

Four misconceptions
of growing your
business

RICOH
imagine. change.

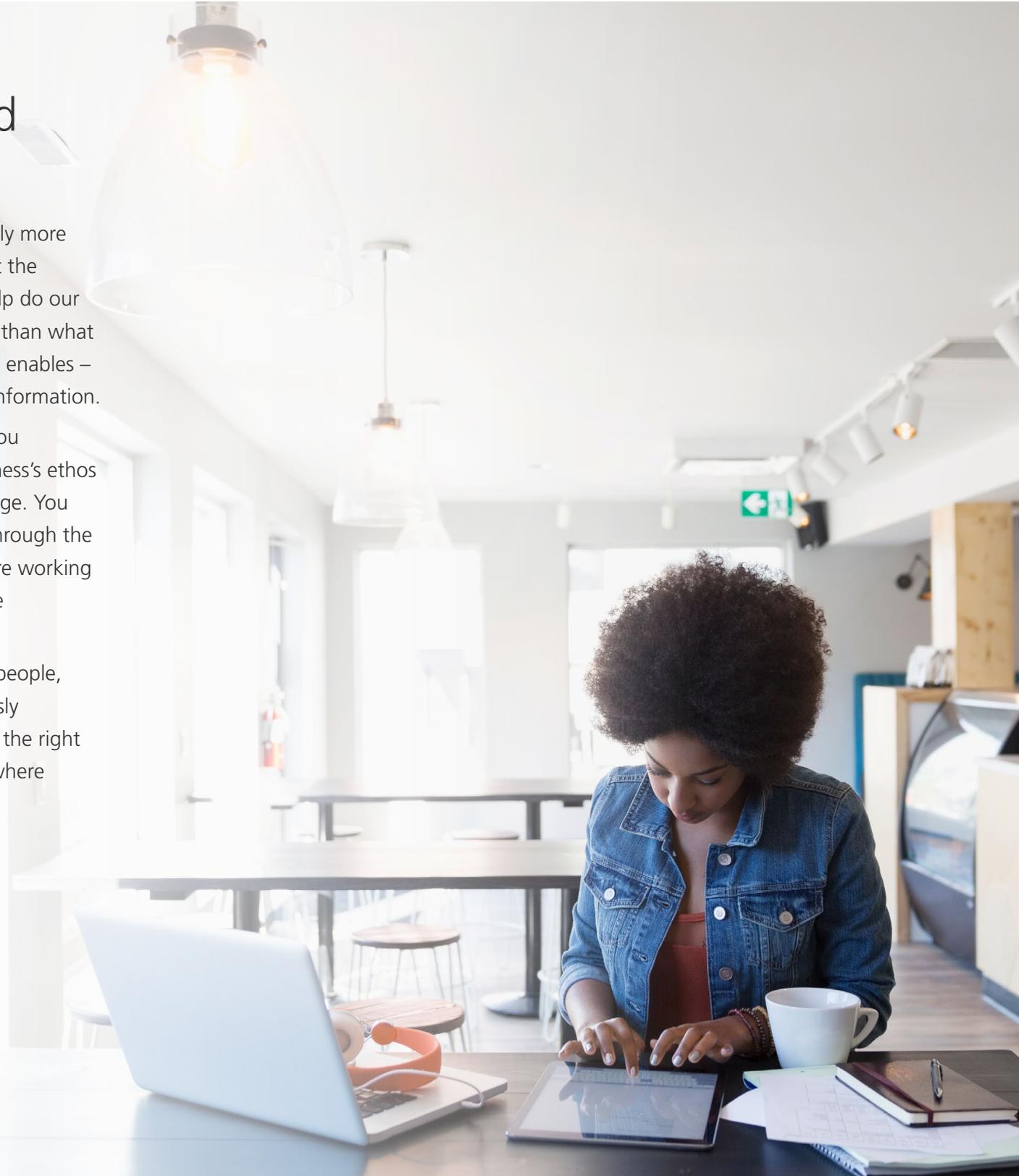


We're in a new world of work

Growing your business would be exponentially more difficult, frustrating and unproductive without the mobile technology we rely on everyday to help do our jobs. But those devices are far less important than what they connect us to and what that connection enables – the management, movement and access to information.

Information is a powerful tool. But it's how you strategically build information into your business's ethos and structure that gives you a competitive edge. You need to ensure your information is flowing through the right technology, and that the right people are working together with that technology to manage the information moving from point A to point B.

In short, your business needs its technology, people, and information interconnected and seamlessly working together. The ultimate goal is to get the right information, to the right people, when and where they need it.





Understanding your business today

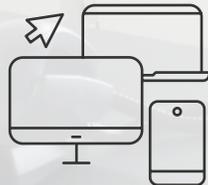
The free exchange of information can have a dramatic impact on tangible business outcomes including improved productivity, reduced costs and increased revenue. But there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution for any business.

If you're feeling unsure, overwhelmed or even antiquated in how your business is running – especially compared to others – it's probably time to change things up, whether that's the size of your servers, the capabilities of your copy machines, or even the floor plan of your workspaces.

But before you can begin transforming your business through this lens, it's critical you first remove any false perceptions of what it means to operate a business today.

