

Building flexible and focused employee experiences

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In this InfoBrief

With the continuously evolving norms of remote, onsite, and flexible work models, successful organizations are taking a holistic approach to employee experience (EX) initiatives. Long considered an HR purview focused on the individual employee, **organizations are rapidly redefining EX as a strategic, organizationwide priority that aligns with business objectives and technology integration.**

In February 2025, IDC surveyed 609 IT and line-of-business (LOB) leaders from organizations that had undergone work transformation and had implemented or were planning to implement flexible work models. These leaders included a mix of large (500–999 employees) and very large (1,000+ employees) enterprises in healthcare, manufacturing, financial services, the public sector, and retail.

Source: IDC's Ricoh FoW and EX Survey, February 2025

Changing technology investments



installed new meeting room technology.



increased their use of flexible space providers.



invested in hardware and peripheral devices to support onsite and flexible work.

SECTION 1:

The evolution of the employee experience

Flexible work benefits

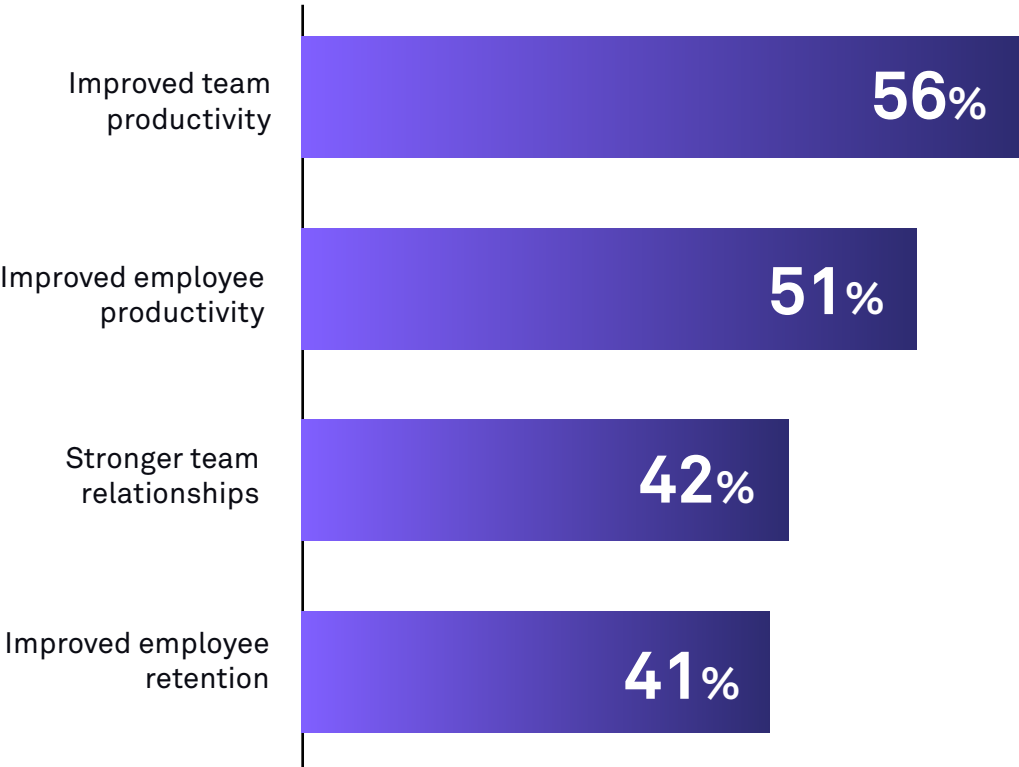
Traditionally, when most employees worked on site, employee experience was defined in terms of the individual, much like consumer experience.

HR departments looked for new ways to make the in-office experience more collaborative, removing cubicles and replacing them with long tables where employees could work side by side. The result? Workers struggled to find quiet areas to work, longed for privacy, and frequently found themselves catching colds.

Fast-forwarding to the present, flexible work models have transformed the employee experience by creating collaborative digital spaces in which employees can virtually work side by side and then seamlessly slip into their quiet home office to continue the work they had started with others. Similarly, professional work sites have transformed to focus on driving business results through AI-enabled conference room technologies, collaborative and private work environments, and improved onsite navigation.

