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SOLUTION PAPER

Transforming to a Digital workplace with enhanced user experience

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Preface

In the digital age, the term, “Workplace” is no longer a physical office space where employees work on enterprise data and tools for a designated number of hours. Today’s connected world has enabled employees and organizations to connect and share knowledge beyond a fixed framework through unprecedented modes of communication.

The Digital workplace is business strategy that promotes employee agility and productivity through a consumerized work environment. This paper explores the changing demands of the modern workplace and how Microland's workplace solutions for enterprises enable the transformation to a Digital workplace.

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What is a Digital workplace?

The digital workplace is a business strategy that promotes employee agility and productivity through a consumerized work environment. The philosophy of the Digital workplace is to incorporate elements of business processes, technology, and workplace culture to foster higher productivity and agility to enable:

- A **collaborative** environment for users to communicate, interact and share data in the widest variety of ways from the widest variety of locations.
- **User experience** applications that work across a wide range of device types, screen sizes and input/output (I/O) modes, as well as deliver the appropriate user experience.
- **Self-service** or self-help culture within the organization

According to the 2012 Deloitte report titled "The Digital workplace," the workplace model represents all the tools and technologies that employees use to complete their work. This can range from HR and business applications to diverse tools used for e-mail, instant messaging, web-based conferencing, virtual meetings and so on.

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Emergence of the Digital workplace

With the increasing consumerization of IT, consumer technologies including instant messaging and personal email have penetrated the enterprise. Today's employees (particularly the millennial generation) are more proficient with these technology tools. An increasing number of Gen Y workers prefer the same ease-of-use with their work-related technology tools, as with any of their personal or consumer-related experiences.

The gradual retirement of the baby boomer generation along with the emergence of the multi-generation workforce is driving significant demographic changes in the modern workplace. With technological progress in internet-enabled devices, organizations are shifting towards increased digitalization to achieve employee satisfaction, along with achieving higher productivity at lower costs.

Shift from device-centric to user experience-centric work environments

Modern workplaces are undergoing a silent transformation. Traditionally, the IT function of any organization focused on the device-centric model of providing the necessary infrastructure to their employees to perform their work. IT devices typically comprised of resources including printers, desktops and software tools. Employees were expected to deliver productivity by working in this controlled device-centric environment and had little say when it came to the choice of the technology.

Increased personalization and consumerization of IT have provided digital empowerment to the modern workforce, who expect the same level of user experience in their work, as with any external IT-enabled services.

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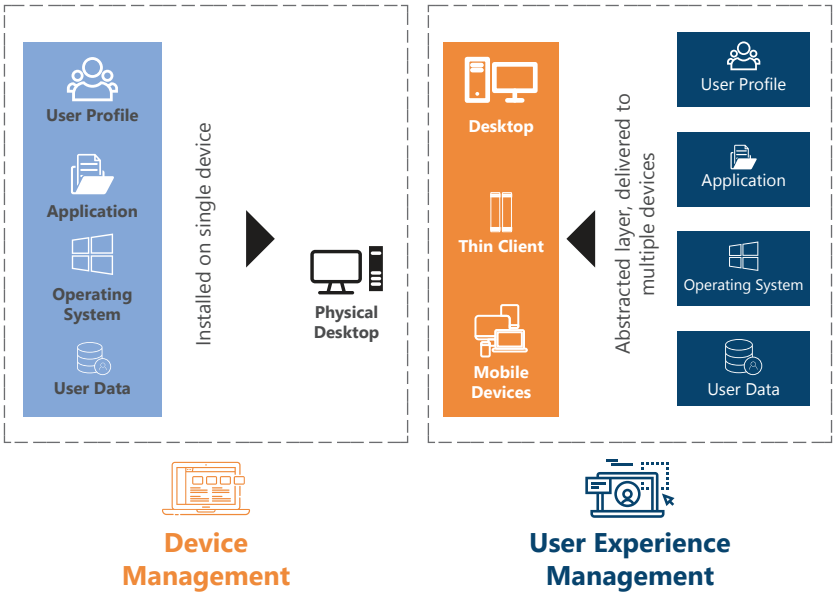

Source : Microland.com

In the traditional device-centric model of management, employee work and productivity were restricted to the PC, which was owned and controlled by the company's IT department, leading to a restricted and "locked-down" model of management.