Let's take a look at four common misconceptions that are sure to hinder your business growth if not recognized and addressed throughout the fabric of your operations.

Misconception #1:
Work is done in the office.



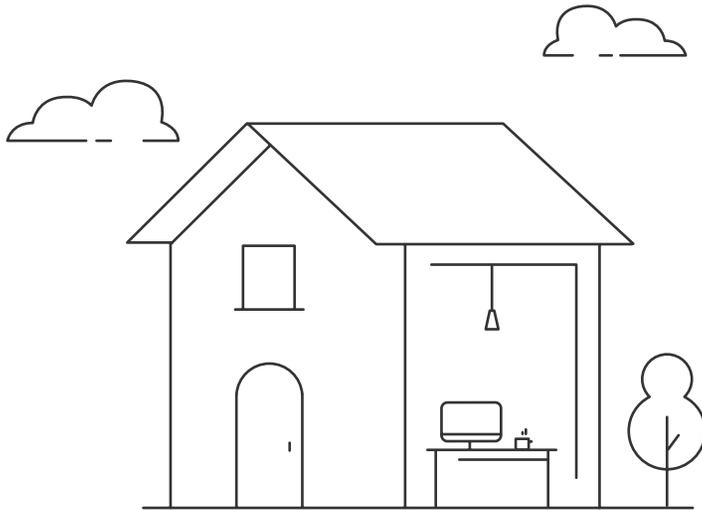
Misconception

Work is done in the office.

Truth

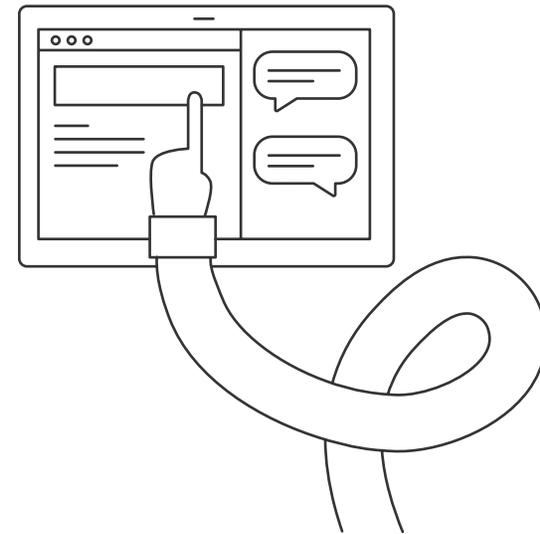
The world is now our workplace.

The numbers



Remote is the new norm

63% of workers say they expect that the standard eight-hour workday will be obsolete and 68% said they expect to work remotely instead of commute to an office every day.¹



Flexibility drives worker engagement

Workers who spend 60% - 80% of their time working remotely are likely to have the highest workplace engagement.²



What this really means

“Going to work” has always meant settling in at the office – becoming one of many in a sea of desks – from 9 a.m.- 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. While this is still certainly the case for many, there’s also a good chance you’ve worked outside of your office walls, and at all hours of the day.

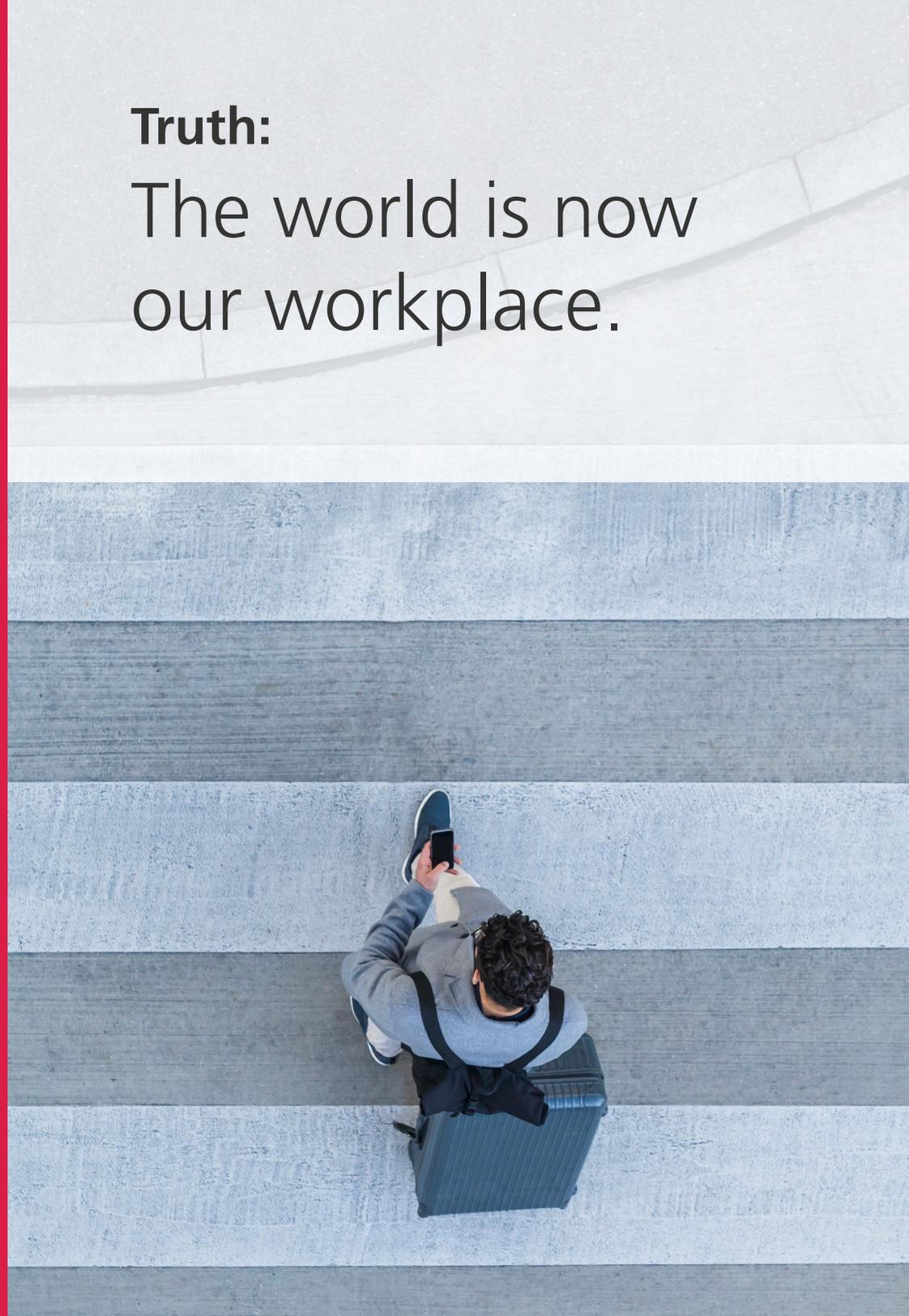
Thanks to technology, information is shared from one corner of the globe to another instantly, and meetings can all be had in the palm of your hand – whether it’s in the coffee shop, on your couch, or on the airplane. As a result of companies and employees being “always on,” deadlines no longer adhere to the traditional workday or office environment. Gone are the days when you should expect workers to stay in the office long past business hours or physically “come in” on a Saturday.

