

Marketing Execution and Compliance: Evolving to Support an Expanding Remote Workforce

by Ken McDonald

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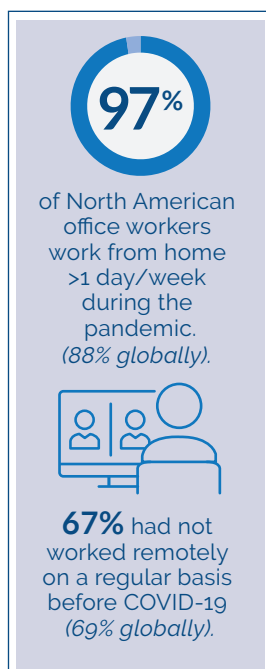
The COVID-19 pandemic is changing the way global organizations operate—with remote work now considered a necessity for many companies. Today, countless employees work from home (WFH), students attend classes virtually, and corporations rely heavily on technology to stay connected as they strive to define the new normal.

Since many companies were not well prepared to deal with large remote workforces, they are quickly expanding their use of technology to ensure that remote working for employees is simple and secure. This significant growth in the number of WFH employees accentuates network capacity and compliance issues—and new risks are introduced by tasks previously not performed remotely.

Managing compliance across a remote workforce creates new challenges for those attempting to adhere to company policies, regulatory guidelines, and supplier contracts. Proper governance requires companies to establish a centralized, secure workflow that is easily accessible by all essential employees and stakeholders.

As workers in many industries are compelled to work remotely for the foreseeable future, effective collaboration between marketing teams, stakeholders, third-party agencies, and suppliers is vital.

Technology solutions that empower cooperation, review, and approval by key stakeholders are becoming the standard for global organizations—and they can enhance compliance controls in remote work environments. Deploying technology with single sign-on access, integrated workflows, and end-to-end project transparency enables compliance professionals to provide regulatory evidence of a controlled process.



Source: Global Workplace Analytics

in 2017 & 2018**~25%**

of U.S. employees worked at home at least "occasionally."

15%

had days in which they "only" worked at home.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

**in 2020**

from Mid-March to early April, the percentage of U.S. employees working remotely

DOUBLED from 31% to**62%**

totaling 100 million employees.

Source: Gallup

Investment in marketing execution technology can greatly improve processes for advancing marketing initiatives and communications from concept to completion swiftly and efficiently while empowering workers to accomplish their work remotely. When using the right tools, marketing teams can operate more effectively, accelerate speed to market, reduce costs, and preserve employee and supplier compliance from remote locations.

Adapting Policies for an Ever-Changing Business Environment

As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations have suggested or mandated working from home for all employees—resulting in some companies implementing remote work for the first time. Converting a workforce to WFH is challenging, with many employees struggling to remain productive as they acclimate themselves to new tools and protocols. Timely communication of policies is critical—employees and employers must remain agile in an ever-changing global business environment.

Remote work introduces a potential for cyber threats to intensify as systems are accessed from outside the office environment. When complex workflows incorporating business stakeholders, support teams, and suppliers are added, risks are heightened exponentially. This places a strong emphasis on reinforcing operating policies and supplier interaction along with refresher training for remote users to observe compliance practices.

As in-house marketing teams adapt to remote work policies, third-party suppliers are working through similar challenges. It is critical to assess supplier relationships, data connectivity, and contract terms to ensure that policies are updated to maintain a compliant remote working environment. Accurately identifying supplier operational, transactional, and regulatory risks is essential, as is reviewing service level agreements and business continuity plans. Companies with collaborative marketing tools advance many steps forward as they enable remote teams and suppliers to work together on reviewing, approving, and distributing marketing collateral.

Rapid WFH mobilization has created a greater need for technology that gives marketing organizations deeper insight into policy compliance and transparency across critical business operations. Integrating tools that utilize single sign-on and permission-based access to manage data sharing and workflow is mandatory for remote workforce optimization.

82%

of companies intend to permit remote working some of the time as employees return to the workplace.

**47%**

said they intend to allow employees to work remotely full time going forward.

