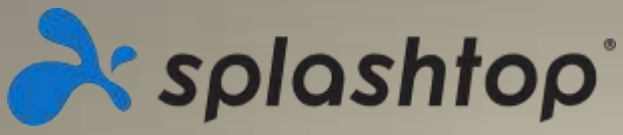

This is a report of the Work-From-Home Survey conducted by Splashtop. It summarizes key findings of the survey, explains the survey method, and details the results

Work-From-Home Survey by Splashtop

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, employees worldwide had to resort to work from home. Soon after, the debate about remote working began - Is a remote workforce sustainable? Is productivity impacted? Which remote tools help boost productivity? Splashtop surveyed employees worldwide to find out.

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1. Executive Summary

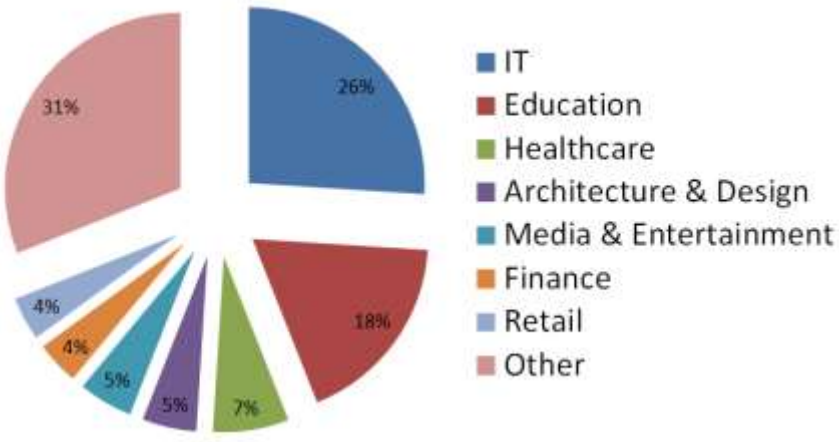
In May 2020, Splashtop conducted the Work-From-Home Survey to find out how professionals across industries had transitioned to working remotely during COVID-19. The following topics were covered in the survey:

- Working from home before COVID-19
- The productivity of working from home vs in the office
- Tools that help employees be productive while working from home
- Use cases of how the tools are used
- Respondents' opinion on the future of remote work

Eight hundred and seventy (870) individuals worldwide, from various industries, took the survey.

It is interesting to note that up until recently, working from home was an option mainly in the IT industry. It was uncommon for television broadcasting stations, game developers, video producers, architects, faculty members, hospital staff, and professionals in many other industries to work remotely. That's in part because the licensed software applications they work with consume a lot of CPU resources and storage, and are therefore housed on physical computers in an office. They cannot be replicated easily. For security purposes, they prefer not to have computers taken off premises when they contain proprietary content, source code, or medical records. So for industries with such particular needs, remote access solutions are setting a new trend. Continue reading to learn more about our findings.

Figure 1 Industry distribution of survey respondents



1.1 Key Insights and Statistics from Survey Results

1. Organizations across all industries have successfully implemented their business continuity plans from home. This trend is possible because of the availability of new and improved technology which enables professionals in various fields to continue executing their tasks remotely.

   Survey result: Respondents included professionals from IT (26%), Education (18%), Healthcare (7%), Architecture & Design (5%), Media & Entertainment (5%), Finance (4%), Retail (4%), and many other industries (31%). Almost all of them were now working from home.

2. Before COVID-19 a vast majority of the group had never or rarely worked from home. This depicts the challenge that organizations have had to deal with during COVID-19. They had to enable an entire workforce to work from home, almost overnight. With employees never or hardly ever working from home before, organizations lacked the infrastructure for long term work from home, and on a large scale. New-age software solutions have made it possible for companies and institutions to set up a remote workforce effectively and quickly.

   Survey result: Before COVID-19, 36.6% had never worked from home, 34.1% had rarely worked remotely, 21.5% had frequently worked remotely, and 7.8% were remote workers.

