



EMBRACE THE AGE OF AGILITY

The culture of agile working
and the role of technology

Opinion White Paper





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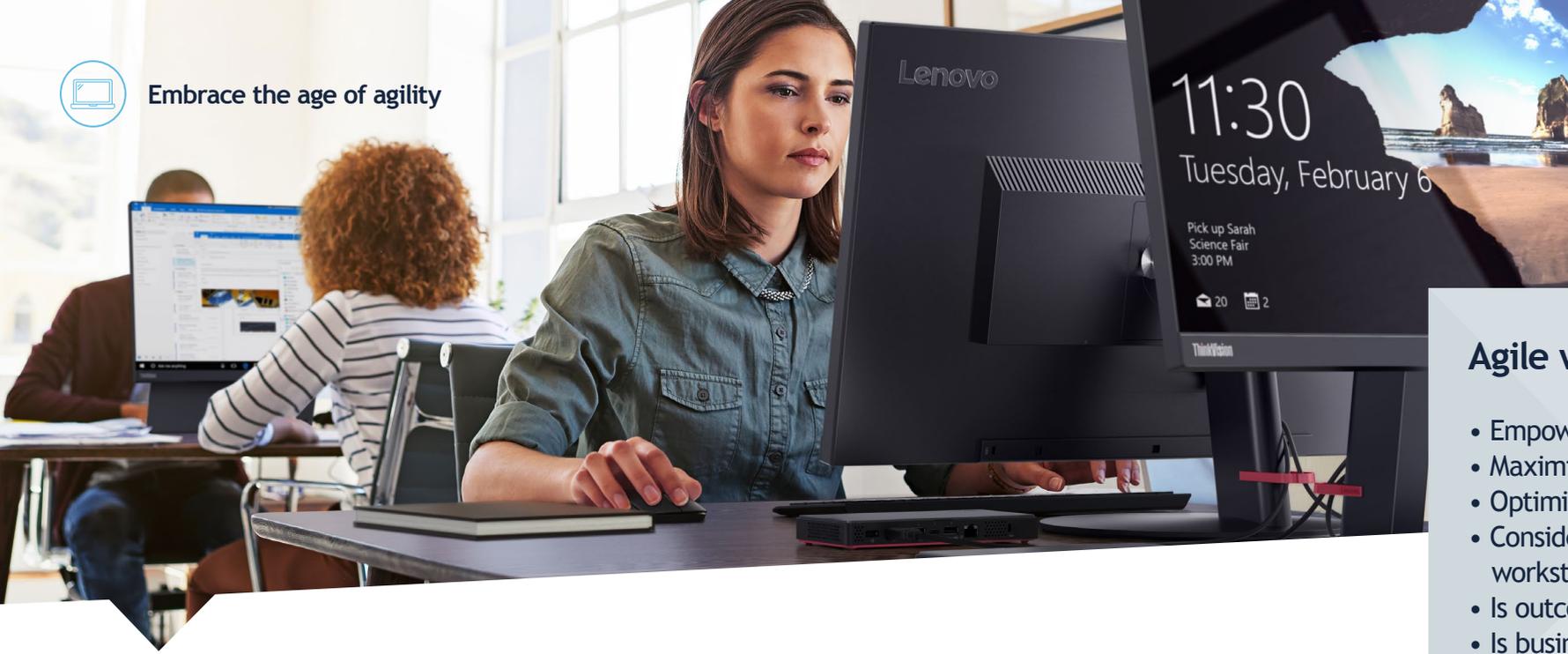
EMBRACE THE AGE OF AGILITY

Agile working has been called into focus by recent global events, but despite this it's not a new trend as businesses look to capture the new efficiencies and better ways of working in the digital era. According to a report by Cebr, 26% of employees said that they would opt to increase the flexibility of their working hours, while the option to work from home more frequently was chosen by 22% of people¹. This is unsurprising, given that people know what technology makes possible through how they use it in their personal lives.

Unquestionably, workplace technology is getting smarter, more capable, and more intuitive - driven by the goal of making people and therefore a workforce more agile. In work terms, the ability to do anything from anywhere is not fiction, and organisations who have pioneered this approach are simply giving the rest of us a glimpse into the real future of work. Those playing catch up have realised that the need for agile working is critical. Given monumental events like pandemics and extreme weather, there's never been a better time to optimise how your people work - not just to contend with the unexpected, but for the positive disruption it promises your business.

