citrix™
The state of remote work
Preparing for business as usual — from anywhere

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1 | Introduction

The ways in which we work have changed drastically in recent years. Digital transformation and emerging technologies have brought people together across regions and time zones in ways that weren't even imaginable a few years ago.

And that's a good thing. Because global disruptions, shifting marketplaces, and other unexpected situations have created a need for flexibility and new ways of working.

Enabling remote work is one of those critical transformations

It offers untapped possibilities — but is also a must-have to ensure businesses are maintained, secure, and delivering positive employee experiences — regardless of what's happening in the world.

This eBook is a guide for leaders looking to navigate these new norms. It provides a road map for getting remote work right, and it covers the following areas:

Building a remote work strategy

Creating a culture for all employees to thrive

Rethinking the role of technology in the future of work

For some companies, remote work will be the new norm

Remote work has been steadily gaining traction for the past decade. So, it's not surprising that in a recent Gartner Group study, 74 percent of CFOs said they plan to make remote work a permanent part of their workforce-and cost-management plans.

And in light of the coronavirus, some companies are taking greater measures. Twitter and Square announced that they will allow employees to work remotely indefinitely, job functions permitting.

2012

2016

2028

According to a Gallup report, 39% of employees worked remotely in 2012.

By 2016, that number had increased to 43%.

And a recent study from Upwork projects that 73% of teams will have remote workers by 2028.

2 | Building a remote work strategy

Remote work can be good for a company's bottom line. It can save on costs, like absenteeism, infrastructure, office leases, travel expenses, and turning on the lights.

Beyond the bottom line

To get the most from remote work, organizations need to look beyond the bottom line and see the many ways remote work benefits the company. It's important to be clear on all the different benefits of remote work so that you are able to articulate why you support it in your organization. Creating a strategy designed for those reasons will help boost its effectiveness.
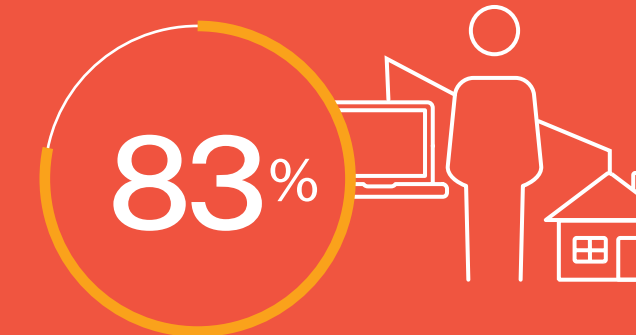
Remote work: the numbers are strong

$2 TRILLION — Economic gains from untapped talent pools

69% — Of remote workers report an increase in productivity and focus

83% — Of remote workers say they have a better work-life balance

214 — Estimated tons of reduced carbon emissions annually

Source: Citrix on Medium

Alignment between IT and HR

It's important to make sure there's alignment on policies and procedures for remote work across all of your executive teams and lines of business. Alignment is especially critical when it comes to IT and HR. That's because IT will need to implement the technology to support remote work initiatives and HR will need to enforce any related policies.

70%

OF IT AND HR LEADERS TAKE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit x Citrix

" The digital environment needs to compensate for the physical efficiencies that can be lacking in a home environment. "

Powerful partnerships

IT+HR

" The partnership between HR and IT is critical … for the right experience to enable employees to be as productive as possible when they work from home. "

Meerah Rajavel
CIO
Citrix

Donna Kimmel
EVP, Chief People Officer
Citrix

Established guidelines and processes for your people

Remote work is a dynamic process that requires buy-in from employees at all levels to be successful. Creating guidelines to standardize policies and procedures around remote work will create consistency, help manage expectations, and minimize friction between those in the office and those off-site.

CLARIFYING EXPECTATIONS WILL SET TEAMS UP FOR SUCCESS.

ESTABLISH FACTORS LIKE:

Which roles can work remotely

Length of time employees can work off-site

Set hours employees need to be accessible

Processes and best practices for optimizing efficiency

A business continuity plan

Unexpected disruptions can bring business to a crawl or even a halt. Whether planned (like a move or IT migration) or unplanned (like many of the unpredictable, real-world scenarios we've seen in recent years), a strong business continuity and disaster recovery plan will ensure your company can pivot and keep business running until your organization is able to return to a state of normalcy. You may not be able to prevent all disruptions, but you can prepare for them.