Modern workers expect to be afforded an increased level of flexibility and freedom to work remotely. This can be mutually beneficial for both employees and employers in terms of increased job satisfaction, better retention and improved productivity if the right systems are in place.

Information is mobile. And so should be the worker using it.

Truth:

The world is now
our workplace.



Getting started

There's no need to reinvent the wheel or stress when it comes to making your business more agile, flexible and collaborative for workers. The tools exist, and so does the information to implement them. Here's a few to get you started:

File sync and share

For mobile employees, convenience reigns supreme when it comes to using their personal email accounts and devices to manage information. However, equipping them with a simple tool for storing and sharing that information goes a long way in eliminating the risk otherwise caused by convenience. Giving employees the right tools and education reduces the chances of putting your data at risk. [Get started.](#)

Communication tools

Different work styles sometimes mean a remote or distributed workforce. So equip your employees with the technologies that keep them connected including [video conferencing](#) and [voice-over-internet phone \(VoIP\)](#). [Get started.](#)

Mobile printing

The ability to print from your mobile device is no longer a luxury, it is a business requirement. With user-friendly mobile printing solutions, you can print to your office devices quickly and efficiently. If you're on the go, you simply submit files for printing later and store them in the cloud securely until you are ready to pick them up from a nearby office or print shop – all without extensive support from IT. Being mobile shouldn't mean being cut-off from your information. [Get started.](#)



Resources

Check out these resources to keep you up to speed on the latest mobile worker trends and insight:

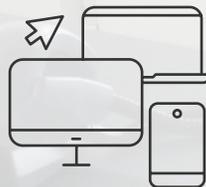
[3 easy steps to avoid common risks of remote work](#)

[Increase collaboration, improve your bottom line](#)

[Mobile workers: Unleashing the power of your workforce](#)

Misconception #2:

Employees are allowed to use any and all tools as long as it gets the job done.



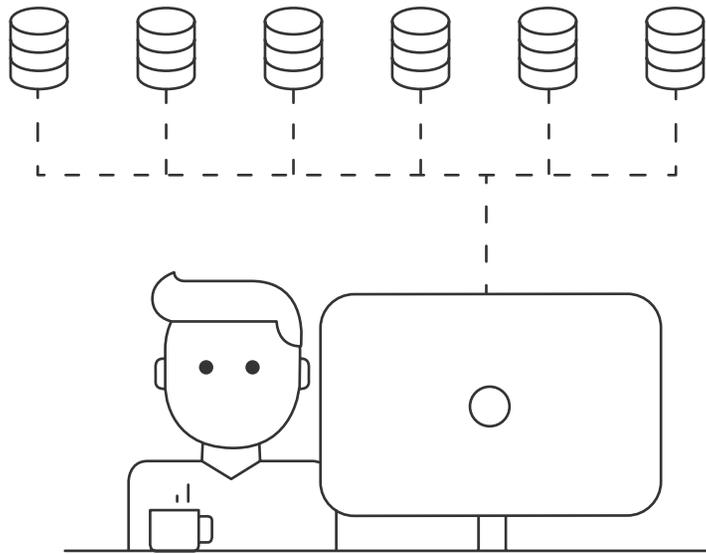
Misconception

Workers should use any tool for the job.