Being agile is so much more than being flexible

The issue with trying to do this successfully is that the approach taken to implement agile working is often confused with flexible working. Agile working is about more than putting the infrastructure in place to allow people to work remotely. Instead, it's about instilling an agile working culture and offering your people the very best experience to do their work regardless of where work is getting done, whether that's in the office or outside of it.



Agile working:

- Empowers employees
- Maximises productivity
- Optimises the workspace
- Considers everyone’s individual workstyles
- Is outcome-led
- Is business-centric

WHAT IS AGILE WORKING?

Agile working empowers and supports people to work where, when, and however they choose. Based on the concept that work is an activity we do, rather than a place we go, it is focused on optimising their performance, maximising productivity, and realising the best possible value from workers by creating greater efficiencies and a more responsive business model.

Agile working considers four key “dimensions”:



These factors in turn determine the need for agility within a given organisation, which naturally varies considerably depending on the industry in question. For example, because a web developer’s role is heavily digital-dependent, many are already prepared for agile working. On the other hand, it’s incredibly difficult, and impractical, to achieve the same degree of agility in healthcare where face-to-face interaction with patients is key. For this reason, agile working looks different for everyone.



WHY IS AGILE WORKING SO IMPORTANT?

Because your people are all different, they all work differently. It's important that everyone's individual needs and workstyles are considered. Many people thrive in a busy and dynamic office environment, where others work best when they shut themselves away in a quiet room. Your business' workplace should take this into consideration.

Expectations of what work should look like are changing too, especially as the technologies your people use continue to evolve. They want to be able to work on the go if they need to, they want to be able to connect seamlessly with their colleagues, and they want to ensure their experience is consistent no matter where they are or which device they're using. And with the next generation of employees being biased to millennials and members of Gen Z, agile working is fast becoming the new norm. In fact, 73% of people in the UK consider this to be the case (IWG)².

But it's no longer enough to simply refine your physical workplace to accommodate your people's needs or just give your employees the flex to work from home - you need to achieve a combination of both, and much more besides.

73% of people in the UK consider agile working to be the norm².



Agility and the digital workspace

A great way to make a start is by looking to create an agile digital workspace. This involves introducing a set of intelligent, collaborative digital tools that are purpose-built to enhance your people's productivity and enable them to work from anywhere. This goes for the devices they use every day, the applications they rely on to do their work, and the data they need to access and share. It's all about finding the perfect balance using the right mix of technologies to help support your people's workstyles in the best way. When harnessed correctly, your hardware, software, and cloud services can really come together to offer the ultimate agile end-user experience.



AGILE, FLEXIBLE, AND REMOTE WORKING: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

What's important to distinguish when considering an agile working model for the first time is that business "agility" is not solely defined by working flexibly, or even just by working remotely. While all three types of working often rely on the same set of tools to achieve their goals, there is actually a distinct difference between their principles:

Remote working

This refers to the ability to work away from the physical office environment at another location, whether that's from home or on the go.

Flexible working

This is an employee-centric working pattern that offers individuals the opportunity to better achieve a suitable work-life balance in line with their personal needs. This could be by introducing flexible start and finish times or the option to work from home regularly.

Agile working

Frequently confused with flexible working, agile working takes both the physical and digital workplace into account in order to drive long-term organisational success. Unlike flexible working, it is driven by the organisation's needs and benefits both the business and the employee. Sometimes referred to as "Activity-Based Working", agile working involves encouraging behavioural change, optimising the working environment, and ensuring every employee has what they need to do their job wherever or whenever they're working.



A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL MODEL

Because flexible working focuses largely on accommodating the needs of an individual based on their personal circumstances, it only really addresses a small fraction of a business' working practices.

Agile working, on the other hand, takes things one step further. Organisation-centric, it aims to optimise how people work based on their performance and the business' desired outcomes. Not only does it offer the scope for impressive flexibility and an easy route to remote working, it also ensures your physical environment has a range of different workspaces available for different purposes.

