How Zendesk powers an evolving workplace

The future of work pivots on people, tools, and communication.
Here's how Zendesk empowers HR and IT teams to help every employee,
focus their talents on complex projects, and to scale with ease.

zendesk

Everyone is talking about employee expectations and workplace dynamics. What's the role of the office? What does it mean to collaborate and innovate? What does the workforce look like, now and five years on?

The answers affect countless companies and individuals — and the answers, complex and multilayered, are evolving at a brisk clip.

The dynamics around employee expectations and the workplace were already in flux, but the pandemic fast-tracked change. In Zendesk research, 90% of tech decision makers said that 2020 accelerated the adoption of digital technology. PwC Research found that 83% of employers said remote work has been successful for their company, compared to 73% six months previous, and only 1 in 5 executives want to return to a pre-pandemic style of office — although only 13% of executives said they wanted to let go of the office for good.

Companies large and small must be able to respond to ongoing change with agility, and HR and IT leaders carry a huge responsibility on this front. How a company's people collaborate, communicate, and interrelate, and the ways in which they use technology are foundational to how successfully a company navigates our times.

That means the productivity, efficiency, and well-being of HR and IT teams ripple out and have an impact far beyond that of their individual groups. Truly, having the right tools and systems to support your HR and IT teams has never been so pivotal.

What HR and IT leaders need to succeed

We HR professionals must free up time for our HR business partners and other people team members so that they can work on the most strategic challenges:

- How is the culture of the organization going to evolve post-COVID?

- What is the ideal use of our office space post-COVID?

- What's our location strategy for roles and individuals?

- What's our offering around benefits, and what more do employees need?

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There are so many strategic things we need our people teams to tackle. Using technology to take away some of the more repetitive tasks frees them up for this complex, important work.

– Fidelma Butler
Vice president, talent & organization development at Zendesk

Workforce dynamics are changing along with workplace models, employee expectations, and values — values of companies and values of employees. Most every professional, regardless of industry, is experiencing one thing in spades: change. Those industries that found themselves less rocked by the past year's tumult have still experienced it via their customers. And the people who do the most direct service to an organization's employees, HR and IT teams, need the right tools to address all of this evolution.

Support teams and employees all need answers and information

Easy-to-navigate workplace processes and engaging experiences are foundational to employee happiness, and thus to retention. Your employees need to know how to find answers, quickly — whether via self-service or by contacting someone directly. Top talent is also looking for visibility into the company they work for, and doesn't want to go on a scavenger hunt to find information — corporate announcements, a CEO's response to a crisis, companywide policies.

Employees love messaging

The past year has taught us in new ways the importance of relationships and communication. Across our lives, we're increasingly using messaging tools to stay in touch and collaborate. The expectation of messaging as a norm of engaging has carried into the workplace.

Two major themes in the evolution of the workplace: **Employers must supply their people with tools they need to do their jobs well, and employees need ready access to information.**

Messaging helps companies achieve these missions.

Messaging embodies interlocking trends. **With the rise of the hybrid workplace** — Gartner says 41 percent of employees plan to continue working remotely at least part of the time — in-person interactions are less common and a less likely source of quick answers. Then there's the workforce itself: **Millennials and Gen Z** will make up roughly 75 percent of the workforce by 2030, and 41% of this group say they prefer to communicate electronically at work rather than face to face, or even over the phone.

Zendesk makes messaging with employees or customers as easy as messaging with friends and family. That's intentional — customers and employees alike want companies to meet them where they already are.