Truth

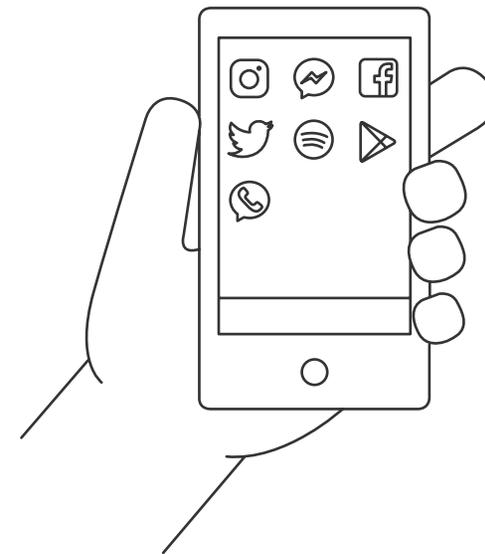
Consistency is critical to success.

The numbers



Information is hard to find

Half of employees need to access 6 or more data repositories, but less than 1 out of 5 companies enable search across all of them.³



Workarounds are rampant

71% of employees are using apps not sanctioned by IT or what's known as shadow IT.⁴



What this really means

You're well aware of the online tools your employees turn to when they need to send or store information in a pinch. In fact, you've probably used them yourself for the same reasons.

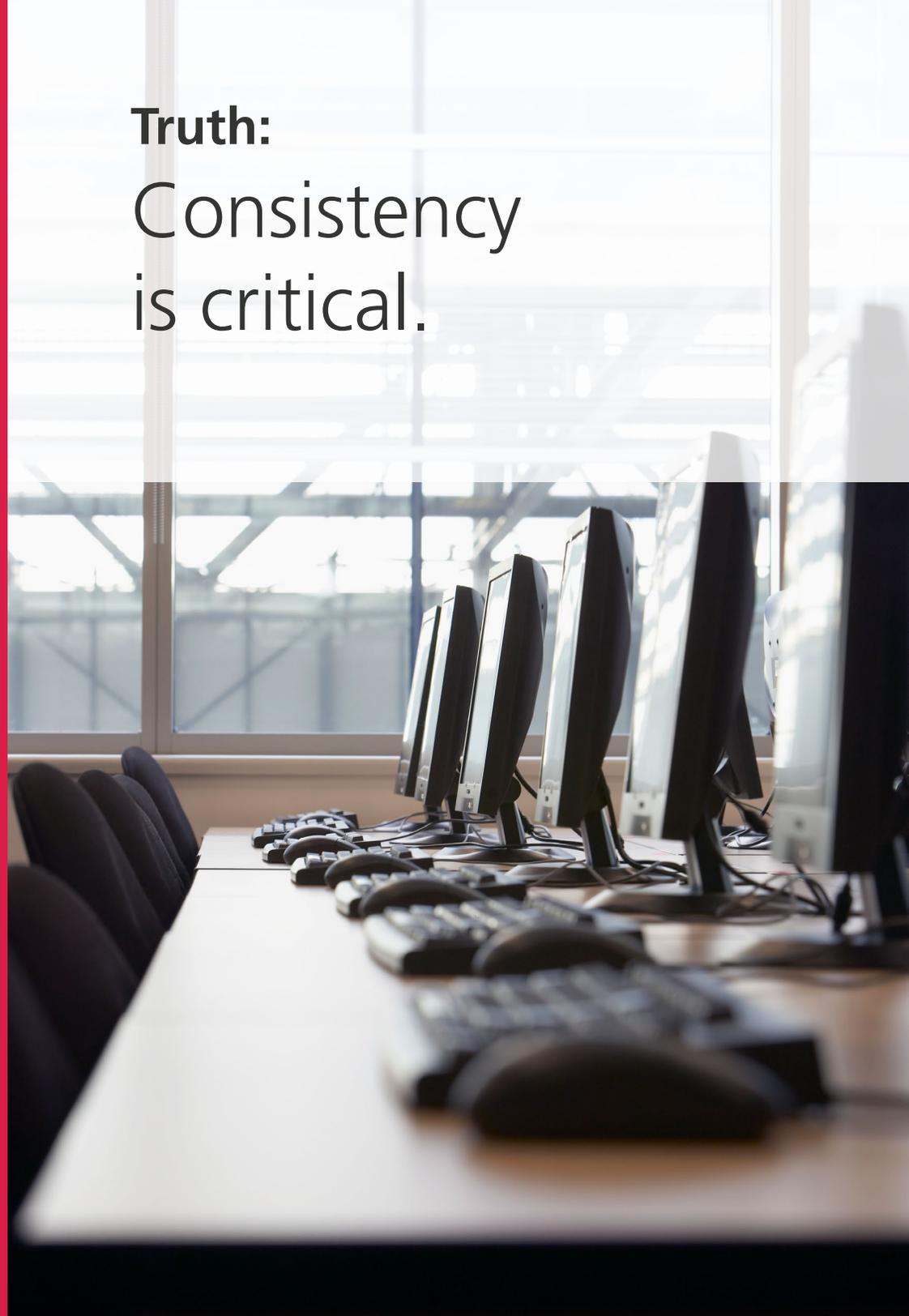
But, why?

