

Cisco's Workspace Transformation Symposium

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Technology is both enabling and forcing workspace transformation; but successful companies are putting people at the centre of their collaboration strategies

Vaughan Klein, Cisco General Manager

The modern workplace has become a diverse environment where employees find themselves working from various settings. Today, some companies find themselves accommodating up to five different generations within a single workplace, so flexibility is key.

Workspace transformation has business leaders and staff alike, both challenged and excited. Trends such as flexible and agile working, innovation and the desire for businesses to enable collaboration across teams has companies experiencing the benefits and teething pains of workspace transformation as it happens either with or without planning and strategy.

In June 2016, Cisco ANZ convened a wide range of speakers from around the C-Suite at Melbourne's Convention Centre, to address the challenge of workspace transformation from both a macro and micro level.

While the world may be changing at an increasingly rapid pace, which poses both challenges and opportunities for the workspace, I always like to remind myself that at Cisco we are all about connecting people. Collaboration tools can provide businesses with a new group of managers, whose roles cross technology, business, and culture. Collaboration tools can also quantifiably both save companies money and increase productivity.

I'd like to thank all of our speakers and guests for joining Cisco at our inaugural Workspace Transformation Symposium. Special thanks also to our sponsor Optus, as well as to Steelcase and Plantronics.



Three trends, mobile, cloud and end user expectations are driving enterprise IT transformation

Jonathan Rosenberg, Cisco Fellow, SVP and CTO for Cisco Collaboration

Cisco Fellow and CTO for Cisco's Collaboration business, SVP Jonathan Rosenberg joined our Symposium in Melbourne via Cisco Telepresence technology to discuss the three most disruptive forces in IT today that are driving workspace transformation, and specifically enterprise technology.

Firstly, it's no surprise that the rise of mobile and BYOD/CYOD has both enabled more flexible work, whilst driving a host of IT challenges to the enterprise across both software and security. Secondly, the rise of cloud-based computing has similarly offered the workspace both opportunities for employees to work from anywhere on any device, whilst causing enterprises to look at mobility, software and security solutions to protect IP and enable work to happen securely and seamlessly. Rosenberg claims that mobile and cloud, are dictating that organisations take up collaborative communications initiatives.

However, Rosenberg also says the most disruptive force in enterprise IT is the end user, highlighting the changing trends in user expectations, which include the need for fast, visually-appealing content based on the pervasiveness of easy-to-use consumer IT in recent years. Consumer IT platforms such as Snapchat, Facebook and Whatsapp which are intuitive and fun to use, have forced businesses to rethink their enterprise IT solutions, with clunky, non-integrated solutions disrupting productivity and decreasing employee satisfaction.

Rosenberg believes that great user experience is the secret to workplace transformation, particularly when it comes to digital and technological solutions. The transformation initiatives need to begin with a keen understanding of how people will engage with their spaces, their devices and their colleagues.

According to Rosenberg workspace transformation is indicative of a new working era, within which idea development, innovation, and growth can flourish. Rosenberg recommends a collaboration technology that seamlessly integrates into the workplace can unconsciously become part of people's routines, and enable companies to transform frictionlessly.



Ensuring that HR is properly engaged in workspace transformation

Lyn Goodear, CEO, AHRI

Lyn Goodear, the CEO of Australian Human Resources Institute, made the case that the future of work needs to be human, and focused on employees. Goodear provided the audience with the perspective of the HR executive within the context of intense disruption.

As top employees have more choice than ever on where and how they work, providing an ethical, supportive, collaborative culture focused on results is key to remaining ahead in the war for talent.

Goodear proposed that companies who put their human capital, or people, first will be the businesses that win in the future as this investment and strategy will have a follow on effect to their products, services and ultimately clients and revenue.



An overview of the economics of transformation

Dr. Ric Simes, Director, Deloitte Access Economics

Dr. Simes offered sobering insights into how the current rate of transformation can be confronting not only to industries and individual workspaces, but it's also "confronting to individuals on a personal level too."

Past challenges for businesses, such as individual merit and IT system integrity, have been outdated by today's rapid pace of transformation shifting business agenda to collaboration, connectivity, flexibility, and diversity.

Dr. Simes' research shows a direct correlation between inflexible IT policies and dissatisfied employees planning to leave, while employees bring their consumer technology expectations into the workplace. Simes believes that workplace culture and management structure is the most dominant driving force of collaboration, emphasising the need for effective management solutions for workplace transformation to effectively take place.



Summary

Enabling and shaping workspace transformation to empower increased productivity, collaboration and innovation requires planning, strategy, investment, and dedication but it is also a necessity in the face of digital disruption.

New technologies, the development of ideas, increasing employee engagement, and seamless collaboration technologies, provide challenges and opportunities for businesses looking to thrive in the 21st century competitive landscape.

As you can see from the perspectives our presenters, workspace transformation is both a destination and a never ending journey dictated by today's fast clip of change and disruption caused by globalisation and technological advancements.

As the modern workplace becomes more diverse and flexible, the need for flexible, adaptive and efficient culture, strategy and technology, to support this change, is growing in urgency.

Cisco's Workspace Transformation Symposium, and this accompanying whitepaper, have addressed workspace transformation from both a macro and micro point of view. We invite you to learn more about our approach to workplace transformation [here](#)



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