GLOBAL THREAT

SLOW BUILD

Business Continuity

PEOPLE CENTERED

SUPPLY CHAIN

ADAPTIVE TOOLS
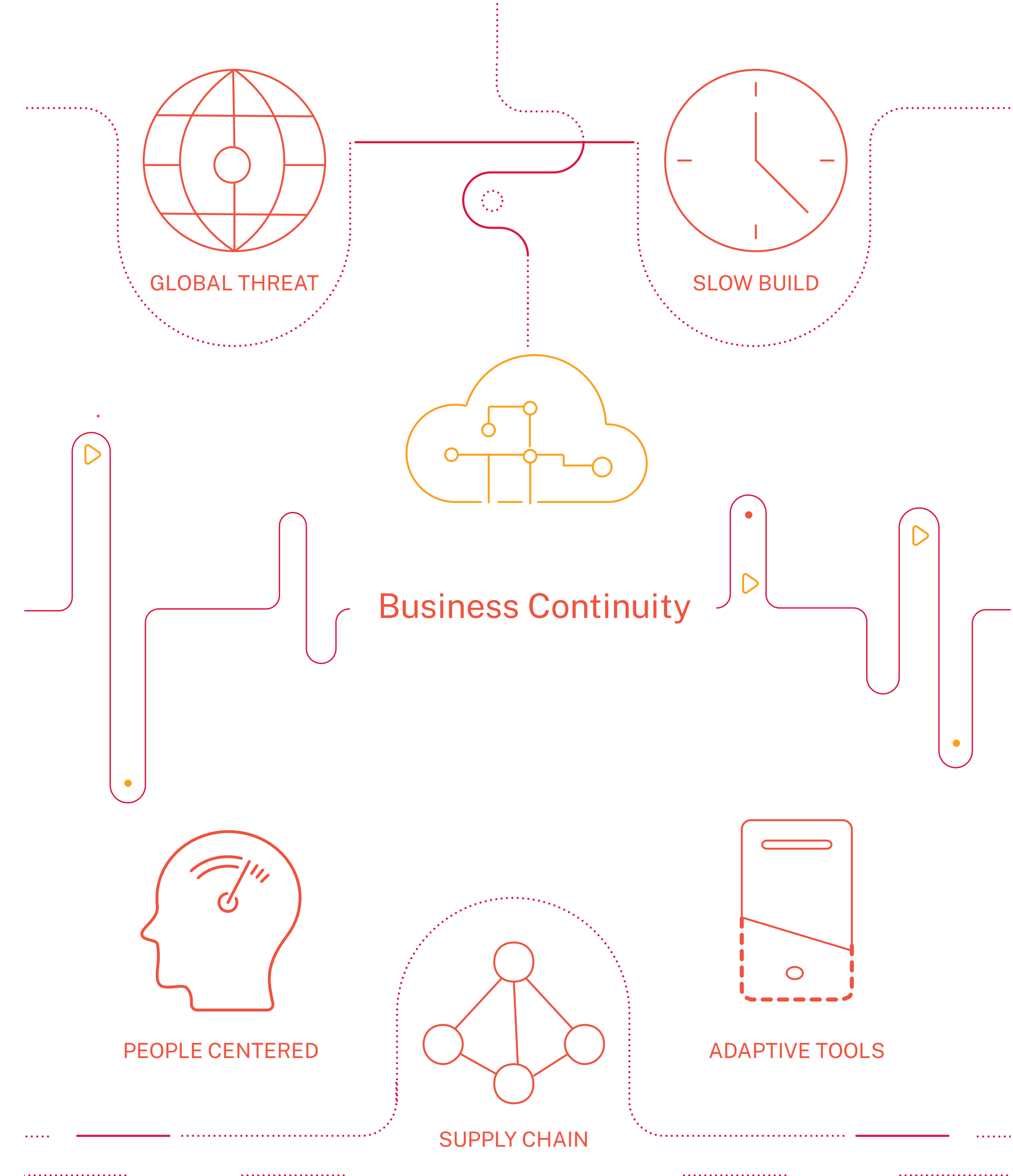
A goal of agility

Remote work enables agility and creates competitive advantage. By implementing the methods, policies, and technologies required for remote work, companies are prepared to pivot and adapt as needed to global situations, or are poised to respond to new opportunities as they arise.
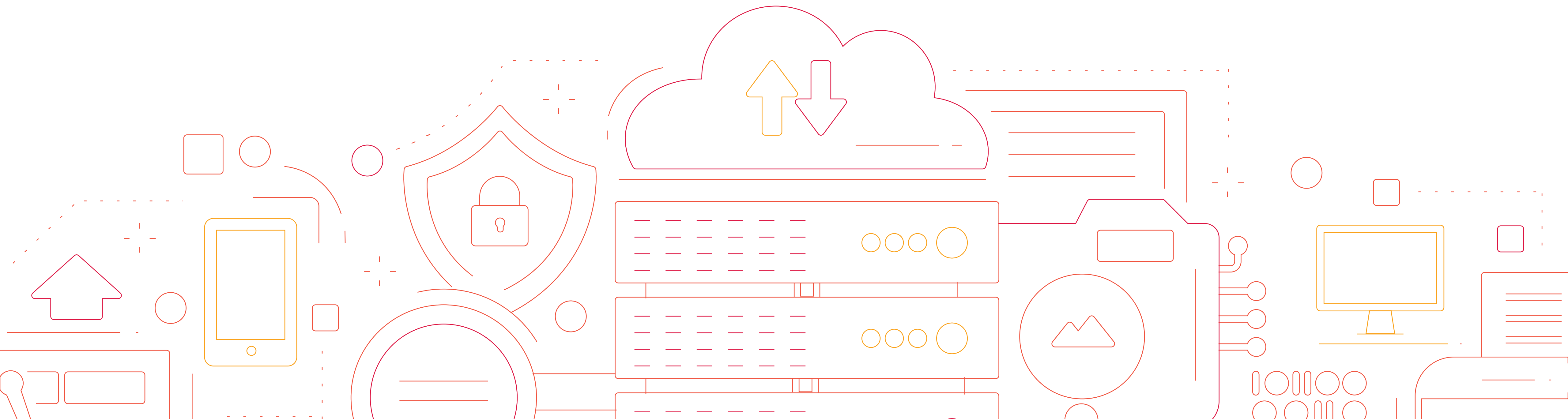
3 | Creating a culture for all employees to thrive