Device-centric management is not suited for the modern digital workplace, for the following reasons:

- The rise of the millennials in the work force, who are more proficient in the use of technology and demand similar experiences at workplace
- The collapse of workplace boundaries

The user experience-centric model of management focuses on the user and enables common user accounts and profiles for multiple devices and solutions. The user-centric model delivers the infrastructural flexibility for employees to access their apps and data anytime, anywhere. This model allows users mobility across multiple devices and operating systems. Users can also install apps of their choice on their personal devices. Using enterprise-level app stores, business data can be delivered seamlessly across devices and users. This device-independent user environment is centrally-managed and also ensures security for corporate data including emails, proprietary files, and applications installed and running on multiple user devices.

Transformational Digital workplace technology

The Digital workplace can be achieved with the implementation of technologies that enable employee productivity in the workplace. Depending on the organization's requirement, the framework for a Digital workplace consists of the following key drivers:

Source : Microland.com

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Enhancing employee communication and collaboration
Powered by cloud technology, this component empowers the employees to connect, collaborate and communicate with others. The objective of these technologies is to foster productive business relationships among digital workers, along with enabling fast and seamless knowledge sharing across groups.

Enabling a self-service culture
Self-service applications (or portals) that allows employees easy access to business applications are a key component of the Digital workplace framework. Self-service tools include enterprise-level app store and chat-based support.

Provisioning anywhere and anytime device access
This component allows employees to access business tools and data while they are away from the office or physical workplace. Apart from the personal smartphone, anywhere and anytime devices include VDIs and cloud-based remote desktop configuration.

Enabling seamless data access across devices
The emergence of cloud computing platforms allows companies to store their business data securely on the cloud to be accessed from multiple devices. Private cloud platforms not only improve productivity and data security, but also reduce operating and maintenance costs.

Enhancing user experience
The increasing adoption of personal devices including smartphones and tablets in the workplace has made companies rethink their infrastructure capabilities based on employee and business needs. Through better connectivity and bandwidth availability, employees nowadays are exposed to superior user experiences in their non-work environments and hence expect high-quality IT services.

> "Over 88% of the companies allow the use of personal devices for their workforce. 90% of the companies are planning investments in productivity boosting technologies for their employees, including advanced video conferencing facilities and voice activation.
>
> A Teknion company survey"

Organizations and the Digital workplace

With the long-term benefits of the digital workplace outweighing the costs, companies are increasingly shifting towards adopting this workplace model. According to a survey conducted by Teknion, over 88% of the companies allow the use of personal devices for their workforce. 90% of the companies are planning investments in productivity-boosting technologies for their employees, including advanced videoconferencing facilities and voice activation. Companies also view the digital workplace as a cost saving investment, with savings ranging up to 30%.

Organizations seeking to transform to a digital workplace, face several challenges that need to be addressed to maximize the benefits of the available technologies:

Employee communication
According to the Digital Workplace Communications Survey conducted by PRSA in 2016, around 97% of the companies still depend on the use of email tools as the primary mode of communication among peers and from company to employees. While the use of email and messaging applications have their benefits, it also adds to employee frustration of having to sift and search for relevant information through the loads of email messages that they receive.

Lean and efficient collaboration and communication tools provides more effective means of employee communication with the easy availability of work-specific documents, conversations, and tasks. This leads to a higher degree of employee engagement and productivity.

Organization culture
In the coming years competitive advantage for many organizations will depend on their workforce's ability to utilize digital technology for business needs. The Digital workplace must provide the necessary environment and productivity tools for employees to bring value and creativity into their daily work. This requires organizations to promote a work culture based on risk taking and creativity in place of traditional risk management practices.

