

Making Work-From-Home Jobs Work for Everyone: 4 Use Cases



By **EVAN WADE** - Contributor

Research has long upheld the value of work-from-home jobs and other flex work arrangements, and Guardian's most recent Next Generation of Work report provides some of the most compelling data yet. According to the insurance giant, 18 percent of the U.S. workforce works remotely, and another 43 percent would explore the possibility if it was available. With a 115 percent rise in careers that work remotely between 2005-2015, the message is clear for employers: If you don't offer work-from-home jobs, your employees are willing to find a workplace that will.



Finance, healthcare, travel, and more. All industries benefit from work from home jobs.

This finding doesn't have to be a bad thing for businesses, though. According to the report, remote working jobs offer an average 13 percent reduction in employment-related costs and directly address some of the business world's longest-standing pain points. As the following use cases show, a digital transformation focused on remote work opportunities can bring substantial positive change.

Healthcare: Addressing a \$150 Billion Problem

According to Health Management Technology, the healthcare industry loses \$150 billion each year on missed appointments alone. For these struggling health systems, telehealth technology lowers barriers, reduces costs, and makes administrative processes faster and more convenient.

Modern communication tools bring work-from-home capability to clinical roles without compromising patient privacy or the employee's ability to provide care. A clinician can observe, make recommendations and referrals, and prescribe like they would in a standard visit. Patients get faster, less expensive care, employees get health and productivity perks common to remote positions, and the organization gets fewer costly missed appointments.

Technologies like SD-WAN, which improve video call quality over any network conditions, can add further value here, allowing personnel to engage in critical care functions over standard broadband. In any context, work from home is a solution that benefits from both a care and a cost perspective.


BYOD IN 2018:
TOP TRENDS & BEST PRACTICES



Top BYOD Trends & Best Practices

BYOD is another key benefit of unified communications.

Legal: Supporting Time-Crunched Staff

Even if the phrase "time is money" has become a bit of a cliché, it's also entirely applicable to the legal field. Busy personnel often have entire days scheduled down to the minute, and minor timing setbacks, such as late-running court appearances, can throw entire workloads into disarray.

As such, telecommuting's ability to make more time can be hugely beneficial to lawyers. Being able to meet a client from home grants greater schedule flexibility, while the advanced document-sharing capability found in a UCaaS solution ensures communications come under the same domain, with a high degree of performance and reliability.

Lawyers are just one role to benefit from work-from-home policies. Consider a firm that hires a number of remote assistants and paralegals available to help office-, home-, or field-based personnel. As a primary or backup resource, these employees further ensure the

flow of high-quality research and e-discovery. However firms ultimately choose to deploy it, telecommuting benefits all aspects of the legal organization.

It is up to businesses to provide the means and the policy-based support to make it happen — and modern communications technology, with its immense power and flexibility, can help get there fast.

Travel: Cutting Costs Without Compromising Quality

Travel industry personnel handle a lot of information in this client-facing field. With the right technology in place, employees can now handle data electronically from any authorized device. Combined with the competitive nature of the field, this makes the lower employment costs and flexible hours of remote employment an attractive combination.

The high-level benefits of work from home align perfectly with travel: More time means more appointments means more booking opportunities. Since the job requires little in the way of specialized equipment, agencies can be far more flexible in their hiring and scheduling practices, which can be particularly helpful during busy and off seasons.

Work from home also adds a human touch to online-only services provided by the online-only competitors that have disrupted this industry. For example, a client hesitant about booking a package may be more likely to commit when they can press a "call now" button on the website and connect with a home-based rep who is immediately available, thanks to the agency's ability to hire greater numbers of employees. Throw in the added productivity and happiness that come with work from home — a happy agent is a better selling agent, after all — and it's fair to say the field is an excellent match for the format.

Finance: Offering More Options and Enriched Service

Because many of the services financial institutions provide involve information shared between consultant and client, finance and accounting organizations that allow employees to engage with clientele from anywhere carry distinct advantages.

For example, consider an accountant long overdue for a vacation who works with a handful of VIP clients. With flex-work opportunities, they can vacation for most of the week, stopping only to virtually meet with the VIPs via video conference, all from the comfort of their hotel room.

In a situation without a scheduled meeting, meanwhile, the VIP could call their accountant's desk number and leave a voicemail, which is immediately transcribed to text and forwarded to the employee's smartphone. The employee could check the message and send a quick response via SMS wherever they are. Should deeper questions arise, the same employee can access the client's account from any authorized device, with identity-protection features like two-factor authentication providing an extra layer of privacy.

One Platform, Endless Possibility

For these four fields and countless others, the question surrounding work-from-home and other flex-work opportunities has become less of an "if" over the past five years and more of a "when." In many circumstances, an employee can project the exact same presence in the office, at home, or from their favorite rented cowork space. It's up to businesses to provide the means and the policy-based support to make it happen — and modern communications technology, with its immense power and flexibility, can help get there fast.