

Businesses Say Hybrid Working Is Here To Stay

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New research by the [British Chambers of Commerce](#) Insights Unit and technology firm Cisco, shows less than 30% of firms expect their workforce to be fully in person over the next five years.

A survey of over 1,000 businesses, of which 96% were SMEs, found just 27% of respondents predict their staff will be fully in-person over the next five years. 47% anticipate their staff to be mostly in-person, 16% expect mostly remote and 8% fully remote.

The research found a clear divide between different sectors, with business-to-business services firms (such as the finance and legal sectors) more likely to expect remote working. Only 17% of B2B services organisations expect fully in person working, while the figure for manufacturers is 38%, and B2C services 37%.

Companies were also asked about the connectivity tools they use such as video calling and cloud security. A quarter of firms (25%) say they are not confident they have the knowledge to make the right purchasing decisions, while three quarters (75%) are confident. Over half (55%) are relying on external experts when making decisions about adopting technology. 65% of firms say connectivity tools are value for money.

Jane Gratton, Deputy Director Public Policy at the British Chambers of Commerce said:

“Our data shows that hybrid working is now part of the fabric of the modern workplace. For millions of people, logging in remotely for at least part of the working week is now routine.

“This flexibility is valued by employers and their teams. Less than 30% of firms expect staff to be working fully in person over the next five years.

“Flexible working makes good business sense. In a tight labour market, where employers are competing for skilled workers, hybrid working, and flexible working more generally, has become an important part of staff benefit packages. As well as boosting recruitment and retention, it can help employers unlock new and diverse talent pools.

“Employers still value regular face to face contact with staff, however, and our findings show only 8% of businesses expect staff to be completely remote. “

Aine Rogers, Managing Director of Small and Medium Enterprise at Cisco UK & Ireland, said:

“Small businesses are the heart of the UK economy, and their most important resource is their people. We know employees thrive in a hybrid working environment, as it enhances their wellbeing, work-life balance, and performance.

“When it comes to choosing the right solution, the key consideration is implementing a simple, secure collaboration platform that can help employees be just as productive remotely, as they would in the office. With the right technology in place, SMEs can also ensure their employees have inclusive, secure and resilient access to their network data and applications, as well as a seamless experience when calling, meeting, and messaging.”

For more information on Cisco services for SMEs go to

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