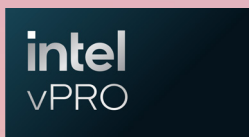


Smarter is excellent: Collaboration trends for 2024

Uncover the latest tech and AI tools
built for operational excellence.



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What's inside

- 3 **Introduction: Pursuing operational excellence**
- 4 **Spotlight on seamless integration**
- 5 **Expand capabilities from the inside out: Augmented Connected Workforce strategy & checklist**
- 6 **Remote work: A productivity advantage**
- 7 **Enhance meetings with AI**
- 8 **Be a digital transformation hero**
- 10 **Empower fearless collaboration**
- 11 **Lenovo ThinkSmart solutions, powered by Intel®**
- 12 **Conclusion: Make work easier for all**



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Introduction

Pursuing operational excellence

Have you given yourself enough credit lately? Any business still operating after years of costly disruption has good reason to celebrate. Despite overwhelming odds, you've persisted, achieved and grown. So, take a moment to acknowledge that hard work. But also keep in mind—now's not the time to become complacent. It's an opportunity to keep up the momentum.

As hybrid work demands continue to evolve where, when and how work gets done, business leaders must re-evaluate the meaning of the term 'operational excellence.' The definition of this business term changes with the environment around it. But today, effective operational excellence features five core elements that—when seamlessly integrated—drive business growth.

Why it matters

Pursuing operational excellence in the connected workplace can take your organization from a strong performer to a leading competitor. According to McKinsey, this approach helped a financial institution reduce the cost of poor-quality outcomes by 30% and rework by 60%—while reversing pandemic-era struggles in customer and employee satisfaction.¹

In this report, we'll dive deep into the technical systems and technology aspects of operational excellence—exploring how you can use smart collaboration tools to enhance meeting spaces, keep teams productive from anywhere and boost long-term ROI, all while keeping sensitive data protected.

Operational excellence: 5 core elements

- 1. Purpose and strategy**
Define why your organization exists and develop a plan for growth.
- 2. Principles and behaviors**
Establish a culture of trust and innovation to achieve your goals.
- 3. Management systems**
Develop leaders, build competency and drive desired behaviors.
- 4. Technical systems**
Eliminate waste and deliver value for stakeholders.
- 5. Technology**
Augment human capabilities with next-gen tech.

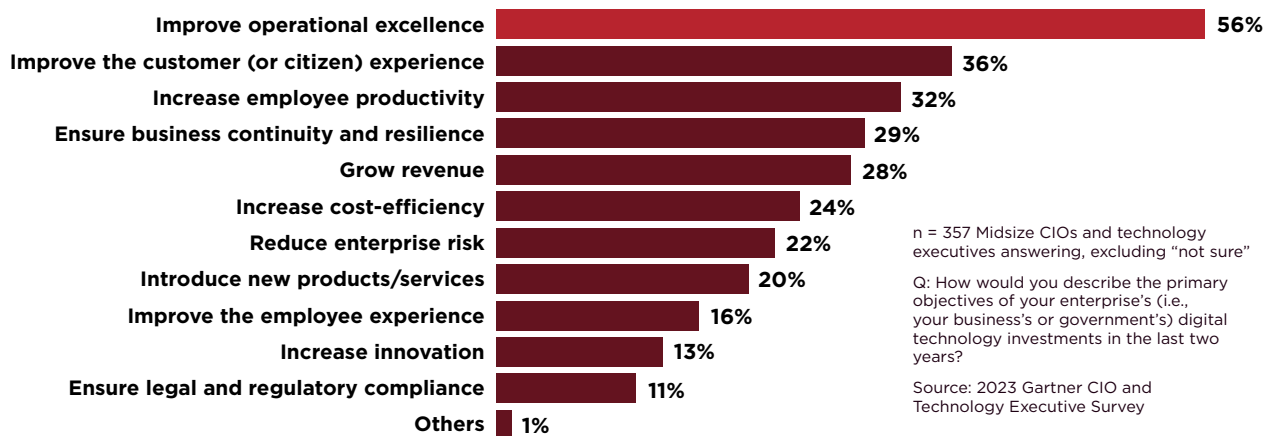
Source: McKinsey & Company



Spotlight on seamless integration

Improving operational excellence is a leading CIO focus.

CIO digital investment objectives



Every organization defines operational excellence in their own way. But in the digital age, we know that improving operational excellence starts with integrating the right tools.

It's important to note that while technology is pivotal to operational excellence, it's not a magic wand you can wave to bypass every operational issue. In fact, it's more of a jumping off point for uncovering how to best support your workforce.

