

# SECURING YOUR HYBRID WORKPLACE

Creating a risk-ready business through  
intelligent archiving





**81% of people either do not want to go back to the office at all or would prefer a hybrid schedule**

**- 2021 The Harvard Gazette**

As companies emerge from COVID-19 and Omicron and any other unknown variants that may occur, one of the few certainties in this post-pandemic world is that the hybrid workplace is here to stay. As companies prepare for the great return to the office after almost two years of remote work, many are opting for a hybrid workweek — two days at home, three days in the office. Or some variation of this schedule.

The more we adopt hybrid working scenarios, the more exposure an organization is forced to take on. It is therefore critical that employers take the lead and assess this new hybrid office communication and take the necessary steps to ensure it still fits within company culture and policies.



# The coronavirus outbreak triggered an overnight transition to remote working environments and rapid digital transformation of historic proportions

If the global pandemic has taught the business world anything, it's that companies can adapt quickly if they must. According to a McKinsey Global Survey of almost 900 C-level executives, companies accelerated the digitization of their operations by three to four years and in the case of adopting remote work, moved 40 times more quickly than they thought possible before the pandemic. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cited in [How COVID-19 has pushed companies over the technology tipping point—and transformed business forever](#)

While this rapid transformation kept businesses operational, the tools that were seen as lifesavers while working in lockdown are the same tools that could end up hurting companies down the line. Communication channels such as Slack, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp, and even texting from personal devices, have kept a dispersed workforce connected. Yet despite their efficiency, if left ungoverned, these tools present unprecedented security, compliance, and HR challenges.

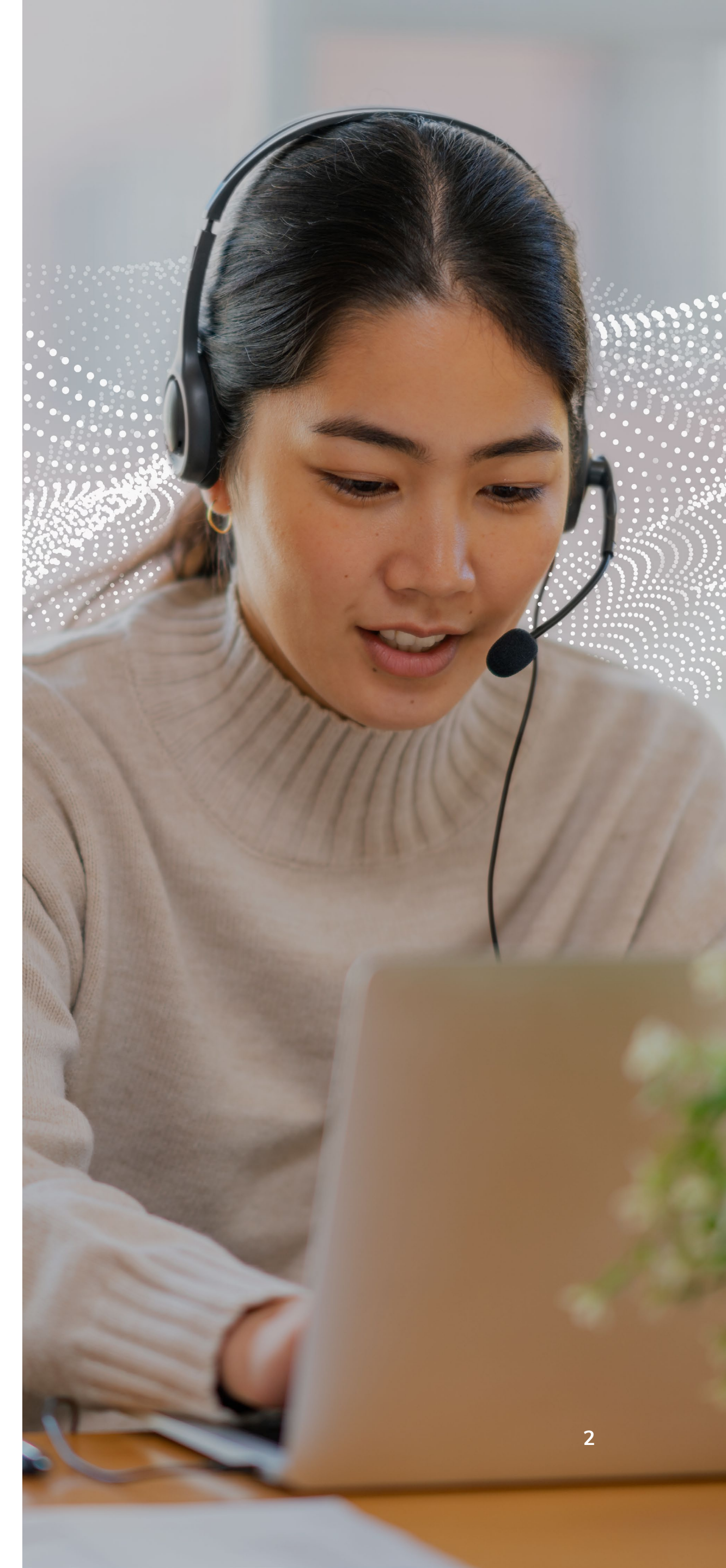


According to a recent Salesforce study, employee satisfaction is boosted by superior work technology, and people view their employers as responsible for providing the right technology they need to do their jobs.