This sees your people are free to work however they want at any time, whether they need a collaborative space to be creative as a whole team, or a secluded and relaxing pod to inspire more intense, focused work. In that respect, agile working is very much a multi-dimensional model. It doesn't just change how you work outside of the office, but how you work inside it too.

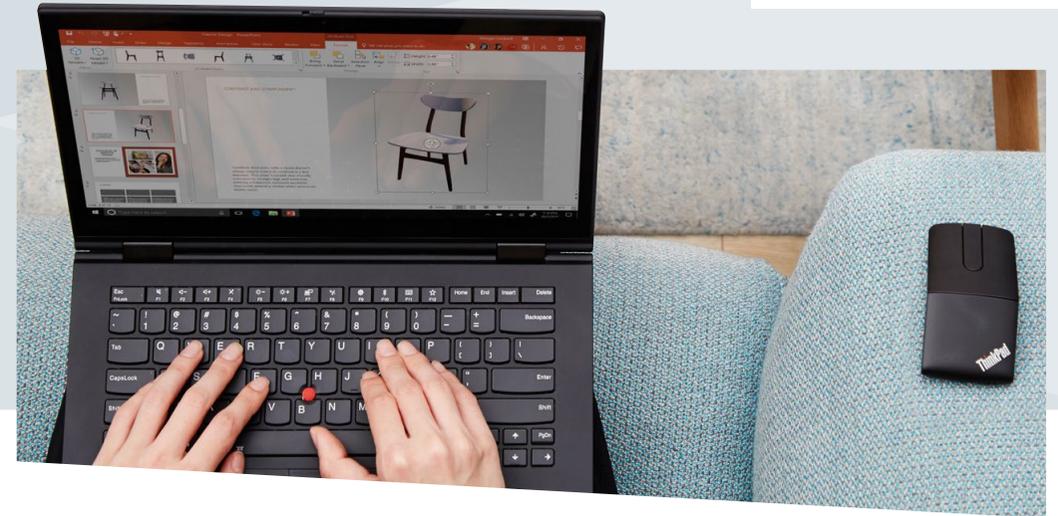


ThinkPad



THE BENEFITS OF AGILE WORKING

Agile working has the potential to benefit everyone - your business, your employees, and your customers. With so much scope to enhance how work is done, you'll be getting the best out of your people on a daily basis, which means happy customers, happy management, and a happy team.



For your business

1. Productivity like never before

With office spaces created specifically for your team to work exactly how they want, when they want, your people's productivity will be going through the roof. By putting the right collaborative tools at their fingertips that enable them to keep working on the go, they'll also have access to everything they need to get the job done that much faster. BPS World's book "The Agile Revolution" reported two thirds (67%) of companies experienced up to a 10% increase in productivity after having introduced agile working³.

2. Enjoy enhanced innovation

Because they're free to work at their own pace and in their own way, your people will be producing the best work you've ever seen. Thanks to an agile digital workspace designed with their needs in mind, their creativity flows. Likewise, due to the fact they'll be more productive, they'll be more liberated to actually focus on driving greater innovation for your business, and more motivated to do so too.

3. Cost and space savings

Agile working ensures your physical environment is optimised, which may mean areas of your office become redundant, particularly if a large percentage of your workforce is opting to work remotely. This change might then open up the opportunity for you to rethink your physical office space and downsize as necessary, seeing you realise both substantial cost and space savings.

67% of companies experienced up to a 10% increase in productivity after having introduced agile working³.