Source: IDC's Ricoh FoW and EX Survey, February 2025

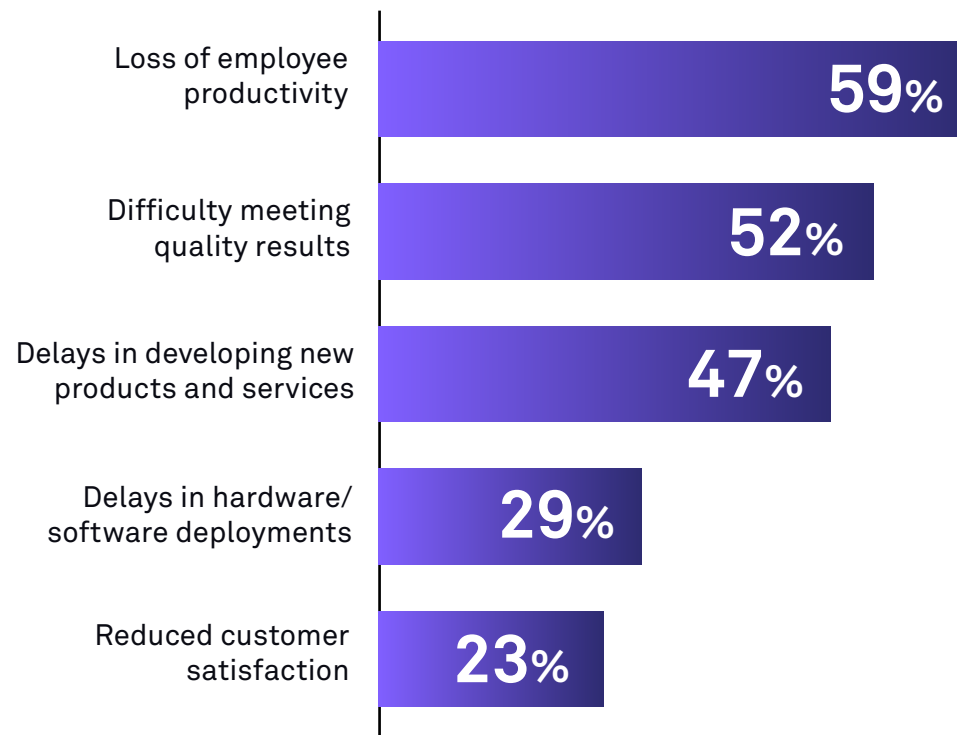
When IDC asked about the benefits of flexible work, IDC/Ricoh study respondents said they saw:



Addressing organizational concerns

So, what keeps employers from supporting flexible work models? Not surprisingly, the answer is a combination of human trust and technical support.

What are your biggest organizational concerns relating to flexible work models?



Source: IDC's Ricoh FoW and EX Survey, February 2025

Despite strong reports of increased productivity with flexible work models, organizational concerns persist around employee productivity across work environments and trust in employees to keep data and corporate resources secure.

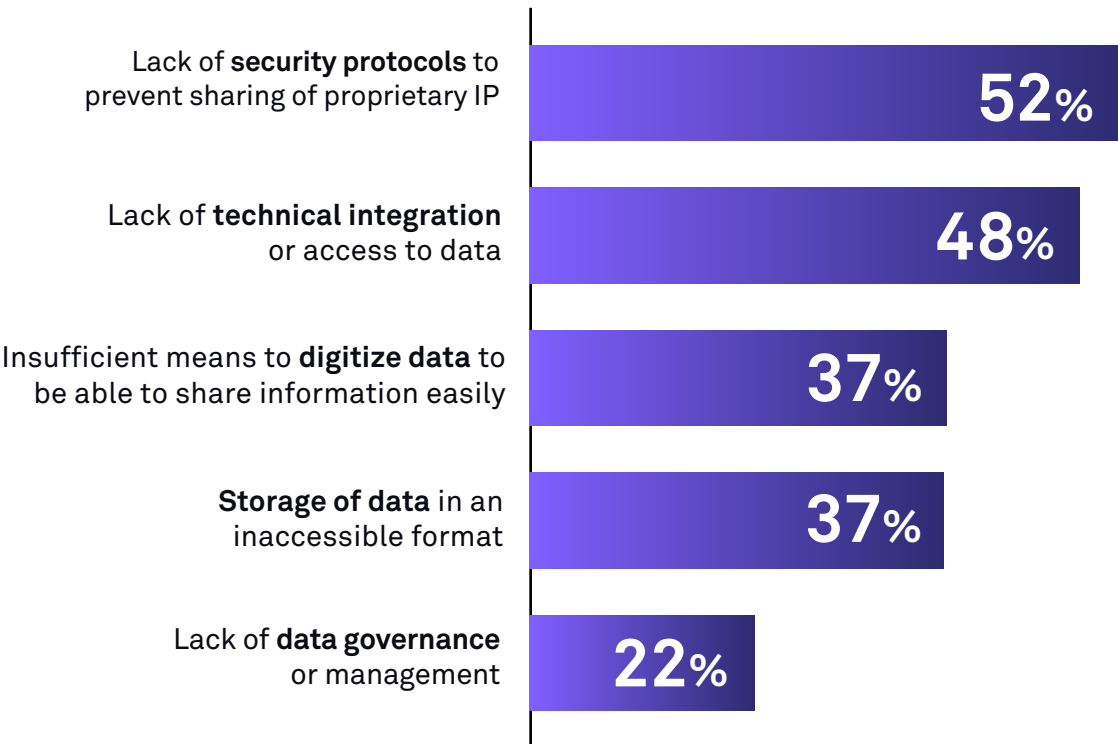


Addressing organizational concerns: Enablement

Organizations must establish strong security protocols for information sharing and address integration issues that prevent employees from gaining access to the data they need.