Employees appreciate flexibility, and enabling remote work is one of the best ways companies can provide it. Not only has remote work been shown to increase productivity, but it also goes a long way toward building a healthy, safe, happy, and engaged workforce.
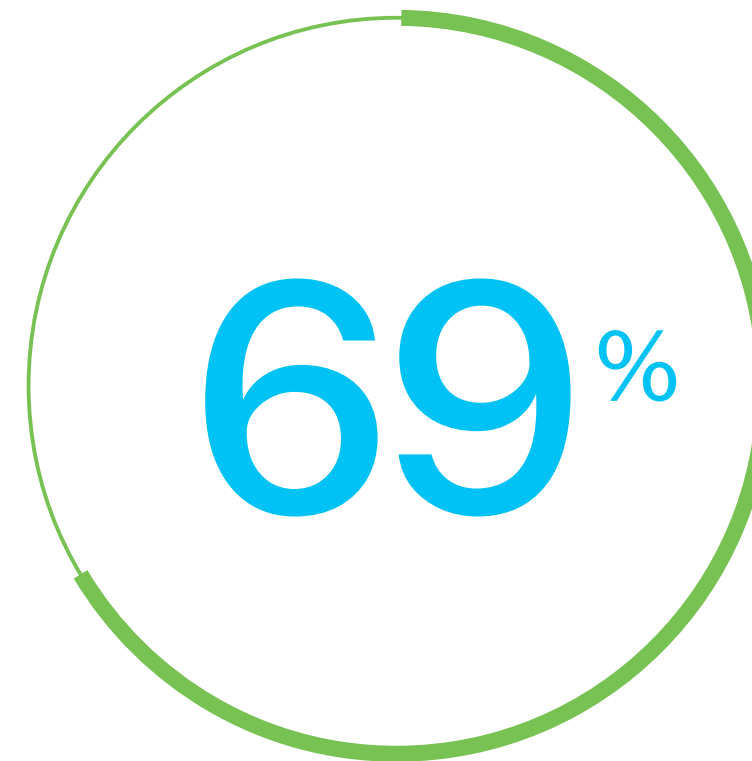
Greater flexibility translates to greater job satisfaction

According to 2019 research from the Centre for Economics and Business Research on remote workers:

60 %
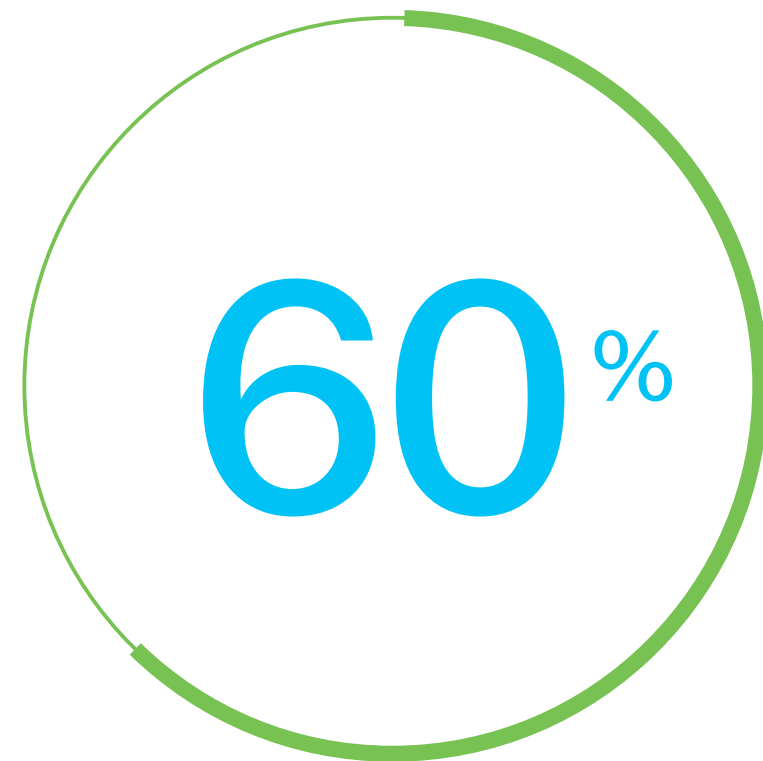
report that it allows them to
boost their professional development.

69 %

report that remote work improves
their job satisfaction level.

73 %

report that flexible working improves
personal well-being and the ability
to balance work with outside activities.

Working remotely can bring unexpected challenges for employees. Companies that take steps to minimize those challenges will benefit from a thriving remote workforce instead of one that's just getting by.

Surprising challenges many remote workers face:
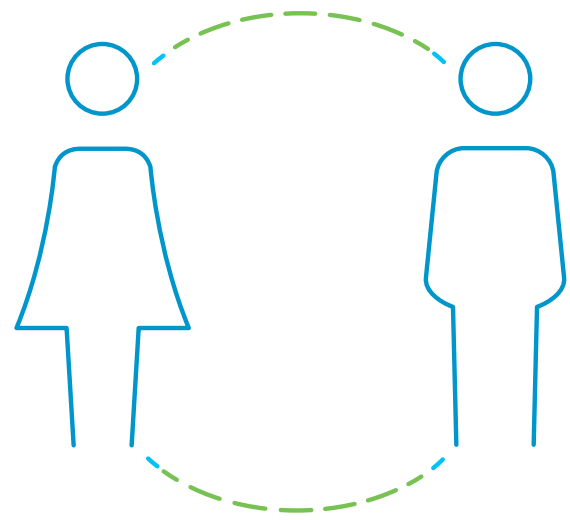
## Fear of missing out and isolation

Yes, many of your employees like working remotely. But it can also produce a sense of disconnectedness, loneliness, fear of missing out on hallway conversations, or anxiety over a perceived lack of information. Being mindful of the importance of feeling connected and valued makes it easier to take simple steps to decrease the sense of uneasiness in employees.