Workers often use unapproved solutions when they're frustrated with or unaware of the sanctioned tools available to them. While the use of a few ad hoc apps for specific needs may seem harmless, it tends to create fragmented information silos that compound over time and disorganize your processes and workflows as a result. This makes it difficult for others to find the files they need and poses a greater risk of unauthorized access to proprietary information.

From this perspective, it can be easy to see why consistency in the tools and training of those tools offered to employees play a critical role in creating and maintaining a strong information management platform within your business.

To get consistent outcomes, you need to give your employees consistent tools.

Truth: Consistency is critical.



Getting started

The proliferation of consumer technology in the workplace isn't new, and it should no longer be unexpected, but it is still a major problem for organizations of all sizes. However, there are ways to control this shadow IT, as well as other sanctioned options you can implement – all in an effort to reduce risk and create consistency.

Device management

Face it, you don't have time to setup and monitor your employees' devices to ensure sensitive information doesn't get routed to the wrong places – intentionally or not. Whether that's remote locking and wiping or reporting on inventory and downloading activity, there are experts in mobile device management to take this burden off your plate.

[Get started.](#)

Scanning to the cloud

Moving to a cloud solution like Microsoft Office 365™ or Google Drive™ and needing to take your paper documents with you? There are integrated methods that ensure you can scan and store documents efficiently and accurately as they enter cyberspace. Scan-to-cloud solutions also conduct optical character recognition (OCR), store documents in popular third party apps, and allow for mobile printing. [Get started.](#)

Content management system

Could you find all your critical business files if needed? Information overload is clogging up your workflows, but there is help to make sense of your data, while keeping it secure and fixing gaps and other troubled spots in your processes. [Get started.](#)



Resources

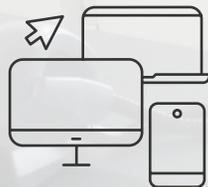
Check out these resources to keep you up to speed on the latest mobile worker trends and insight:

[Shadow IT: Eliminate the risk of employee workarounds](#)

[Managed IT services: Do more with less](#)

[Are rogue IT downloads harming your business?](#)

Misconception #3:
**You can skimp on investing in technology like
collaboration tools.**



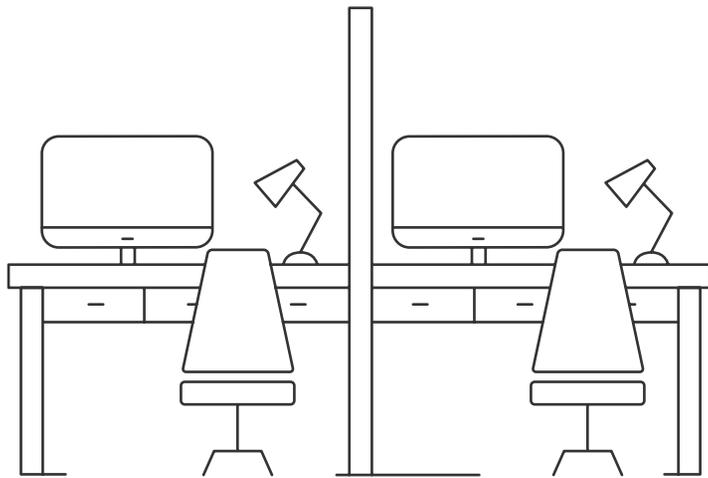
Misconception

Skimp on workplace collaboration tools.

Truth

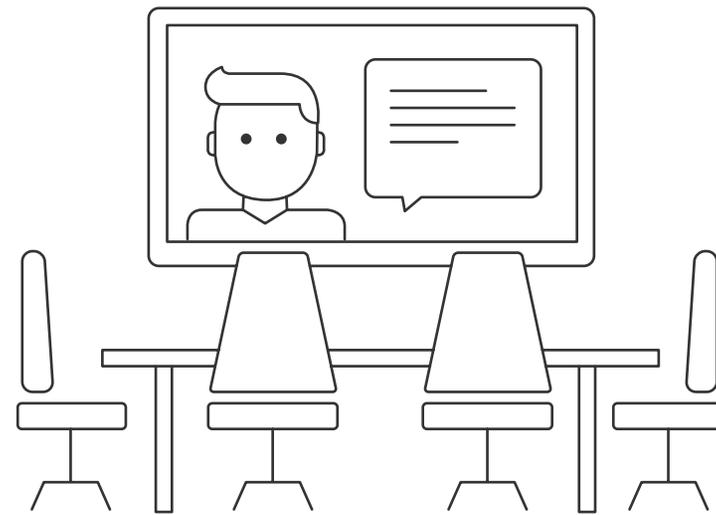
Connecting people is a necessity.

The numbers



More collaboration is needed

Nearly 40% of employees say there isn't enough collaboration in their workplace.⁵



The tools are lacking

Only 27% of companies provide collaboration tools to all employees and only 30% provide basic web conferencing.⁶



What this really means

Did you know integrating your telephone and IT systems can be just as critical as your employees booking a meeting room with assurance that they actually have the proper space, for the next two hours?

Connecting workers physically or digitally, it's all the same when it comes to the criticality of your business.