Implementation of a productive Digital workplace environment depends on the availability of seamless productivity tools and technology for employees, instead of isolated and stand-alone applications that reduce employee productivity. In addition, mobility is key to ensure efficient communication among employees across a range of personal devices.

Data and system security risks
The Digital workplace model challenges organizations to rethink their data and system security. This is particularly critical due to the loss of IT control over the infrastructure and applications used for work and access to external applications by end users.

Organizations face the challenge of constant re-evaluation of their security systems to prevent external cyberattacks, along with addressing internal security threats through the implementation of an efficient BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) policy.

> "Implementation of a productive Digital workplace environment depends on the availability of seamless productivity tools and technology for employees, instead of isolated and stand-alone applications"

In the next section, we share Microland's strategy around providing the right IT solutions to enable their customers in their transformational journey.

How Microland enables your Digital workplace transformation

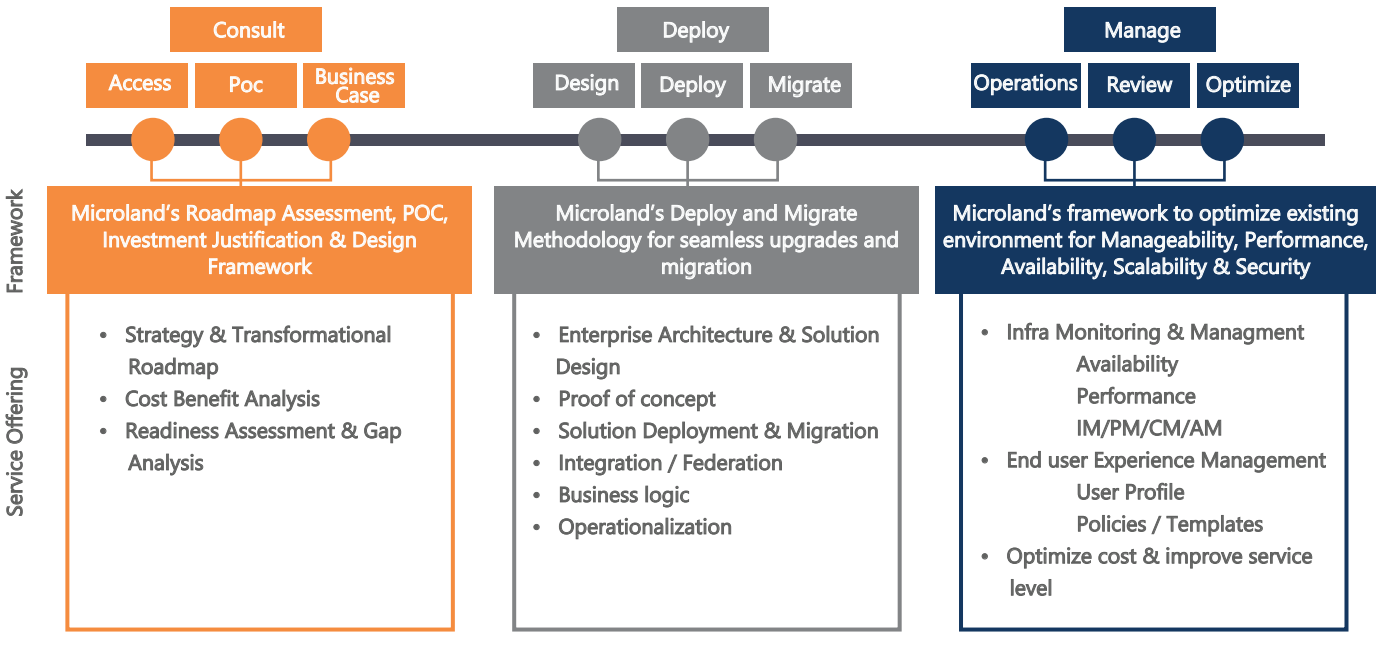
Overview

Microland has the expertise and experience of delivering IT-as-a-service solutions to a range of customers with the right technology and at the right cost.

