Performance Gaps and Winning Strategies

Unisys Digital Workplace Insights Report 2025

unisys

This report was produced by

FT LONGITUDE

Introduction

As organizations strive for growth in a challenging economic environment, every investment decision counts. Business leaders across industries are all asking the same question:

Which workplace technology investments actually drive growth, keep employees productive and deliver competitive advantage?

New research from Unisys reveals a clear divide. Some organizations are thriving — exceeding revenue targets, outperforming on innovation and keeping employees satisfied. Others are falling behind. What separates them?

Our research identifies two distinct groups of organizations with dramatically different approaches and outcomes — and a clear winning strategy.

Who are the Productivity Leaders?

Productivity Leaders are organizations that, regardless of market conditions, have continued to navigate the digital workplace services environment successfully.

To qualify as a Productivity Leader, organizations had to meet four criteria:

- Exceed expectations on workforce productivity
- Rank employee productivity as a top key performance indicator (KPI) for measuring return on investment (ROI)
- See improvement in day-to-day productivity
- Lose less than three hours of productivity time a month to technology issues and downtime (the average is four hours)

These 106 organizations are growing faster, innovating more and keeping employees happier than their competitors. What separates them? They're moving faster on AI adoption, asking employees what they need and measuring success by human outcomes instead of just uptime metrics. Meanwhile, 137 organizations are doing the opposite — these are the Late Adopters, and they're falling behind.

The performance gap is staggering

2x

Productivity Leaders are twice as likely as Late Adopters to exceed sales and revenue expectations (65% compared with 33%).

91%

of Productivity Leaders outperform on product and service innovation, compared with 17% of Late Adopters.

98%

of Productivity Leaders have improved cybersecurity, compared with 42% of Late Adopters.

99%

of Productivity Leaders have improved ROI, compared with 41% of Late Adopters.

Innovation Leaders think differently about technology

While economic uncertainty ranks as the number one barrier preventing greater investment in digital workplace services, and managing budgets remains important, the findings show that commitment pays off.

In total, 70% of executives already recognize that digital workplace services are critical to their long-term business resilience, so organizations must find a balance — prioritizing strategic investment that delivers measurable returns.

Defining digital workplace services

Digital workplace services create an integrated environment designed to foster collaboration, enhance employee engagement and agility and harness advanced technologies for optimal productivity. This ecosystem seamlessly combines various applications, data, devices and services, which work in unison to offer a streamlined and empowering digital experience.

Five ways Productivity Leaders are pulling ahead

87%

of Productivity Leaders say that generative AI plays a critical role in ensuring business continuity during tech downtime, compared with only 35% of Late Adopters.

92%

say that generative AI reduces the burden on IT teams, compared to 42% of Late Adopters.

76%

have increased investment in generative AI in the past 12 months, compared with just 32% of Late Adopters.

93%

plan to accelerate AI business transformation in the coming year, compared with only 38% of Late Adopters.

91%

are experimenting with agentic AI to see how it can augment traditional support models, compared with only 20% of Late Adopters.

Section 1

AI-enabled support cuts downtime

No matter how robust systems and processes are, service disruptions are impossible to eliminate entirely. And when downtime happens, productivity slumps. IT teams often struggle to respond to downtime fast enough to offset costly delays for customers. But AI is changing the game and offering organizations a solution.

Generative AI does not have working hours or a time zone and can respond to events as soon as they happen. It can also automatically summarize and triage tickets according to urgency, which makes it easier for human agents to prioritize cases and get employees back to work.

There are also benefits for IT teams, who are often stretched and under pressure to reduce the impact of downtime. Again, Productivity Leaders understand this: 92% say that generative AI–powered support systems have reduced the burden on IT teams, compared with just 42% of Late Adopters.

AI also has the potential to prevent incidents in the first place. Australian construction and property development company Built uses AI for predictive monitoring and analytics, according to Kurt Brissett, Built's chief digital and innovation officer.

"We're increasingly implementing contemporary digital tools and leveraging AI to detect and protect against cyber threats and proactively measure and predict cloud infrastructure performance," says Brissett. "We have also implemented a range of real-time dashboards for our support staff. These capabilities have provided the team with improved situational awareness, including the ability to track system health, usage trends and make rapid evidence-based decisions."

The Productivity Leaders recognize these benefits:

87%

of Productivity Leaders say generative AI plays a critical role in ensuring business continuity during technology downtime. Just 35% of Late Adopters say the same.

Where next for generative AI?

Productivity Leaders have seen early returns on investment and are doubling down on generative AI. Now that they understand the technology's role within their business environment, they are starting to relax their guardrails: 92% say they are comfortable allowing generative AI to work autonomously in IT support. By contrast, Late Adopters are much more hesitant: Just 32% feel this way.

Productivity Leaders are also committing financially:

- 76% have increased investment in their generative AI–supported service desks in the past 12 months, compared with only about one-third of Late Adopters.
- 93% plan to accelerate AI business transformation in the coming year, compared with only 38% of Late Adopters.

Forward-thinking organizations are starting to focus on agentic AI, which could resolve employee downtime incidents proactively.

"With traditional AI, it actually responds to you in all the permutations you've prepared it to do, which currently provides value in our organization. However, agentic AI has the ability to autonomously provide unique solutions, situations and generate new "permutations" that its creators didn't explicitly prompt it for an answer," says Sean Moore, chief information officer at global logistics organization CJ Logistics America. "The best use cases right now are hybrid, where it sits hand in hand with humans. We're already piloting capabilities while taking a pragmatic approach to make sure it delivers value before going all in."

Almost every Productivity Leader has started experimenting with agentic AI to see how it can augment traditional support models (91%, compared with only 20% of the Late Adopters).

Once again, Productivity Leaders are getting ahead of their competition, and this is translating into better performance against commercial targets.

Technology is the foundation of digital workplace services, but organizations must remember that employees are the heart of every business. Technology should be designed around their needs, says Lennert l'Amie, chief information officer at Dutch airport management company Royal Schiphol Group."

The leading organizations consult their employees

Productivity Leaders understand the importance of this kind of due diligence, and they lean on their workforce when selecting digital strategies: 96% say they understand what their employees want from technology, compared with 72% of Late Adopters.

For instance, 93% of Productivity Leaders have established robust feedback mechanisms that allow employees to provide suggestions for technology investments, compared with just 34% of Late Adopters.

> "AI can be a solution, but first, we need to be clear about the problem we are trying to solve. We don't want to push tools into areas where they don't really help. We look at problem-solving based on personas, on function types and on specific work to really dig deep and start to understand what we need to do."
>
> **Lennert l'Amie**
> Chief information officer
> Royal Schiphol Group

Railway technology company KONUX takes a multi-layered approach to employee feedback, according to Johanna Leisch, managing director and chief operating officer. "We do a lot of surveys and run an 'open line' so employees can share technical feedback directly with leadership, which is used actively," says Leisch. "We also do extended business lunches that enable employees to raise their suggestions in person. It takes time, but it's really needed — meaningful interaction requires effort."