*“When we provide employees with personalized cloud, social and mobile-connected experiences, it’s a huge engagement driver,” said Jill Unikel, SVP, Employee Communications & Engagement, Salesforce. “There’s the business case that it helps teams and employees perform their jobs more effectively, but the bonus really comes from employees being more motivated and engaged, leading to even more productivity.”*

(Salesforce 2021)

Still, this technology can create a different kind of predicament.





# A Crisis of Vulnerability

As entire offices went remote and the constraints of relying on email were emphasized, Zoom, Microsoft Teams and other collaboration platforms met an immediate business need to connect with colleagues and customers in new and more seamless ways. Yet in many cases, records of important business conversations taking place across these fragmented channels were not being retained in line with specific compliance requirements.

Also, with more employees working on their personal devices, applications for business and personal use are often sitting right alongside one other. In the shift to remote working, it's a trend that increasingly blurs boundaries, with the use of 'non-approved' devices and applications also adopted for business-related communication.

For highly regulated industries the impact of not complying with stringent recordkeeping rules, whether intentional or not, can be severe. In December, J.P. Morgan Securities LLC agreed to pay \$125 million after admitting to widespread and longstanding failures to maintain and preserve written communications over WhatsApp, personal email, and other message applications. On top of this, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) fined the bank a further \$75 million for permitting unapproved communications since at least 2015. *(Global Relay blog post Chip Jones)*





According to Chip Jones, Executive  
VP of Compliance at Global Relay,

“ The use of personal devices  
for business communications  
remains a battlefield  
between regulators,  
banks, and employees.  
Unofficial channels have  
become the latest target  
for regulators looking to  
ratchet up enforcement of  
recordkeeping rules.

”



The big problem is that encrypted messaging platforms like WhatsApp, Signal, and Telegram are much more challenging to monitor than company-owned devices and software.

And according to the SEC, “... [companies who believe they may have similar compliance issues should root them out before the SEC discovers them.](#)”

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policies give employees the freedom to use their preferred devices for work while saving companies money. However, to realize the benefits of efficiency, productivity, and employee satisfaction, company policy must take compliance standards into account. Solutions that separate business and personal messages on the same device are one such option to fulfill a compliance requirement.

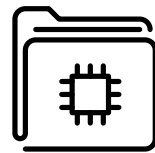


**The risks companies need to assess include:**



**Data security**

Confidential business information sent through unsecured networks and personal devices or accounts poses a significant risk.



**Recordkeeping**

Messages and calls made using third-party apps can present a challenge in terms of retention and/or preservation. Not only does this create risk in internal recordkeeping, but it also puts an organization at a significant disadvantage with external investigators.



**Compliance breaches**

Employees using unmonitored devices and accounts for work leave their organizations exposed to compliance gaps. The SEC found that messages by J.P. Morgan Securities employees hadn't been preserved, and this impacted the SEC's ability to investigate.





# An Evolving Environment for Conduct Risk

The hybrid workplace also opens certain risks for an HR department. The expected behavior, norms, **and culture that were firmly established in the physical workplace** are more challenging to oversee in a new hybrid paradigm. It is a nuance that could expose companies to litigation they never saw coming.

According to legal expert, Adam Rosenthal, forward-thinking leaders must keep an eye on five key trends that will make or break success in the post-pandemic world.



## 1. THE BLURRY LINES OF HYBRID WORK

Workplace harassment happens in the remote world, too. It's important that employers acknowledge this uncomfortable truth and update or reinforce internal reporting protocols to mitigate incidences and any reputational damage or potential legal exposure.

**38%** of employees experience remote harassment through the phone, chat apps, video calls or email.

## 2. POLARIZATION AND WORKPLACE CULTURE

Another consequence of the office exodus is a highly polarized workforce. Offices are typically environments where self-expression is modulated to an employee's bulletin board or desktop. Employees working from home and meeting via video calls, often reveal personal details about their lives and beliefs which are often on display in the background. A lot has happened since people were last together in the office; the U.S. presidential election, global social justice protests, mask mandates, and vaccine policies – all of which bring baggage that must be unpacked and managed within the broader company culture.



### 3. TRUST AND LOYALTY AFTER THE GREAT RESIGNATION

The pandemic shifted how employees prioritize work and their opinions about the companies who employ them. During the early months of the pandemic, as most organizations were facing one existential crisis after the other, millions of employees were told that they were being furloughed, resulting in an unprecedented 13% unemployment rate in the second quarter of 2020. The proverbial tables have now turned. Now there are not enough qualified and willing employees to fill open requisitions, and employees have much more leverage in negotiating the terms and conditions of their employment, while deciding whether to stay where they are, or take their skills to another company. This is another signal that organizations must reevaluate and revamp culture and conduct policies to ensure the commitment and buy-in of a changed workforce.