Although a basic requirement for digital transformation, over a third of respondents had yet to properly digitize and share data in an accessible format. These are key steps to enabling employees to work effectively.

What impediments are preventing your organization from offering employees access to the comparable and secure information and systems they need to work effectively, regardless of location?



Source: IDC's Ricoh FoW and EX Survey, February 2025

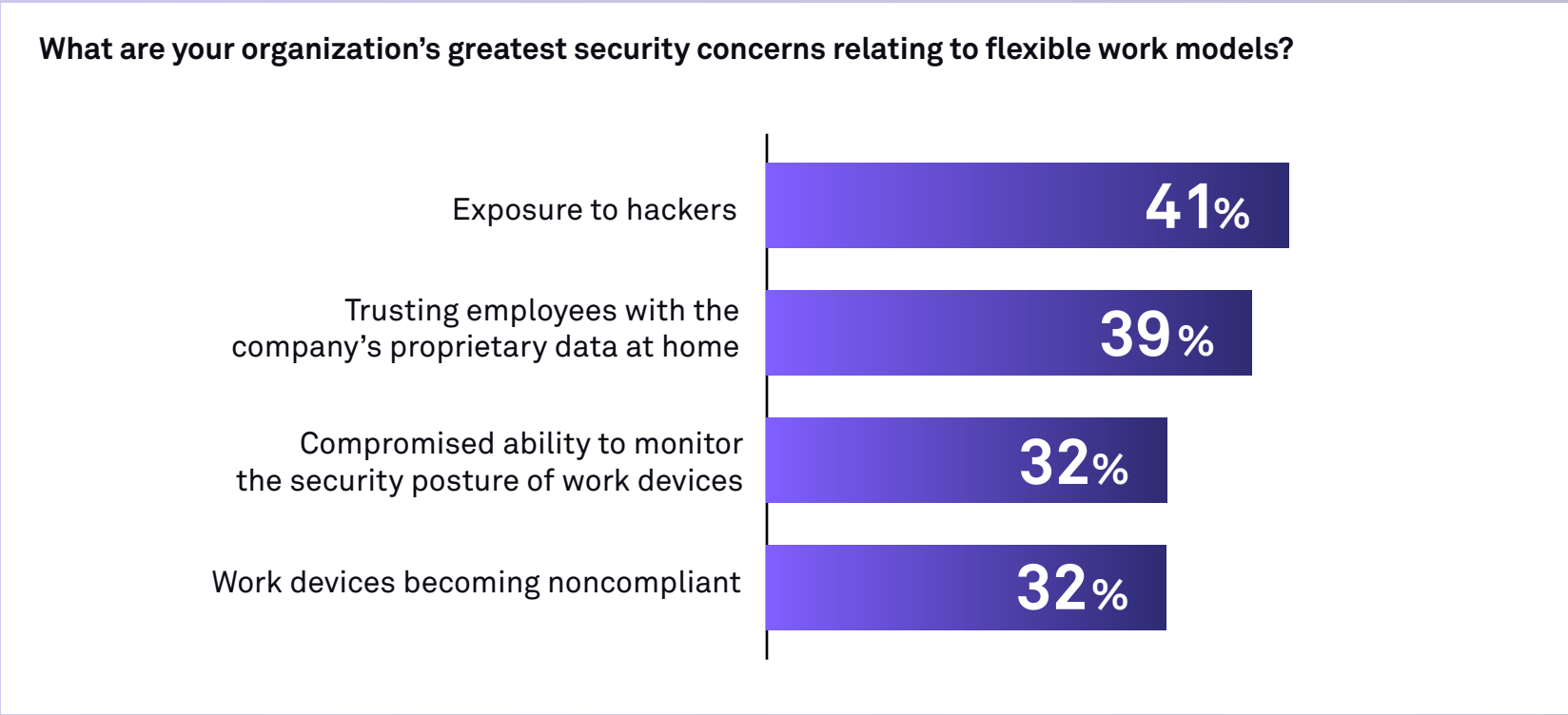
Addressing organizational concerns: Security

Security, software upgrades, and device management are key to addressing core technical challenges for employees. Not only do organizations need to address external threats from hackers, but they must also create an internal culture of trust — one based on rigorous software security, employee training, and device management.

What are the biggest technical challenges keeping your organization from realizing the full potential benefits of flexible work models?



