

## 2021; when firms need to get serious about remote working



**A**s the various vaccines give us hope that there is light at the end of the Covid tunnel, it may seem to many that in 2021 things could return to “normal”.

But, at least to some degree, the remote working practices ushered in by lockdown will remain, driven by employees seeking a better work-life balance and employers always looking for reasonable cost savings. One City firm I’m aware of is considering whether the annual £40,000 cost *before* salaries to slide a chair under a desk is money well spent!

Although IT professionals (development, support and security) have made strong advances in delivering these modern work environments, 2021 will be driven by organisations demanding a more joined up, secure and future-proof workplace. So how will they do this?

### Virtual collaboration tools are the next big thing

Were employers more tolerant in 2020? Probably. As the pandemic (hopefully) recedes, the demand for the return of previous productivity levels will increase, and many companies are looking to provide the tools required to deliver this. Video conferencing platforms, file sharing/collaboration tools and communications technologies are now for much more than

idle chit-chat. Both employers and employees are taking these seriously as a way of working, so to maximise productivity firms need to offer the right mix of these collaboration tools.

Having identified the “what”, delivering the “how” will require serious reconsideration of networking and cloud strategies. Businesses will increasingly realise that the internet doesn’t necessarily deliver the performance, reliability and security needed for complex cloud applications and distributed, remote working practices. The average home router has minimal security built in, with ineffective firewalls present in name only. With entire households of children, teenagers and adults browsing and downloading all sorts via the same network a firm’s confidential documents are shared on, this creates a serious risk. More organisations will adopt direct, more secure, private connections for employees to utilise their cloud services from home, delivering a more agile network model.

If your employees are going to continue working from home, consider including guidance for them in to the standard training, policy and procedures documentation. Make sure it includes advice on increasing the robustness of their network and make sure that secure firmware updates are a required part of their routine. And talk to an IT service and support provider that can deliver the security you need. ■

**David Henderson-Begg**  
**Managing Director**  
**Labyrinth Technology Ltd**

**Unrivalled support for London’s law firms in 2021**

<p><b>IT Support</b>  <b>Cloud Consulting</b>  <b>Project Management</b>  <b>VoIP and Mobile Comms</b></p>	<p><b>Windows Support</b>  <b>Cybersecurity Consulting</b>  <b>Microsoft 365 Support</b>  <b>Hardware &amp; Software</b></p>
--	--

 **Labyrinth Technology**

*“We are delighted with Labyrinth’s support. They are extremely responsive, friendly and always willing to go the extra mile to help us resolve any IT issues that arise. They also provide excellent strategic input to improve our IT systems and enable us to run more efficiently. We would have no hesitation in recommending them”.*

Jon Gilligan  
 Managing Partner - GQ Littler



**You spent years becoming a legal expert.  
 You shouldn’t also need to be an IT expert to run your business.**

**020 3790 7500   www.LabyrinthIT.com   enquiries@LabyrinthIT.com**