3. Even though most employees had hardly ever worked from home, companies and employees alike experienced higher productivity while working from home. This is largely because of employees having the right collaboration, team management, project management, and remote access tools in place to effectively work from home.

   Survey result: 40.4% were more productive from home, 39.5% were equally productive as in the office, and only 20.1% were less productive.

4. In addition to collaboration and communications tools, remote access and support tools have enabled professionals across various roles and industries to work remotely. They can now access and/or support workstations or lab computers from home as if they were sitting right in front of it. This capability has made it possible for organizations to

virtualize offices and schools. Employees, students, faculty, continue their tasks with secure access to all the offices'/schools' computer resources.

Survey result: 75% of the respondents use remote access solutions to work from home

5. Organizations and employees today prefer remote access software to traditional VPN based solutions to remote into their workstations. VPN is not easily scalable and not well suited for entire workforces working remotely.

   Survey result: 75% of the respondents use a remote access solution, of which less than 16% use VPN based solutions, to remotely access computer resources, facilitate remote learning, remotely support devices, and for the convenience of being able to work from anywhere and any device.

6. Organizations have seen an unexpected productivity increase with decreased operating and travel costs, along with increased employee satisfaction. It's no wonder that companies like Twitter and Square have made remote work options permanent, along with Facebook, Google, and Microsoft announcing work from home as a long term option.

   However, it seems like most organizations are still weighing their options as the situation evolves before announcing a formal decision. It remains to be seen if COVID-19 will prove to be a catalyst for a significant global change in what has been an 'office' up until today.

   Survey result: Almost 75% of the respondents felt like their company might be more open to working from home, of which 28% think that it might also be the new normal. However, 68% said that their organization has not announced a formal decision regarding the future of work from home.

2. Background

COVID-19 has resurfaced the decades-long debate of working from home. However, this time around it is different - it seems like a more permanent shift in the employers' mindset, and the general perception of work from home. This shift is mostly because digital transformation and the age of new remote technology have significantly improved the capability of employees to work from home without impacting their productivity.

2.1 Evolution of Work from Home

The concept of remote work is not new. Decades ago, remote work began with women entering the workforce after World War II with examples like Tupperware who enabled women to market and sell from their homes. One might also argue that work from home was the norm in medieval times when working classes often set up craft shops at home. But after industrialization, the nature of jobs changed drastically and the concept of an 'office' took roots.

After that and until recently, employers provided a remote option only in special circumstances for certain roles, mostly in IT, sales, and marketing. The mind-set that remote workers are not as productive as office goers is strongly rooted. We are seeing that perception change now.

Since digital transformation, especially cloud computing, and remote access solutions, practically any professional who works on a computer can work remotely, and that is a significant portion of the workforce. Almost every field today utilizes software applications for most if not all tasks. However, there are aspects of an in-office setting that cannot be replicated at home – the camaraderie, collaboration, and there are some tasks that cannot be digitized. Nonetheless, other benefits of remote workforces like the ability to spend more time with family, lesser crowded roads, environmental rejuvenation, and so on might tip the balance in favor of at least a hybrid workforce: A blended model of a remote and an in-office workforce.

2.2 The Role of Remote Access Solutions

During COVID-19, along with collaboration and communication tools, remote access and remote support solutions saw a significant spike in individual professionals and organizations alike, requesting remote access to enable their business continuity plans from home.

