

TELECOMUTTING FROM AN IT PERSPECTIVE.

Telecommuting is whereby a company or an organization allows employees to complete work assignments from outside the organization's traditional workplace using telecommunication tools such as email, video conferencing, phone chats and messaging.

It utilizes Information technology and telecommunications to enable employees to complete tasks, meet, and collaborate with each other from remote or separate locations.

Telecommuting has evolved a lot in recent times. This has been accelerated a lot by the pandemic that rendered the social interactions in the office place somewhat dangerous due to the virus. The office scene was almost being rendered useless and the concept of working from home became a norm.

This has created a lot of issues both positive and negative in the corporate world and from an IT perspective has created a whole new range of issues.

Some of the issues may include but not limited to; remote access, security, database access and more.

- **REMOTE ACCESS**

Telecommuting has created a whole new way of doing things as opposed to the normal office way. One could be thousands of miles away from the office and still be working as effective as one who is in an office setting.

People whose jobs entail a lot of on-site client support have telecommuting to thank for as this has made it easier for them to work effectively and have no issues at all.

At the same time people who have to communicate with others who are on different locations have telecommuting to thank for as the tools and software for doing meetings are easily available. Communication has greatly improved over time and things can be done in real time as opposed to a certain time before.

Workers have the ability to handle more clients remotely and in a quick manner and therefore things get done in a quick and timely manner.

- SECURITY

Telecommuting has changed the IT security scene quite drastically as it has made companies adopt non traditional ways of data and machine protection.

Most companies have moved their operations to cloud based storage services to enable the growing number of telecommuters access company information in a more secure way. Also, this has brought about the need to regularly update software installed in machines also to adopt more creative ways of even physically storing devices we use.

Practices such as installation of antivirus software's, firewalls, file encryption software's are some of the ways to digitally secure crucial company data while working remotely.

Other practices such as lock screens, locking up your laptops, USB data blockers and password protecting your devices are some of the physical ways of protecting your devices from preying eyes of hackers.

- DATABASE ACCESS

Database access in telecommuting has made companies adopt new ways of company data storage. Moving to cloud data storage solutions has made it easier for companies to hire people even in other continents because they can be able to access a company's data easily. They are able to securely and easily work as they can effectively update data in real time as they work.

This has made it so easy for companies to expand their operations easily as well as have other offices in other parts of the world.

- OTHER DAILY IT RELATED FUNCTIONS

Other IT related functions have become easy because one does not need to move around a lot. Remote access tools have become easily available enabling the IT staff to support the users easily and faster.

IT staff now have to also adopt a new way of doing things as users don't need to be physically in the office for work to be able to be done.

Telecommuting has its advantages to both the employer and employee and also it has its fair bit of challenges. Company's need to look at what model works best for their employees. There are companies that have hybridized both concepts and have worked for them. However, there are others that have to pick one and leave the other model maybe because of the nature of their jobs or the company's budget.

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Sourced from www.security.berkeley.edu/education-awareness/best-practices-telecommuting-securely

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