It is more than investment decisions that benefit from employee perspectives. For IT support, Productivity Leaders are increasingly focusing on the employee experience as a measure of success. They are almost six times as likely as Late Adopters to move from service-level agreements, which focus on quantitative results and service delivery, to experience-level agreements (XLAs), which focus on human outcomes. And three-quarters of Productivity Leaders have increased investment in XLA monitoring and analysis, compared with just 11% of Late Adopters.

As a result, Productivity Leaders are giving employees the tools and services they really need, instead of guessing. Their employees are more than twice as likely to quickly adopt new tools once they are available. This is improving ROI on digital workplace investments, and increased productivity is improving commercial results.

This feedback approach also makes employees feel heard: 91% of Productivity Leaders are exceeding expectations for employee satisfaction and retention, compared with just 31% of Late Adopters.

Section 3

Leadership misalignment holds businesses back

When it comes to long-term strategies, Productivity Leaders and Late Adopters have one thing in common: disconnected leadership is putting future transformation progress at risk.

We surveyed IT executives and other business executives (CEOs, CFOs, COOs and CHROs) and found that their perspectives on the drivers behind and success metrics for digital workplace tools and services are dramatically different.

Take executive goals for digital workplace services. To measure ROI, business executives are primarily using human- and experience-centric KPIs, such as employee productivity and satisfaction and customer satisfaction.

But IT executives are preoccupied with quantitative measurements, such as operational efficiency, risk reduction and downtime mitigation.

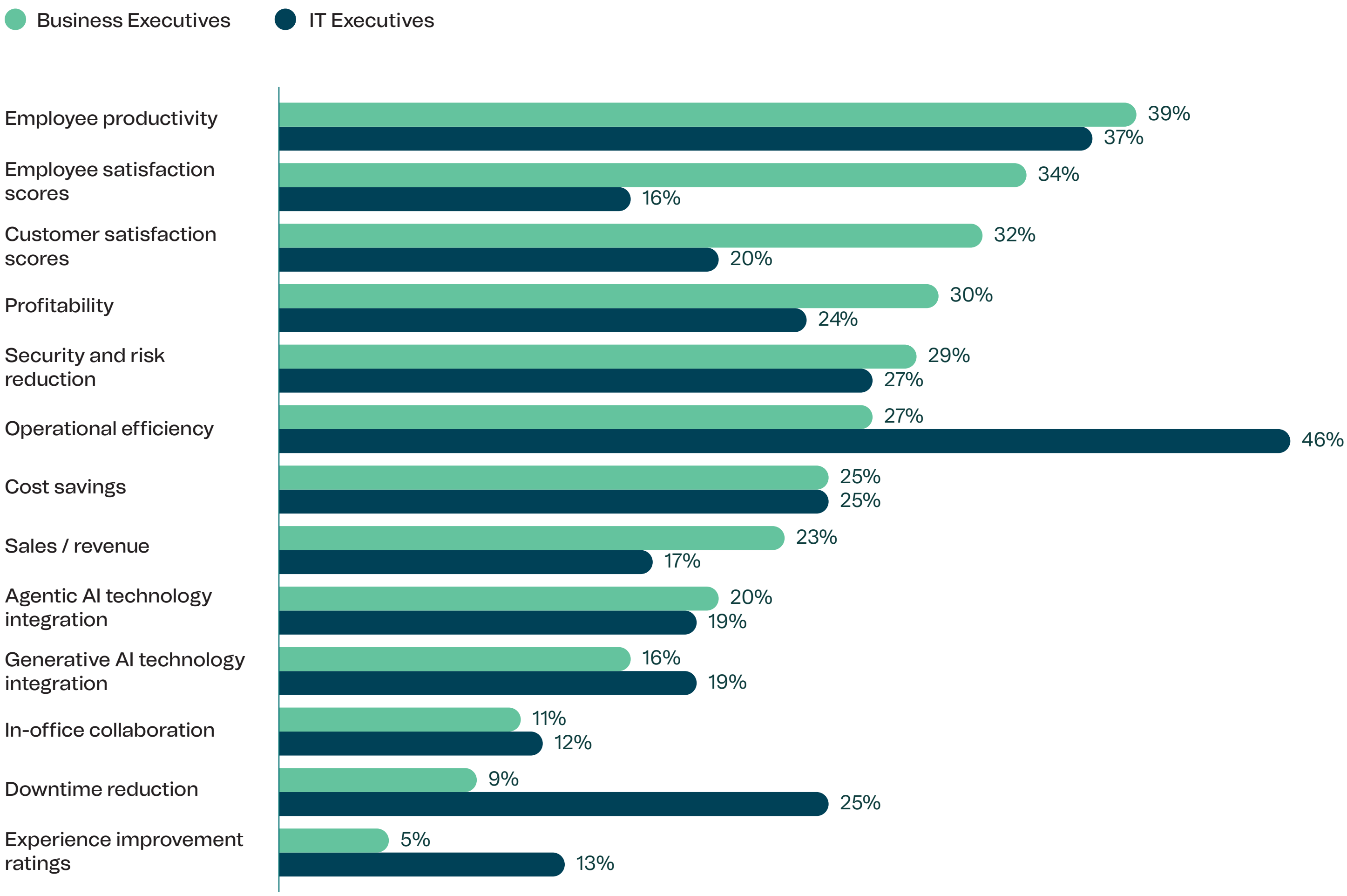
Productivity Leaders show that using both approaches can have broader business benefits. A holistic approach that balances efficiency with people-centric outcomes is essential for sustainable, long-term transformation.

When it comes to AI in particular, this balance is a key part of preparation. From an operational and risk perspective, to maintain effective governance, company data needs to be classified and access rights defined ahead of AI implementation.

And from a human perspective, employees must be provided with adequate training to avoid bottlenecks after AI-enabled process changes.

Figure 1:

Business and IT executives use different metrics to measure digital workplace success



Q: Which of the following KPIs are most important to your organization when measuring ROI for your digital workplace solutions? (Rank 1–3 summary; base: all answering. Business leaders = 56; IT leaders = 944.)

Executives also disagree about the performance of their current digital workplace strategies. IT executives are about twice as likely as business executives to say their approach has improved ROI, cybersecurity and day-to-day productivity.

A big gap exists between the executives' views of workforce tools in a hybrid environment. Two-thirds (67%) of IT executives say the digital tools they provide to employees are consistent across remote and office-based workers, compared with just 32% of business executives.

AI is another source of tension. Even though Productivity Leaders' results show AI's benefits to digital workplace services, business executives are not convinced. Less than a third say that generative AI plays a critical role in solving downtime, compared with 72% of IT executives. IT executives are much closer to downtime processes, so this gap might reflect that business executives have less understanding of how AI is used.