Unnecessary complexity

Remote employees can't just stroll into IT every time they need help, so simplifying the technology they use is important. Intuitive solutions help increase productivity and minimize downtime and frustrations.
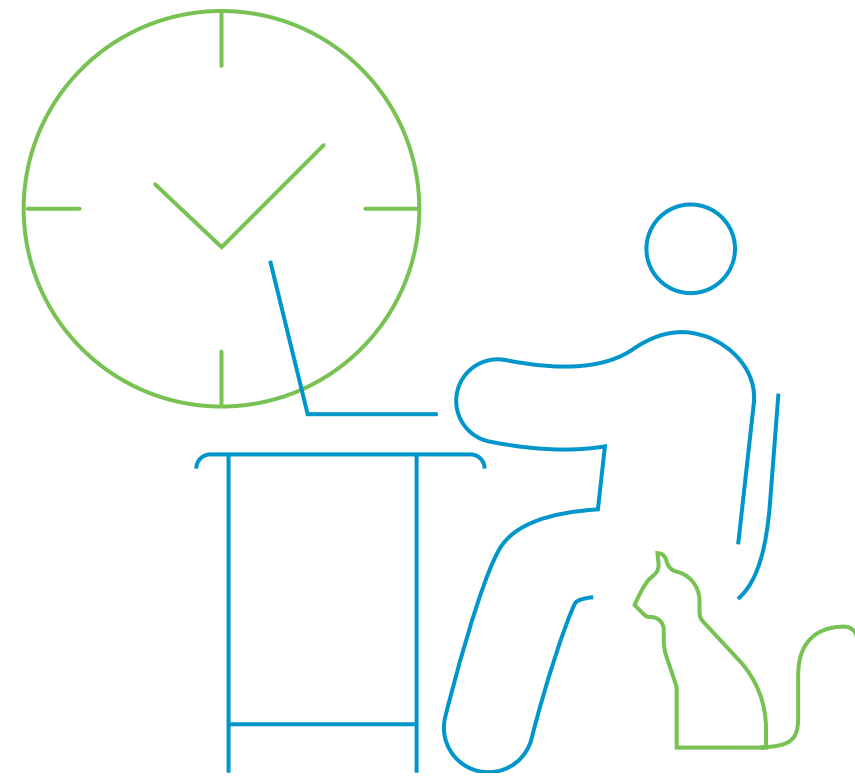
Feeling the need to always "be on"

When employees work remotely or from home they can fear being perceived as absent or inaccessible. And they can try to overcompensate by:

· Spending extra effort to appear available and responsive at all times, which can create distractions and churn

· Downloading extraneous apps and widgets to get the tools they need to get work done, leading to app overload

· Having a hard time turning work "off" at the end of the day, especially if they work with teams across different time zones
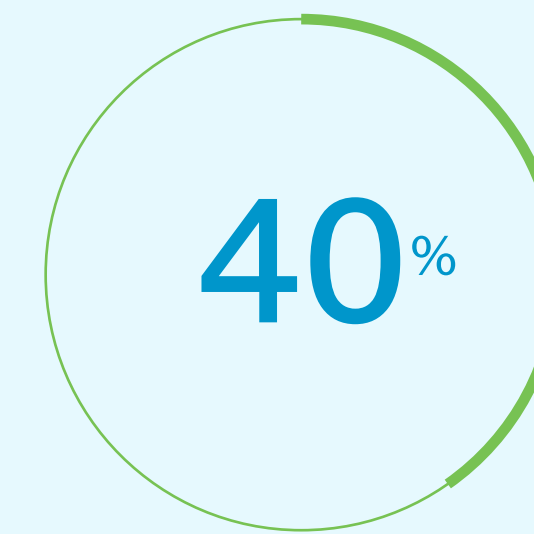
67% of employees believe being "always on" has a significant negative impact on their health and wellness.

Source: Quartz

81% of workers believe decreasing burnout should be a top priority for employers.

Source: Quartz

40% of the day is spent switching between apps and actual work, and it's killing productivity.

Source: Quartz Course

Remember, longer hours don't equate to greater output

Remote employees often work extended workdays. In a recent poll, 77% of respondents said they work the same hours or more when working from home. But always being on can quickly lead to employee burnout — and studies show that extra hours don't actually improve the amount of work being produced.
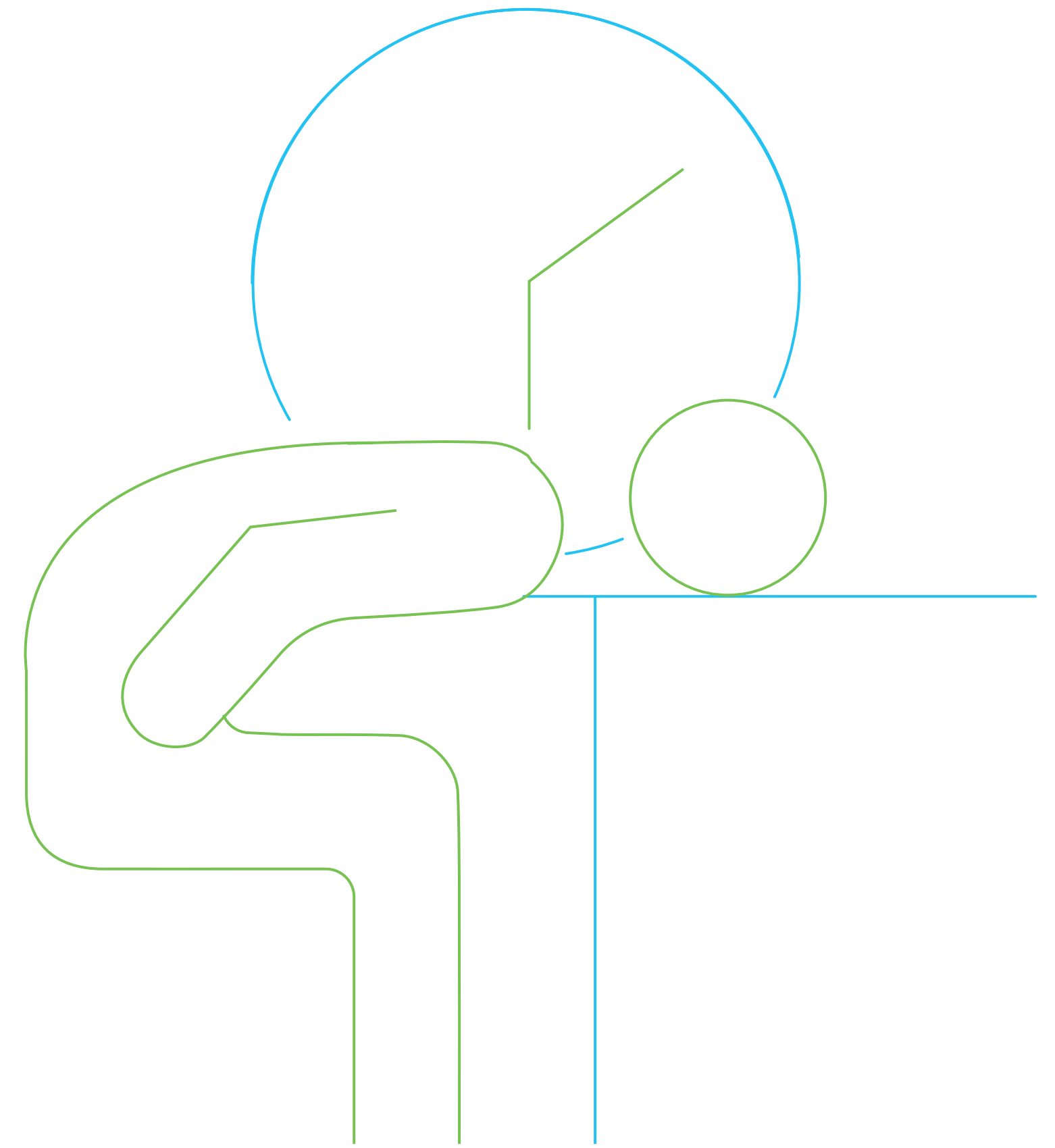
Output doesn't always increase with time.