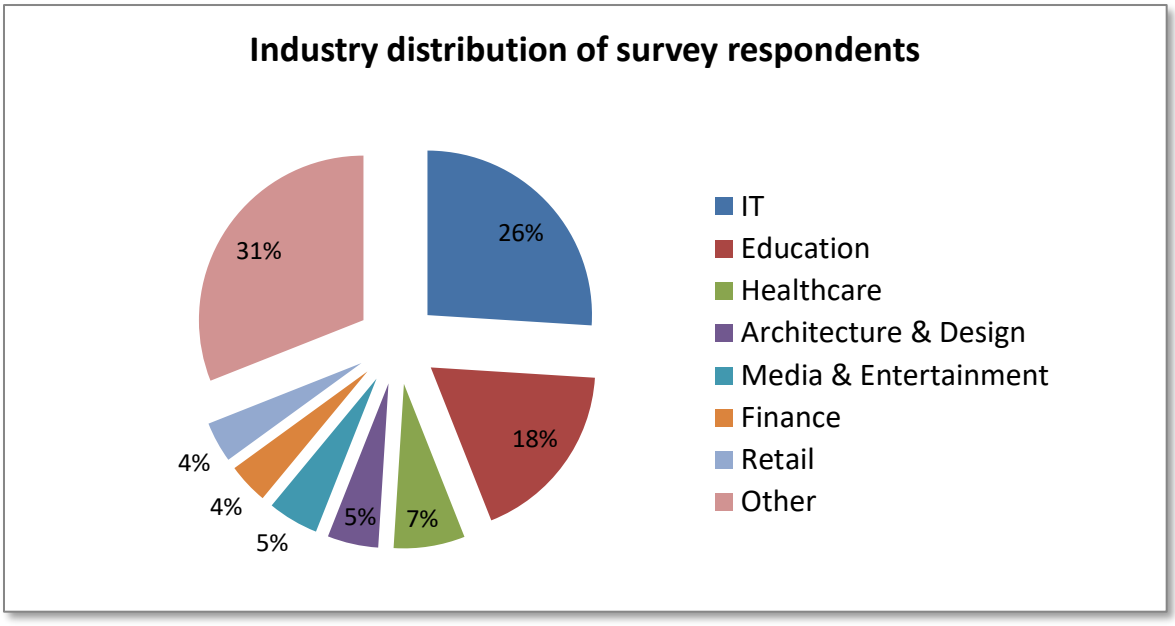
Remote access solutions enable professionals to remotely access their work computers and carry out their tasks in real-time. Not only can IT professionals write code and provide technical support but video producers can edit videos, architects can draw up 3D models, game developers can test builds, doctors can access patient records, students can access lab computers, all from anywhere using any device. For professionals in these fields, working from home has not been the norm until today because the 'heavy' licensed applications they use are not cloud-based and still follow the on-premise model, which is not easy to replicate. With remote access solutions, the possibilities of remote work and study are endless!

