Remote IT Support

Five challenges in the work-from-anywhere era.

GoTo

Introduction

In this White Paper, we share the key insights that emerged from our discussions. We highlight the five main challenges facing remote IT support professionals as they strive to enhance service levels, reduce costs and improve efficiency. We also offer brief insights into the solutions implemented by a number of GoTo clients to overcome some of these challenges.

Understanding the challenges for the IT support and management profession

Working practices and the technologies that support them have undergone rapid and wholesale change in recent years, placing unprecedented pressure on IT help desk and support teams. The switch to remote and hybrid working has necessitated a rapid shift to remote methods of IT support. This comes at a time when IT teams are dealing with growing mandates and responsibilities, with limited resources and budgets.

As a provider of remote IT support and management technology, GoTo wanted to better understand the challenges facing IT support professionals in this fast-changing environment, and learn about the principal pain points and barriers that were holding them back. We gathered more than 50 senior IT support professionals to share their experiences in a series of roundtable discussions. Attendees included senior representatives from a wide range of organisations from multiple sectors, including SMEs, global brands, utility companies, universities and local authorities. We debated solutions to some of the key challenges and explored ways in which IT teams can better support customers and employees in 2023 and beyond.

50

Senior IT support professionals to share their experiences in a series of roundtable discussions.

1 Challenge: Security Concerns

How to build trust in remote IT support.

IT leaders are concerned about many aspects of security in the hybrid working environment. One aspect is maintaining high levels of protection for users' devices. This becomes a particular issue when staff are using their own devices to access work systems, which is increasingly common among remote workers. IT teams need to be able to keep all devices updated with the latest security releases to prevent malicious attacks. Almost every week there are reports of new security threats to IT systems, which means IT teams are in a constant race to identify and close security gaps across the many tools and devices used throughout the hybrid workforce.

Another security concern is the safety of remote access software, which is vital to enable support technicians to connect securely to end-user devices on any network. Help desks need to use remote support software that ensures data and communications are well protected – using secure encryption – during any remote access sessions. Such security guarantees are vital not only to protect data, but also to give reassurance to employees or customers that their remote support connections are safe.

End users need to be able to trust any software used to access their devices. IT leaders working in universities cited this as a particular concern among students, who were often reluctant to allow IT technicians to remotely access their laptops. Users need to be sure that remote sessions are not only safe, but that once the connection to an IT technician is ended, the technician cannot regain access without permission from the user.

One important way to provide security assurances to end-users and IT teams alike, is to use zero trust security protocols. These take a "trust nothing, verify everything" approach to protecting the multiple entry points into any software or IT infrastructure. Zero trust architecture requires that anyone and anything trying to connect to systems must verify their identity before access is granted.

Success story:
Supportwave

Pioneering on-demand IT support platform, Supportwave, wanted to better control the quality, security and simplicity of remote support services offered by its IT engineers. The company chose Rescue from GoTo for its ease of integration and white-labelling capability, allowing the company to deliver worldwide remote support on a Supportwave-branded tool.

> "As we continue to build the company, Rescue has provided an essential piece in the puzzle, tying everything together into a neatly wrapped package that enables us to deliver consistently high service standards worldwide."
>
> **Darren Strydom**
> CTO, Supportwave

2 Challenge: Tools and Systems

How to optimise limited resources with consolidation.

Many IT professionals report having to work with multiple disconnected tools to carry out monitoring, management and IT support services. This proliferation of tools is a hangover from the pandemic, when IT teams quickly had to cobble together the software and systems required to service a remote workforce. Now, this assortment of systems is resulting in convoluted workflows and time wasted switching between tools. This is inhibiting productivity and impacting the speed and quality of support services provided to end users.

Unsurprisingly, consolidating IT tools was high on the priority list of many of our roundtable participants. They spoke about the need to have all their support solutions in one place, with a common interface, and to standardise the software used to provide IT support. Many described their current arrangements as disjointed and inefficient, with IT technicians having to find manual workarounds because the systems they use don't synchronise.

With IT resources under pressure and teams being expected to do more with less, time is at a premium.

One participant confided that there was simply too much transformation going on at present for the available people to deal with. Any tool that consolidates multiple functions into one accessible platform could deliver valuable time savings and significantly improve the efficiency of IT support teams.

Several participants at our events suggested that self-service bots could play a key role in helping to deal with basic-level IT issues and the most common requests – giving IT professionals more time to focus on more complex issues requiring expert intervention. New innovations in AI technology are constantly emerging, and there are likely to be opportunities for the use of transcriptions, machine learning, automation and applications like ChatGPT to support the delivery of more efficient remote IT support.