For example, modernizing management systems with technology helps reduce the time and resources needed to support your infrastructure—while simultaneously expanding its results. And that's a key differentiator for today's middle managers who find themselves stretched thin.

But perhaps the most important element of pursuing tech for operational excellence is streamlining how the

work gets done. By implementing solutions that integrate seamlessly and operate intuitively, your team can experience easier, more productive and satisfying workdays.

So, how do you get started? Turn your attention to integration. Extend the tools you already have in place and focus on what new or upgraded technology will best serve your team. These three questions can provide a platform for launch:

1. **What fresh value do I need my tech to create?**
2. **How can tech contribute to operational excellence for my organization?**
3. **What tech will empower my team to work in a safe, productive and collaborative way?**



Expand capabilities from the inside out

Use an augmented connected workforce strategy to scale competencies.

What is an augmented connected workforce (ACW)? At its core, it's a strategy for accelerating new digital skills required for work across all job types. By leveraging this strategy, business leaders can optimize value in several ways, such as:

- Enhancing employee competencies for productivity
- Boosting team agility with AI-enabled smart tech solutions
- Improving processes by examining workforce analytics

A growing trend across business types, ACW strategies provide the opportunity to reduce onboarding time for new hires by getting them up and running faster. And as dispersed workplaces become more common, Gartner predicts that this trend will sweep the business world.²

How to develop an ACW strategy

The flip side of the coin when it comes to this strategy is that workforces will be required to manage more complex issues. However, by helping teams gain new tech skills and expand their digital prowess, you may be equipping them to handle those issues as they arise.

There's also the challenge of fostering human connections in a dispersed working environment.

According to Gartner, CEOs rate workplace culture as their biggest concern when it comes to hybrid policies.³ To keep the culture sentiment up, it's important to take a break from productivity every once in a while and facilitate intentional moments of camaraderie. Periodic in-person meetings or on-site work with managers can be those moments that help improve performance, inclusion and engagement.

Despite this CEO priority, Gartner reports that only 40% of organizations are implementing these practices.³ How can you successfully augment your workforce and keep up morale? It all comes down to your approach.

Gartner predicts that through 2027:

25% of CIOs will use an ACW strategy for

50% reduction in time to competency for key roles

Source: Gartner. "Top Strategic Technology Trends." 2024.

ACW implementation checklist

- Focus on employees who perform in complex environments
- Quantify the results of faster onboarding
- Gather leaders to prioritize investments and outcomes
- Augment employee experiences with smart technology
- Craft guidance to help employees overcome obstacles



Remote work: A productivity advantage

Power collaboration and communication from anywhere.

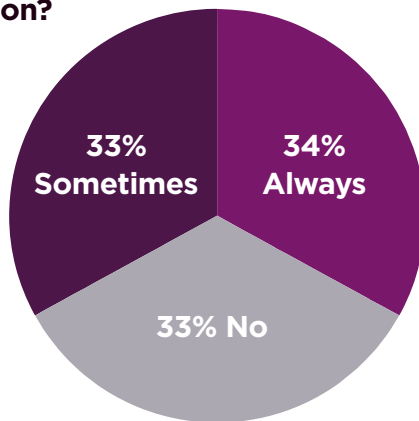
Today's teams often work together from varying locations—in the office, at home, from a coffee shop—the list is only limited by WiFi access. Maintaining company culture across these workspaces is a challenge, but equipping these employees for seamless collaboration is even more critical of an undertaking.

Do remote teams want to meet camera-on?

67% Yes overall

33% Depending on the situation

34% Prefer being on-camera, even when not required



Source: Statista. "State of Remote Work." 2023.

Video conferencing has become the most common way to communicate across dispersed working environments. But it may surprise employers to know that most remote employees prefer to hold these calls with cameras on—67%, to be exact.⁴ Why? When asked, these respondents said it's easier to communicate when they can see the expressions of their coworkers or customers.

Even in the digital age, body language remains vital to communication. However, mandating on-camera meetings can be a burden for some employees,

depending on their living situation or workspace location. It's important to find the right balance for your team to empower effective and inclusive collaboration.

Collaboration tools to enhance productivity

Video conferencing software, online communication platforms, file sharing apps and AI-enabled project management tools have all become staples of the modern workplace. But to make the most of the investment, these collaboration tools must be properly integrated and accessible on various devices.

Lenovo's **ThinkSmart Hub Gen 2 for Microsoft Teams Rooms**, engineered on the Intel vPro® platform, is designed to make meetings more efficient than ever. Built for Microsoft Teams, this next-gen hub features a slim design, sleek display, multiple microphones, speakers and an innovative single-cable mechanism. Plus, the hub is scalable to various room sizes and offers one-touch meeting startup for seamless and simple collaboration.



