

# Remote Vs. In-Office Work

## Shaping the future for office technology dealerships

by: Deborah Hawkins, Keypoint Intelligence

Three years after the COVID-19 pandemic upended how America works, the dust still has not settled. While many companies have reopened their offices, the “where” and “how” of work have permanently shifted. According to research by Keypoint Intelligence, roughly 40% of knowledge workers in the United States now work in hybrid arrangements, splitting their time between their homes and offices. Fully remote work remains higher than pre-pandemic levels, but is often confined to micro-sized companies. For office technology dealers, this evolving balance between remote and in-office work is more than a human resources headline — it is a blueprint for the next decade of sales, service and innovation.

### Strategic Recommendations for Dealers

#### Understand Client Work Models

Ask detailed questions about remote versus in-office ratios, workflows and document security needs.

#### Develop Hybrid-Specific Packages

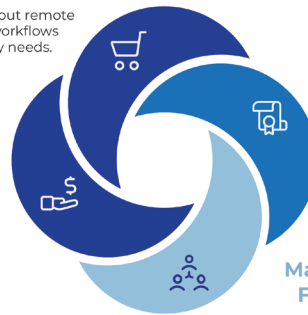
Bundle hardware, software and service for both on-site and remote setups.

#### Invest in IT, AI & Workflow Expertise

Train teams on cloud, security and collaboration tools, or work with partners that can expand your expertise.

#### Market to Decision-Makers Focused on Productivity

Tailor messaging to operations managers, CIOs and HR leaders driving hybrid strategies.



### The Data on Work Location Trends

The numbers tell a clear story: The American workplace is no longer dominated by either extreme. Hybrid arrangements, where employees spend part of their week in-office and part working remotely, have emerged as the sweet spot for many companies. Hybrid work now represents the largest single category of workplace arrangement for full-time employees.

Fully remote work has retreated from its pandemic peak, especially as large employers like Amazon, Google and JP-Morgan Chase have set a minimum number of in-office days. But remote work, as a portion of working time, is still far more common than in 2019, when less than 6% of U.S. workers were fully remote. Based on Keypoint Intelligence research, two to three days per week in the office through the pandemic years has now settled at 3.5 days on average, which means a tip toward more work in the office than remote.

This has major implications for how organizations design their spaces, invest in technology and manage productivity. For dealerships, these changes dictate what equipment is purchased, where it is installed and how it is serviced.

### Demand Implications: The Modernization Plan

A hybrid workforce means fewer people in the office at any one time, prompting many businesses to downsize their physical footprints. Office leases, as reported by corporate real estate players, are shrinking, and floor plans often feature shared workstations and “hot-desking” setups.

From an equipment standpoint, this shift reduces the need for large, centralized print and copy fleets. One high-volume MFP that used to serve 50 employees may now serve only 25 in-office people on any given day, making the investment harder to justify.

However, the flip side is increased demand for smaller, decentralized devices that can serve individual departments, satellite offices or even employee home workspaces. Compact desktop printers, scanners and all-in-one devices, when paired with secure cloud-based workflow tools, can deliver flexibility without sacrificing capability.

This is not as simple as A3 versus A4, though. Workflow integration is key for today’s modern workplaces and, for many businesses, the return-to-office (RTO) mandate has included the upgrading of equipment, space and facilities

to more worker-friendly settings, which allows the seamless shift from remote to in-office work, with the highest level of digital technology.

The “equipment-as-a-service” model is gaining traction as well. Businesses want to avoid heavy capital expenditures when their staffing levels and space usage are in flux. Subscription models that bundle hardware, service and software into easy-to-understand, predictable monthly payments align perfectly with this need. Similarly, the coworking option is back, with demand for shared office space rising, which offers perks such as shared client bases, networking capabilities and modern, high-tech workspaces.

### How Hybrid Work Creates Opportunities for Office Technology Dealers

While some dealers may see the shift as a threat, it is better viewed as an invitation to expand capabilities. Hybrid work opens several growth avenues:

■ **Home Office Fleet Management at Scale** — Dealerships can provide standardized devices for employees’ home offices, ensuring compatibility, reliability and security — and managing them as part of a unified fleet.

■ **Secure Cloud Document Solutions** — With documents being created, printed and scanned in multiple locations, secure, cloud-based platforms for storage and collaboration become essential. Dealerships that offer and support these tools move beyond “box sales” into workflow consulting.

■ **Managed Print & IT Services** — Hybrid clients often lack the internal IT capacity to manage distributed device fleets. Dealerships that bundle managed print services with remote IT support can become indispensable partners.