4. Reduce your carbon footprint

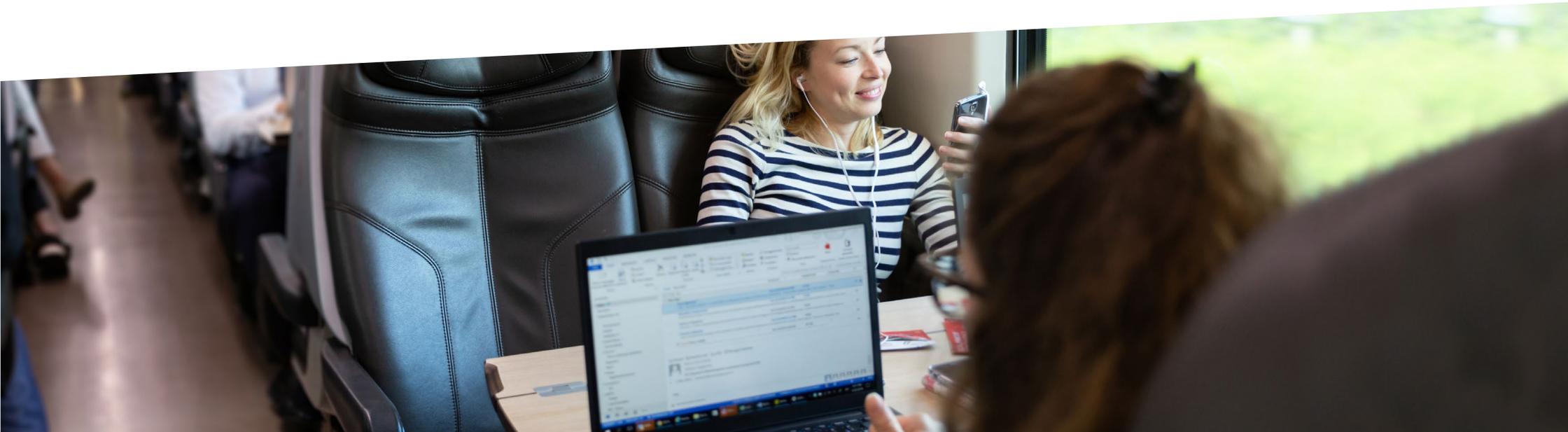
Giving many of your people the option to work from home will have a massively positive impact on the environment. With less people coming into the office, that means less cars on the road, lower emissions, and a reduced need for fuel. Based on findings from Global Workforce Analytics, WebEx estimates savings of 54 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions if people with remote-compatible jobs worked from home half the time⁴. Agile working also has great implications for your power consumption, as less energy will be required on a regular basis if nobody's in the office. And with climate change a big consideration for both your employees and your customers, this proactive step to improve your carbon footprint would be very well received.

5. Employee attraction and retention

Millennials and Generation Z are ascending as the majority demographic in the modern workforce, and Generation Alpha is not far behind. That in mind, agile technology is no longer a perk but a necessity. If your business doesn't offer sufficient flexibility, it's very likely you'll lose potential employees to one that does. 80% of respondents to IWG's Global Workspace Survey said when faced with two similar employment offers, they would turn down the one that didn't offer flexible working.

Key benefits of agile working

- Increased productivity, efficiency, and innovation
- Cost and space savings
- Reduced carbon footprint
- Meeting customer expectations
- Attraction and retention of talent
- Improved work-life balance
- Better internal and external relationships





For your employees

1. No more commute

The lack of a commute made possible by agile working boosts your people's productivity tenfold. According to Cebr, economic output would increase by over £20 billion each year if British workers were to spend their entire commuting time working.

2. Empowered by autonomy

Allowing your people to work from home, or crafting your environment to suit their workstyles reinforces your trust in them, helping them feel empowered. This level of autonomy encourages people to have better control over their work, seeing both their satisfaction and motivation to do good work improve. By creating a culture that removes artificial measures such as time and attendance, agile working enables your people to instead turn their attention to what matters most: results and performance.

3. Improved work-life balance

Importantly, your people can enjoy a greater work-life balance thanks to agile working. Their overall health and wellbeing can improve too due to a reduction in stress, the scope for healthier eating, and the opportunity to more readily incorporate exercise into their routine. FlexJobs' 2018 Annual Survey found 77% of people surveyed said having a flexible job would allow them to be healthier and 86% said they'd be less stressed⁵.