In fact, it quickly drops after 50 hours a week. That's according to analysis by Stanford economist John Pencavel.

"In the past, it would be really easy for managers to say, 'I don't think my team can work remotely.' Now what we're finding in many businesses is that many jobs actually can be done remotely if they're provided the right tools and the right resources.

**Donna Kimmel**
EVP, Chief People Officer
Citrix

Simple steps to improving the remote employee experience

The good news is that there are a few simple things you can do to minimize those challenges — and many of these are a benefit to all employees, not just those working remotely.

1. Communicate often

While no one is suggesting unnecessary communications, a little extra communication will ensure all employees know what's happening in the company and where to find important resources. This can go a long way toward helping employees feel connected and plugged in.
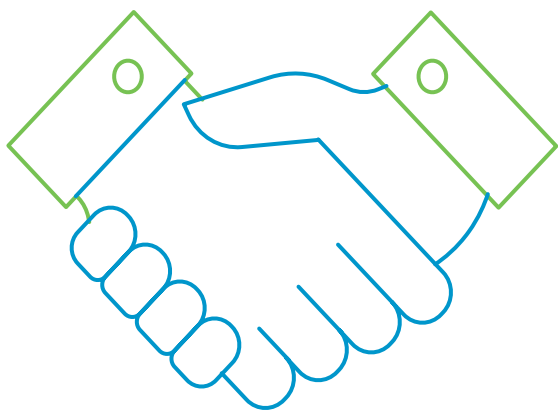
2. Lead with trust and transparency

Be clear about expectations for remote employees and then back those up. Encourage all executives to work remotely for periods of time too, so they have a better sense of what it entails.
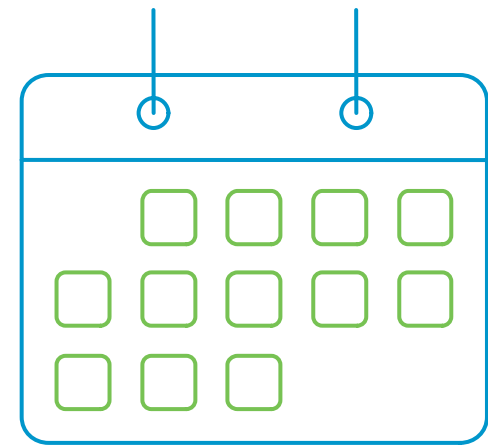
3. Give employees flexibility

When employees have flexibility they're able to adjust their schedules somewhat to accommodate other life priorities — without having to sacrifice work quality. This helps fosters gratitude in employees, which drives loyalty and retention.

4. Remember that it doesn't have to be all or nothing

Remote work doesn't have to mean employees are never in the office. A lot of companies now offer some flex days and have all employees come into the office on specific days of the week to get face time. Alternatively, some companies share work stations so employees can be in the office occasionally without the company having to foot the bill of a full-time desk for every employee.
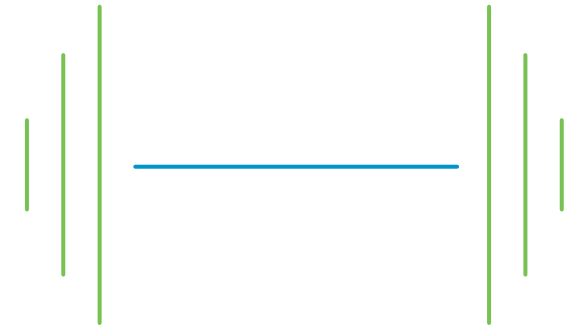
5. Encourage physical wellness

Healthy behaviors create well-adjusted employees. Even small gestures that include employer-sponsored perks, like mindful practice sessions or discounts on gym memberships, can reap big rewards. Physical wellness helps improve stress, decreases isolation and burnout, and keeps employees feeling good. And that's a benefit to us all.

Psychological and physical burnout is costing U.S. employees $125 – $190 billion a year in healthcare spending.

Source: Harvard Business Review.

