Introducing a new type of DaaS

Device-as-a-service is a model for the future of work

Device-as-a-service – the enabler of the future of work

The world of work is changing, and to keep pace businesses need to deploy technology, in the right way, to support their workforces.

This change is also bringing new challenges, from deploying the right infrastructure and managing legacy processes, to supporting new user experiences and improving talent attraction and retention.

Solving them requires the deployment of digital workspaces, enabled by a device-as-a-service (DaaS) model. This is a new approach to procuring, accessing, and provisioning the devices employees need, while ensuring business needs are met, creates a flexibility for companies to move away from long-term purchasing cycles in favor of month-long leases and improved sustainability ratings.

The demands of the future of work

Businesses are being challenged to move away from one-size fits all working models. Changing expectations, continued disruption around being in the office and conflicting data on the positives and negatives about different ways of working are challenging conventional thinking. This is a part of a drive to better equip and increase the productivity of knowledge workers.

"Knowledge worker productivity is the biggest of the 21st Century management challenges."
Management Challenges for the 21st Century, Peter Drucker

Employers are increasingly being forced to look at new ways to provide devices and tools to support employees in their roles, as workers themselves search for greater variation in where they do their jobs. Globally, 76% of knowledge workers are looking for added flexibility in where they work.[1]

The challenge is immense. Employers that get it right will be able to connect with new talent pools by offering more remote working opportunities; re-engage with employees by enabling more flexible working; right size physical presences; and align technology to the task for greater levels of productivity.

Or, as Holly Muscolino, research vice president for content and process strategies and the future of work at IDC, put it in the introduction to the analyst's Future of Work predictions, "As digital enterprises move from hybrid workforces by circumstance to hybrid by design, we will see the evolution of both physical and digital workspaces, innovative learning styles, and a new approach to leadership, ultimately driving innovation as well as productivity, a better worker experience, and business resiliency." [2]

Read on to find out how to get the most from this new approach.

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Recognizing and overcoming challenges

A new era of work does signals a new era of challenges. With an increase in workforces not coming into the office as much, how do you ensure employees have secure access to the technology that they need to do their jobs?

How can you support both the newly remote (i.e., knowledge workers) and those that have never been based in the office (such as field or production and manufacturing staff), without adding to workloads or overstretched corporate networks?

This is a challenge known as a dancing landscape of requirements, and it isn't just a technical question; it's an HR issue too. With more opportunities, employees are far more mobile, and attracting the right talent costs more. Why would you invest in an exemplary recruitment process and experience if the first days and weeks of onboarding are not as inspirational? Mounting anecdotal evidence suggests new joiners are prepared to walk away if the IT on-boarding experience isn't right, and with more employees initially joining virtually, getting the technology in place to improve first day retention is critical.

This extends to existing talent as well. A Gartner study noted that "organizations that offer employees flexibility over when, where and how much they work, see 55% of their work force as high performers." [3]

Then there's the cost and logistics complexity of getting technology to workforces. Are your IT teams set up to operate as door-to-door supply chains, whether delivering a new device-like unboxing moment for new starters or getting the right replacement kit to existing employees?

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User adoption and support issues

A more remote workforce also requires technology that just plugs and plays. With less opportunity for face-to-face instruction, organizations run a significant risk of low or under adoption of critical applications and services. Users may only use the bare minimum of features, relying on instruction from peers (which could well be based on older systems and processes) to provide more effective training than theory-focused workshops delivered by central IT teams.

Answering the question of what happens when it goes wrong is also critical. Most traditional IT support desks are ticket-based, with service level agreements that focus on infrastructure rather than user experience. The focus is on prioritizing urgency – if an individual's problem only affects this single user then it is less likely to be resolved quickly. The SLA is intact but the user is and their tasks are frustrated.

Addressing security and procurement issues

Security is also a major concern. The pandemic period has decentralized endpoint connections at a scale never before seen, creating significant issues for businesses. However, trying to extend the office network by using Virtual Private Network (VPN) solutions has proved expensive, difficult to manage and frustrating for both administrators and users. This leaves enterprises with a security challenge at such a scale that endpoint protection platform was the second-fastest growing segment of the worldwide security market in 2020, according to Gartner. [4]

A more permanent switch demands a new approach to protecting corporate networks, data and applications.