Ease-of-use is another important consideration when it comes to speeding up the remote IT support and management process. If tools are simple and intuitive for end users to access, it can save technicians valuable time in the process of connecting to a user's device.

3 Challenge: User Expectations

How to provide consistent service levels.

IT service desk leaders agree that user expectations put a great deal of pressure on IT help desks. Everyone wants their IT problems to be fixed quickly. Senior executives in particular, it seems, have the highest expectations of rapid resolution. There's nothing more frustrating for individuals than having their IT systems fail, meaning they can't get on with their work.

People working remotely now expect to have easy access to IT support and an instant response. Participants at our events spoke about the dream of giving employees working at home the same overall experience as those working in the office.

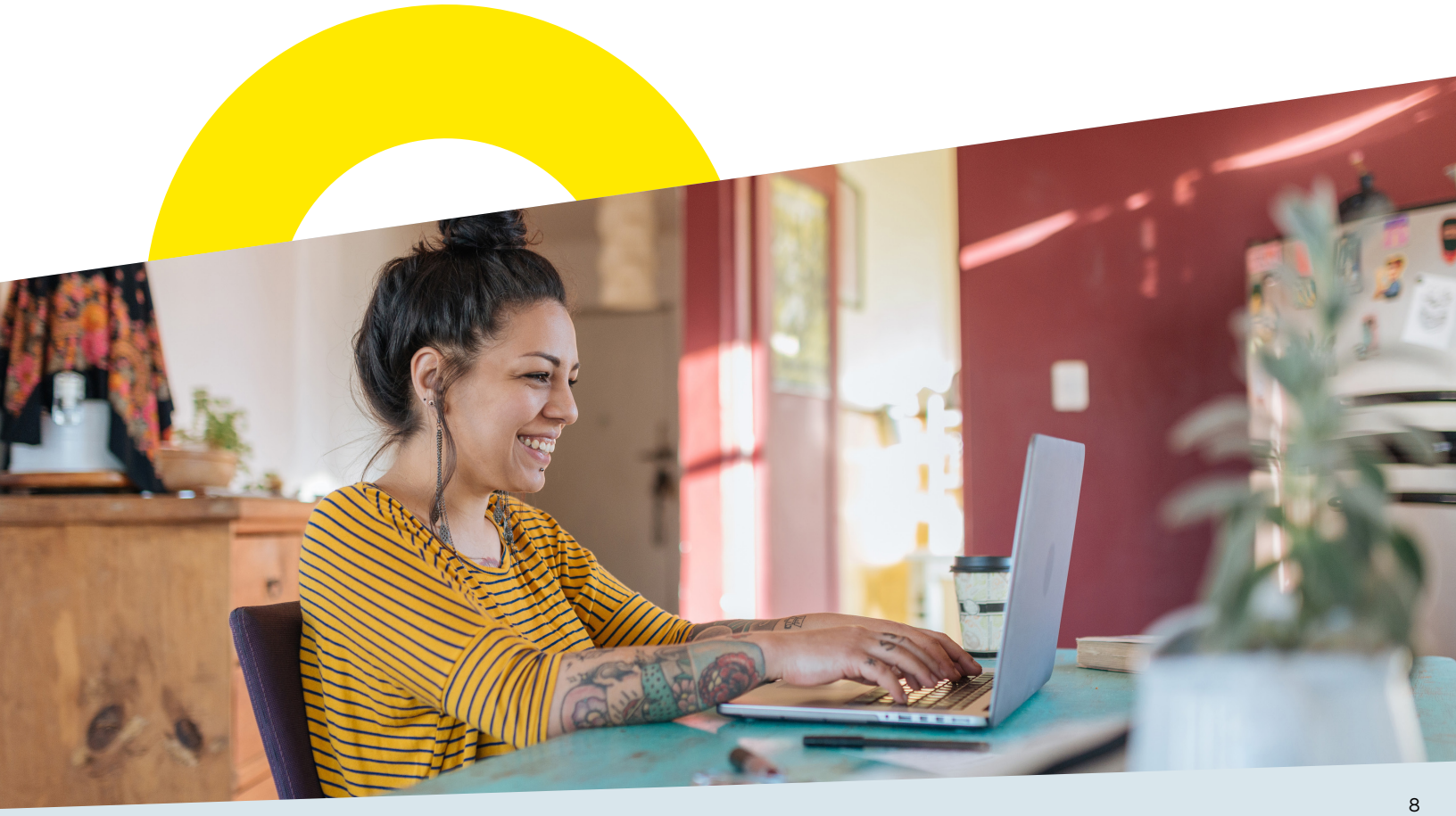
Before the pandemic, one participant pointed out, remote IT support was seen as a luxury. Now it has become an expectation. That means it's crucial to adopt the right technology to support the hybrid work environment. The challenge for IT leaders is to manage expectations so that everyone can adjust to the new world of remote support delivery.