This misconception could be putting further investment in AI at risk. Only one in three business executives is comfortable allowing generative AI to operate independently in IT support scenarios, compared with almost two-thirds (64%) of IT executives.

Bridging the divide: How to bring together IT and business

If executives do not agree on what has been a success or on the right path forward, future transformation is likely to stall. So, organizations must align their leadership around shared priorities, and both groups have a role to play in this.

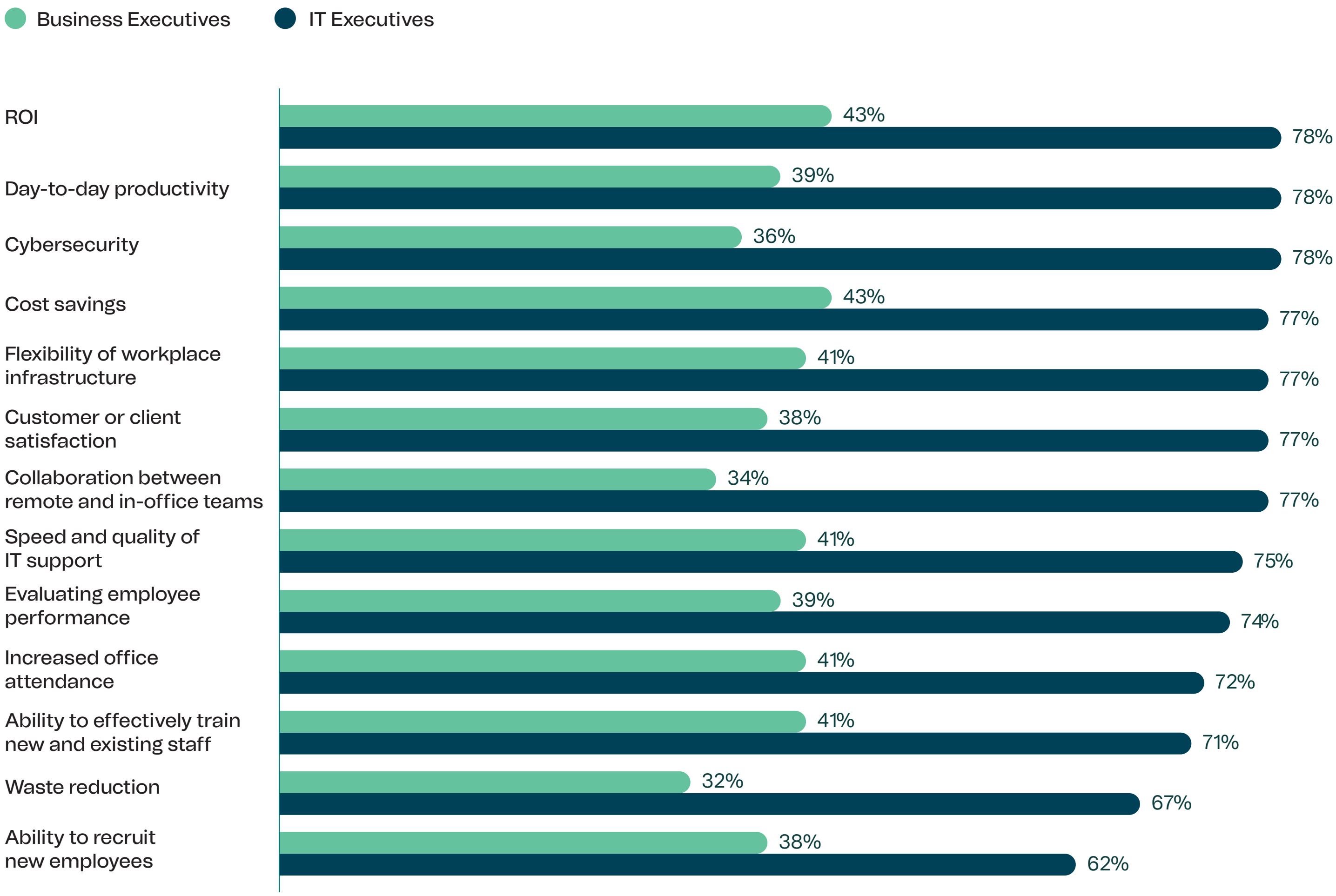
IT leaders must educate their business peers about the impact AI can have on IT support and champion the business case for further investment. But they have to be careful how they communicate the benefits of AI, according to May Yap, senior vice president and chief information officer at manufacturing company Jabil.

"IT leaders should not think only like IT leaders — they need to think like business leaders," says Yap. "When you start to appreciate business problems and speak their language, you can demonstrate how technology enables solutions. That's how you bring the C-suite with you on the transformation journey."

Business executives, meanwhile, must make sure that IT executives do not forget the importance of prioritizing employee experience and input. At CJ Logistics America, Sean Moore says that having formal touchpoints between business and IT groups helps to keep the organization grounded: "We created a technology steering committee with members of the C-suite and IT. It helps us align on a pipeline of new tools and decide which are worth evaluating and prevents shadow IT from running off with shiny objects. It's been critical to uniting technology and business priorities."

Michael Schmelmer, vice chairman of the Board of Managing Directors at pharmaceutical company Boehringer Ingelheim, believes that the gap between executives and IT leaders is narrowing. "Fifteen years ago, business executives talked about IT as a cost factor; now, they talk about IT investment with high returns," says Schmelmer. "CEOs and CFOs are realizing that investing in IT is investing in the business as a whole."

Figure 2:
Business and IT executives view the success of their digital workplace investments differently



Q: To what extent has your organization seen improvements or regression in the following areas as a result of your current digital workplace solutions and services strategy? ("Improvements" summary; base: all answering. Business leaders = 56; IT leaders = 944.)

Conclusion

From survival mode to sustainable growth

Our research shows that the right approach to digital workplace services can make a significant difference to growth, innovation and employee satisfaction. Doing nothing will erode productivity and leave organizations behind in an already challenging economic environment.

The next wave of transformation is coming, and it is going to be even more disruptive. It will reshape the workplace as we know it. The organizations that act on the following five fundamentals now will join the Productivity Leaders and define the future of work.

Five fundamentals to drive growth, keep employees productive and deliver competitive advantage:

1. Balance cost discipline with business needs

Cutting costs alone is shortsighted. Productivity Leaders manage budgets carefully but not at the expense of employee experience and business growth.

2. Embrace new-era IT support

Generative and agentic AI are redefining the service desk. Productivity Leaders use them to reduce downtime and free up IT teams to focus on higher-value work.

3. Put employees at the center of strategies

Technology is only effective if it works for the people using it. Productivity Leaders show that feedback, XLAs and employee-centric design can turn technology from a source of frustration into a productivity driver.

4. Prioritize leadership alignment

Disconnected leadership derails transformation. IT and business executives have to align on shared success metrics, blending efficiency with employee-focused outcomes. Even Productivity Leaders are struggling with this.