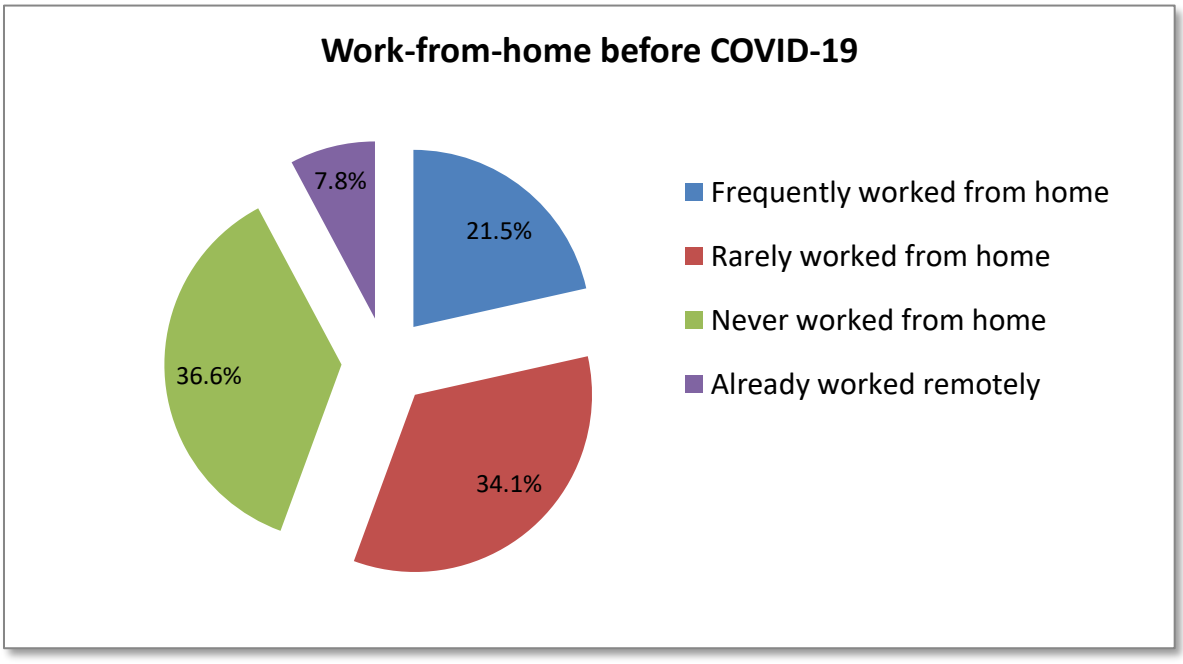
2.3 Survey Objective and Methodology

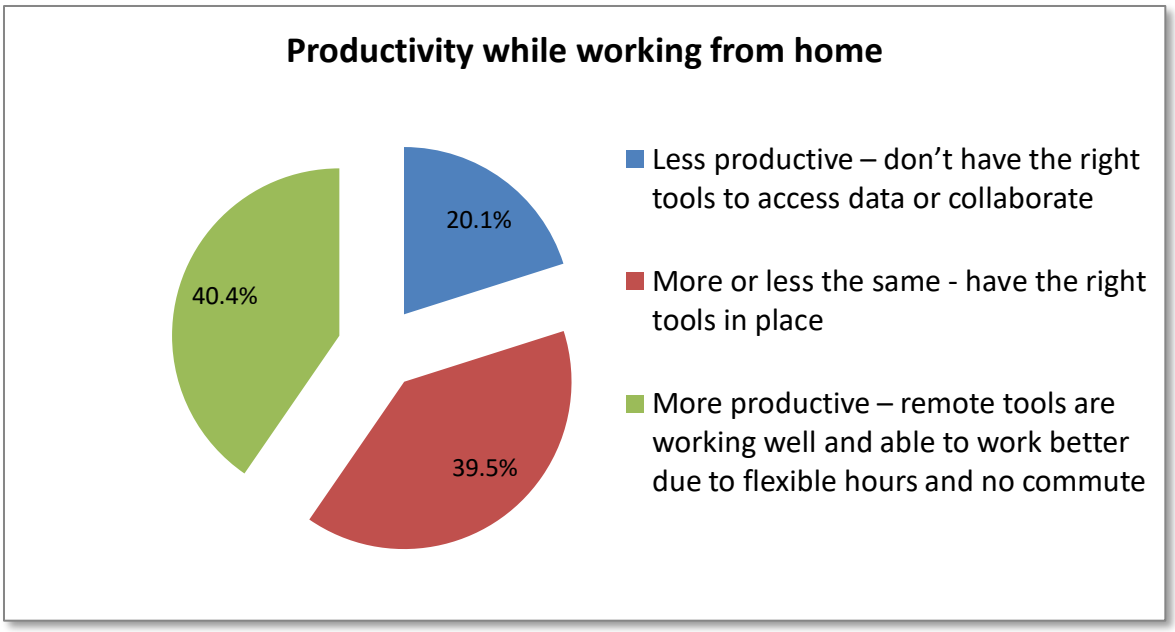
The onset of COVID-19 spurred a flood of questions on the various aspects of working from home. As a leader in enabling a remote workforce, Splashtop wanted to directly ask those impacted in order to best answer these questions.