Those apps may be cloud-native; equally they may be part of the legacy landscape, anchored in on-premises infrastructure and not designed to be accessed by any device from anywhere. But legacy can be as much a process as it can an app or system. The actual procurement of devices and technology can be rooted in legacy thinking. Think of three- or five-year buying cycles – at the beginning of a cycle, you might require 10,000 laptops and mobile phones, and your procurement process requires you to buy them.

Any changes to that requirement within this procurement cycle must be workarounds – handed down devices if people leave or move and are replaced, with your employees expected to adapt if circumstances change. It all contributes to a less than optimum experience.

Finally, there are environmental concerns. Procuring devices adds them to a company's asset list, and must be considered when look at environmental, social and governance efforts.

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The digital workspace in the modern workplace

What you need is a digital workspace – a way of using technology to manage the devices, apps and data to support employees to work however they see fit or meets their needs.

The goal is to deliver the same experience (and applications and data) irrespective of location or even device, in a secure manner.

It's an overhaul of how technology supports working environments – the foundations of new approaches to working, whether that's fully remote, hybrid or in new, collaborative-focused offices.

Device-as-a-service: a consumption model for anywhere working

The device-as-a-service concept is not new, but it is needed now. The pandemic has accelerated the demand to facilitate new approaches to working. The question is, how will it be delivered in such a way that businesses can deploy it successfully?

What's needed is a new approach to procurement and provision, based on consumption of resources, rather than ownership. A 'pay for what you use' model to include the virtual desktop, workplace portal and the device itself. All able to flex on a 30-day notice period.

So, moving away from multi-year deals to a shared risk approach. One where the device is no longer owned by you as a business but remains the property of the supplier. This lease model not only gives greater flexibility, allowing business to respond to changes in the market or organizational design. It also helps off-set carbon footprints as the device does not sit on the customer's asset register. However, this does mean that you have a responsibility to ensure that the recycling and disposal of devices is handled to the appropriate standard by the supplier.

For IT, the complexity of physical logistics and delivery is handled by suppliers, with tech teams able to focus on provisioning the apps and services that meet the needs of users.

For users, they receive new devices of their choice, not handed down laptops set up to other people's preferences.

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Application delivery

But this isn't just about devices or endpoints; getting apps and services to devices is just as critical. Deploying a customizable portal, based on a platform like VMware Workspace ONE or Microsoft Intune, provides access to all the apps an employee needs. It means a consistent experience across devices, with the portal optimized across PC, tablet and mobile devices. There's no need to replicate the "Start menu" experience, and therefore no lock-in to Windows if it isn't required.

IT teams can manage access to apps based on detailed user personas, ensuring security without hampering user choice when it comes to how they wish to work.

This DaaS model brings the familiarity of consuming cloud-based services, which both enterprise and individual have grown use to over the last few years, to a way of working that previously relied upon virtual desktops to enable flexibility.

It's a self-service world. Employees can provision their own apps and devices; they can also start to fix their own issues, moving away from support desks and infrastructure-focused SLAs to self-service help, frequently asked questions and forums, guided by intelligent search in the portal.

The difference between workspace and workplace

In discussions on the future of work, the terms digital workspace and digital workplace often appear. While similar, they have distinct meanings.

The digital workspace is an approach, one that seeks to centralize managing applications, data and endpoints/devices while allowing users to collaborate and work wherever they choose – in effect, bringing to life any device, any location. The focus is on self-service, whereby the experience is consistent across platforms, locations and devices, while still being secure and overseen by enterprise IT teams.

The digital workplace is about using technology, people and processes to improve overall efficiency and drive business objectives. If offices are the physical places people work, the digital workplace is the digital layer that enables them to work in the way that best suits them.

While different, both digital workspace and digital workplaces are inextricably linked, with the deployment of the latter ultimately requiring the use of the former to fully realize its potential.

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What the new DaaS means for…

Daas can deliver benefits across the company for both employees and your business. We explain how.

What DaaS means for your employees

It's a high-quality, personal experience, that allows them to choose and use the devices they want, working wherever they want. No longer having to make do or put up with workarounds, both new joiners and existing employees can enjoy new device unboxing excitement, ready to go as soon as the device is connected to the Internet.

Personal and corporate data remains fully secure without compromising the ease of use, thanks to centrally managed app updates that require little to no employee action.

In addition, artificial intelligence and self-service combine to help fix issues. The portal can help users learn about new applications and how to solve problems themselves without involving IT, all while avoiding the effective yet potentially out of date knowledge of unofficial super users in their own teams.