5. Commit to digital transformation for the long term

Short-term fixes do not deliver resilience. Productivity Leaders sustain momentum by constantly evolving — they balance efficiency today with innovation for tomorrow.

About the research

To better understand how businesses are leveraging AI to modernize digital workplace services and unlock business growth, Unisys partnered with FT Longitude to conduct a global research study of 1,000 senior IT and business decision-makers between June and July 2025.

The study explored a broad series of topics and issues facing companies in the United States (n=375), Europe (n=525) and Asia-Pacific (n=100). Participants were either C-suite executives (n=133) or C-suite minus one from IT functions, e.g., SVPs, directors and heads of IT (n=867). Quotas were applied to achieve representation among a wide range of industries, titles and roles.

The findings are representative of these respondents only. The study utilized an online survey methodology.

Industry trends: What sets the winners apart?

Working arrangements and environments vary from industry to industry, but the results from Unisys' latest research on digital workplace find there is one common priority for employers: empowering teams to work securely from anywhere, at any time, on any device.

A closer look reveals that some industries are taking a strategic approach to the digital workplace by implementing services that provide everything from cost savings to more efficient IT support responses and enhanced customer satisfaction. But not all industries are positioned to realize these benefits.

Who are the winners and what sets them apart?

Defining digital workplace services

Digital workplace services create an integrated environment that fosters collaboration, enhances employee engagement and agility and harnesses advanced technologies for optimal productivity. This ecosystem seamlessly combines various applications, data, devices and services working in unison to offer a streamlined and empowering digital experience.

Industries leading by example

Across all industry sectors we surveyed, Financial Services organizations lead the pack. They show the strongest improvements from their digital workplace investments, followed by Professional Services and Retail and Consumer Goods.

Figure 1:

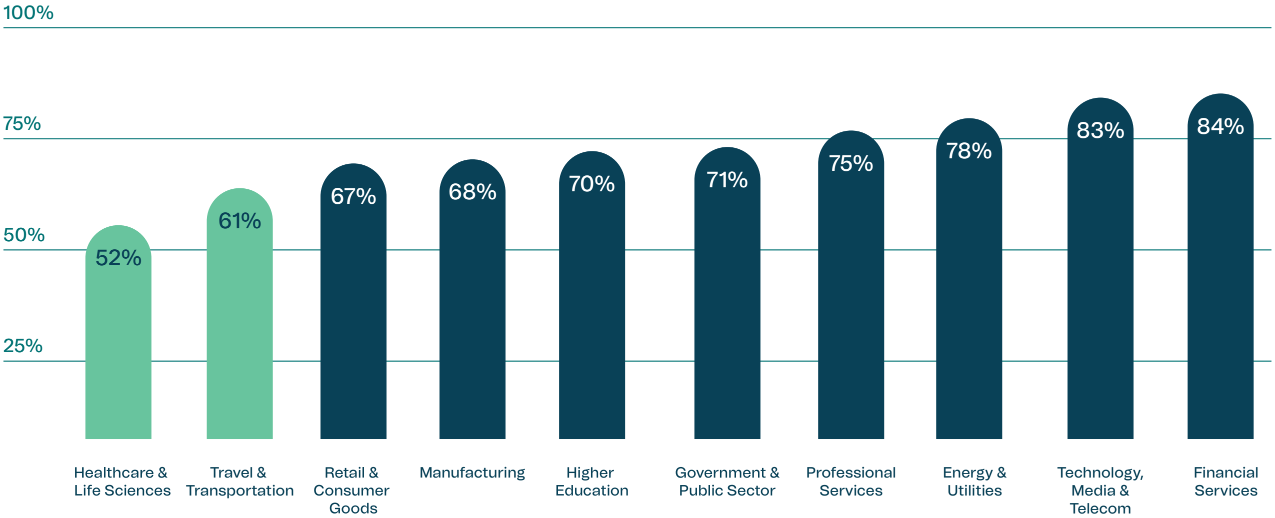
Financial Services organizations are most likely to outperform on ROI, productivity and customer satisfaction, followed closely by Professional Services

Q: To what extent has your organization seen improvements in the following areas as a result of your current digital workplace solutions and services strategy?

Meanwhile, organizations in Healthcare and Life Sciences, Higher Education and Energy and Utilities have yet to realize these gains. Without the right strategy in place, progress stalls — more than 4 in 10 (41%) Healthcare and Life Sciences organizations report declining productivity, recruitment and training outcomes.

Underperforming industries need to implement urgent change, but leadership resistance is stalling the required transformation. Just over half (52%) of Healthcare and Life Sciences organizations say they will accelerate technology and AI transformation over the next 12 months, compared with 84% of Financial Services organizations. In the following sections, we set out the key differentiators between stalling and successful strategies.

Figure 2:
Only half of Healthcare and 6 in 10 Travel and Transportation organizations plan to accelerate IT transformation



Q: We plan to accelerate our IT and AI transformation over the next 12 months. (Agree summary)

Commitment is key

Economic pressure means every investment needs to show clear value. Some industries need better visibility into their returns. Despite their plans to accelerate IT transformation, around one-quarter of Higher Education, Energy and Utilities and Healthcare and Life Sciences organizations haven't built the measurement systems to accurately track ROI from their digital workplace services.

Leaders can't invest with confidence when they can't see results. More than 1 in 10 (12%) Energy and Utilities organizations find it harder to secure leadership buy-in now than they did 12 months ago.

But not all industries struggle with getting leadership buy-in. Only 2% of Financial Services organizations, for example, find this to be a challenge, despite having already invested significantly in their digital workplace services. These organizations have improved performance against all business metrics, and their leadership appears convinced of the value of digital workplace services, making it easier to secure further budget.