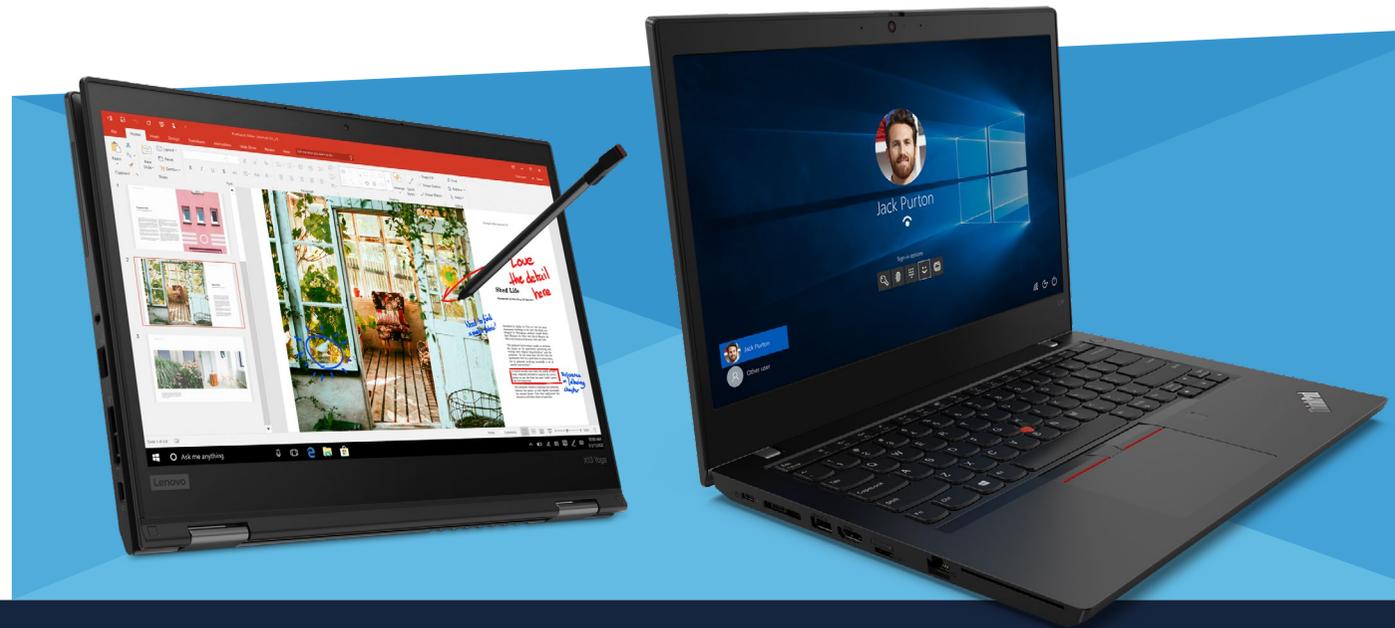
For your customers

1. Expectations are always met

By increasing the productivity, innovation, and motivation of your staff, agile working also helps see your customers' expectations are more likely to be met, if not exceeded. Enabling your employees to work at their best means any output they produce is more consistently of a higher standard, which will benefit your customers upstream.

2. Better relationships with your team

The collaborative tools your team uses to communicate internally can just as easily be utilised externally. Important applications like Microsoft 365 and Zoom's video conferencing platform can vastly improve how you connect and respond to your customers, making them feel even more valued and engendering their loyalty.





To work agile a business needs to think agile

To successfully implement agile working into your business, it takes a lot more than just making changes to your environment and your technology. There's a thought process that also needs to occur, but perhaps most importantly, a cultural change across your entire organisation. The focus needs to shift from success and productivity being measured by factors like time and location to an outcomes-based approach. Embracing this new culture is key to adopting agile working.

This is different for every business too. A smaller business may simply want to give their workforce freedom to work from home more often, whereas a larger enterprise might have multiple departments and locations globally that require greater agility for communication across time zones. The agile working model is different in every case. Therefore it can actually be best to start small and ensure the adoption of it is considered at the right level and at the right time.

HOW TO ACHIEVE AGILE WORKING

It's easy enough to say that agile working is a complete no-brainer and now is the perfect time to adopt it, but some hard work is needed to get it right before you can start to enjoy it. Here are a few steps you can take to successfully achieve it:

1. Establish your objectives

First and foremost, you need to understand why your business needs agile working and what you want to get out of it. There's no point in implementing it if it won't make a big difference to your organisation as a whole. The requirement for it could be driven by wanting to increase your profitability, reduce expenditure, action customer feedback, or even just to satisfy your company's sustainability targets.

2. Develop a business case

Once you've identified a need for agile working, develop a compelling case for it. This will need to effectively prove your requirement for greater agility and justify the potential expenditure that will emerge off the back of implementing such a change to your business' infrastructure. This will ensure your CEO and CFO are bought into its value.

