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Alan Connolly is the Global Head of Connected Workplace at Capgemini Cloud Infrastructure Services. He focuses on building relationships across all levels to understand key challenges, delivering compelling IT solutions that create business value, and identifying opportunities to enhance employee experience and digital journeys across the workplace.





## TECH @ WORK: A KEY ENABLER OF THE PEOPLE EXPERIENCE



#### Paying attention to tech as the primary EX enabler

hile, historically, companies have focused on designing a suitable physical workspace and perhaps throwing in a few communication tools, not enough attention has been paid to which technologies will enable employees to perform and engage. Many product and service organizations focus on deploying the latest technologies to benefit their customers; however, they fail to look inward at the benefits of technology for, nor the experiences of their employees.

The recent study from the Capgemini Research Institute indicates that many employees are underwhelmed by their current work-related technology experiences; moreover, we found that only 28 percent of employees agreed that they have access to the technology and equipment they need to do their job optimally. Below, we identify the possibilities provided by some of the technological solutions that could bring organizations' requirements and their employees' expectations into closer alignment.

#### **GO TO CLOUD**

**Cloud enables work from anywhere:** Cloud enables applications and data to be accessed now from any device, which means



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that employees are no longer tied to a single location. They don't need to be in the office; they can work from home or while commuting, facilitating the hybrid work models that are increasingly the post-pandemic norm. Cloud also promotes "tech agnosticism," meaning employees are free to use their preferred device to access work systems, rather than being obliged to use a prescribed one.

#### AUTOMATE

#### Artificial intelligence and automation augment employee productivity:

Irrespective of the role of an individual employee, AI and automation technologies can dramatically boost their productivity, freeing up time for more strategic, value-added activities. This ranges from the more obvious assistance in technical roles to the AI-based tools including Jasper and Grammarly that can help employees in the content-creation process.

#### **MAKE EVERYTHING SMART**

#### Internet of Things (IoT) – a seamless connection to business

**infrastructure:** – Every day, more office devices become network enabled. This is a trend that started with network-connected printers but, today, with the advent of beacons and sensors creating new use cases, offices and factories are "turning smart" in a way that was not previously possible.



## CLOUD ENABLES WORK FROM ANY WHERE

"Microsoft's Viva latest release, for instance, has rebooted the concept of the intranet by moving siloed information to a single central location so that it can be accessed democratically by whoever needs it within the appropriate divisions of the organization." Employees can then interact with their smart spaces digitally to undertake day-today tasks such as booking desks or rooms, locating their colleagues, and connecting digitally to servers and networks. All of these greatly enhance the potential for collaboration and employee productivity in the world of hybrid work.

#### **DIVE INTO VIRTUAL**

Mixed reality brings an immersive element: Mixed reality (MR) is the term used to describe the combined use of virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) to allow a more immersive experience in continuous learning or daily tasks. For example, by using smartphones, tablets, or wearable devices such as the Oculus VR headset, factory employees can access a "digital twin" of the appliance that they are manufacturing, permitting practical training and diagnosis of faults without interrupting or otherwise negatively affecting the production process *(see insert for more details)*.

#### **MAKE IT TOGETHER**

**Collaboration tools are key to thriving in the new normal:** As the world adjusts to new post-pandemic work models, hybrid working is a predominant request. In such distributed environments, the role of tools that facilitate collaboration has become critical. Our research finds that less than one-third of employees (29 percent) are happy with the collaboration tools to which they have access to at work, often relying on outdated video-conferencing equipment. There are several contenders on the market to allow organizations to upgrade to a comprehensive collaborative experience; Microsoft's Viva latest release,



for instance, has rebooted the concept of the intranet by moving siloed information to a single central location so that it can be accessed democratically by whoever needs it within the appropriate divisions of the organization. This centralization of data also facilitates crossorganization collaboration. It does require to rethink the ways of working, interactions, and managerial connections, but technology can help in this challenge that needs to be addressed anyway.