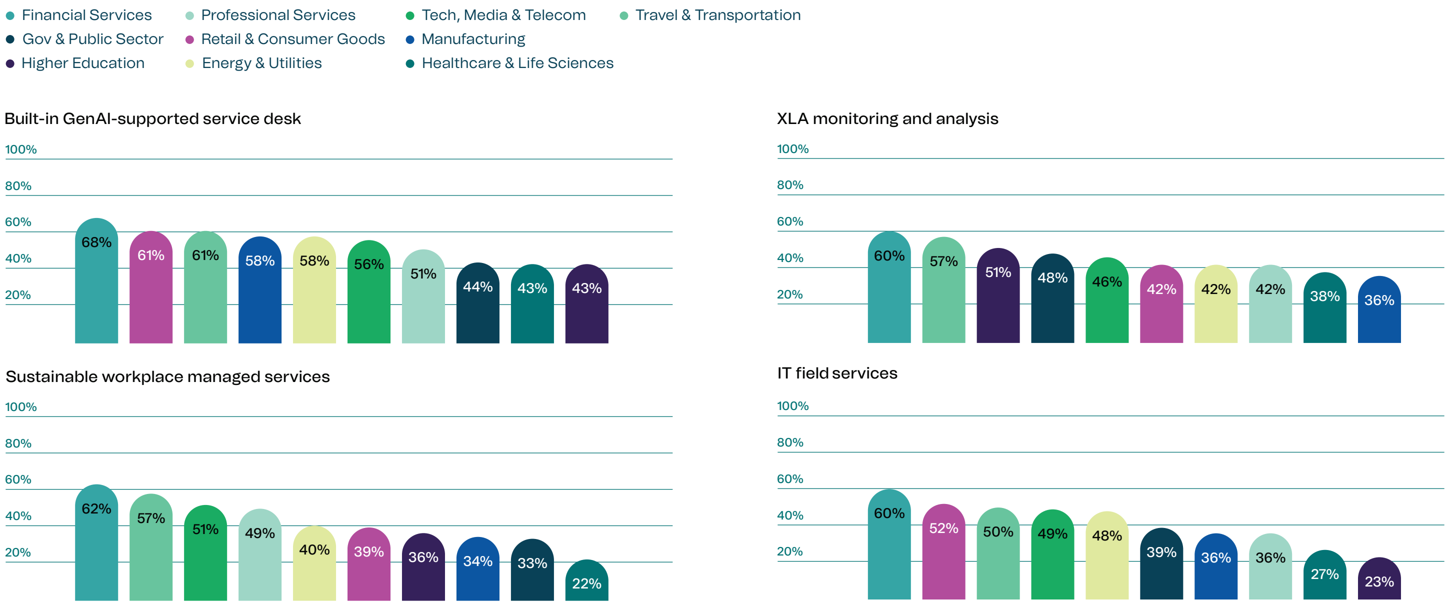
Which solutions have delivered this advantage? Notably, over two-thirds (68%) of Financial Services organizations have increased spending on built-in generative-AI-supported service desk solutions in the past 12 months.

Generative AI enables 24/7 support for employee IT issues, relieving the burden on overstretched IT teams. This increases workforce productivity in a cost-effective way. Other priority investments include sustainable workplace managed services, IT field services and experience-level agreement (XLA) monitoring and analysis.

In comparison, Healthcare and Life Sciences organizations are most likely to reduce investments across the board, fueling a vicious cycle of underperformance.

Figure 3:

Financial Services organizations invest aggressively across digital workplace solutions



Q: Thinking about the past 12 months, how would you describe your organization's investment in each of the following digital workplace solutions? (Increased investment).

Investment challenges by sector

The link between increased investment and performance is clear. But aside from a lack of leadership buy-in, there are several other barriers to more extensive spending. Most organizations are grappling with macro issues, such as economic uncertainty and how to balance digital innovation with data privacy. But there are also industry-specific obstacles.

For example, Manufacturing and Technology, Media and Telecommunications organizations are holding back spend due to legacy system limitations, while struggling industries such as Higher Education and Healthcare and Life Sciences cite competing priorities for IT budgets as a barrier. Overcoming these challenges requires a tailored approach that balances transformation progress with internal pressures.

Why intent matters as much as investment

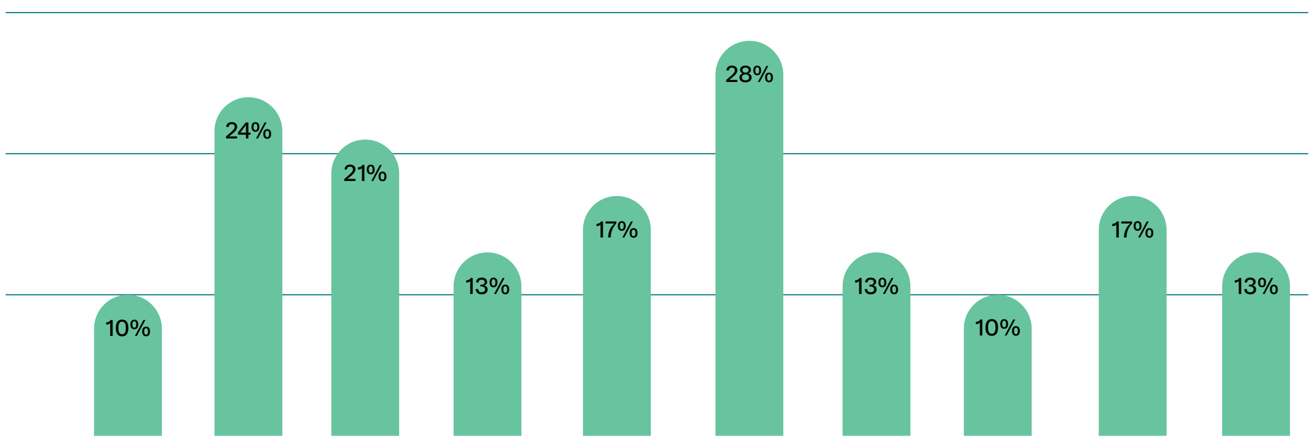
Intent, as well as investment, is essential to the effective adoption of digital workplace services. Top-performing industries are laser-focused on productivity, while lagging industries are preoccupied with defensive measures, such as cost-cutting.

Only around half of Healthcare and Life Sciences organizations and Energy and Utilities organizations say they invest in generative AI primarily to boost productivity rather than to cut costs.

In contrast, 78% of Financial Services organizations prioritize productivity over cost-cutting — second only to Technology, Media and Telecommunications organizations (80%).

Similarly, Healthcare and Life Sciences and Energy and Utilities organizations are around twice as likely as Financial Services and Professional Services organizations to say cost-cutting is a higher priority than employee experience when investing in new technologies.

Figure 4:
Around one-quarter of Healthcare and Life Sciences and Energy and Utilities organizations prioritize cost-cutting over employee experience



Q: How would you describe your organization's approach to investing in adopting and planning for new technologies? (Cost-cutting is a higher priority than employee experience.)

The most successful industries strike a balance between internal economies and productivity. Digital workplace services can deliver efficiencies that enable employees to perform at their best and minimize downtime, both of which fuel overall business growth.

These initiatives require upfront investment — something that can deter organizations in challenging market conditions. But companies that take a long-term view stand to gain the most. Focusing on digital workplace services with proven ROI enables sustained productivity gains, drives innovation and ultimately strengthens commercial performance.

The path to digital workplace success: Learning from the leaders

Every organization wants better ROI. Our research shows some industries are already getting there — using digital workplace services to boost performance across multiple business metrics.

But for the industries falling behind, all is not lost. By following the example set by top performers, they can use digital workplace services to reset their current trajectories.

Calls to action

1

Demonstrate value to leadership by highlighting the success stories of leading industries, showcasing the value and ROI opportunities that sustained investment in digital workplace services can bring.

2

To achieve meaningful impact, ensure your approach reflects the distinct challenges, opportunities and operational needs of your industry.