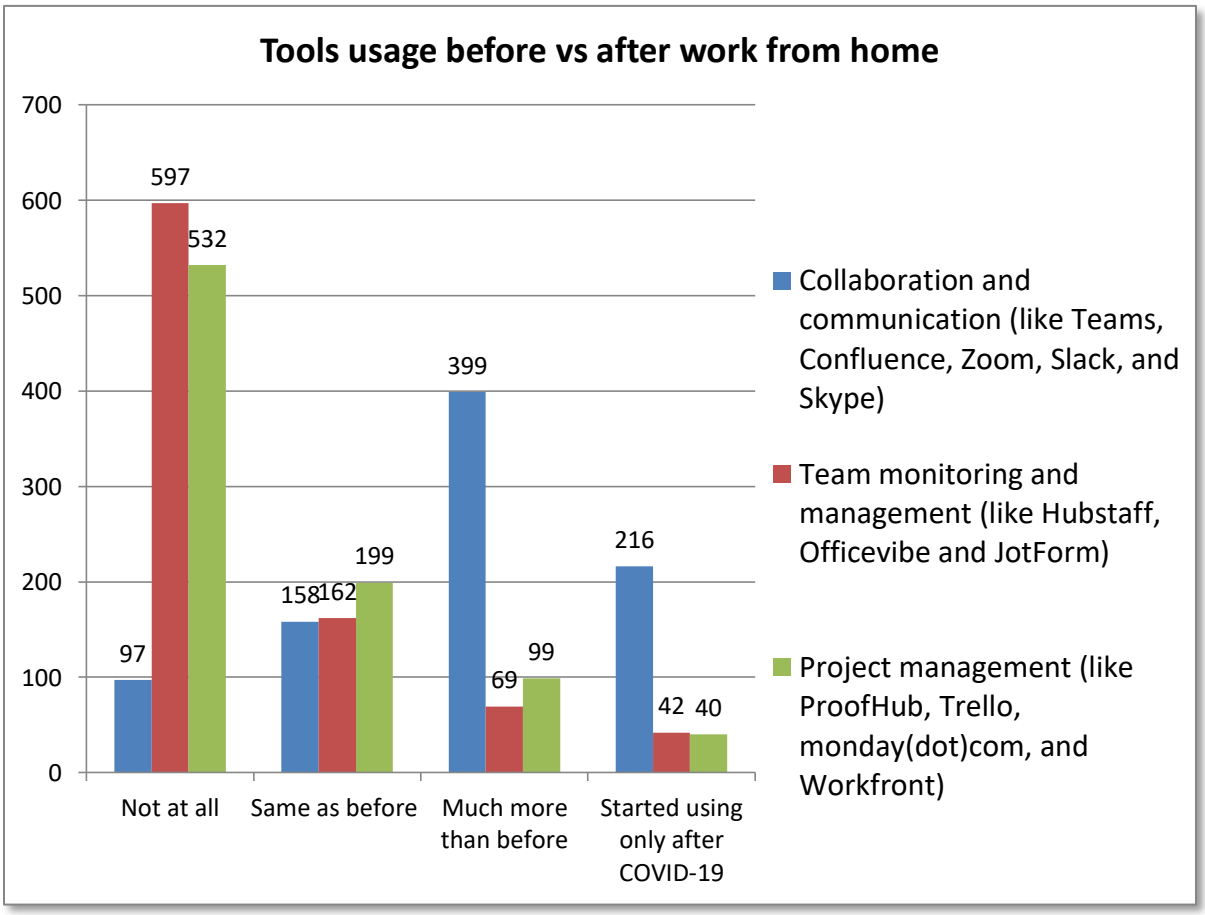
We built the survey in Google Forms, and promoted the survey through social media and emails. No particular group of individuals was targeted to take the survey. The questions were built to gauge the experience of individuals' ability to productively work from home, the contribution of a new-age of remote solutions to their productivity, and the indication of the future of remote work.

