers to the mix can make striking a balance a little more difficult.

Fortunately, virtual networking technologies can help here. A virtual meeting, for instance, allows both on-site and remote workers to hold brainstorming sessions and meetings without losing any of the benefits of being in physical proximity to each other.

When it comes to collaboration, a cloud-based office suite can enable seamless communications and teamwork, facilitating faster accomplishment of projects. That can be massively beneficial for both remote and on-site workers.

Technology can also help with another oft-cited headache when it comes to balancing remote and on-site work: project management.

A good project management tool will help you manage budgets, timelines, resources, communication and quality with a calendar, Gantt chart, time tracking, and group chat type functionality.

If you can find one with automation capabilities, you'll also save time on routine tasks. Meanwhile, a visual workflow builder with a simple drag-and-drop interface is useful for making automation easier.

Remote or not, these types of technologies can streamline your day-to-day operations with meaningful enhancements like task list templates and routine task automations. It won't just make things easier if you're ever forced into a scenario where you have to take your operations remote for a period, it'll also help improve overall productivity.

- **Making the most of the 'new normal'**

In truth, most businesses have been heading towards, at the very least, a hybrid model where some employees are remote and others work on-site. But this needn't be problematic.

Both offer distinct advantages, according to the function or individual task being fulfilled. With the right approach and technologies, it's possible to leverage the benefits of both without falling prey to any of the disadvantages traditionally associated with them.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andrew Bourne, Region Manager, Africa, Zoho

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>