3

Invest for performance, not just savings. Focus on enhancing productivity and the employee experience. Efficiency gains and cost benefits will follow.

Regional trends: Europe leads the way

Across the globe, digital workplace journeys are underway. Organizations have progressed at different rates and have seen varying successes. While all businesses look to create productive and secure working environments, the strategies being used to achieve them differ — sometimes dramatically.

New Unisys research shows that European organizations are leading the pack in driving business value from digital workplace services. Compared to other regions, European organizations are most likely to have improved performance against critical business metrics, like ROI, productivity and customer satisfaction, since implementing their current digital workplace strategy.

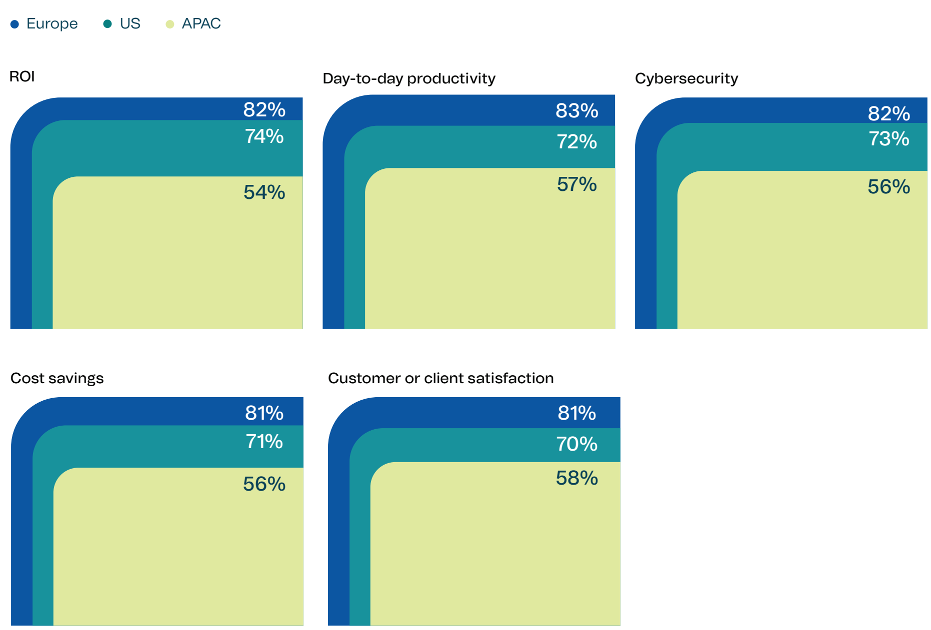
Figure 1:

European organizations see the greatest benefits from digital workplace strategies

Q: To what extent has your organization seen improvements or regression in the following areas as a result of your current digital workplace solutions and services strategy? (Improving)

Figure 2:

European organizations see the greatest benefits from digital workplace strategies



Q: To what extent has your organization seen improvements or regression in the following areas as a result of your current digital workplace solutions and services strategy? (Improving)

Defining digital workplace services

Digital workplace services create an integrated environment designed to foster collaboration, enhance employee engagement and agility and harness advanced technologies for optimal productivity. This ecosystem seamlessly combines various applications, data, devices and services working in unison to offer a streamlined and empowering digital experience.

So, how are European organizations creating more effective digital workplaces? This report examines how they prioritize generative AI, employee-centricity and sustainability to drive success.

Europe's competitive edge

European organizations recognize the benefits generative AI can offer the IT service desk. The technology offers rapid assistance to employees experiencing technical issues at any time of day. Over three-quarters (78%) of European organizations say generative AI plays a critical role in reducing downtime, compared with 62% of US and 55% of Asia-Pacific (APAC) organizations.

Encouraged by outcomes around IT support, European organizations are looking to expand their use of generative AI. Over two-thirds (67%) are comfortable allowing the technology to operate independently in the service desk environment, versus 58% of US and 53% of APAC organizations.

European organizations are bolstering their commitment with further investment: 64% have increased spending on built-in generative-AI-supported service desk solutions. Just over half (51%) of US organizations and 40% of APAC-based organizations have taken the same approach.

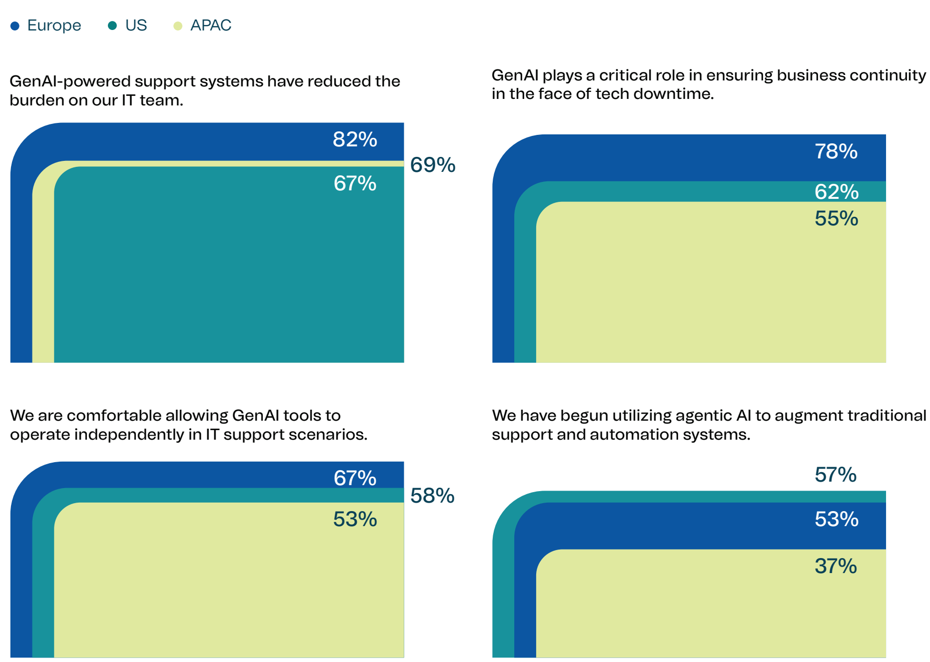
Figure 3:

New Zealand- and Australia-based companies are cautious about AI

Q: Thinking about your organization's IT support, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Figure 4:

US- and APAC-based organizations are most likely to be generative AI skeptics



Q: Thinking about your organization's IT support, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

US moves first on agentic AI

But Europe may not be the AI leader for much longer. US organizations are already turning their focus to the next technological frontier: agentic AI. In the US, 57% of organizations have begun experimenting with agentic AI to augment traditional IT support, compared with 53% of European and 37% of APAC organizations.

Regulatory headwinds may be holding Europe back. The EU AI Act assigns different levels of risk to distinct AI technologies, and while the legislation does not explicitly refer to agentic AI, its ability to act with greater autonomy could give it a higher risk profile. Europe also has stricter data protection rules than the US, which could be delaying agentic AI adoption.

