



# The New Normal is Work from Anywhere

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## Biography

*It all began with Andrew, and his brother Philip, creating the game 'Movie Producer' for the Dragon 32 computer in 1983. From there they started a mail order games business and then progressed to custom building PCs for their customers. Following a meeting with a local car leasing company, Andrew and Philip couldn't understand why there wasn't anyone using this concept for computers. After testing interest with an advert placed in Computer Shopper, they were inundated with enquiries from businesses who wanted to lease their computer equipment – and so HardSoft Computers (<https://www.hardsoftcomputers.co.uk/>) was born.*

*Around ten years ago, Andrew and Philip saw a shift towards Mac and became one of around 50 Apple Authorized Resellers in the UK. HardSoft now has a mix of Mac and PC customers and recently re-launched their custom built PCs.*

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**Paper type** Research, Opinion

## Abstract

*The workplace of the future is likely to be very different to the one we have all experienced in the past. The recent worldwide Pandemic and the need to work from home (WFH) gave us a glimpse into a new way of working, but as staff begin to return to offices, there is a new standard emerging – Working from Anywhere (WFA), explains the author of this article.*

## Introduction

Fuelled by digital connectivity and caused by the worldwide pandemic; Working from Anywhere (WFA) is set to become the new standard, empowering us to think and choose which location to work from that is going to make us the most productive. For many of us, the workplace has become less a fixed location and more anywhere we can set up operations with an essential suite of technologies. For some, that could be the kitchen or the bedroom.

Employers have had to become agile in response to the pandemic. The traditional 9 to 5 Monday to Friday working week has accelerated, and we are fast becoming 'digital nomads' out there. Although we might not be in some idyll – as the digital nomad fantasy promised – we could at least enjoy some of the freedom, flexibility and release from the extra stresses of a daily commute. A Gallup Poll conducted in the US last spring found that 60% of respondents would like to continue working remotely once restrictions were lifted. Whilst 35% say they would like to return to working at their office<sup>1</sup>.



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Of course, as 2020 progressed, we all realized that the new flexibility comes at a cost. Away from the office, many employees have felt isolated and missing those water-cooler conversations and the day-to-day social interactions that were so annoying but became lost.



Video conferencing via Teams or Zoom has been helpful but it isn't the substitute for the physical collaboration and camaraderie an office workplace creates. This revolution (that we didn't ask for) in the way we work won't be reversed, and employees are now looking to find a middle ground or a sweet spot that retains some of the freedom and flexibility yet offers back the professional community.

### **A hybrid approach to the future workplace**

Work from Anywhere is on the rise as organizations respond, rethink and reorganize how their employees work – and where from, particular as many employees reported to their employers that working virtually allowed them to feel more connected with their colleagues than they ever had done before. Therefore, a hybrid approach to the Office/Home conundrum will be less as an obligation and more a destination. It is the place for culture, socializing, innovation, sparking creativity, all the things that really add value. But the true challenge will be how employers keep up the connection between employees gained during home from home.



### **Done with the big HQ**

Most companies are now questioning the need for large, expensive, centralized HQs, instead developing satellite office models. As most work can be done at home or by smaller teams based in smaller offices or coworking spaces, the smaller downsized office becomes just a space for the essential collaboration and celebrating wins.



It is a model that has far-reaching implications for the make-up and mechanics of our cities and suburbs. Many argue it will bring new vitality to neighbourhoods as our lives become local-centric. We will commute less, reducing strain on roads and train networks. We will have more control over our daily routine that should improve the work-life balance.

### **In conclusion**

Of course, the 'new normal' requires new tools – computer hardware and software – to keep us collaborating, connected and able to concentrate. Likewise, the traditional methodology of purchasing computers needs to change as well. Five



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years ago, 90% of software was purchased. That has changed now to be under 10% with most companies subscribing to solutions such as Microsoft 365. Computer hardware such as Apple Mac's and Microsoft Surface is available on a subscription basis and companies and companies like HardSoft are leaders in the solution of Device as a Service<sup>2</sup>.



Changes to working practices are likely to be in constant flux for some time to come and for some, WFA means disturbances from kids, pets, flatmates, couriers and the like. While the incessant chat of the open-plan office or coworking space is hardly a respite, you can adapt using technology such as the MacBook Air Work From Anywhere<sup>3</sup>.

Whether people are working from home, at the office, working remotely or on the go, businesses still need to ensure that productivity, connectivity and security can be managed. In the strange world we all find ourselves in, using WFA solutions<sup>4</sup> can help us all to make sense in the world that currently lacks sense.

**Reference**

- <sup>1</sup> <https://news.gallup.com/poll/321800/covid-remote-work-update.aspx>
- <sup>2</sup> <https://www.hardsoftcomputers.co.uk/devices-for-teams/>
- <sup>3</sup> <https://www.hardsoftcomputers.co.uk/macbook-air-work-from-anywhere-bundle/>
- <sup>4</sup> <https://www.hardsoftcomputers.co.uk/what-kind-of-user-are-you/flexible-business-lease-subscriptions-for-apple-computers/>