### Flexible Leasing & Financing Models

Equipment needs may fluctuate as hybrid policies evolve. Offering short-term leases, device swaps or “pay-as-you-go” models reduce friction for clients.

And let’s not forget that any opportunity to talk to clients about their futures — such as redesigning their workspaces for the next decade — is good for any dealership. That does mean talking to clients at all levels, from the procurement team to IT to the C-suite. Particularly overarching projects — such as the digitization of lines of business or processes — will require buy-in from many parties. Economic buyers have emerged as the holders of budgets for many projects, yet those decision-makers are influenced by many. There has never been a more important time to network with clients at all levels to retain future business.

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### Technology That Supports the Hybrid Model

The most successful dealers will focus on integrating technology that bridges the home/office divide and makes it easy for customers and their workforces to seamlessly move between remote and in-office locations. This will include:

■ **Cloud Print & Scan** — Users can send documents to a queue and release them at any authorized device securely,

regardless of location.

■ **Security Layers** — Encryption, authentication and compliance tools protect sensitive data in dispersed environments.

■ **Collaboration Platforms** — Integrations with Microsoft Teams, Slack or Zoom Rooms streamline workflows.

■ **Automation & Analytics** — Use tools that track usage patterns, optimize device placement and reduce waste.

Dealers who master these technologies become more than equipment providers — they become workflow architects.

### What About Tariffs?

There is no doubt that the economic environment in the United States today is strained amid political and tariff-related uncertainty. Tariffs pose a threat to businesses and have changed end users’ business priorities. This May, some 300 IT decision-makers told us that cost reduction and operational efficiency were their top business priorities for the next 12 to 24 months. These were followed by digital transformation (DX) and revenue growth. No one is shelling out for new gear right now, but companies are looking for greater efficiency, which dealerships can absolutely provide through automation.

We are slowly accepting the fact that artificial intelligence (AI) is going to be a game changer for many businesses, and it is certainly worth talking to your customers about how they might implement AI into their workflows. Encourage the sharing of examples among customer groups and show them your own level of expertise, whether in fleet management, content management, business process automation and/or intelligent document processing (IDP).

Respondents to a Keypoint Intelligence survey reported that intelligent document classification driven by AI is currently their most valuable document process. Business documents are also living in a hybrid world, with 33% of businesses telling us that paper and digital content is used in equal measures. That tipping point is coming and you need to be ready for it — to support your clients as they implement their first automation projects or expand company-wide.

### Turning Change into Opportunity

The tug of war between remote and in-office work is no

longer about returning to “the way things were.” The U.S. workplace has settled into a fluid, hybrid reality that blends the benefits of both models. For office technology dealerships, this is more than a shift in location — it is a shift in customer priorities. The organizations you serve now need technology that works anywhere, security that protects everywhere, and service models that flex as their head counts and office spaces change. All of this has to be oriented to the needs of the future workforce.

Dealerships that cling to a pre-2020 playbook risk being sidelined as IT service providers court the same customers with more relevant solutions. But for those ready to adapt, the opportunity is clear: Position yourself as an essential partner in enabling hybrid efficiency and productivity. This means expanding offerings to include cloud-based workflows, secure remote printing, AI-driven automation, collaboration integrations, and scalable leasing or subscription models.

The lesson is simple: Hybrid work is evolutionary. Dealerships that embrace the reality of today’s work patterns, anticipate their clients’ next challenges and lead with solutions instead of products will not only survive this shift,

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they will define its future. ■

*With more than three decades of experience, Deborah Hawkins, group director of the workplace team at Keypoint Intelligence, guides clients through intricate challenges, helping them innovate processes and propel sustainable growth. As group director, she leads a team of expert analysts who deliver strategic intelligence, enabling clients to thrive in a dynamic market landscape.*

*Under Hawkins’ leadership, the team has been instrumental in enhancing client performance, achieving significant milestones in global industry opportunity forecasting, and completing custom consulting projects.*

*Prior to joining Keypoint Intelligence, she worked in the vendor community as a product manager.*

*Hawkins is frequently featured in industry publications, serves as a judge for the Technology Reseller Industry Awards, is a board member of the Managed Print Services Association (MPSA) and is a member of the International Managed Print Services Global Alliance (IMPSGA). She can be reached at [deborah.hawkins@keypointintelligence.com](mailto:deborah.hawkins@keypointintelligence.com). Visit [www.keypointintelligence.com](http://www.keypointintelligence.com).*