The survey findings also indicate that European organizations may be slightly more concerned about onboarding employees. One in five (20%) say they are committed to replacing support desk personnel with agentic AI but are worried about potential backlash from displaced employees or end users. Also, labor laws are stricter in Europe than in the US, which could further limit the ability of European organizations to reduce headcount when rolling out agentic solutions.

Whatever the reasons, if the US can get ahead on agentic AI implementation, it could lead the way through the next phase of technological transformation, with enhanced ROI from digital workplace services.

Designing digital workplaces with people in mind

An effective digital workplace strategy depends on harnessing the right technologies. But European organizations recognize that the skills to implement and scale are equally important. Around three-quarters (73%) say they have the right talent in place to scale their use of AI, machine learning and automation, compared with 57% and 56% of APAC and US organizations, respectively.

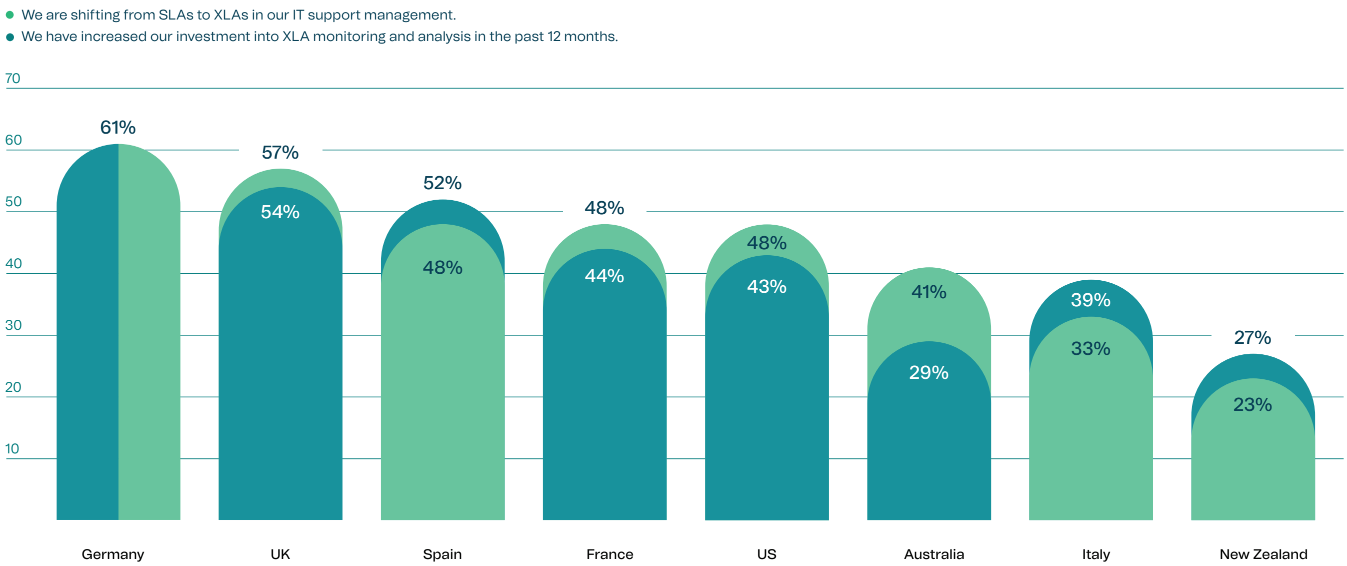
A truly employee-centric approach goes beyond hiring specialized tech talent. For example, around 8 in 10 European organizations (79%) report using employee and device data to enhance the workforce experience and working arrangements, compared to 64% of US and 62% of APAC organizations.

European organizations also recognize the value of involving employees directly in the development of digital workplace services. Around 8 in 10 (78%) have implemented robust feedback mechanisms where employees can suggest IT investments, compared with 65% and 55% of organizations in the US and APAC, respectively.

European organizations are also prioritizing a move away from traditional service-level agreement (SLAs) to experience-level agreement (XLAs) in IT support. More than half of German and UK businesses are shifting toward employee-centric metrics, compared with less than a quarter of New Zealand-based organizations, for example.

Figure 5:

Australia and New Zealand lag on XLA adoption, while Germany takes the lead

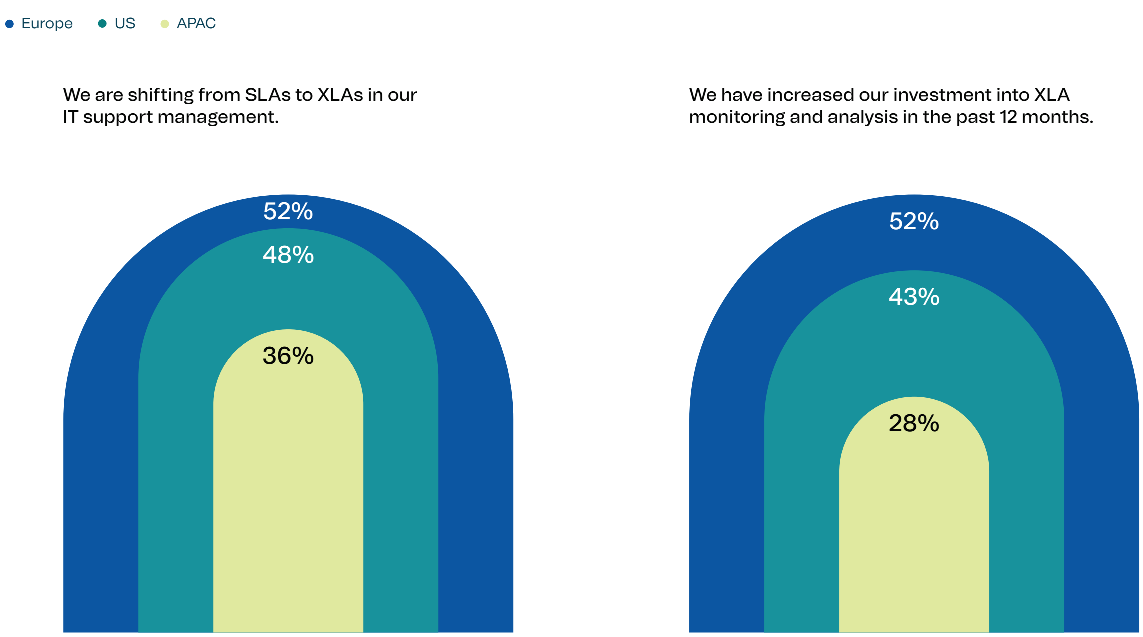


Q: Thinking about your organization's IT support, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Q: Thinking about the past 12 months, how would you describe your organization's investment in each of the following digital workplace solutions?