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Enhance meetings with AI

Capitalize on top collaboration trends for 2024.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is one of the biggest workplace collaboration trends for 2024. AI and machine learning tools are being utilized across industries—from manufacturing, to healthcare, technology, entertainment and beyond. But how can these innovations enhance the experience in your corporate conference room?

Much like AI tools themselves, the possibilities are nearly limitless. But here are a few specific enhancements you can expect:

Smart scheduling

AI can help your teams spend less time cross-referencing calendars when scheduling meetings. By quickly analyzing the calendars of every participant at once, AI-enabled software tools—like Microsoft CoPilot—can suggest times that work for everyone, prevent double-booking and even help provide more accurate meeting time estimates. All that's left is to hit 'Send.'

Assisted meetings

AI can be used to take meeting notes, transcribe discussions and highlight important action items from each conference. The days of spending time summarizing meetings are over with Microsoft CoPilot—an everyday AI companion designed to

track discussions in real-time and produce detailed conversation summaries. Spend more time productively in the moment and less on busy work with AI-powered meeting tools.

Personalized experiences

AI can also be used to enhance physical meeting spaces. By analyzing past behaviors in the conference room, connected software can adjust lighting, room temperature, screen brightness and even speaker levels.

Advanced audio capabilities

AI-enabled conference room solutions can fill the room with high-definition audio. All attendees—whether in-person or online—can expect to be heard with acute accuracy. Plus, noise-cancelling features reduce unproductive background noise for a crystal-clear audio experience.

Real-time access to the whiteboard

AI tools make brainstorming sessions easier for hybrid teams. For example, the ThinkSmart Bar 180 comes equipped with a high-fidelity camera to capture and stream whiteboard content—allowing all attendees to view the running list of ideas in real-time.



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Be a digital transformation hero

Create a culture that embraces workplace technology.

The number of digital applications a knowledge worker uses per day is growing. In 2023, Gartner reported that this number was 11 on average—compared to just 6 in 2019.⁵ This study also found that 5% of knowledge workers use a staggering 26 or more applications for work.

These statistics beg two questions: how did we get here, and how are workers coping?

How did we get here?

Over the past few years, the wealth of digital apps available for work has become a double-edged sword. On one edge, there's an application to tackle almost any workplace challenge—from long-distance communications to project management. On the other, knowledge workers are inundated with tools that don't integrate. The result is that workers struggle to find the information they need, make mistakes due to missed details and get irrelevant notifications that clutter their inboxes.

How are workers coping?

Playing a daily game of digital application ping pong is not ideal for most workers. On average, 66% agree that better business outcomes could be achieved if leadership provided tech standards⁴—universally accepted applications teams should use to complete their work.

It's time for an upgrade

Complex and fragmented tech stacks only lead to workplace inefficiencies and alignment issues. So, what's the next move? An integration upgrade.

By scrubbing your current tech stack and replacing unnecessary applications with all-in-one options, you can bring clarity to your workforce. Platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom and Google Workspace now offer productivity management features, along with flexible integrations for various other tools—helping to end the digital ping pong match for good.



66% of knowledge workers believe tech standards will help achieve better business outcomes.⁴



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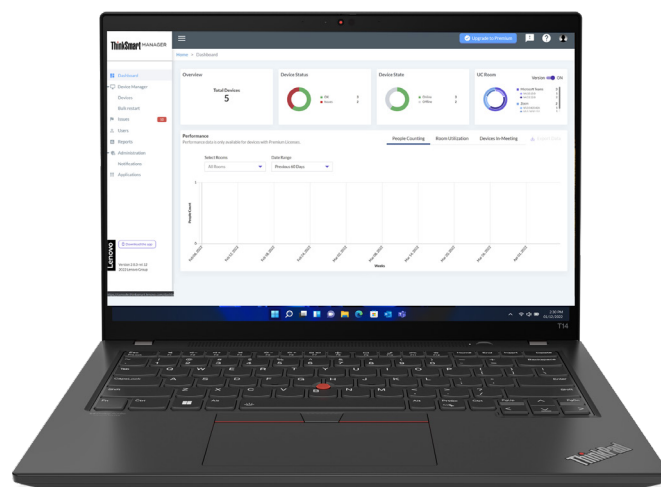


Getting started

Create a culture that embraces workplace technology.

Workplace technologies—particularly AI-enabled options—have incredible potential. But like with any big change, it's likely that there will be some trepidation. So, when you're ready to start putting this into practice, remember to be OPEN.