Source: IDC’s Ricoh FoW and EX Survey, February 2025



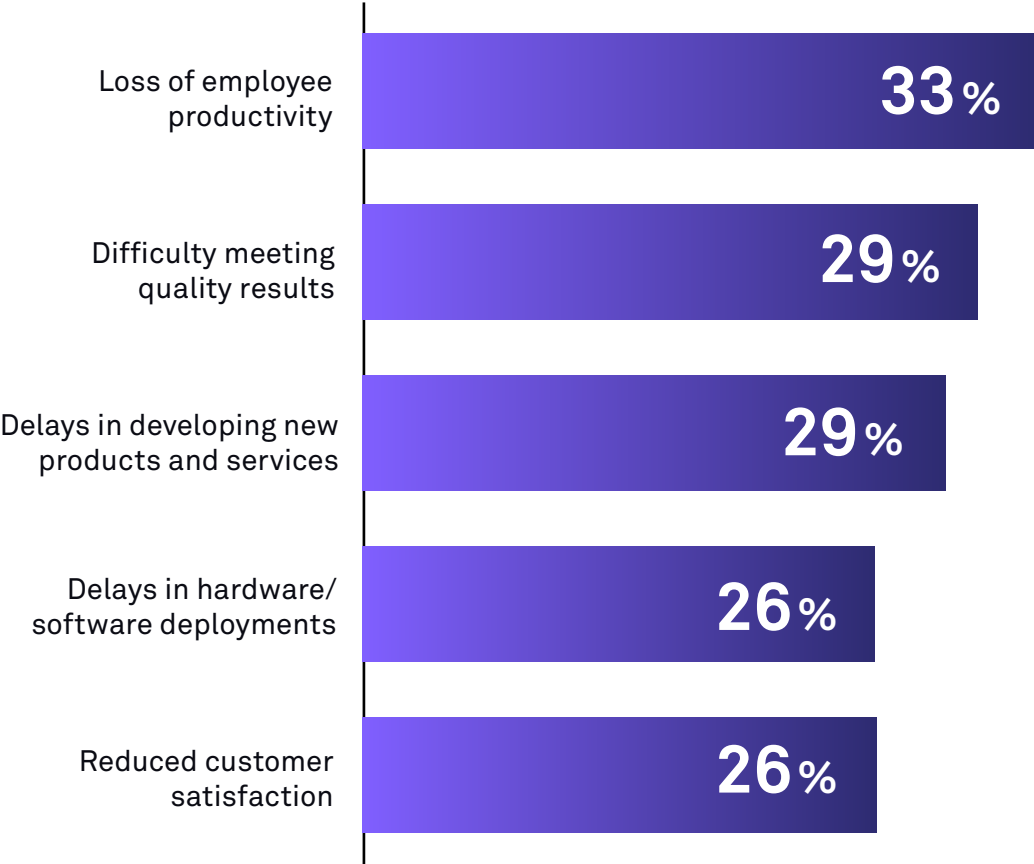
Parity of access to key workplace solutions

A lack of access to key workplace solutions can hamper productivity, impair business results, and delay the development of new products and services.



Source: IDC's Ricoh FoW and EX Survey, February 2025

In your opinion, which of the following is a result of a lack of employee access to key workplace solution technologies?



SECTION 2:

Investment in employee experience as part of the broader business strategy

Priority investments for parity access

What technologies and services will your organization invest in to enable technology parity for workers, regardless of physical location?



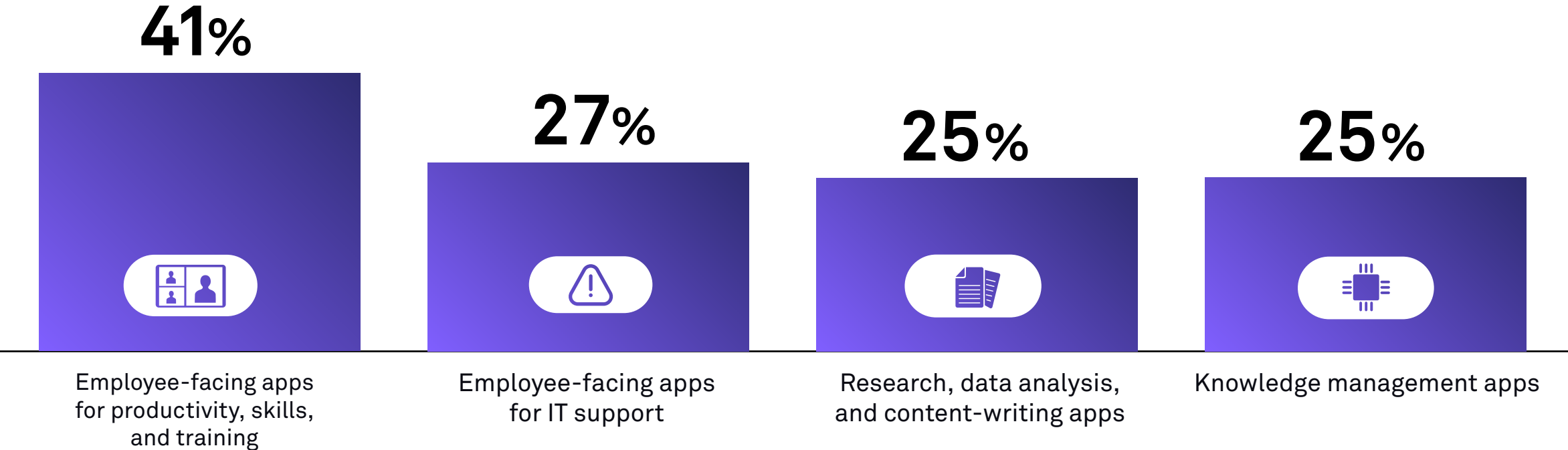
Source: IDC's Ricoh FoW and EX Survey, February 2025

Employee experience investments increasingly focus on technology hardware, software, and infrastructure. Rather than viewing EX as an HR programmatic cost, successful organizations focus on enabling employees to meet strategic business goals as part of a broader technology investment.