6. Support digital wellness

Digital wellness uses technology to minimize friction and improve efficiency so there's more time for the actual work itself. Apps that streamline controls, automate administrative tasks, and enhance mobility go a long way toward boosting productivity.

What's digital wellness?

"Digital wellness" is defined as an intentional and healthy relationship with workplace tech. It's a key ingredient for a positive employee experience.

Source: Quartz
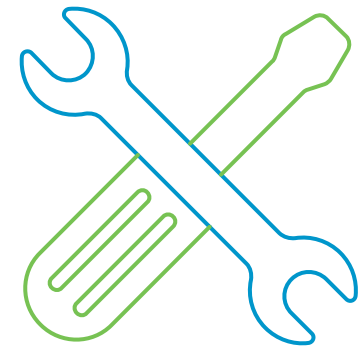
7. Prioritize the right tools and tech

Implement team- and company-wide technology designed for everyone — from IT admins to end users. That means integrated and consolidated solutions that give remote employees the same access to tools, people, and data as those in the office. It also simplifies life for your IT teams by making it easier to centralize and secure your entire IT infrastructure.

75% of those surveyed say employee experience is a top priority. And they anticipate high financial benefits from leveraging emerging tech to help create it.

*Source: Dow Jones*
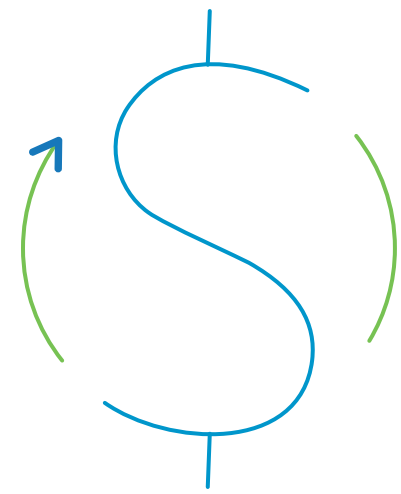
8. Value what your employees value

Corporate responsibility is more important than ever. That's because today's employees want to work for companies with values that align with their own.

67% of prospective employees are attracted to organizations with a low carbon footprint and ethical policies.

Source: Citrix and Sustainability, Justin Sutton Parker

Remote work has a positive impact on the environment — and that matters to employees. Adopting good environmental practices, like minimizing fossil fuel used in long commutes, goes a long way toward reducing environmental impacts. In fact, for every 1,000 employees working from home two days a week, there's a 40% decrease in CO_2e.

Source: 2018, J. Sutton-Parker MBA Sustainability, "InformationTechnology (IT) and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions," PhD Research for University of Warwick Computer Science Department
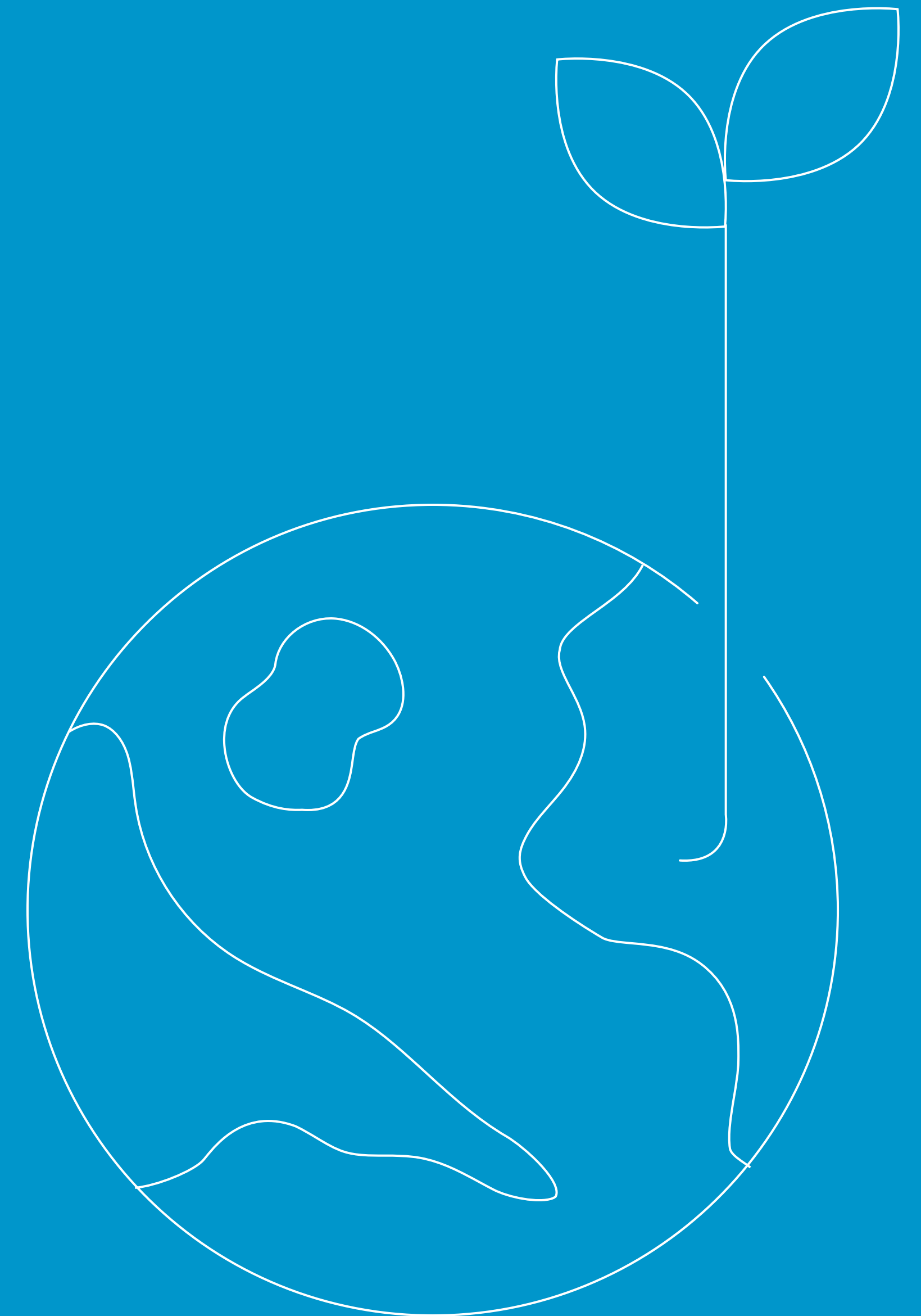
4 | Rethinking the role of technology

Twenty years ago, people used fax machines to send a document or a quick message. Then came email.