With nearly two decades of designing and implementing solutions in workplace management, Microland adds customer value by:

- Providing a range of technology offerings from online messaging to user mobility through strategic partnerships with global leaders including Microsoft, Citrix and VMWare. Microland's technical expertise is extended to solutions including desktop management, cloud implementation, application delivery and service desk support.
- Ensuring smooth and seamless transformation to a Digital workplace model through a robust framework and a change management methodology that fits the organization's culture.
- Investments in innovative NextGen technologies, along with implementation of NextGen solutions for clients through strategic partnerships with OEMs and ISVs.

The figure below illustrates Microland's approach towards infrastructure modernization for their clients.



Source : Microland.com

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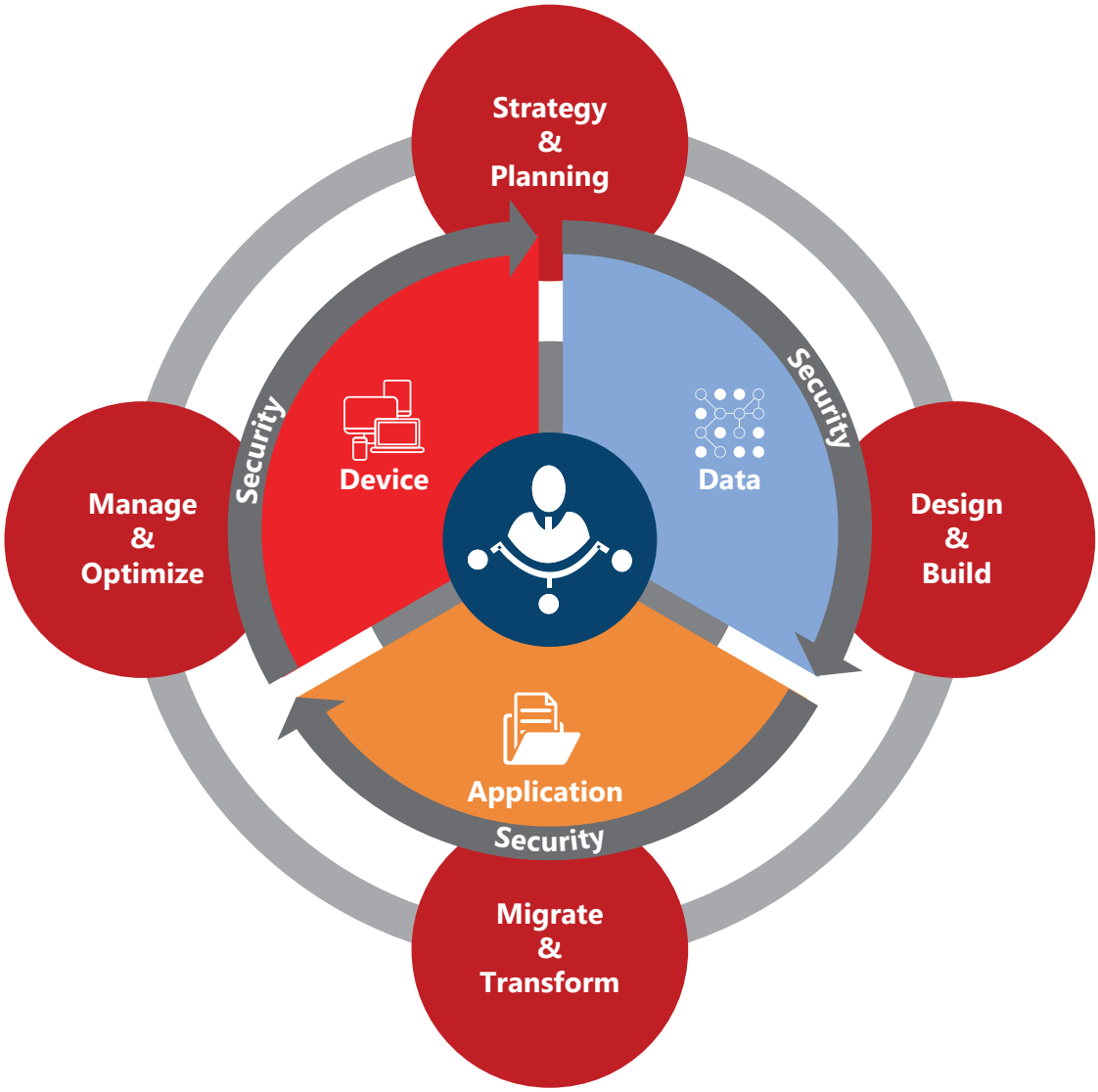
A comprehensive end-to-end environment modernization strategy is critical for enterprises to ensure a smooth and seamless transformation to a Digital workplace.