Priority AI integrations

Adopting AI-enabled solutions will not only boost employee productivity but also provide a crucial resource for automating IT support and facilitating key use cases such as research, data analysis, and content development.

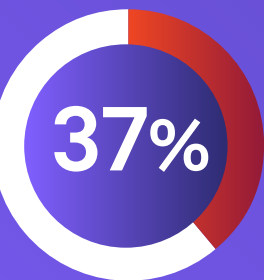


Source: IDC's Ricoh FoW and EX Survey, February 2025

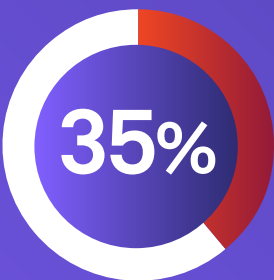
Priority EX improvement initiatives

Key technological supports: It's not one solution, but a package of technological supports that will be key.

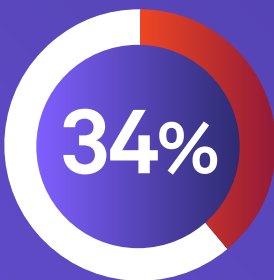
What are the top 3 initiatives your organization uses to improve employee experiences?



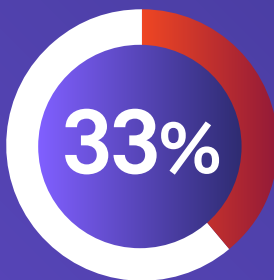
Responsive IT support, regardless of physical location



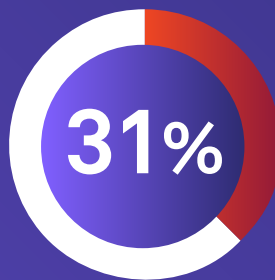
User training and development platforms



Updated policies to support flexible work models



Investments in employee productivity AI tools



Cloud-based access to resources from any device or location

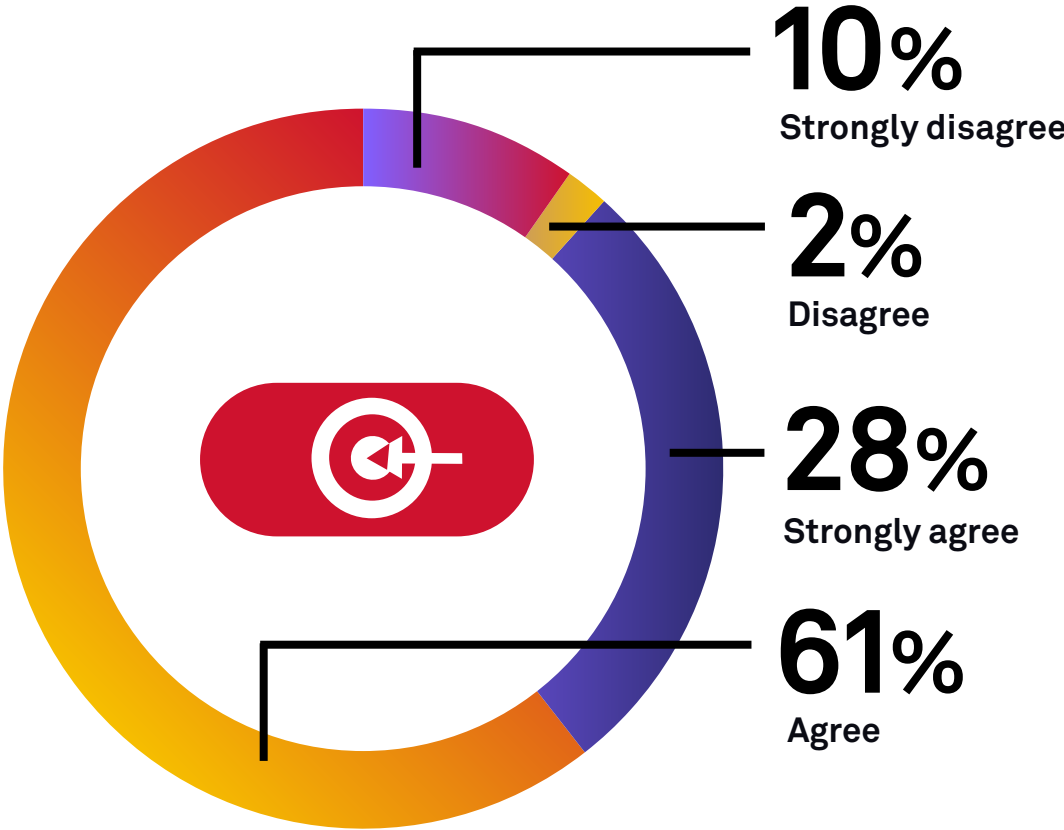
Source: IDC's Ricoh FoW and EX Survey, February 2025

Engage third party support services

61%

outsourcing non-core operations to a third party would allow our employees to focus on work that is most essential to reaching strategic business goals.