3. Consider how much flexibility is available in each role and develop a model

There are likely to be a number of different roles across your organisation that your agile working model will need to take into account. The whole purpose of agile working is to make certain everyone's individual needs are met as much as possible, so when putting a model together, it's really important to consider who will require the most flexibility and why.



4. Build an action plan to achieve the desired model

To successfully implement agile working into your business, it's essential to have a proper plan in place. This will involve a rigorous assessment of your existing IT infrastructure and the tools you already have available to understand how easily your agile model can be integrated. You'll need to consider critical implications such as data security, mobile device management, and Wi-Fi access, and the impact they will have on your ability to become agile.

5. Gain senior management commitment

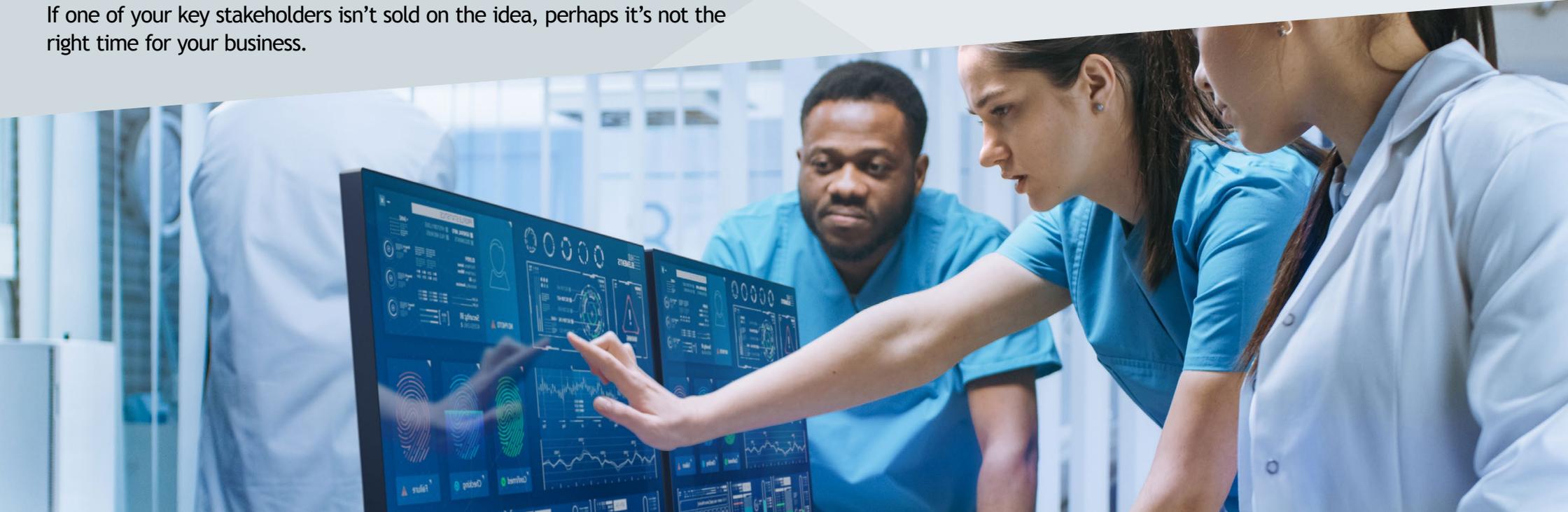
You'll need the approval of your senior management team, and a commitment from them to proactively get involved in the behavioural changes required by agile working before you can begin to implement it. If one of your key stakeholders isn't sold on the idea, perhaps it's not the right time for your business.

6. Get employee support

The way in which your employees work will be massively impacted by the introduction of agile working, so you need to make sure they're on board. If you're struggling to convince senior management, having the support of your employees behind you will also make for a much stronger argument.

7. Measure success and impact

This is vital. Agile working won't be successful unless you're measuring the results on your business. It may be difficult to see evidence straight away, but once you're into the swing of it, the benefits will present themselves thick and fast. Make sure you have some way of substantiating this so you can accurately prove that you made the right decision in introducing it.