Today, a lot of employees prefer instant-messaging tools. Smart phones and tablets now perform many of the same functions as computers. If one thing is certain in our digital world, it's that technology is dynamic and will continue to evolve. And that's a good thing. It's also what allows business to continue during disruptions.

Adopt technology designed for what's ahead

In the future, the most competitive companies will be those that lean into emerging tech. Citrix can help your organization implement a digital workspace to meet your changing IT needs — so you're prepared to adapt as technology evolves.

Look for a complete solution that is:
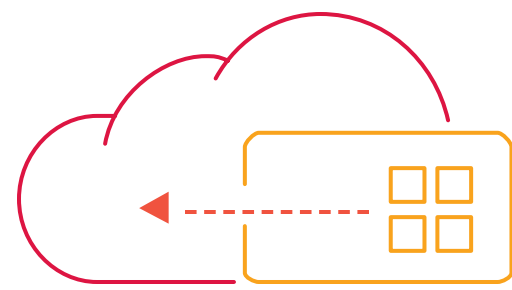
IT friendly

- Securely delivers apps and data regardless of where they're located

- Allows for control customizations based on job roles and personal preferences

- Centralizes and manages your entire IT ecosystem from a single screen — even across hybrid, multi-cloud, and on-premises data centers

- Provides visibility across hybrid and multi-cloud environments

- Allows for easy on- and offboarding of employees
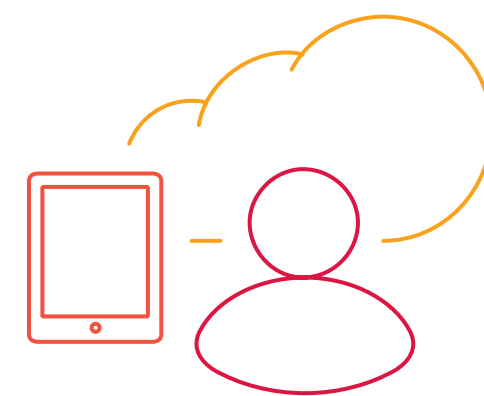
User friendly

- Allows access to all apps and files with a single sign-on

- Simplifies everyday tasks with a personalized information feed, virtual assistant, and automated workflows

- Reduces context switching and minimizes unnecessary distractions

- Empowers employees with self-service and customizable tools
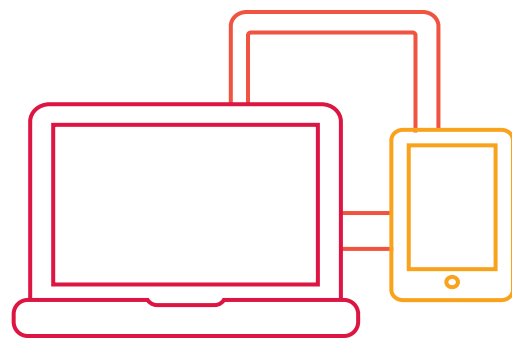
Mobility driven

- Delivers [enterprise mobility management](#) and bring-your-own-device support

- Simplifies access to data from anywhere, at any time

- Allows employees choice over devices, software, apps, and work locations

- Ensures mobile productivity and an engaging digital experience from any device

Secure

- Delivers security outcomes based on zero trust

- Provides a consolidated approach without a lot of point products

- Unifies access to apps and data — even across different regions, dispersed offices, and content repositories

- Centralizes definition and enforcement of security policies

- Protects both applications and API integrations
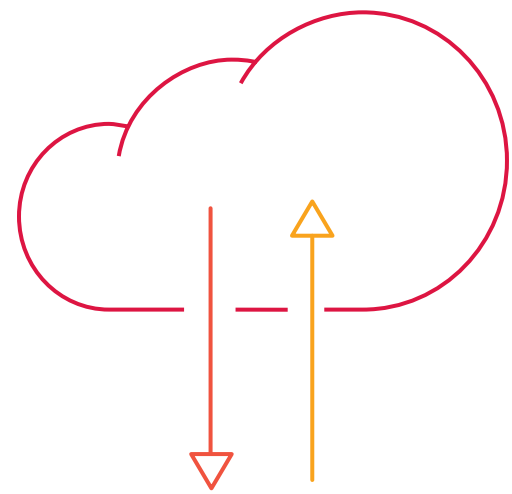
Continuously connected