### 4. DEI AS A MAJOR BUSINESS RISK

Many employees take Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) very seriously and will bring scrutiny to disputes, or even litigate around issues of discrimination. Just a few months ago, hundreds of Netflix employees walked out in protest over a controversial Dave Chapelle special being aired on the streaming platform. To build and maintain a strong DE&I culture, employers should use the opportunities that a reimagined office environment brings to the discussion. Everything from recruiting, hiring, promoting, mentoring, and retaining employees, should contain DE&I elements. Authenticity in DE&I is also paramount. Employees who take DE&I seriously are not interested in hollow promises but are judging their employers on KPIs when it comes to creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment and work culture.

### 5. TIGHTENING PRO-EMPLOYEE REGULATIONS

Employers should prepare for constant flux in employment law for the foreseeable future, with emerging privacy laws, wage, and hour issues and other contentious labor topics demanding quick action on a large scale.



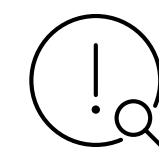


# Communication Is Key

As with all risk, compliance, and employee management issues, the key to proper implementation is communication. As employees work both from home and the office, and more critical topics are shared, it's easy for vital information (and in many cases, legal evidence) to get lost in the shuffle of work and home devices. That's where intelligent archiving and lightning-fast retrieval comes in. Global Relay archives all those meetings and conversations so there's always a digital record.

The pandemic brought on an avalanche of employment litigation at a pace that continues as companies move into a hybrid world. In this highly litigious environment, maintaining a record of electronic communications throughout an organization, from emails to texts and videos, is as important as understanding the context of those conversations. Having a single source of truth, from which data and evidence can be extracted at a moment's notice, goes a long way in mitigating risk when it comes to compliance and security or issues of harassment and discrimination.

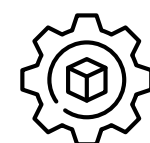
## Improve your organization's risk-readiness in a hybrid world



Identify the potential risks of workstream collaboration content



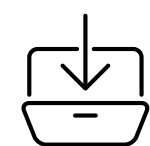
Reassess corporate and regulatory compliance capabilities



Establish clearly defined guidelines and protocols for employees on how to handle sensitive information while working remotely



Budget for the storage/application costs of this increased growth in data from new content sources. Data reduction and life cycle management requirements are growing.



Evaluate vendors who provide Enterprise Information Archiving





# Enterprise Information Archiving

Enterprise information archiving (EIA) will be critical moving forward. It's essential to select an EIA product that supports archive, e-discovery, compliance, and analytics.

According to a recent Gartner report,

**45%** of enterprise customers will conduct supervision of audio/video content to meet compliance requirements by 2025. That's up from only 10% in 2021.

By 2025,

**35%** of enterprise customers will archive workstream collaboration and meeting solutions for non-regulated requirements, increasing more than seven-fold from 2021.

What to look for when assessing vendor solutions:

- Include artificial intelligence/machine learning (AI/ML) as a critical component of an EIA-based solution, based on its ability to automate classification, improve e-discovery and supervision workflows, and enrich content through analytics.
- Look for solutions that align with current business workflows, platform scalability, support of current and future architecture and data strategies.
- Optimize the storage of content sources by including data reduction and life cycle management in the scope of EIA requirements.



About Global Relay

Privately owned and operated with global presence



Private secure cloud

Over 20 years of delivering Software-as-a-Service in our own mirrored data centers



Serving highly regulated industries

financial firms, banks, public companies, insurance, government, healthcare, energy



Beyond compliance and archiving

information governance platform with integrated collaboration and analytics tools to make the most of your organization's data

Global Relay is named a Leader in 2022 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Enterprise Information Archiving. This is the ninth consecutive time Gartner recognizes Global Relay as a Leader.

Global Relay Archive scored highest among vendors in all

4 Use Cases:

- Compliance
- Archive
- E-discovery
- Analytics

OUR RECENT INNOVATIONS:

- Global Relay Messenger offers the archiving of voice calls and recordings, and IM communications, such as SMS and WhatsApp
- Support for financial services compliance requirements, extending into requirements such as trade reconstruction
- Open Connector Network to parse, structure, and convert supported content types to EML, preserving formatting and original metadata
- State-of-the-art Green Data Center: a 200-rack, 5,000 server, 4-Megawatt capacity \$24 million SOC2 audited facility that lowers client energy costs by over 50%
- Use of workspaces provides distinct working areas within the single archive to assign multiple groups to their own user roles, access rights policies and case management, and generates its own event logs, audit trails and reporting
- Integrated AI/ML developed in-house to support compliance supervision, e-discovery, behavioral analytics, sentiment analysis and classify data

20,000+

customers

90+

countries

22

of the top 25  
global banks

+70%

FINRA  
broker-dealers

+70%

SEC  
hedge funds

Trust Global Relay With Their Critical Data



# Conclusion

A hybrid workplace can provide the flexibility employees seek AND the security employers need. Connections between working from the office and working remotely can be stronger, safer, and more productive. Choose a trusted partner that can satisfy HR, IT, Legal, and Compliance without exposing your organization to unnecessary risks.

Welcome to a better new normal.