This means users are upskilling themselves without increasing the burden on IT, and at the same time ensuring the adoption of new technology, applications and services. Team competency levels increase, and with it comes an individual sense of empowerment, as well as improved productivity levels.

What DaaS means for you as a business

DaaS offers you major benefits – an advantage in the war for talent, a step forward in improving productivity, improved security through better device support and more flexible financing options.

With talent, there is the opportunity of an improved onboarding experience that helps to quickly engage new joiners and reduce churn in the first days and weeks.

You can boost engagement through enhanced worker productivity, as employees are able to acquire and configure the tools they need to do their jobs effectively, rather than fit into a one-size-fits-all, desktop-focused box. With engagement comes retention and a reduction in churn.

In addition, if you are able to align device type to roles and scale up and down the devices needed as operational demands evolve, you not only drive better productivity but also ensure you only pay for what's required and actually used, rather than what has been forecasted or predicted.

This can all be achieved without ceding complete control – through the portal, devices and apps can be supported centrally, with access to apps and, most importantly, data determined by personas and user profiles.

What we mean by DaaS

The acronym DaaS is already well known within end-user computing circles. Commonly referring to desktop-as-a-service, it is focused on delivering the desktop experience to the user, using virtual desktops over the Internet on a per-user license, with hardware on a 36 month hire purchase agreement.

Where this new concept of device-as-a-service differs is that it combines the hardware, a workplace portal and the virtual desktop on a new consumption-based model. It reflects the user requirement to get work done in the way that suits them, whether that's based on their preferred device, their location at that time or the actual work itself, rather than taking that physical office experience and replicating their desktop on different devices.
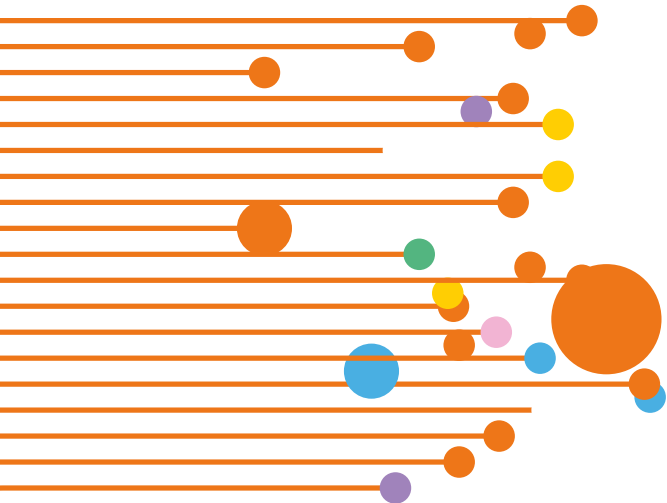
Choosing the right supplier

Of course, to deliver all this requires suppliers and providers aligned with new approaches to device use and consumption, with the appropriate technical knowledge and resource to support every aspect of the new DaaS-enabled digital workspace.

Orange Business Services has developed this unique device consumption model to meet the demands of delivering devices, apps, services and data to employees in a way that fits with the evolving future of work.