With their End User Environment Modernization Services, Microland enables enterprises:

- Transform legacy environments to dynamic and flexible digital environments with optimum performance across multiple devices.
- Safeguard organizations' data from security threats and leaks.
- Flexibly choose a user operating system to incorporate a variety of user profiles and business needs.
- Maintain consistency in user experience (UX) across multiple devices.



Source : Microland.com

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Microland Service Offering

Microland recognizes that different enterprises could be in different stages of their workplace transformation journey and have different priorities for their transformation. The company has built a comprehensive portfolio of services to address each component of the workplace transformation lifecycle:

Workplace modernization – *Strategy and planning for the digital workplace*
Most analysts recommend a 12-month timeline for planning, design and deployment of modern workplace solutions like Windows 10. Microland has leveraged its experience in workplace services to build a set of tools and frameworks including automated readiness checks, factory-based compatibility assessments, standardized planning frameworks, industrialized large scale deployment capabilities, zero-touch migration and a strong project governance framework that address each aspect of the modernization process.

> “Most analysts recommend a 12-month timeline for planning, design and deployment of modern workplace solutions like Windows 10”

BYOD enablement - *Anywhere, any device, secure access through best in class mobility platforms*
For enterprises that are planning on enabling BYOD, looking to deploy a suitable BYOD solution or manage their environment, Microland provides a set of BYOD services through mobility and VDI platforms. These services are enabled by readiness assessment and policy definition tools, a proprietary VDI implementation framework, operationalize VDI and a BYOD implementation and management solution, SmartMPaaS.

Self-service - *Enabling self-support & app store through service desk & desktop management*
While service desk and desktop management have been an integral part of the workplace, modern enterprises are choosing a more consumerized app-store driven experience for their employees. This has led to a proliferation of issues along with an end user expectation to be able to manage simple problems with their own device. Microland’s service desk and desktop management services enable this self-support culture through a self-service portal powered by its in-house platform, SmartCenter. This enables employees solve simple problems like password reset with simple one-click solutions and easy access to its knowledge engine.

Cloud based messaging - *Making workplace collaboration easier with O365 collaboration platform*
The underlying premise of workplace modernization is to improve employee productivity and collaboration platforms like O365 are key to achieving this. However, moving to the O365 platform is often challenging. 80% of organizations struggle to fully utilize their investments in cloud and enable user adoption beyond Exchange. Microland provides a comprehensive set of planning, deployment and management services that provide seamless deployment and high user adoption with shorter timelines and lower costs. These services are supported by a migration factory with templatized processes that improve quality of service while crunching timelines.

Seamless access - *Allowing easy access to enterprise data from any device in a secure manner*
The impact of flexibility provided by BYOD and collaboration enabled by O365 would be limited without the ability to share and access enterprise data across devices and locations. Microland’s Enterprise File Share and Sync (EFSS) services provide a secure mode of sharing, backing-up and accessing data across multiple devices. These services are powered by a set of cloud-based tools to provide secure backup and securely transfer files of any size and type with employees, customers and partners.