- O Offer education**
Help teams understand new tech with continuous learning opportunities.
- P Promote flexibility**
Encourage teams to use tech to hold effective and inclusive meetings.
- E Exemplify enthusiasm**
Get teams excited about new tech by using it yourself and celebrating its wins.
- N Notify employees**
Keep teams informed of new features designed to make work easier.



Lenovo ThinkSmart Manager

Powered by the Intel vPro® platform, Lenovo's ThinkSmart Manager allows you to monitor, manage and troubleshoot all your connected devices from one place. Assess a device status, add new users, check for updates or even restart a device—you're always in control with Lenovo ThinkSmart Manager.



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Empower fearless collaboration

Digital transformation increases the need for data security.

As the volume of online work expands, so does the risk of a detrimental cybersecurity breach, which has led many organizations to heavily invest in data security technologies. In fact, a 2023 report found that 76% of the world's companies mark cybersecurity as a leading priority for their IT initiatives.⁵

For many companies, this push for better data security leads to increased spending on dedicated IT security products and services. However, there are well-rounded solutions on the market that offer both support for digital transformation and advanced data protection.

ThinkSmart is backed by ThinkShield

The complete Lenovo ThinkSmart portfolio, powered by Intel vPro®, allows you to take advantage of AI-powered security capabilities that help prevent ransomware, cryptomining, and even memory scanning attacks. With Intel® Threat Detection Technology (Intel® TDT) and Lenovo ThinkShield, your users are better protected against new and emerging threats—enabling them to collaborate online without fear.



IT's top five

In November 2023, a worldwide survey of IT executives⁶ found that these five priorities rank highest on their lists:

76% Cybersecurity

75% Cloud migration

74% Digital transformation

58% Improving customer experience

54% Business growth



Smarter collaboration starts here

The Lenovo ThinkSmart portfolio, powered by Intel®, is designed to keep your team working securely, productively and collaboratively—no matter where they're signing on.

Enhance meetings with AI



ThinkSmart Bar 180

This smart sound system powers smoother collaboration by automatically detecting voices and adjusting the camera view to follow the speaker as they move.

- AI features including intelligent zoom, explicit voice detection and more
- 180° panoramic views with high-resolution camera system
- Sleek, stylish and ultra-light to be easily placed on a desk or mounted on a wall



ThinkSmart Hub

Engineered on the Intel vPro® platform, built for Microsoft Teams and easily integrated with Microsoft CoPilot, this next-gen hub makes meetings easier than ever.

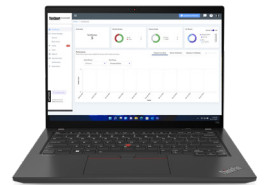
- Slim and sleek design, featuring a single-cable mechanism
- Multiple microphones and speakers for clear audio
- Scalable across room sizes and features one-touch start

Streamline device management

ThinkSmart Manager Platform

Manage all your Lenovo ThinkSmart devices from one console with this innovative software solution, complete with Lenovo ThinkShield for data protection.

- Remotely access essential tools to keep business running effectively
- Intuitive interface equips even the smallest offices with best-in-class collaboration tools
- Turn any room into a productive workspace



Boost productivity and collaboration

ThinkSmart One

The world's first Windows-based integrated collaboration solution, built on the Intel vPro® platform and powered by the latest Intel® Core™ processors.

- Integrated bar with FHD camera and premium audio
- 10.1" HD controller with one-touch meeting function
- Ideal for small-to-medium sized workspaces



ThinkSmart Core + Controller Kit

Built on the Intel vPro® platform and powered by the latest Intel® Core™ processors with Intel® Iris® Xe graphics, this meeting room solution is built to optimize productivity and collaboration.

- 10.1" HD anti-glare, anti-smudge display with 10-point touchscreen
- Kit includes ThinkSmart Core, Controller display, Premier Support and ThinkSmart Manager Premium software
- Ideal for rooms of all sizes with existing A/V technology



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Conclusion

Make work easier for all

Smart collaboration must meet employees where they work.

Whether your knowledge workers are in the office, at home or on the go, Lenovo's ThinkSmart solutions, powered by Intel®, are certified for leading unified communications platforms. The result? Your teams access the same experience no matter where they're working—with familiar controls for joining meetings and sharing content.

Our smart collaboration portfolio of devices, accessories and services is built to keep teams focused on their work in any setting. And we make meetings easy everywhere, from the smallest huddle room to the largest conference room.

Ready to talk about upgrading your collaboration experience? Connect with a Lenovo representative today.

Sources

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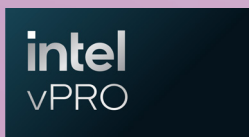


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Smarter collaboration is waiting

Upgrade to Lenovo ThinkSmart solutions,
powered by Intel® to make work easier for all.



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