Ensuring that employees can work together effectively can be difficult — whether they're sitting next to each other or hundreds of miles apart. When workers don't have the necessary and integrated technologies and services at their disposal such as VoIP, they end up spinning their wheels and creating redundancies.

The same goes with meeting rooms. If a scheduling tool or process is disorganized, bookings overlap which can immediately kill much needed productivity sessions when the replacement room isn't equipped with the necessary technology or assets needed to access or capture information in a brainstorm.

Remember: Information is managed not just through technology, but through people too.

Truth:
Connecting people
is a necessity.



Getting started

Physical meetings are challenging in today's mobile environment. Between the people in the office, those working remotely, and those in different time zones, how is your workforce supposed to collaborate effectively in real time?

Collaboration tools

Your customers and sales teams are spread across the country, but you have a need for regular meetings? Video conferencing is the way to go. Get the personalizing of being "face-to-face" with those who matter most for your business. Be sure to equip yourself and your employees with the technologies that keep everyone connected. [Get started.](#)

Voice over IP

When you are vying for business in a competitive world, you can't afford information bottlenecks. Voice over IP (VoIP) is a perfect starting point for SMBs, giving your employees the ability to communicate via voice and multimedia over the Internet. Challenges using your phone system to communicate between offices, locations, and with mobile employees and customers? [Get started.](#)

Meeting room utilization

The average monthly rent for a square foot of office space can reach as high as \$6.16 in some states⁶ — can your company afford to let this space sit empty? The answer is probably not. But why is it happening? Is it an equipment problem or a process and scheduling inefficiency? All you know is there are more important issues at hand. Bring in an expert to audit your situation and tailor a solution for you, including booking software and digital room signage. [Get started.](#)

Resources

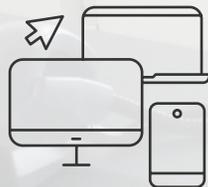
Check out these resources to keep you up to speed on the latest mobile worker trends and insight:

[Telepresence robots open new frontiers in business](#)

[Collaboration and communication drive mobile workers and global business](#)

[Increase collaboration, improve your bottom line](#)

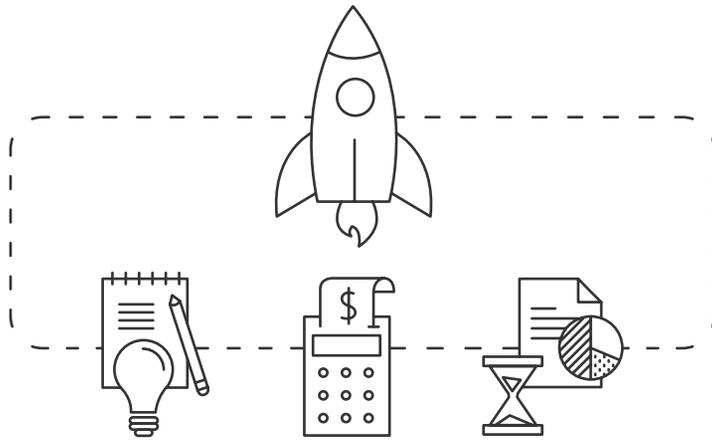
Misconception #4:
Paper is dead.



Misconception
Paper is dead.

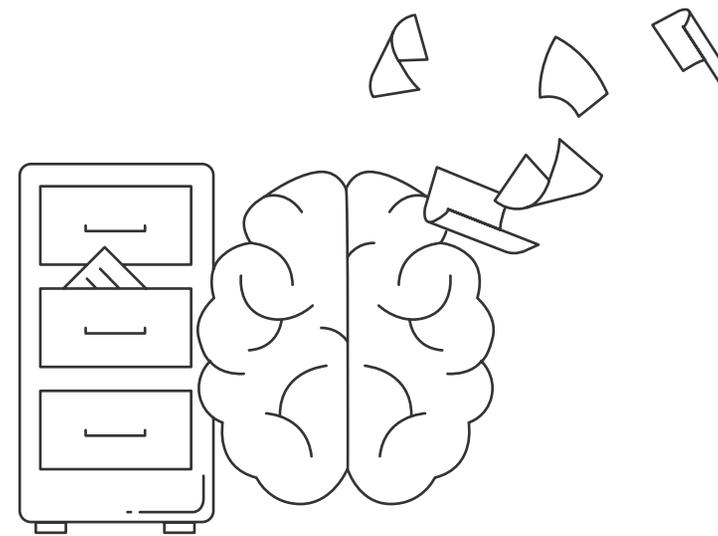
Truth
Old habits die hard.