In the past, companies haven't always had the tools to use messaging at scale and with ease. Zendesk worked hard to change that. Our messaging is simple to set up and adopt — and even automate — which takes pressure off your people, enables seamless onboarding experiences, and gets answers to employees fast. One of the best aspects of Zendesk messaging: Conversations are ongoing and connected across whatever channels you use, so no one ever has to repeat themselves.
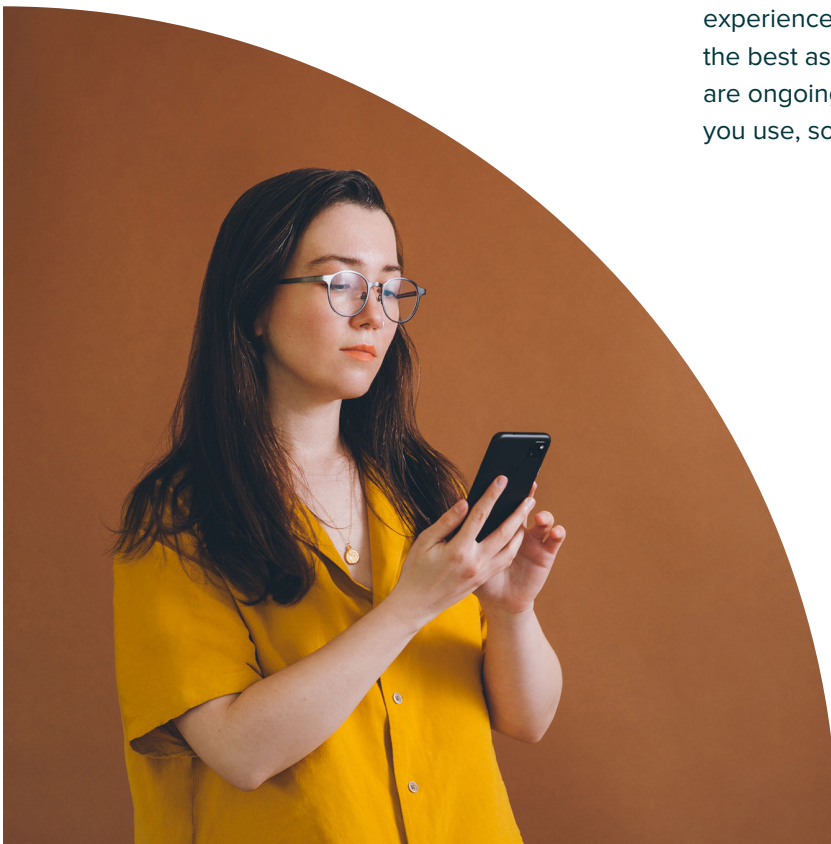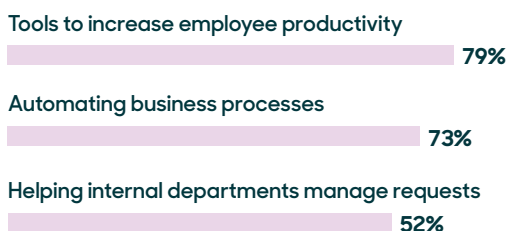
Why investing in employee experience (EX) is a must

61%

Business leaders report plans to boost investment in engaging employees, with 61% expecting a bigger budget in 2021

TOP AREAS WHERE THEY PLAN TO INVEST:

Tools to increase employee productivity

79%

Automating business processes

73%

Helping internal departments manage requests

52%

Source: CX Trends 2021

In addition to enabling your HR and IT leaders to be optimally efficient and productive, using Zendesk at work is a critical tool for improving how your teams operate, and, in turn, the employee experience. **Companies are beginning to realize that investments in EX translate into meaningful business results, so they're making it a priority.** In fact, in a recent Zendesk survey, over 50 percent of business leaders said investments in their employee experience contributed to increased revenue.

The employee experience requires ongoing nurturing, feedback and responsiveness, just as the customer experience does. Similarly, employees can tell the difference between a company that is ticking boxes and paying lip service — and one that genuinely cares about their holistic wellbeing.

"We need to be more responsive now than ever before," says Butler. "We're very much dealing with individuals, so we need to be able to respond to individuals. Everybody's needs are different in this pandemic — and beyond. Everybody's got different childcare situations, different living situations, different health situations. And so we need to be able to respond faster, more succinctly and more consistently as well, and that's where the technology comes in."

Introducing Zendesk for work

The benefits of investing in employee support teams and the employee experience

- Increased productivity and satisfaction within internal support teams

- Increased retention across internal support teams

- Increased innovation and revenue

- Increased workforce engagement

The consequences of ignoring the employee experience

- Stagnant productivity, especially among internal support teams

- Revenue loss

- Increase in employee churn, plus hiring and training costs

- Decreased workforce engagement and satisfaction

Companies typically think of employee experience (EX) as HR's responsibility. That isn't always the case. Yes, HR typically brings a solution into their entire org, but most departments can benefit from EX solutions, especially those that manage or support:

- High-volume or high-velocity requests

- Large teams or the entire organization — these groups get lots of questions from throughout the company

- Any large groups that require specific training and support to onboard or ramp up

Why Zendesk is the right choice

Zendesk has long helped you deliver excellent customer service easily, no matter where your people are located. It can now help you solve similar pain points and create efficiencies within your own organization. "People can't necessarily just walk up and tap their HR representative or IT person on the shoulder anymore," says Butler. "This is where our technology comes in."

Zendesk is truly employee-centric, geared to the needs of internal support team leaders and their teams, as well as employees in the broader organization. We are highly attuned to perceptions and value. Even before the world changed, a tight internal support operation was necessary to keep an entire company running and on the same page — especially during times of change and uncertainty.

Now, with a highly distributed workforce as the norm for many, companies must be even more efficient and effective in understanding how their employees perceive them, getting them the information and tools they need to do their jobs well, and communicating the right information to create healthy, accurate perceptions.

Moreover, making it as frictionless as possible for your people to stay up to date ensures that their energy is focused on the engaging, high-value projects you hired them to do.