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Customer Benefits

Microland's solutions for Digital workplace management management provides the following customer benefits:

- Enhanced user experience with improvements in response time ranging from 70% to 90%. Microland has achieved this through:
  - Implementing a self-service framework for users
  - Enabling workflow automation
  - Customer support channels using chat and social media support

- Improved agility in the migration methodology, ensuring that Windows 10 migration is completed in 35% lesser time with 15% cost savings. Microland has achieved this through:
  - Assessment of Windows 10 compatibility to prevent migration issues
  - Enabling self-service mechanisms for users to schedule the migration process
  - Automation of the migration process, along with live migration dashboards for updates

- Cost effectiveness with the operationalization framework ensuring faster deployment and increased user adoption of the mobility and VDI services. Microland has achieved this through:
  - Clear policy definition and implementation
  - Efficient user communication and training
  - Enhanced customer satisfaction management
  - Assurance of end user privacy
  - Complete usage tracking and metering

> "Microland is among the major contenders in the "Workplace Services Market Trends and PEAK Matrix™ Assessment: "End Users are No Less than Customers!" report published by the Everest Group."

Industry recognition and customer implementation

Microland has featured among the major contenders in the "Workplace Services – Market Trends and PEAK Matrix™ Assessment: "End Users are No Less than Customers!" report published by the Everest Group.

Microland has enabled a global customer to migrate more than 200,000 mailboxes with over 30GB of archive data to Microsoft Office 365 cloud-based service. Challenges faced in this project included:

- Large volume of mailboxes of clients spread across different industries.
- Scheduling and implementing a seamless mailbox replication and migration.
- Unpredictable mail inflows from multiple customers.
- More than 30GB of mail archive data.

Microland completed the entire mailbox migration in just 6 months. The tools used for leveraging included Powershell, ISW, and Microsoft SharePoint.

Another Microland solution to a Fortune 20 conglomerate improved its Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) score for mobility users to an impressive 4.85 out of 5, and reduced the overall cost of mobility management. The company had over 125,000 global users with a diverse multi-vendor mobility environment, including Blackberry, AirWatch, MobileIron and EAS. Microland's unique approach to mobile infrastructure management led to an optimized cloud-based solution with better end-user experience.

Conclusion

An efficient Digital workplace technology solution enables enterprises to unleash productivity from the limitations of physical spaces and tools. Enterprises that will be the success stories of tomorrow will need to break down the barriers between their people, physical workplaces and the technologies in use.

This paper presents the technology components for implementing a Digital workplace strategy in any organization through Microland solutions.

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About the author

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Raj Kumar Thakur has over 17 years of experience in the IT Infrastructure Management space and has played various roles in Service Creation, Service Delivery, Service Management Consulting and Solution Engineering. As Senior Director & Practice Lead –End User Services Practice, he is responsible for building service capabilities in the areas of Digital Workplace, Cloud based messaging & collaboration and NextGen End user support ecosystem. As part of this role Raj is responsible for bringing innovative ideas and initiatives that sets out to improve the employee experience with various technology solutions.

In his previous roles in Microland he was responsible for building service capabilities in Cloud and Mobility area. He has also led ITSM consulting practice for Microland with focus on IT Operation Strategy Consulting, ITIL & ISO 20000 Consulting services.

He is a certified ITIL® V3 Expert with very strong IT operations and ITSM consulting background and has successfully taken many global organizations through their IT service improvement journeys.

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About Microland

Microland is a leading Hybrid IT Infrastructure Service Provider and a trusted partner to enterprises in their IT-as-a-Service journey. Incorporated in 1989 and headquartered in Bangalore, India, Microland has more than 3,600 professionals across its offices in Europe, Middle East, North America and India. Microland enables global enterprises to become more agile and innovative through a comprehensive portfolio of services that addresses hybrid IT transformation, workspace transformation, service transformation and end-to-end IT infrastructure management.

Learn more about us at:

www.microland.com