Please rate your agreement with the following statement: Outsourcing non-core operations to a third party would allow our employees to focus on work that is most essential to reaching strategic business goals.



Source: IDC's Ricoh FoW and EX Survey, February 2025

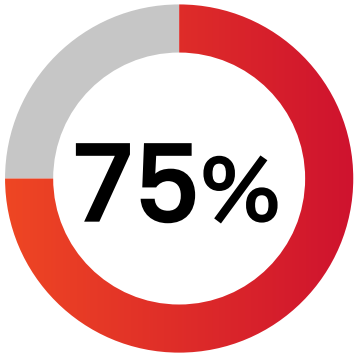
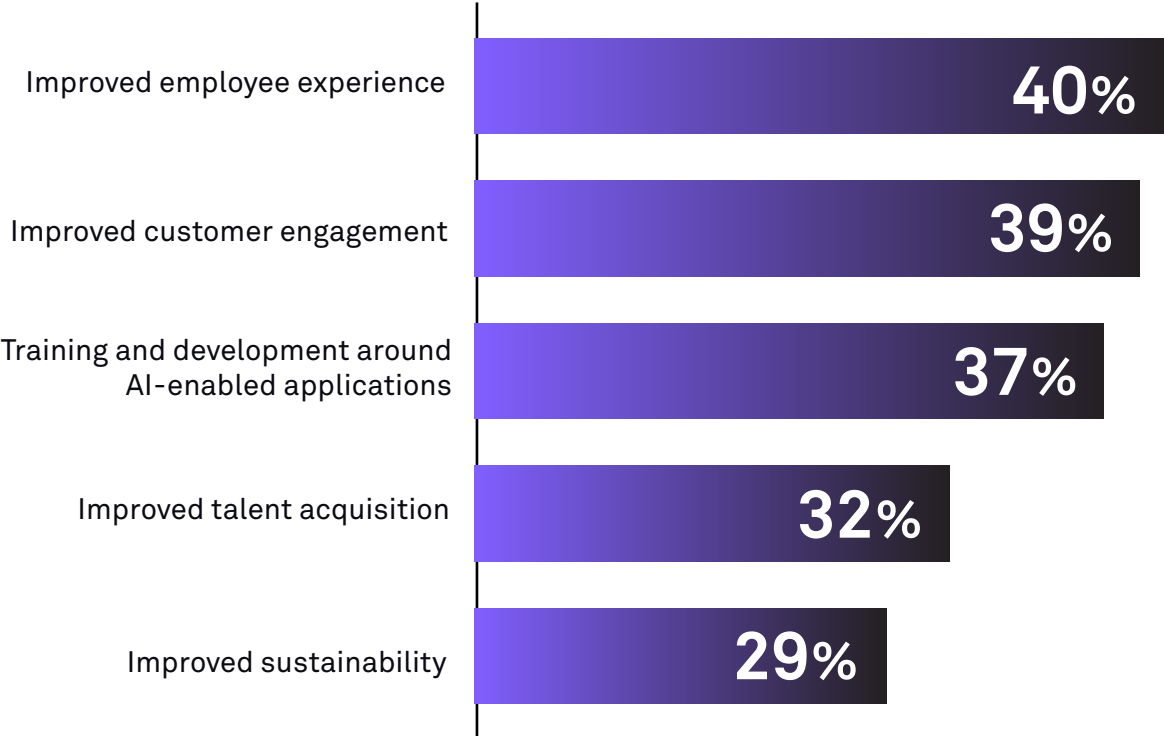


SECTION 3:

Next steps: Critical success factors for the future

Employee experience, customer engagement, and AI enablement

Looking ahead to the next 18 months, what are the most critical success factors for your organization?

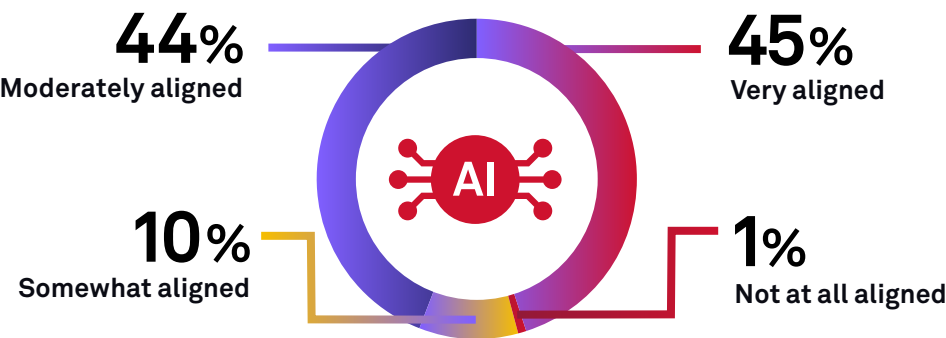


of IT and LOB leaders have implemented analytics and key performance indicators to measure the relationship between EX and CX.