It builds on our knowledge and understanding of the impact of changing working behaviors. The end-to-end offering that combines our expertise in cloud and unified communications and collaboration to cover everything from the delivery of services and use of devices (with DaaS) to the technical needs of workspaces designed to accommodate hybrid and flexible working models.
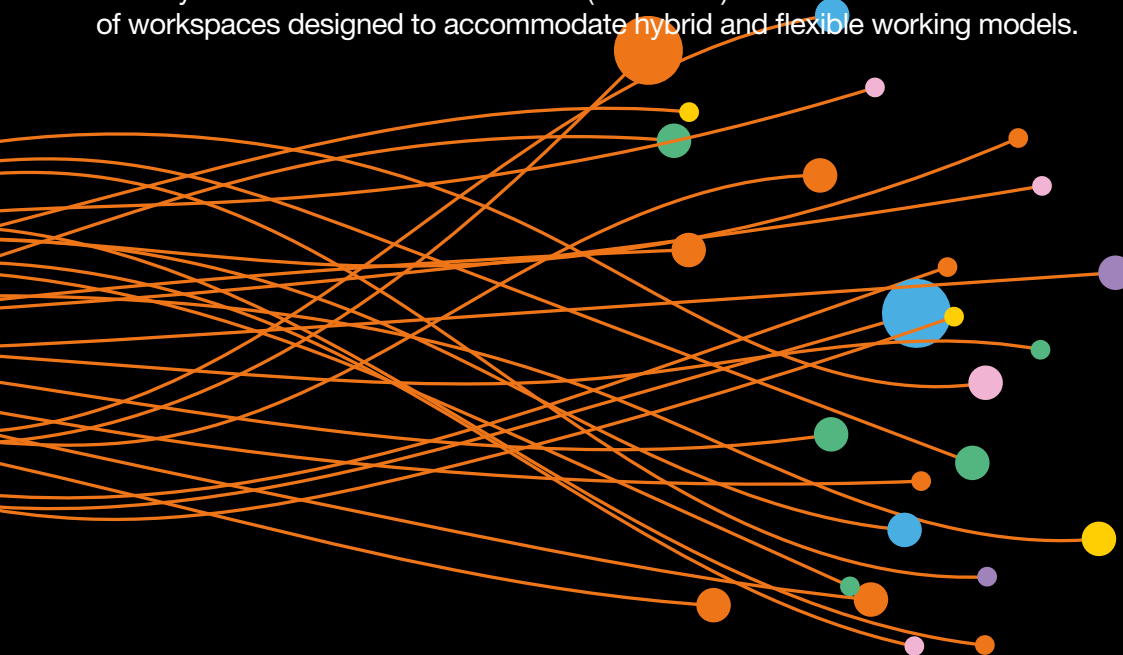
User-centric approach

In addition, our user-centric approach means a shift from service level agreements to experience level agreements, meaning you can expect support that meets the needs of employees, delivered via self-service and self-provisioning, rather than a model that suits the supplier's margins.

While it is all backed by the Orange commitment to experienced, fast service, users only interact with support teams when absolutely necessary. Instead, they can call upon advanced self-service, software adoption technologies and AI bots that allow them to be more productive.

This could not be achieved without our partners. The customizable platform that connects physical devices to the apps and services employees want can be deployed via leading systems, whether VMware Workspace ONE or Microsoft Intune, while cloud services can be tailored to enterprise requirements, be it VMware on AWS, VMware on Google Cloud or Microsoft Azure.

To manage logistics and distribution of devices, we work with Westcoast, a leading distributor with extensive experience and capabilities to deliver the device employees want, whether Windows, Linux, MacOS, Android, Chromebook. It is backed by a robust environmental policy aligned with UN Sustainable Development Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production and meeting the relevant regulations around the responsible use and recycling of packaging, energy consumption, use and disposal.

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Free consultation

Sign up for a free consultation where we'll discuss your challenges, the latest digital workspace innovations and map out a draft for your digital workspace transformation journey.

How it works

1 Innovation consultancy
Our innovation coaches are ready to give you free advice for two hours (online/in person). Learn how to shape a future-proof digital workspace that gives your organization a long-term competitive advantage.

2 Persona investigation
Any solution needs to be focused on the user, which means understanding the types of users within the organization, how they work, what tools they currently use and the processes which affect them.

3 Application landscape assessment
Once you know your user, it's time to understand the applications that enable them to perform their role. An application landscape assessment helps to map every service in use so that any investment in a DaaS approach or a digital workspace covers all the relevant applications.

Why Orange

At Orange, we combine our years of experience as a network leader with a complete understanding of the challenges of digital transformation. Along with more than twenty years partnering with the world's leading technology vendors, we also employ a range of specialists globally, covering everything from networking and security to unified communications and collaboration.

Our commitment to meet the needs of customers is highlighted by our unique DaaS service. We listened to what customers wanted, and developed a new approach to procurement and provision, based on consumption of resources, rather than ownership.

We took the flexible cloud consumption model and extended this 'pay for what you use' model to include the virtual desktop, workplace portal and the device itself. All able to flex on a 30-day notice period.

Our team includes thought leaders and strong working relationships with the market leaders supported by the strength of Orange Business Services.

- 📋 **3,400+ Service desk experts**
- 🎧 **550+ Certified contact center experts**
- 🎓 **2,400 Data intelligence experts**
- 👤 **600+ Consultants**
- 🌐 **500+ Service providers managed**

Contact us

If you would like to hear more about how we can help your transition to a digital workspace, or the role device-as-a-service would play in your organization, please contact us at:

https://www.orange-business.com/en/any-request

For more information visit:

https://www.orange-business.com/en/solutions/collaborative-workspace

Sources:

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