Source: Gartner, Inc. survey June 2020



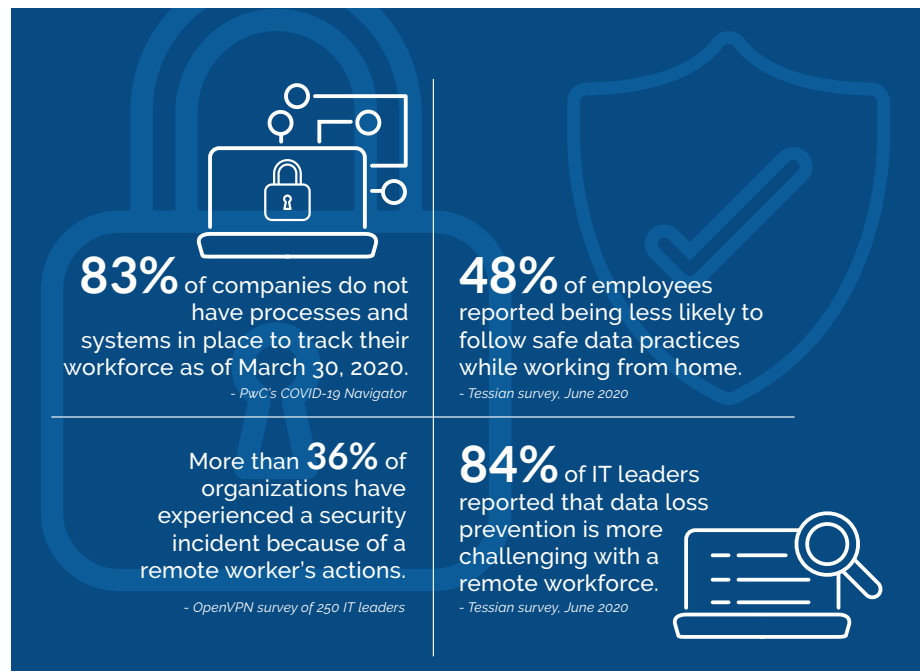
25-30%
of the workforce will
be working-from-home
multiple days a week by
the end of 2021.

Source: Global Workplace Analytics

The good news is that marketing execution technology exists that can improve visibility into policy compliance, streamline supplier engagement, and boost the productivity of remote workers.

Enhanced Regulatory Oversight with Work from Home Staffing

Managing regulatory compliance has long been essential to business operations. The pivot to remote work means that compliance professionals and their colleagues have had to adapt almost overnight. These teams must ensure that everyone, everywhere follows federal, state, and local regulations and maintains visibility into operational controls as they respond to regulatory audits.



Larger remote workforces, increased regulatory pressures, and a spotlight on breaches have put compliance teams under heavy pressure to eliminate sub-optimal processes and unnecessary risks. Companies are obligated to review compliance practices to assess strengths, uncover weaknesses, and develop more robust controls with a strong awareness that regulatory compliance will never be optional.

Teams need to think carefully about how they handle communications and marketing materials that may contain confidential, personally

identifiable, or client-specific information—especially when employees are working from home. Integrating technology that simplifies workflows and tracks project details allows teams to adhere to compliance controls and elevate productivity.

Marketing organizations need effective, real-time collaboration tools that improve transparency and enable teams to monitor, capture, and report on all campaign activities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many companies to change the ways that employees interface with internal and external stakeholders and clients. Deployment of robust marketing execution technology enables everyone to stay connected and active during this unprecedented isolation. Companies that deploy technology effectively to manage compliance programs and workflows will be the best prepared for the new realities of the post-pandemic world.



To reinvent business for a WFH world, **~ one-third of companies (32%)** look to tech-driven products and services.

Source: PwC U.S. CFO Pulse Survey, U.S. Findings, June 2020

Constructing an Efficient and Effective Workflow

As global organizations modify their policies and embrace work from home, they are adding new employee benefits into the mix, including improved work-life balance and reduced stress. Many organizations have adapted workflows to support WFH staff by integrating technology to expedite collaboration between remote teams and suppliers.

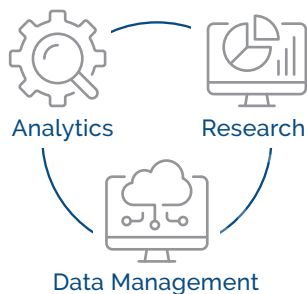
No longer viewed as a productivity drain, **54%** of CFOs plan to make remote work a **PERMANENT OPTION**.