#### **TESTING THE METAVERSE**

By harnessing the metaverse and the VR, AI, and social-media channels it opens up, organizations can address two main employer concerns: firstly, the need for enhanced networking and collaboration in the hybrid world of work; and, secondly, the fact that Generation Z constitutes as much as 60 percent of metaverse users. In order to attract the top talent of the future, organizations must recognize and tap into such preferences and provide them with the tools which they are accustomed to using in both their private and working lives. Making this effective across generations is the main challenge, hence the need to start testing.



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### The benefits of the immersive experience

**Aerospace & Defense:** Airbus harnesses AR, VR, and MR tools across its operations. It has designed and deployed VR tools in its aircraft-design process, for instance. Airbus engineers can use VR to view, interact with, and even adjust 3D digital models of aircraft before they begin to develop the parts. This allows them to simulate scenarios in a safe environment. Similarly, using AR glasses, electrical engineering teams can examine the various cable-configuration options, superimposed on the physical aircraft. This kind of hands-free guidance allows up to 25-percent quicker installation.<sup>1</sup>

**Automotive:** Ford and Bosch have developed a VR training tool that allows Ford to train its technicians in servicing and maintaining the allelectric Mustang Mach-E. Ford uses VR headsets to train its engineers in diagnosis and tasks such as installation, removal, and servicing of the main battery.

**Healthcare:** US-based startup SentiAR is working on an AR tool that can guide surgeons during cardiac and other invasive interventions. Via a headset, the system presents the surgeon with a 3D image of the patient's heart, allowing them to see the position of catheters within the organ. Use of the tool has demonstrated an improvement of up to 50 percent in surgical precision.<sup>2</sup>

**Insurance:** Allianz, a German multinational financial services firm, has used AR to improve its claims process. Allianz's adjusters conduct live video assessments of claims damage from remote locations, using AR and AI to collect required data such as photos, signatures, and geolocation. Within less than a year of adopting this process, the company has processed over 100,000 remote video claims, reducing employee travel by more than 6 million kilometers, shrinking the organizational carbon footprint, and improving claim-resolution time.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Airbus, "Virtual reality with real benefits," September 25, 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Washington University in St. Louis, "SentiAR raises \$5.1 million for holographic cardiac ablation guidance system," April 13, 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Allianz Success Story. (January 20, 2022.). SightCall. Retrieved September 22, 2022, from https:// sightcall.com/case-studies/allianz



## TECHNOLOGY IS ONE OF THE KEY ENABLERS THROUGH WHICH ORGANIZATIONS CAN IMPROVE THEIR PEOPLE EXPERIENCES.

#### Where should organizations start?

Every organization contains variations in ways of working and dozens of roles, each with its own specific responsibilities and critical tasks to be effectively and sustainably performed. Correspondingly, it is important to understand the needs of each one in their role fulfillment by mapping their digital user journeys in performing their daily work. In doing so, two key things can be achieved:

- 1. Organizations can identify the critical moments that need to be improved, facilitated, and measured.
- 2. They can adapt or redesign operating processes, tasks, and ways of working through the appropriate and relevant use of technology, thus increasing efficiency, productivity, and user-satisfaction.



Technology is one of the key enablers through which organizations can improve their people experiences, affording an attractive connection with the work and life experiences of younger-generation workers. Cloud technologies enable flexible working, from any location and on a device of the employee's choice. MR, the metaverse, and collaborative working support a global, connected workforce, facilitating immersive learning and mentoring on a daily basis. Similarly, self-help and AI technologies allow employees to maintain productivity levels, with issues resolved automatically, or even pre-emptively, with little or no downtime as a result. The organizations that have grasped the importance of improving their employee experience are already receiving the benefits in terms of improved productivity, greater retention of talent, and a distinct competitive advantage.

By taking an experiential approach to defining and implementing their technology portfolio strategy, organizations can avoid unnecessary technical piling-up, debt, and waste, and improve the overall impact on their employees' ability to perform their jobs, and, in the process, help them to derive greater satisfaction from doing so. This is how amazing people experiences are implemented.

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