AGILE WORKING NEEDS AGILE TECHNOLOGY

The successful implementation of agile working into your business is heavily reliant on the technology you choose to employ. While the environment your people work in plays a large role in how you establish your agility, it is the technology that empowers them to ultimately get the job done. And because the methodology behind agile working is a modern one, it's important to honestly appraise your existing technology investments. Legacy hardware can be slow and unreliable, and what's more may be incompatible with any new software and the collaborative applications you're looking to give your team access to. Your current operating system (OS), too, might be holding your IT back - if your devices are still running on Windows 7 or XP for example, these OSs are no longer supported by Microsoft. This means you won't have the benefit of updates or patches, leaving your business increasingly vulnerable to cyber-attacks. You need a modern IT solution to match your modern agile working model.

Dedicate some time to decide on your devices

Arguably the most important component you need to consider is the devices your people are using. They are essential to achieving true business agility. The interface to the rest of your digital workspace, everything starts with your choice of device. It has to seamlessly enable flexibility and ensure the user experience is always on-point, so your people are never left wanting more from it.

Of course, there's a lot that goes into the decision behind your devices:

Workstyles

Different devices work for different people, so it's not going to be a simple case of one-size fits all. You need to see every person is catered for and has the right technology put into their hands.

Choice

Giving your people the opportunity to choose which device they would prefer to work with makes them feel like they have control over how they work. It'll ensure they stay loyal to you too, and will definitely catch the eye of potential employees.





Everything in one

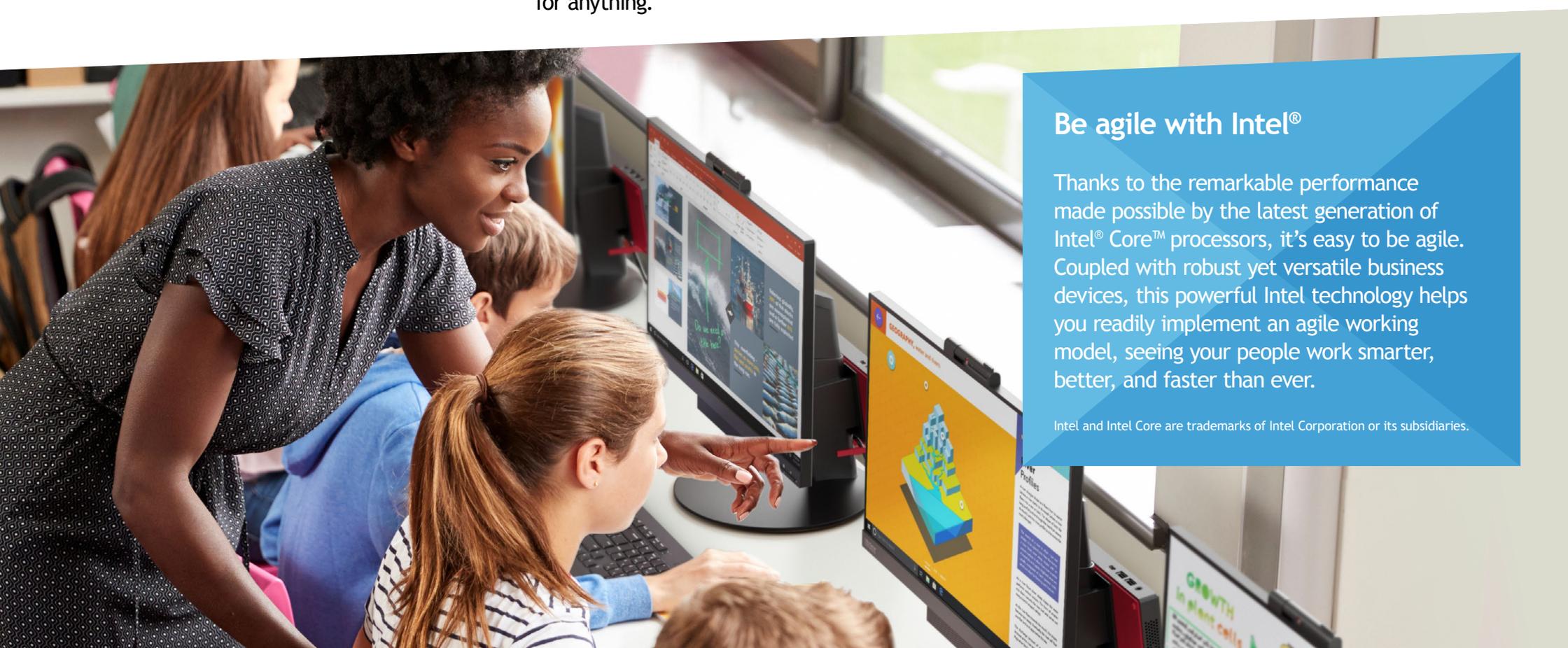
While in our personal lives we often switch between different devices to achieve different things, this can be impractical in a working environment. Instead, harnessing a single device that has everything your people need to do their work in one place vastly simplifies and streamlines the process.

