

Adoption Campaigns: The Key to Digital Workspace Success

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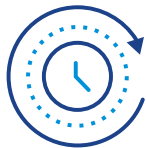
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71%
of the IT leaders surveyed say their organizations depend on IT support for adoption campaigns.



Only 43%
say they have executive sponsors on board.



42%
say early adopters also play a critical role in adoption campaigns.

As organizations increase their use of digital workspaces to support remote and hybrid work environments, they sometimes leave behind one critical element for success: users.

In fact, a new survey of IT leaders by VMware and IDG reveals that the organizations most successful at rolling out new remote work environments do so with users front and center.¹ It's part of a concerted program that defines activities and resources to drive users' engagement through adoption campaigns. The survey shows that these organizations deploy four or more campaign components with a good balance between technology, people and process to drive digital workspace adoption.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the survey also shows that the IT department is critical for successful adoption. In fact, IT's key role goes deeper than simply implementing the new technology. Because the buck stops with them, the IT department is also essential for driving user adoption.

Even so, not every organization leverages user adoption campaigns for technology rollouts, and it's not always by choice.

But this constraint need not hold them back from focusing on end user adoption. Instead, they can cost-effectively employ help from outside the organization. The survey results point to this and other solutions, including involving all stakeholders and tracking key performance indicators (KPIs), as crucial to success.

Why Companies Need Adoption Campaigns

More than three-quarters of employees now want to work from home at least two days a week, according to [McKinsey & Co.](#) There's no doubt that the work world has undergone a profound change, and digital tools for enabling the shift to remote and hybrid work are more critical than ever.

But technologies aren't the only enabler; the transition is cultural as well, and the actual change comes from employees. And while some early adopters readily take to new tools, many need more time and help to get on board. Employees are overwhelmed by the range of new digital tools at their disposal—an average of 2.5 digital workspace solutions, according to the survey. That's where user adoption campaigns come in. Adoption campaigns help employees understand the benefits of new tools and how to make the most of them.

IT, more than any other department, is responsible for the people element in technology rollouts, including driving user adoption of digital workspaces. Reflecting this reality, nearly three-quarters (71 percent) of IT leaders surveyed by VMware and IDG say their organizations depend on IT support for adoption campaigns.

Adoption program teams often see the participation of success owners — those responsible for successful adoption, often from the IT department — as being helpful (named by 40 percent of respondents). Early adopters (named by 42 percent of respondents) may also play significant roles.

1. Based on interviews with 103 ITDMs (Manager level and above) who have deployed digital workspace/ End User Computing software. Conducted Oct. 22-Nov. 12, 2021.

Organizations with mature adoption campaigns have considerably higher rates of fully successful projects.

Mature adoption programs may also benefit from executive support (named by 43 percent of respondents), and support from training (40 percent), marketing/communications (24 percent) and HR leads (21 percent). All of these people represent stakeholders who may not be broadly involved but could nevertheless bring value to the project.

Altogether, companies see the best results with digital workspace deployments that implement formal adoption campaigns. These campaigns aim to communicate the value of new deployments and educate employees while supporting them with their new technology.

Survey respondents with no user adoption campaigns reported low success rates in meeting their adoption goals for digital workspace rollouts. Indeed, they reported low success (26 percent) at more than twice the rate of their peers who used adoption campaigns (only 12 percent). Conversely, nearly nine in 10 respondents (87 percent) with campaigns reported moderate to high success rates in user adoption. And those with mature approaches — that is, with campaigns with at least four distinct components — had a considerably higher rate of fully successful projects (43 percent vs. 29 percent).

Essential Components of an Adoption Campaign: KPIs, Timelines and Enablement

Equally important to having a formal adoption campaign is what goes into it. Companies that see the most success with adoption campaigns start with key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure their objectives.

KPIs are critical to measuring the impact of an end-user computing (EUC) project on the business. And KPIs need to take in more than the traditional technical measurements of a typical technology initiative. They also have to include the crucial people factor.

What's more, with the emergence of the digital workspace, the range of KPIs used to measure the success of an EUC project has evolved to include KPIs that reflect the expectations of all the stakeholders involved, according to a recent VMware [report](#). These include KPIs related to expected business outcomes, employee experience and employee proficiency.

Yet, only 35 percent of respondents include KPIs as a component of campaigns.

The top three KPIs tracked are:



72% Business outcomes



68% Employee experience



56% Number of users onboarded

The third item on the list — the number of users onboarded — also known as platform activation, is a particularly foundational metric. That’s because other significant metrics depend on it, including achievement of desired business outcomes and employee experience goals.

When organizations launch campaigns and for how long are also critical components to success. Nearly all organizations start their adoption campaigns before (53 percent) or concurrently with (43 percent) their technology rollouts. Getting it right depends on careful planning, as reflected in the survey results.

- Most organizations (63 percent) *plan* campaigns for 1-3 months.
- More than a third (44 percent) *run* campaigns equally long, 1-3 months.

The main takeaway: Successful campaigns often require just as much time in the planning phase as in the active period.

The most successful companies also include four or more components in their adoption campaigns, including:



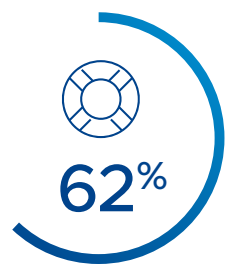
Technical support



Communication strategy



Organizational readiness assessment



Employee resources including FAQs, guides, and tutorials

Organizations with intermediate or advanced campaigns also report more successful end-user adoption (43%) than those with novice campaigns (29%).

Most organizations focus on training IT staff and set up appropriate IT support for users. But the most successful organizations go beyond the basics and also run readiness assessments, curate their communication strategy and provide users with effective enablement resources.

Education and Communications: Keys to Success

More than a third of surveyed organizations (35 percent) cite a lack of budget and other resources as the reason for not implementing a formal adoption campaign, making it the most-cited reason.

In a related finding, most companies (58 percent) see support from their digital workspace vendors as critical to supporting end-user adoption. The message is clear: Vendors can play a crucial role in picking up the slack for beleaguered IT departments that may not have the resources to take on yet another project and do it justice.

Effective adoption campaigns require promotion and a variety of enablement and support options. But not all IT organizations have access to the marketing and communication resources required.

As organizations roll out workspace software, they must ensure that users know about, understand, and actually work with the new tools.

On the other hand, the software provider may be ideally positioned to help their customers articulate the value of a digital workspace tool for end-users.

Most respondents (60 percent) named training for end users as one of the most-desired functions for vendors in helping support adoption. IT leaders also look to digital workspace vendors to provide in-product guidance (named by 44 percent of respondents), enablement resources and materials (41 percent) and guidance on how to develop an adoption campaign (36 percent).

Email, used by 94 percent of respondents, is king for getting the word out to users. Fewer than half (44 percent) leverage their company's intranet, and 40 percent use webinars.

As for what materials companies send over those channels, FAQs top the list, named by 76 percent of respondents. Enrollment guides come in second (44 percent), followed by links to websites providing further information (44 percent), onboarding instructions (44 percent) and how-to videos (38 percent).

Conclusion

The rise of remote and hybrid work has accelerated the adoption of digital workspaces to help employees and their organizations stay in sync. As organizations roll out workspace software, they must ensure that users know about, understand and actually work with the new tools. And, as with the deployments themselves, the work of ensuring adoption often falls on IT departments already juggling competing priorities.

Fortunately, VMware customers can meet their adoption goals even on limited resources by following best practices, including looking to VMware for additional support.

Learn more about how to run a successful adoption campaign at <https://www.vmware.com/products/workspace-one/end-user-adoption.html>.