- Ensures high-quality connections — even from remote locations

- Securely supports virtual, cloud, and SaaS apps across the enterprise

- Optimizes bandwidth with an always-on connection to work resources

- Provides an exceptional app experience over any network regardless of on-premises, or hybrid and multi-cloud infrastructures
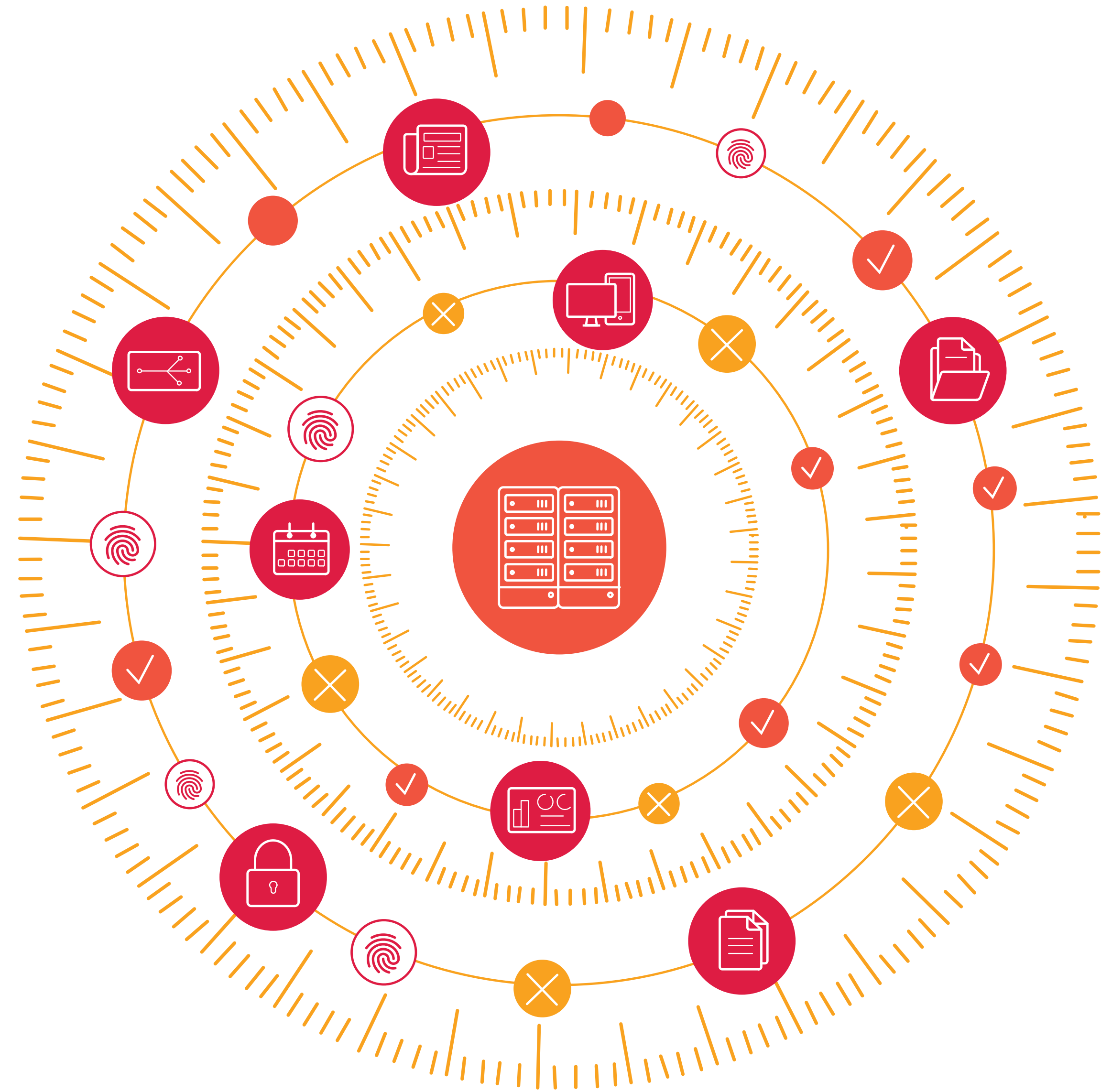
5 | Customer stories

How three organizations implemented an IT platform to ensure seamless remote connections, boost employee productivity, and better support constituent needs.

University of Sydney

- **80,000+ students**
- **22 locations**
- **100+ course-specific apps**

Learning, uninterrupted

Recently, major events like brushfires, flooding, and COVID-19 interrupted students' learning and educators' instruction, the University of Sydney IT team turned to Citrix to keep operations running. They deployed a suite of solutions that enabled seamless connections allowing work, learning, and life to continue — without sacrificing access, performance, or experience.

[Customer story]

State of Illinois

- **25,000+ employees**
- **20x increase within days**
- **Remote workforce**

Critical connectivity

When COVID-19 closed all but the most essential facilities, more than 25,000 Illinois state employees found themselves trying to figure out how to continue serving constituents without going into the offices they had always populated. IT teams had to figure out how to launch widespread remote work capabilities — and fast. That's when they reached out to Citrix. Within days, the team increased its remote workforce by 20-fold, keeping the state running and providing critical resources to those who need them.

[Customer story]

Bechtle

- **70 businesses**
- **14 countries**
- **67,000 employees**

Engaging employees and boosting engagement

Bechtle is the largest B2B IT provider in Germany. Its success has depended on having an IT environment that could enable a mobile workforce and flex as business needs change. To do that, they needed a better means of supporting remote work, streamlining new-employee onboarding, rolling out services, and simplifying the user experience. So Bechtle worked with Citrix to create a simple and intelligent solution that would provide a reliable way to engage employees, boost productivity, and better serve customer needs.

[Customer story]

6 | Conclusion

Remote work isn't just an employee perk or a nice-to-have for a few positions anymore. It's here and it will be the key to defining the future of business operations. Companies without a comprehensive strategy and an adaptive IT infrastructure to support it will be left behind.

How Citrix is redefining work and empowering the workforce

As an industry leader with a comprehensive suite of tech solutions, Citrix continues to be on the forefront of remote work since its founding. With a [comprehensive suite of tech solutions](#), your organization will be able to create a remote work strategy that drives employee engagement and meets your business needs — for today and on into the future.

Find out how we can help you deliver the right technology to help your remote workforce work even better