



The How-To Guide for Setting Up a Hybrid Office

Work is no longer a place you go, it's something that you can do from anywhere. There are more employees than ever before working remotely permanently, or in a hybrid model. Employees need a simple, secure collaboration platform that can help them be just as productive virtually as they would in the office. Your employees need to access the same secure set of tools they need to get their jobs done. And, in this connected world, your business depends on a secure network more than ever before.

You will want to take into consideration all the factors involved to ensure you build the ideal hybrid work model that meets you where you are.

Here are some important questions to ask yourself before setting up a hybrid office:



1. What IT staff will we need?

In a small business, you've got to be savvy. You need to be able to quickly set up hybrid work to accommodate both your employees and customers. You don't have the time to add more complexity to your already busy days. You need solutions that are easy to deploy and manage while powerful enough to fend off cyberattacks. You don't have to become an expert in technology to work remotely, but you do need the right tools and advice. Working with one IT provider can give you access to a team of knowledgeable IT experts who can help make sure you limit downtime and remain secure and compliant.

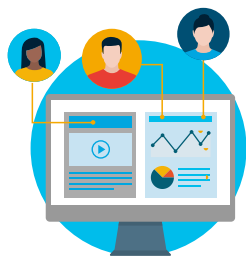


2. How secure will we be?

Every small business needs to make security a priority because networks, systems, and users are bombarded with a continual stream of threats every day. Your business could be one data breach from oblivion. In fact, 60% of small businesses that suffer a breach go out of business within six months. Although security solutions are becoming more efficient at detecting threats, attackers are also becoming more sophisticated and persistent. Your security needs to extend to remote workers and their devices.

Look for a reliable network that:

- Allows secure endpoint access to your network
- Offers easy-to-use management and configuration
- Protects your sensitive data by verifying the identity of users, devices, and applications
- Defends against threats with cloud-delivered security
- Can detect and block cyberattacks



3. Is it easy for teams to communicate?

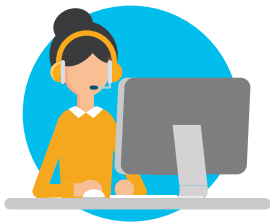
The ability to communicate is vital for any small business; disjointed and clumsy collaboration tools can make matters worse. Collaborating with teams in various locations is different than in person, but it's easy if everyone is using the same secure interface. When teams can work in multiple modes (voice, video, web, messaging), all in one place, they can be extremely productive. Your virtual workspace should make it possible to easily:

- Exchange messages and files across devices
- Search the space to find conversations and documents
- Privately message one person or create a group chat in seconds
- Use a digital whiteboard to brainstorm
- Launch video meetings



4. **What network capabilities are most important for our business?**

It really depends on how you want to run your business. Maybe your current network is not robust enough. And, in this connected world, your business depends on a secure network more than ever before. You need to stay connected to your suppliers, your employees, and of course—your customers. Are you a digital business that exists solely in the cloud? Then a cloud networking solution would probably be best for your business. If you're not sure and just want the very basics to get started, then a box solution may be better. Just be sure to choose products that are smart and offer embedded security and analytics capabilities.



5. **How much technical support will we need?**

Most small businesses have dynamic 24x7 requirements as employees are constantly moving on and off the network from different locations, switching between devices and applications. All the technology needs to work to keep the business running. Any time lost to redesign, integration, or rewiring and cabling is a loss of productive time for employees and revenue for the business. The possibility of a network failure and resulting business disruption is a risk you can't afford to take. Look for solutions that have technical support and training.

We know the various options and approaches available for a hybrid office setup can seem complicated and confusing. You want simple, clear information in easy-to-understand language to help you make better, informed decisions. Well now you have it. In this guide, we share our tried-and-true principles and tips so you can get started working your way today.

Why Cisco?

For more than 35 years, Cisco has served some of the world's largest, most complex organizations. Now, that same technology that supports these industry leaders is affordable and easier to buy, set up, and use in small businesses. At Cisco, we know your small business is personal. We're with you every step of the way, keeping you strong, smart, and safe so you can focus on keeping your business humming. Wherever you take your life's work, and wherever it takes you, we're here to make sure technology works as hard as you do.

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Cisco makes it easy and cost-effective for your small business to work your way. Cisco partners have the IT expertise and can understand and address your specific needs. We can guide you to the right Cisco Designed networking, security and collaboration solutions that are easy to set up, manage, and expand with pricing models that make sense for your business. Now IT is simple, affordable, and flexible. And the office is anywhere you securely log in.

For more information on Cisco Work Your Way solutions, please contact us today.