The numbers



Paperwork is pervasive

More than 58% still rely on paper documents for critical business processes.⁷



Records management lags

Almost 40% of business information is still captured in filing cabinets or employees' heads.⁸



What this really means

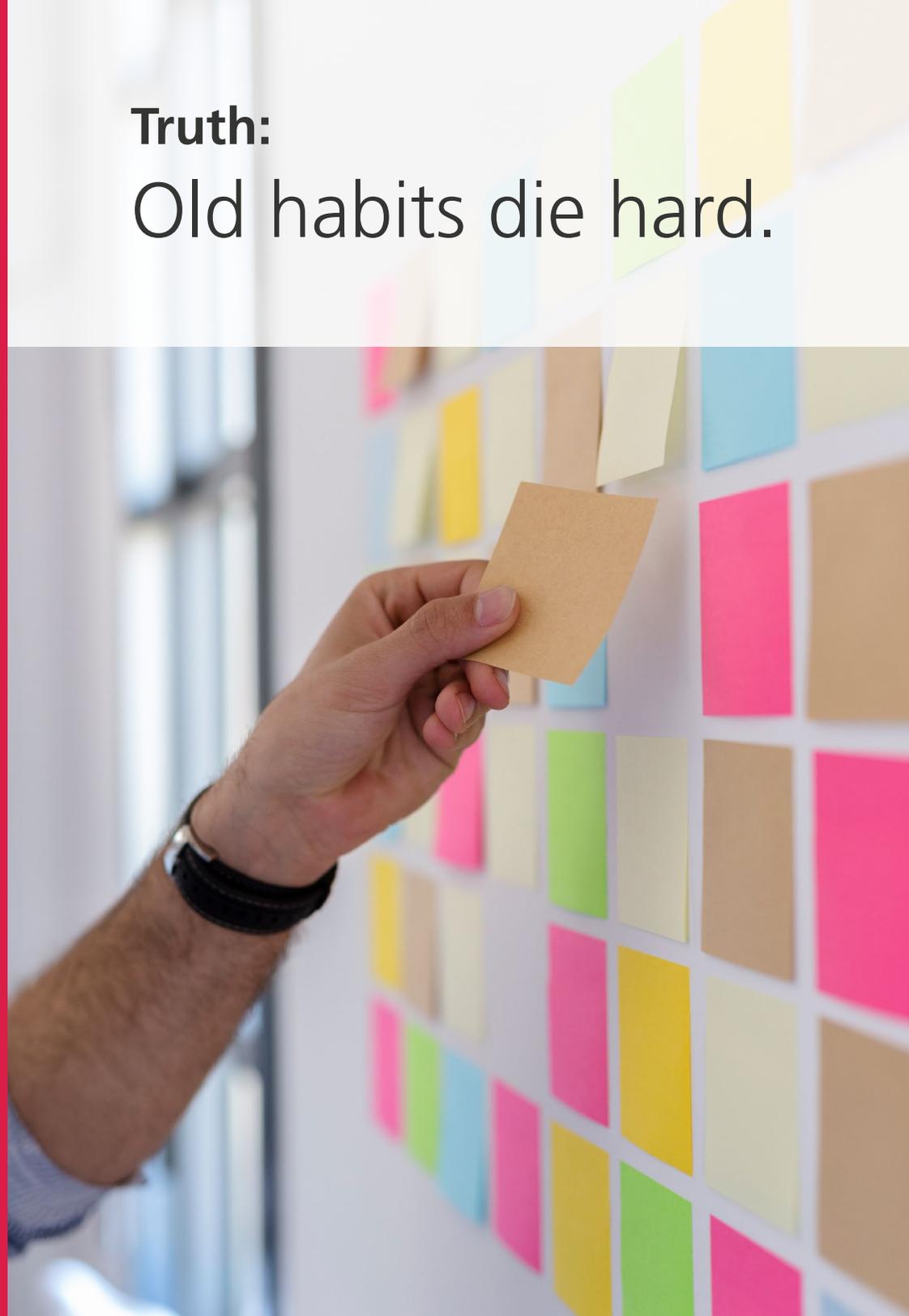
It's inevitable that organizations will become increasingly digital, but reaching a 100% digital business may not be realistic – at least not anytime soon.

Workers, and more broadly people, still instinctively reach for the notepad to take notes, and the mail carrier still frequents your office daily with a stack of envelopes to be distributed. With automated workflows permeating more and more business areas, physical documents need to be digitized in order to work with the rest of the business' workstreams.

But paper records also remain a major roadblock for information. As a remote worker, it's difficult to pull up that document you need when it's sitting in a filing cabinet 300 miles away. It also carries increased risks for loss, damage or theft and is incredibly time consuming to boot. Moving to digital processes and converting legacy records can increase security, reduce costs and improve productivity all at once.

So how do you make it all work together?

Truth:
Old habits die hard.



Getting started

The often scrappy and upstart nature of small businesses lends itself best to a hybrid approach of paper and digital information management. But how do you merge the two into your business operations?