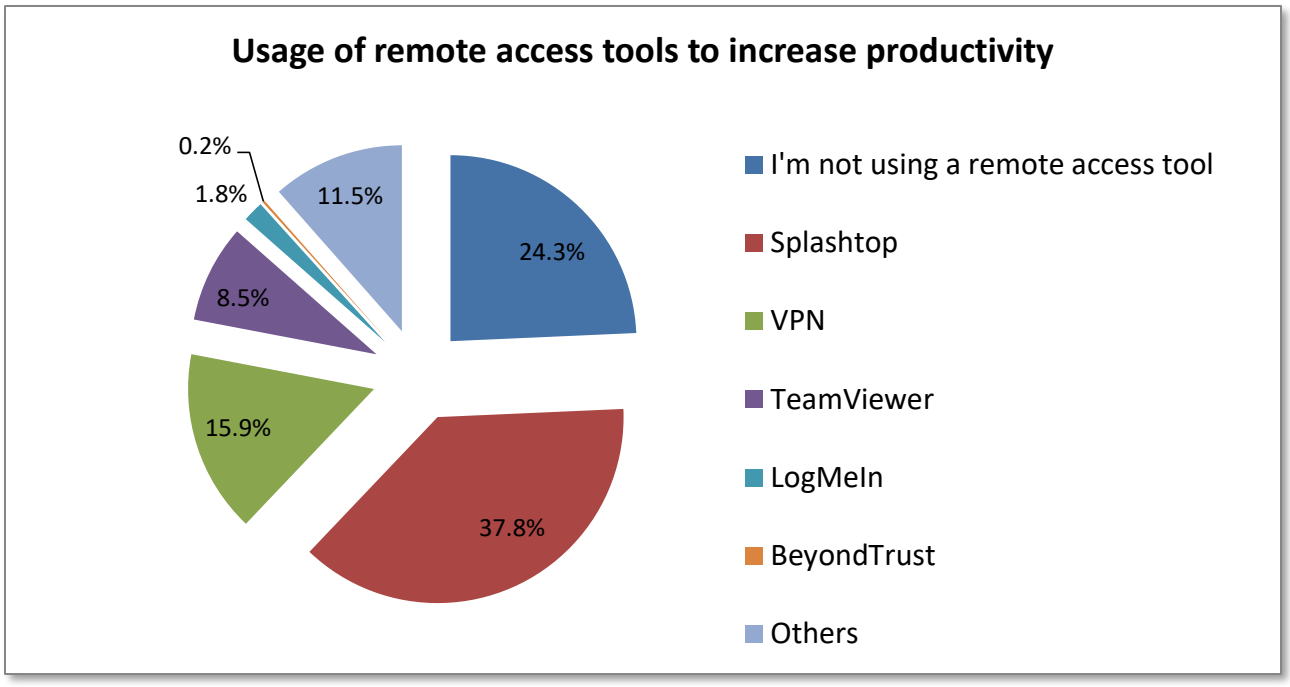
3. SURVEY RESULTS






Productivity while working from home
20.1%
40.4%
39.5%
Less productive – don't have the right tools to access data or collaborate
More or less the same - have the right tools in place
More productive – remote tools are working well and able to work better due to flexible hours and no commute


Tools usage before vs after work from home
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
97
597
532
158
162
199
399
69
99
216
42
40
Not at all
Same as before
Much more than before
Started using only after COVID-19
Collaboration and communication (like Teams, Confluence, Zoom, Slack, and Skype)
Team monitoring and management (like Hubstaff, Officevibe and JotForm)
Project management (like ProofHub, Trello, monday(dot)com, and Workfront)



How respondents are using remote access tools

<u>To remotely access computer resources:</u>

- Access work PCs and Macs from a laptop or mobile device from home
- Access applications for accounting (QuickBooks), reporting, video editing & broadcasting, running diagnostics, billing & invoicing, ERP, military air force applications, CAD, and BIM (Revit)
- Access confidential client/ patient data
- Remote into work computer to use the intranet
- Conduct training