Source: IDC's Ricoh FoW and EX Survey, February 2025

AI enablement and strategic business planning

How aligned are your organization’s employees and leaders on the adoption of AI tools for work?



Very aligned:
Both are very enthusiastic about ongoing AI adoption and have measures in place to document both employee productivity and business results.

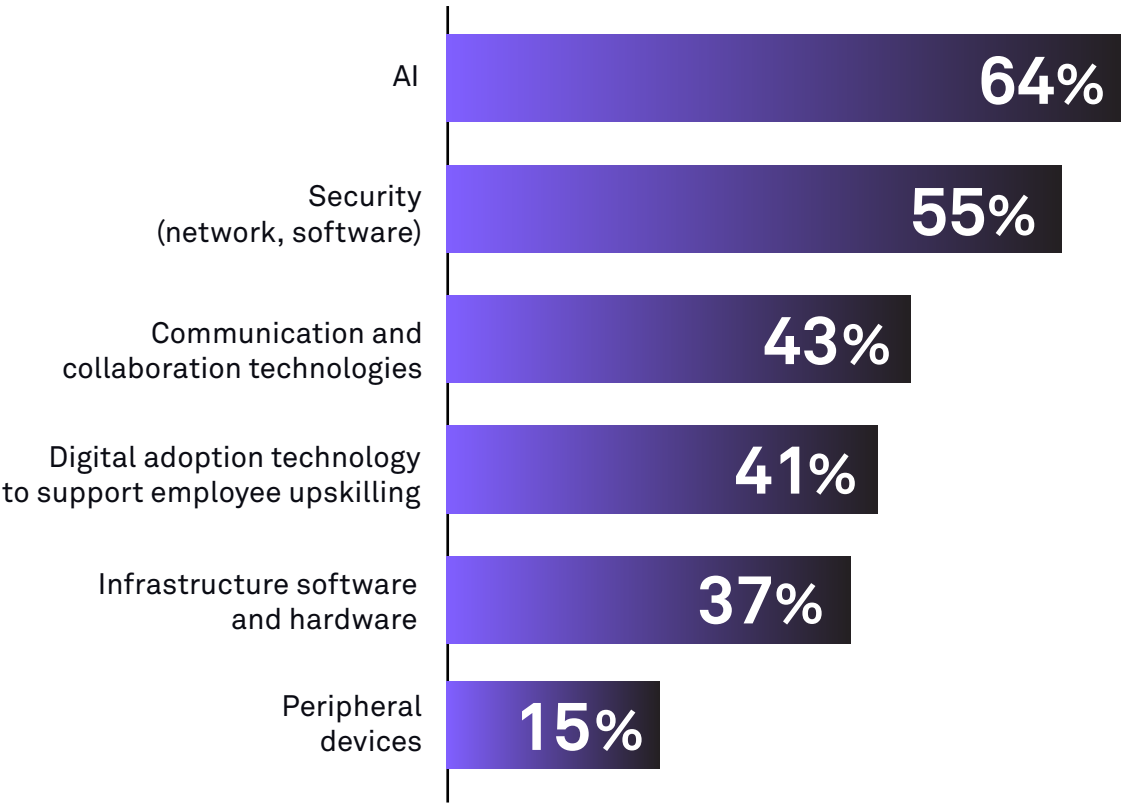
Moderately aligned:
Both employees and leaders feel positive about AI and that it can help them achieve their business goals.

Somewhat aligned:
Certain employees are aligned with executives’ AI ambitions while others are reluctant to adopt AI technology.

Not at all aligned:
Leaders and employees differ in their approaches to adoption of AI tools and technology.