Automated workflows

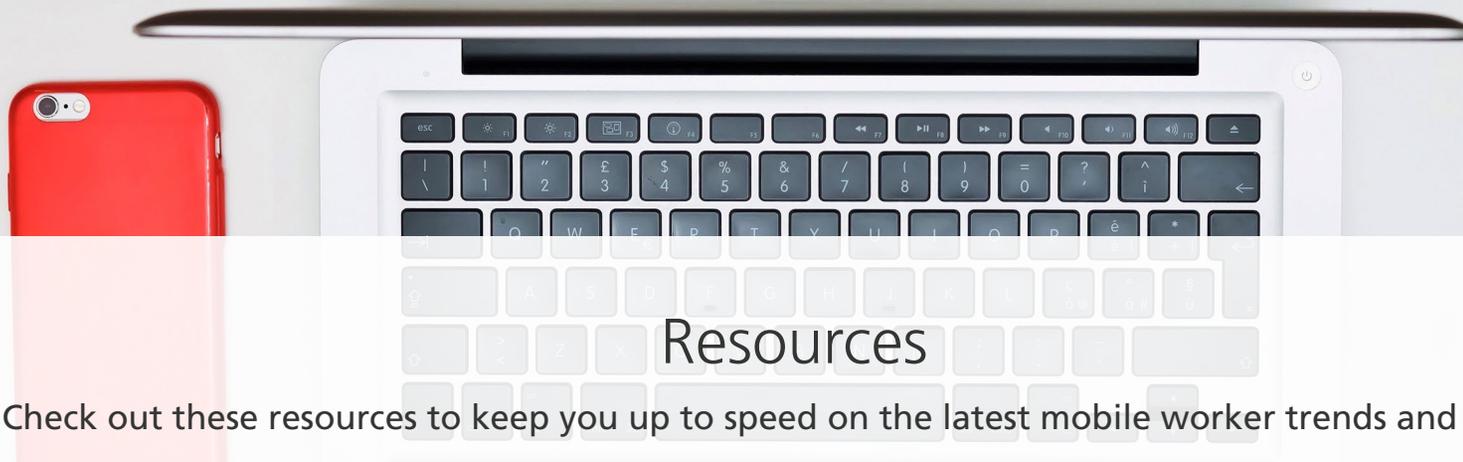
Backend areas of your business require more attention than you often have time for. Organizing and scanning documents, and approving and processing invoicing can suck up some serious time. Consider outsourcing workflows such as **accounts payable** and other data extraction or special processing needs to ensure your necessary, but tedious, business workflows get the attention they require. [Get started.](#)

Digitizing your information

Your business is agile, versatile, responsive. Your file cabinets ... are not. Get your documents captured and converted to digital securely so your employees can instantly get – or send you – the information you all need from across the office or across the globe. [Get started.](#)

Enterprise content management (ECM)

Your information has little value if it's inaccessible, uncategorized, or generally disorganized. However, ECM allows you to structure your unstructured information to improve how it's moved and controlled between various formats, locations, and people. This gives you the ability to manage documents throughout their lifecycle, unlock knowledge and reveal key insights that make information work for you. [Get started.](#)



Check out these resources to keep you up to speed on the latest mobile worker trends and insight:

[Go digital to optimize your workflow](#)

[How file cabinets are putting your business at risk](#)

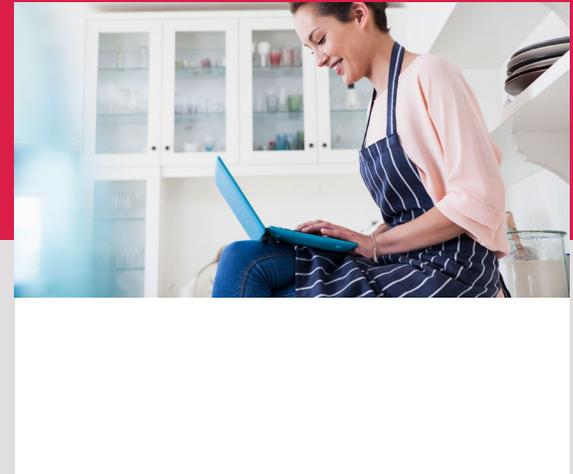
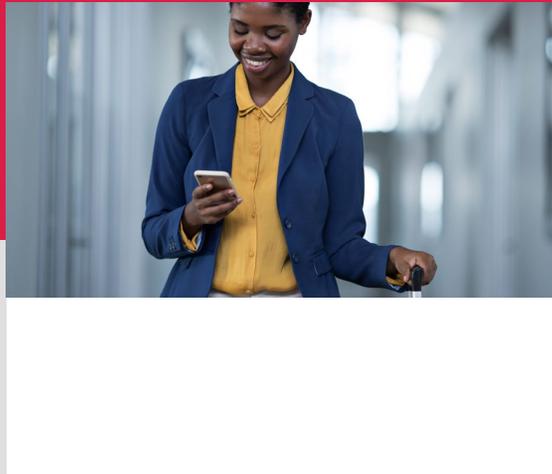
[Time to go digital: Why paper is less secure than you think](#)

Immerse yourself in the new world of small business

Ensuring you cut these misconceptions from your business will open new areas of opportunity to improve on your most valuable asset – information. But how you handle that information properly can still be a challenge for many.

We can help.

Check out our series of playbooks that will guide your small business' information strategy further into the new world of work. Get the **free playbooks now**:



Sources

- 1 <https://www.pwc.com/ee/et/publications/pub/pwc-consumer-intelligence-series-future-of-work-june-2016.pdf>
- 2 <http://news.gallup.com/businessjournal/206180/engaged-remote-workforce.aspx>
- 3 <https://www.ricoh-usa.com/-/media/ricoh/common/pdfs/infocenter/whitepapers/addressing-information-gridlock-idc-study-infobrief.pdf>
- 4 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesproductgroup/2017/02/22/shadow-it/#679341bb79fd>
- 5 <http://searchcio.techtarget.com/blog/CIO-Symmetry/IDC-SMBs-will-contribute-to-40-of-worldwide-public-cloud-spending-by-2019>
- 6 <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/heres-how-much-your-company-pays-to-rent-office-space-2015-05-27>
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