<u>To facilitate remote learning:</u>

- Teachers use an iPad, Chromebook, or Surface Pro to remote into school computers and conduct remote lessons effectively by writing and annotating on the device
- Students access lab computers to complete projects
- IT admins solve problems that students run into by remoting into their devices

To remotely support devices:

- Support client computers, troubleshoot and resolve issues
- Remote into client computers to monitor their HVAC systems
- Help family members with issues related to their computers and mobile devices

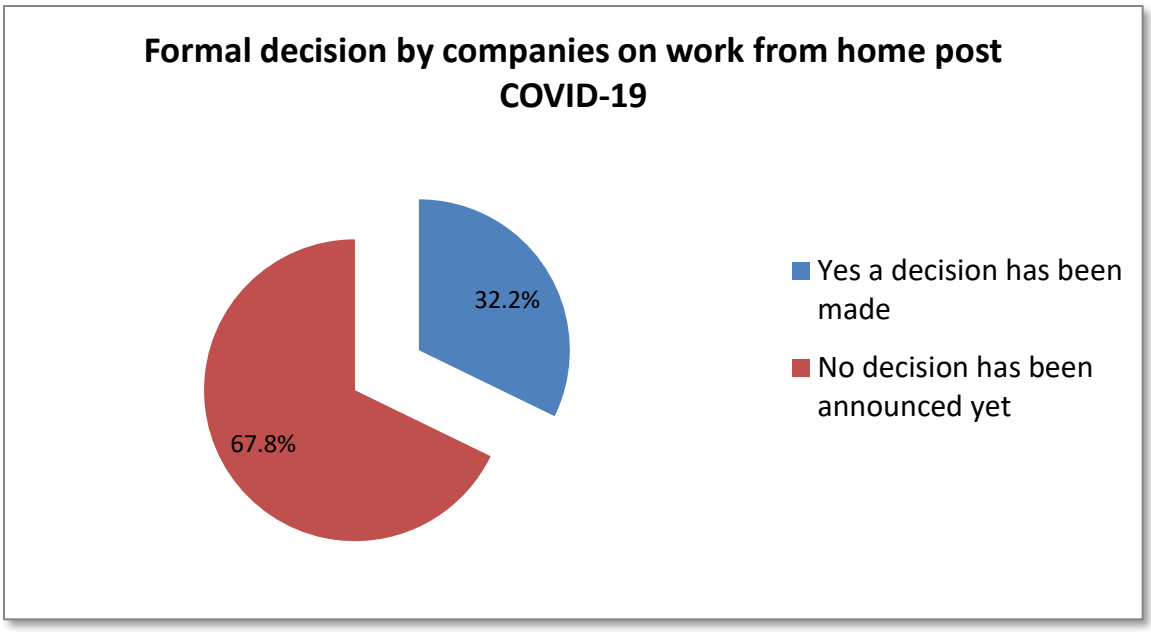
For convenience:

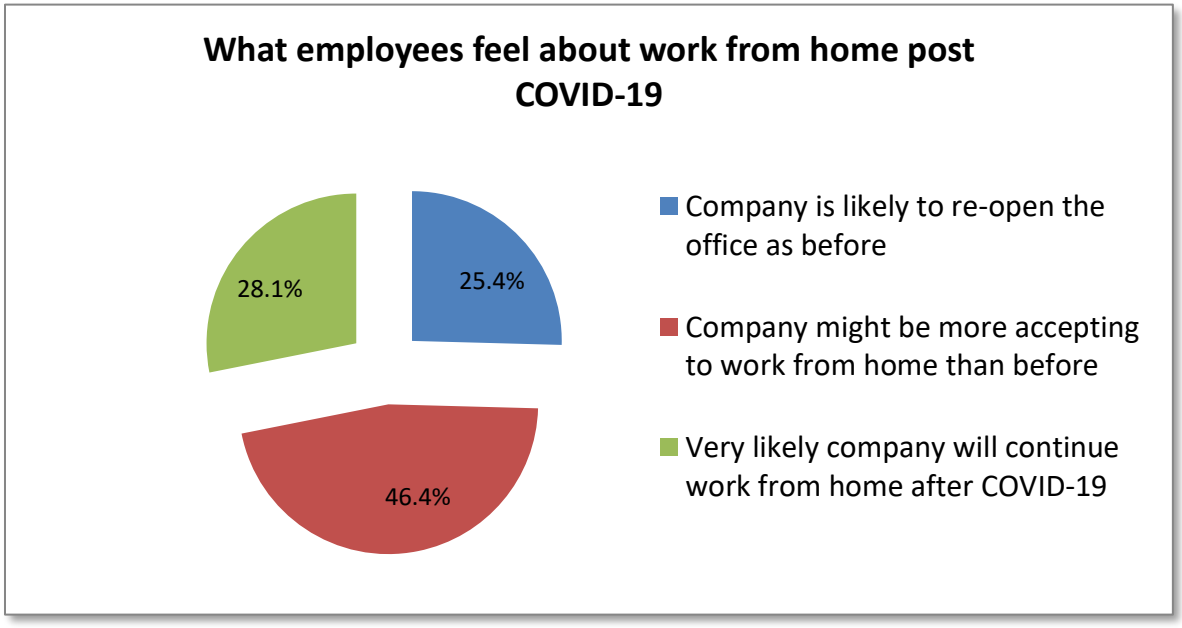
- Work from different places within the house by remoting into the desktop from iPads, Chromebooks, and even mobile phones
- Use iPads, TVs and other screens as a second monitor
- Mirror cellphone apps on to a computer
- Watch movies and play games

Most useful tools while working from home

Collaboration/communication tools: Zoom, Teams, Skype, WebEx, Google Classroom, and Slack

Remote access tools: Splashtop, VPN, TeamViewer, and LogMeIn


Formal decision by companies on work from home post COVID-19
32.2%
67.8%
Yes a decision has been made
No decision has been announced yet


What employees feel about work from home post COVID-19
25.4%
46.4%
28.1%
Company is likely to re-open the office as before
Company might be more accepting to work from home than before
Very likely company will continue work from home after COVID-19

4. SURVEY QUESTIONS

EVOLUTION OF WORK FROM HOME DURING COVID-19 AND BEYOND

1. Which industry do you work in?
    - IT
    - Finance
    - Media and Entertainment
    - Architecture and Design
    - Banking
    - Healthcare
    - Education
    - Other

2. Before COVID-19, how often did you work from home?
    - Never
    - Rarely
    - Frequently
    - I'm a remote worker

3. How effectively are you able to work from home compared to physically being in the office (without considering distractions like kids and pets!)?
    - Less productive – don't have the right tools to access data or collaborate
    - More or less the same - have the right tools in place
    - More productive – remote tools are working well and able to work better due to flexible hours and no commute

4. How much more are you using each of those tools since COVID-19?

Collaboration and Communication	O Not at all	O Same as before	O Much more than before	O Started using only after COVID-19
Team Monitoring and Management	O Not at all	O Same as before	O Much more than before	O Started using only after COVID-19
Project Management	O Not at all	O Same as before	O Much more than before	O Started using only after COVID-19

5. Are you currently using a remote access tool
    - I'm not using a remote access tool
    - Splashtop
    - TeamViewer
    - LogMeIn
    - BeyondTrust
    - VPN
    - Other

6. Please explain how you use the remote access tool (If answer to question 5 was not option 1)

7. Name the top three tools you have found to be the most useful while working from home.

8. Do you think your team or company will continue work from home after COVID-19?
    - Probably not
    - Might be more accepting to working from home than before
    - Very likely

9. Has your company announced any decision with respect to working from home or going back to the workplace?
    - Not yet
    - Yes