Source: PwC U.S. CFO Pulse Survey, U.S. Findings, June 2020.

Leading marketing organizations that have adopted remote working are leveraging technology solutions that deliver integrated workflows, enhanced communication and visibility, and more insight into supplier performance and compliance. These cloud-based toolsets enable marketing teams and service providers to interact at a project level, manage assigned tasks, track costs, and adhere to established compliance policies.

Regulated industries like healthcare, insurance, financial, and others face a significant risk of fines or litigation when they share content via traditional means. Automated workflows enhance security and reduce the potential for regulatory breaches or associated penalties as they streamline workflow. Compliance teams also rely on technology to retain an audit trail and ensure conformity to regulations for remote workforce transactions.

Top three investment priorities for marketers remain unchanged from 2019 to 2020:



Source: The Pivot Report, RR Donnelley, May 2020

Marketing organizations and marketing service providers routinely monitor and manage projects across a wide array of platforms used by their remote teams, creating inefficiencies and increasing risk. Introducing a robust marketing execution technology that centralizes campaign management and integration with ERP, CRM, eCommerce, and AP solutions helps boost WFH productivity and improves both cost savings and marketing compliance. These tools are valuable for remote workforces by enabling location-independent access to data, real-time visibility into projects, and better communication among stakeholders, approvers, and suppliers.

Integrating Technology to Optimize Remote Work Teams

Virtually every industry is undergoing historic changes as companies contend with the ramifications of COVID-19, and it is very tempting for them to put compliance controls on the back burner. By adapting policies, educating staff members on changes that impact compliance, and investing in the right technologies, businesses can ensure that they are well equipped to maintain the highest levels of compliance standards and simplified procedures for remote workers.

Marketing organizations and service providers need to think about what additional tools they need to manage remote workers. Do they have the necessary technology to maximize productivity and compliance? Do they have access to essential analytics to guarantee that teams and suppliers are productive and are achieving project goals? As management thinks about the new normal, extra steps may be necessary to further reduce risk and successfully support remote workforces.

Leading marketing execution solutions incorporate single sign-on access with a permission-based roles engine to ensure security across all applications. Coupled with centralized, integrated workflow and detailed reporting, these solutions can significantly improve marketing efficiency

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

KEN MCDONALD
is the founder of SourceSCM Consulting LLC, dedicated to partnering with businesses to drive cost optimization, accelerate organizational transformation, and execute innovative, customer-focused solutions.

A trusted sourcing and supply chain expert with 30 years of Fortune 6 leadership experience, Ken focuses on sourcing, negotiations, contracting, supplier relationship management, risk, compliance, supplier diversity, distribution, and logistics operations in highly regulated industries. He began his career in retail and moved from there into lead roles in manufacturing and distribution. Ken volunteers as a sports coach and with various groups benefiting children's charities, food banks, and struggling families.

and compliance across a distributed workforce. The most capable execution solutions include sourcing controls for remote marketing teams to manage supplier selection, project approvals, and campaign spend while tracking and reporting supplier performance.

Companies that manage most effectively through the pandemic will end up with better systems and processes to withstand future business challenges.

The ability for a company to thrive in these ultra-challenging conditions is quickly becoming a huge competitive differentiator. Working from home enables employees to be healthier and more stress-free. With the help of technology, they can stay connected and productive without increasing risk or compromising compliance.

Ultimately, the COVID-19 pandemic may drive the most significant changes in the way work is done during the history of the modern era. Remote work was previously an obscure plan for some companies. Today it is a necessary reality for all, and tomorrow it could become the global norm.

About Noosh

Noosh is the world's leading independent marketing execution software company, used by enterprises and marketing services companies to bring campaigns to life. The company's collaborative SaaS solution helps customers optimize marketing execution activities from creative brief through production processes to costing and invoice reconciliation. Noosh's users span the entirety of the marketing value chain, including agencies, enterprises, and suppliers, delivering billions of dollars of marketing assets into the market to drive revenue for some of the world's leading brands.