Figure 6:

European organizations are shifting to employee-centric IT support metrics



Q: Thinking about your organization's IT support, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Agree)

Q: Thinking about the past 12 months, how would you describe your organization's investment in each of the following digital workplace solutions? (Increased investment)

By building their strategies around their employees, European organizations are benefiting from a tech-forward culture that maximizes IT ROI. Over three-quarters (76%) say their employees are quick to adopt new technologies, compared with 61% of US and 56% of APAC organizations.

Keeping employees involved in the development of digital workplace services can also impact employee satisfaction. Two-thirds (66%) of European organizations say they are outperforming expectations in this area, compared with 58% of US and 44% of APAC organizations. Happy, fulfilled employees are more productive and easier to retain, helping organizations stay on track toward long-term objectives, with broader commercial benefits and stronger growth.

The sustainable workplace transition

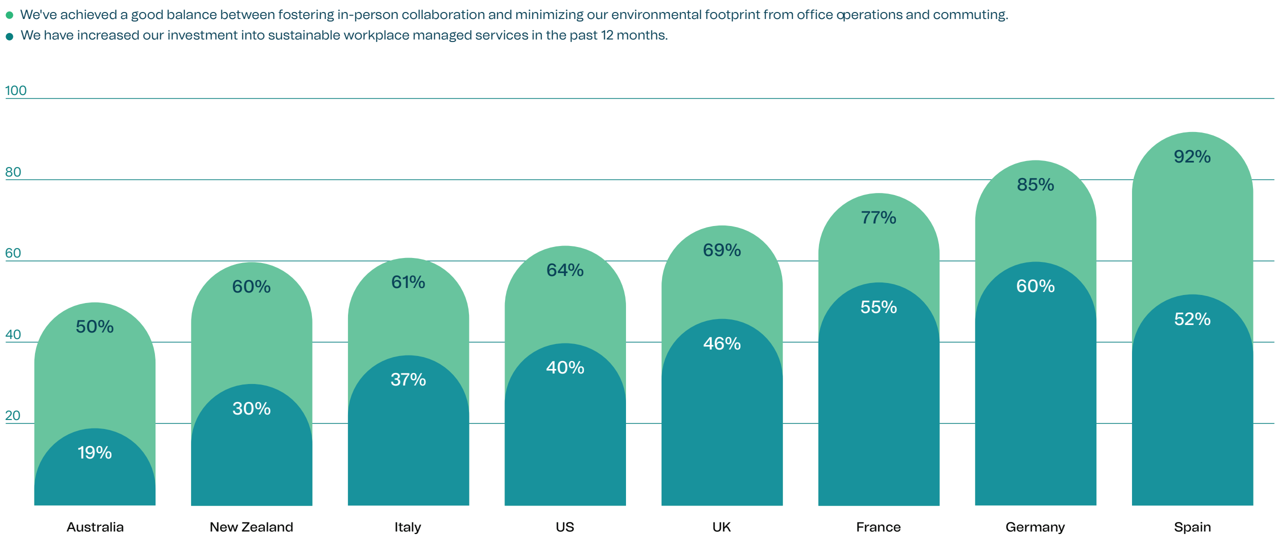
The early 2020s saw an exponential rise in remote working. Recently, organizations have begun to reverse that trend. Unisys research shows that 32% of employees are now fully office-based, while a further 33% are in the office four days a week.

A consequence of this is increased commuting, which can have an indirect impact on their environmental footprint. European organizations seem more aware of this issue than their peers in other regions and are focused on making the transition as sustainable as possible.

More than three-quarters (76%) of European organizations say sustainability is becoming a more important factor in digital workplace investment decisions, compared with 58% of US and 53% of APAC organizations.

This is reflected in their budgets, with 51% of European organizations increasing their investment in sustainable workplace managed services. These solutions use real-time office data to monitor occupancy, optimize energy usage and make smarter resource decisions while meeting employee needs. Worldwide, Australian organizations are the least likely to embrace sustainable workplace managed services, with fewer than one in five (19%) increasing investments in the past 12 months.

Figure 7:
Less than a fifth of Australian companies have increased investment into sustainable workplace solutions



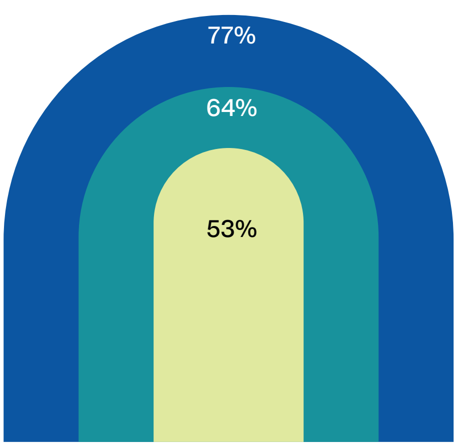
Q: Thinking about your organization's working arrangements, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Agree)

Q: Thinking about the past 12 months, how would you describe your organization's investment in each of the following digital workplace solutions? (Increased investment)

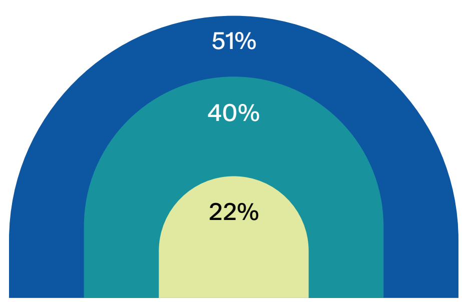
Figure 8:
Europe finds the balance between office returns and sustainability

Europe US APAC

We've achieved a good balance between fostering in-person collaboration and minimizing our environmental footprint from office operations and commuting.



We have increased our investment into sustainable workplace managed services in the past 12 months.



Q: Thinking about the past 12 months, how would you describe your organization's investment in each of the following digital workplace solutions? (Increased investment)

Thinking about your organization's working arrangements, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Agree)

European organizations are already seeing the benefits of their investments: 77% say they have achieved a good balance between fostering in-person collaboration at the office and reducing overall environmental footprint. Only 64% and 53% of US and APAC organizations, respectively, report having achieved the same balance. By optimizing energy usage, European organizations have also reduced waste to a greater extent than those in other regions, supporting both sustainability and profitability.

Global lessons from regional leaders

Global digital workplaces are evolving quickly — but not necessarily evenly. The successes of European organizations demonstrate what is possible when companies innovate with technology, sustainability and the employee experience front of mind.

But regardless of location, all organizations must guard against complacency. New technologies, such as agentic AI, are reshaping the digital workplace, enabling the development of new working structures. The organizations that remain agile, adaptive and aligned with global trends will be best positioned to heighten productivity, resilience and long-term value.

Calls to action

1
Embrace both generative and agentic AI to build an IT support strategy that delivers timely and effective solutions for employees.

2
When developing digital workplace strategies, prioritize employees to boost productivity and retention rates.

3
As working arrangements evolve, strive to maintain an operational balance between cost, performance and environmental impact.