Source: IDC’s Ricoh FoW and EX Survey, February 2025

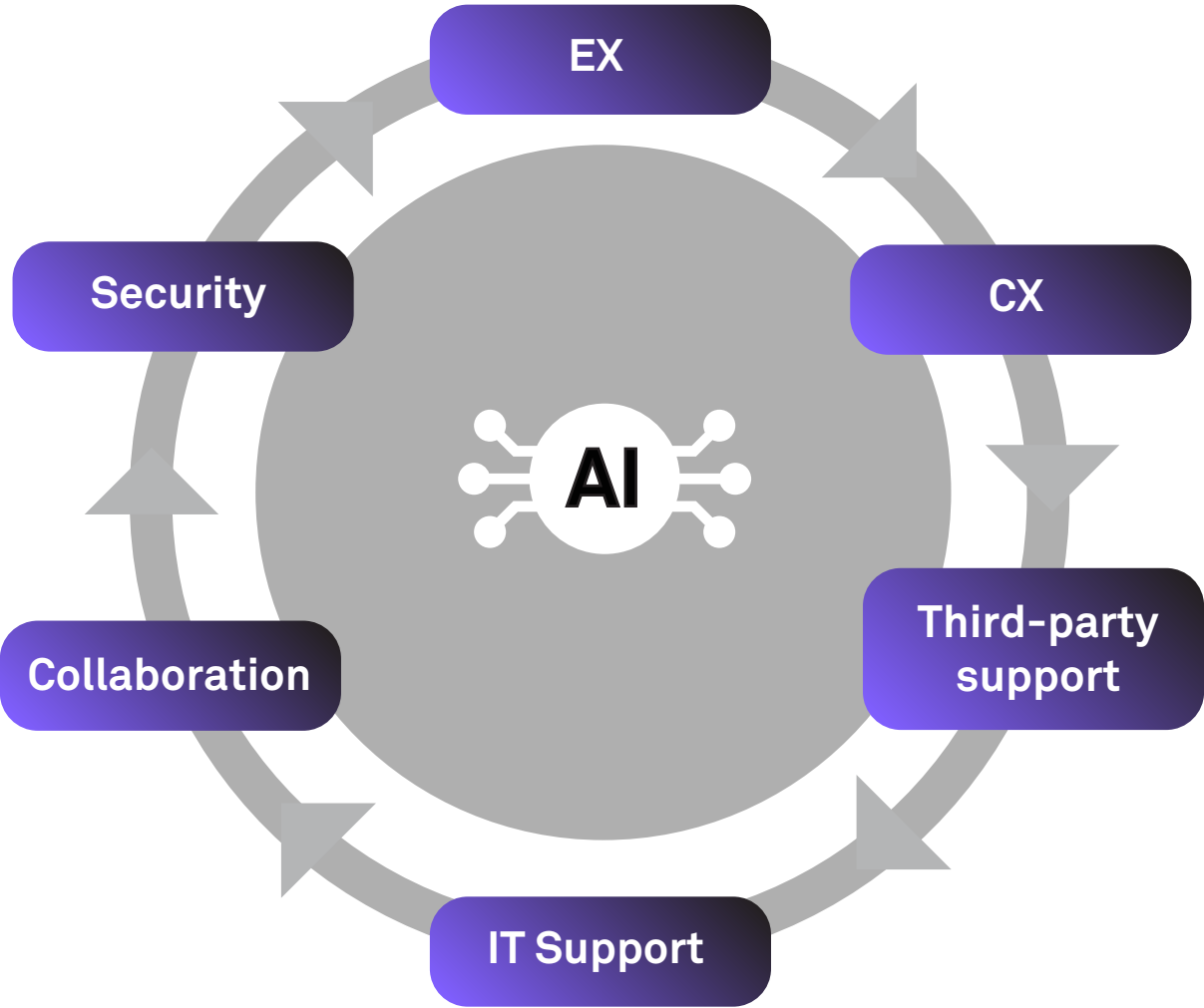
Which of the following technologies are most critical for your strategic business planning for 2025/2026?



The winning formula

Business growth relies on a connected solution environment.

While no single technology or policy provides a magic bullet, combining investments in communication and collaboration, AI, AI training, and flexible work models with redesigned workplaces is proving to be a winning formula for driving business growth.



Source: IDC's Ricoh FoW and EX Survey, February 2025

Essential guidance



Ensure employees are equipped to drive business results. Recognize that EX requires a broad range of support systems, including access to AI-enabled software, hardware, robust security protocols, and flexible work models.



Reinforce technology investments with IT and training support. Provide responsive IT support for key tools, ongoing training in the flow of work, and third-party resources.



Align your business strategy with employee experience. Develop and evolve measures to align employee experience investments with broader business strategies and CX metrics.



Message from the sponsor

Ricoh supports work by supporting the people who do the work. We ensure employees have the time, tools, and support they need to succeed. We do this by helping organizations with tools to capture and communicate information, provide secure (anywhere) access, simplify the flow of data, manage offices and equipment, and provide expert support regardless of location.

Some of the ways Ricoh empowers people every day:

- AI and automation that enables the frictionless flow of information, removes roadblocks, tedious tasks and inefficient communication — so there's more time for customers, creativity, and core business.
- Secured access to collaboration tools and shared information, regardless of location. Giving employees the flexibility they want, without sacrificing security.
- Responsive support, at any location, that's vendor agnostic — so regardless of platform or solution implemented, employees know who to call for help.
- Always-current technology connects devices to external cloud services and third-party apps, allowing employees to access the latest features and updates and work more efficiently and effectively.

Empower your employees with Ricoh@Work. Let's talk about how we can work together.
Contact us today.

About the IDC analyst



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Amy Loomis is research vice president for IDC's Worldwide Future of Work market research service. In this role, Loomis covers the growing influence of technologies such as artificial intelligence, data analytics, robotics, augmented and virtual reality, and intelligent process automation in changing the nature of work. Her research looks at how these technologies influence workers' skills and behaviors, organizational culture, and worker experience and how the workspace itself is enabling the future enterprise.

[More about Amy Loomis, Ph.D.](#)

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