How Zendesk for work helps

As a service-centered organization, creating simple and delightful experiences for internal support teams and corporate employees is at the heart of what we do. Time sucks and pointless rabbit holes detract from your employees' productivity and well-being. The average worker spends 1.8 hours each day searching for and gathering information, and, on average, an employee spends 28% of the work week managing email and nearly 20% looking for internal information.

With Zendesk for work, we help your teams run more efficiently and do their jobs well:

- Automate processes via self-service and AI to cut down costs, lower resolution times, and streamline processes

- Drive efficiency and productivity by giving employees all the tools they need in one place

- Delight employees with simple, consumer-like experiences to increase engagement and drive productivity

Zendesk for work also helps your company build culture and help your teams gauge performance, analyzing trends and gaining actionable insights into any underlying problems, so that you can go on to optimize it. After all, companies that use analytics to track support team metrics reduce their resolution times by an average of 16%.

A tool that fosters collaboration

Zendesk for work offers the ability to collaborate, the ability to bring other people in on a ticket and promptly solve for that employee's need. Very often in the HR space, you've got an HR Ops person owning a ticket, and they might need to bring in someone from Total Rewards or an HR Business Partner in the employee's region. The ease of all this collaboration within Zendesk for work is crucial to facilitating this collaboration and resolution.

– Fidelma Butler
Vice president, talent & organization development at Zendesk

For IT Leaders

IT groups face a special set of challenges, particularly those in companies that are aiming to grow in size and complexity. Two-thirds of IT organizations resolve less than 80% of incidents at the first point of contact. "There is way more movement in the IT ecosystem now than ever before, more devices with sensitive information are out in the wild, and nefarious actors are leaning in with increasing focus. And all of this is happening against a background of continued migration to the cloud, digital transformation to a work-from-anywhere — hybrid — environment, and an explosion of undersecured devices," says Dan Ortega, vice president of product marketing, Oomnitza. "The bottom line: Data in motion is data at risk."

Zendesk for work is great for organizations on the entire spectrum of IT maturity. As you grow in size and complexity, Zendesk will scale with you. Its capabilities and apps meet the needs of more mature IT organizations who need capabilities such as:

- Change management
- Asset management
- Approvals and workflows

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xero

"In terms of functionality, Zendesk checks all the boxes. Zendesk is a good, enterprise-grade ITSM tool with the look and feel of a consumer-grade application."

Hadleigh Lynn
IT support team lead

QUICK STATS:
- 6 weeks to full implementation
- 270 agents
- 5K+ tickets resolved per month

We need to free up time for our IT partners and other people so that they can work on high-level imperatives:

Logistics orchestration
Now more than ever it is critical to keep track of all assets—hardware, software, accessories—associated with all users, across the entire asset lifecycle

Security enforcement
Given the expanded potential attack surface associated with a work from anywhere (WFA) model, companies must lean in even further to track AV, license, and location status on all relevant assets to minimize risks associated with hybrid work models

User experience
Onboarding and offboarding must be a well-oiled machine. The ease, or lack thereof, of onboarding can be the difference between a happy, motivated employee, or a cynical and frustrated one. When an employee leaves, with so many applications in the cloud, if you remove an employee's credentials from the system, you run a very real risk of deleting all the files they were working on. This has major security and compliance implications

Dan Ortega
Vice president of product marketing, Oomnitza

For HR Leaders

HR leaders need to know what story the data is telling, says Butler. "What are the things that our employees are asking about the most? When we know, we can get ahead of those issues. We can provide an article proactively on that, or we can update a particular policy, or we can get some additional communications out."

Zendesk for work makes all of this possible, using Zendesk and a host of apps that help HR teams manage all parts of the employee experience from a single place, including:

- Onboarding
- HR performance tracking
- Employee surveys and feedback

REDFIN

"My favorite thing about Zendesk is that I can take someone who has never used a ticketing system and get them up to speed in less than an hour."

Mac Jonson
Help desk manager

QUICK STATS:
- 3 months to full implementation
- 246 agents
- 96% internal satisfaction

What to prioritize when you survey
When you're setting out to survey your employees, consider the focus areas that would make a meaningful impact. It's very important that you frame the survey in this way to employees as a means for them to contribute to making a meaningful impact. Tell people what the outcomes of the survey were and crucially, tell them what you're doing about them. Define some short-term, quick-win actions and then some longer-term things as well. Then tell them when you've taken the appropriate actions—and then resurvey again. The worst thing that you can do is survey people and neglect to follow up with action. Be explicit as to how people's input is being used to drive action.

Fidelma Butler
Vice president, talent & organization development at Zendesk

Learn more about how Zendesk for work could empower your internal support organizations with the tools they need to be successful today and in the future

Visit zendesk.com/internal-help-desk

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