Reliable

Because a lot of agile working models are heavily weighted towards remote working, you need to make certain the devices given to your people are extremely reliable. They're most likely going to be moving around a lot, and possibly used more than the traditional 9 to 5, so they should be durable, robust, and ready for anything.

Secure

Due to the flexible nature of agile working, your business-critical data will be accessed outside of the office, possibly multiple times a day. You need to know the devices your people are using are completely secure, giving you the peace of mind that your data is safe wherever it is.



Be agile with Intel®

Thanks to the remarkable performance made possible by the latest generation of Intel® Core™ processors, it's easy to be agile. Coupled with robust yet versatile business devices, this powerful Intel technology helps you readily implement an agile working model, seeing your people work smarter, better, and faster than ever.

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Embrace the age of agility



WHY LENOVO FOR AGILE WORKING

Lenovo's entire range of ThinkPad devices ticks every one of these boxes. Purpose-built for agile working, ThinkPad offers the ultimate in flexibility, impressive functionality, and industry-leading reliability. Their smart and attractive devices have everything you need already built-in as standard, from military-grade durability to enhanced security, making agile working not only possible, but effortless. And with support for powerful Intel® Core™ processors, you can be sure your agility is always matched by exceptional performance.

ThinkPad devices also offer a whole spectrum of agility-enhancing features. These include:



Vibrant, jaw-dropping 4K Dolby Vision™ displays



Dolby-enhanced speakers for crystal-clear audio and base control during calls



2-in-1 flexibility to suit any workstyle, anywhere



Epic battery life so your people can do more for longer



Noise-cancelling technology that even eradicates the sound of your keyboard



USB-C hub for seamless working regardless of which desk you're using



Primed for agility, Lenovo's ThinkPad devices are a perfect fit for any progressive organisation looking to take their IT to the next level. Incredibly diverse, there is a ThinkPad out there for absolutely everyone.

Sources

¹Cebr and Lenovo, (2018), 'Lenovo Connect: New ways of working' ²International Workplace Group, (2019), 'The IWG Global Workspace Survey: Welcome to Generation Flex - the employee power shift' ³BPS World, (2017), 'The Agile Revolution: A Guide for Business on Agile Working' ⁴Cisco WebEx, (2016), 'Infographic: Can Remote Work Help the Environment?' ⁵FlexJobs, (2018), 7th Annual Survey



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ACHIEVE ULTIMATE AGILITY WITH SERVIUM AND LENOVO

Awarded Lenovo's Growth Partner of the Year in 2019, we're ideally equipped to match you with the Lenovo technology your business needs to be agile. Thanks to our longstanding partnership and intimate knowledge of the Lenovo portfolio, we help you make the switch to their devices quickly so you can begin to realise the benefits of agile working straight away. What's more, by calling upon the expertise available through our Services Ecosystem, we knit your Lenovo devices together with complementary technologies and solutions from industry leaders that see you get the most out of your agile working model.

THE NEXT STEP

If you would like to learn more about Lenovo's portfolio of ThinkPad devices or better understand how agile working could benefit your business, please contact your Account Manager, email us at hello@servium.com, or speak to one of the team on **+44 (0)303 334 3000**.

ABOUT SERVIUM

Servium is dedicated to creating great IT experiences - we seek to win the hearts and minds of IT strategy-makers, professionals and users. Our attitude is that no challenge is too big, no detail too small. We tackle both the ordinary and the extraordinary with the same focus and originality of thought that ensures solutions make a difference. It means we're one partner ready to assemble all the technology and know-how every medium to large organisation relies on. Matched by straight-talking, real-world experience and amazing service, our customers enjoy exceptional value; the product of the best innovation, latest thinking and a thriving ecosystem of technical experts.