To deliver on the high expectations of most users, help desks are crying out for easy-access tools that enable them to quickly connect with users, and diagnose and fix their problems promptly.

Success story:
Littlefish

Managed Service Provider, Littlefish, has grown significantly in recent years by disrupting the established MSP market with its remote support service levels. The company uses Rescue from GoTo to connect users quickly and easily with agents and support rapid fault diagnosis and resolution. Littlefish uses the full range of Rescue tools, including Rescue Mobile to support smartphones and mobile devices, and Live Lens camera-sharing to help fix devices such as printers and routers.

> "Rescue products allow us to support the full range of IT issues. They have enabled us to develop the exceptional customer experience we've become known for."
>
> **Alec Hughes**
> Head of Service Desk, Littlefish



4 Challenge: Varying IT Literacy

How to make remote IT support accessible for everyone.

The wide range of IT users requiring support – whether employees, customers or students – means IT professionals must provide services to people with widely varying levels of IT literacy. People also use different hardware of varying standards, and may have limited broadband speeds, which can make remote support even trickier to deliver. Help desks want to provide an efficient, professional service, but that can be challenging when technicians are trying to connect to outdated devices with poor connectivity, for users with little IT knowledge.

Participants noted some trends in IT literacy levels and preferences. Sometimes there are generational differences, with more mature users less inclined to use self-service bots to deal with routine IT issues – preferring to speak to an expert instead. In university settings, as already noted, students are more reticent about allowing technicians to have remote access to their devices. In addition, many students are using older hardware, which may be less secure and more difficult to maintain remotely.

One way to address these issues is to choose remote support software that is easy for anyone to use. Participants spoke about preferring plug-in solutions that are easy to set up, and easy for users to access. The user experience is everything, according to IT leaders. No matter the level of IT literacy, if remote support can be delivered via secure one click-access, with no need to download an app, it's much more likely to be adopted by a wider range of users. The less training required to use any remote support system, the better, since many IT departments don't have the time or resources to offer training to everyone that needs it.

One way to address these issues is to choose remote support software that is easy for anyone to use.

Success story:
360 Orthodontics

360 Orthodontics supplies hardware and software for orthodontic practices. The company wanted to enhance its remote support and find a better way of resolving hardware issues. GoTo Resolve Camera Share proved to be a game changer – enabling support technicians to solve hardware problems faster than ever, with no need to visit the customer's site. It's a cost-effective solution that has significantly enhanced the customer experience.

> "GoTo Resolve Camera Share has completely changed the way we provide remote hardware support and makes life so much easier for our technicians and the customer."
>
> **Beth Ambridge**
> Customer Support Manager, 360 Orthodontics

5 Challenge: Changing Behaviours

How to adjust to new ways of working.

The pandemic accelerated change in the workplace and the reliance on digital tools in everyday work. It also precipitated a change in IT support, and the need for IT teams to adjust to new modes of service delivery. Such behavioural change takes time to embed, and can lag behind the availability of technologies to support these new ways of working.

The rush to deliver remote support by any means during the pandemic has left a legacy of behaviours that can be hard to reset. For example, Microsoft Teams was widely used during lockdowns to facilitate everything from meetings to IT support delivery. While the use of Teams for IT support was only intended as a stop-gap solution, some IT help desks are finding that users still try to contact them via Teams. By attempting to get their problems solved by this channel, rather than via the correct remote support systems, users are bypassing the ticketing process and disrupting the prioritisation of IT support jobs. One solution to this issue is to use remote support tools that integrate with Teams and other widely used work applications, to streamline and simplify the delivery of remote IT support and management.

Participants at our events spoke about the need to win hearts and minds when it comes to changing behaviours – helping people adjust to new and more efficient ways of accessing remote IT support. One way to help people embrace new IT support mechanisms is to find out what works best for different categories of end user. That means IT technicians focusing on delivering their support via the most effective route for different service users – whether that's via self-service bots, remote access software, camera-sharing tools, or more traditional telephone support.

GoTo Solutions

All-in-one platforms for remote IT support and management.

Amid all the upheaval of recent years and the challenges posed by new ways of working, one thing hasn't changed. That is the desire of IT teams to deliver the simple, secure and effective IT support that all end users crave.

With this clear objective in mind, the IT solutions specialists at GoTo have been refining the company's best-in-class remote support and management software to create two intuitive, streamlined, easy-to-use products designed specifically for modern IT support teams.

The first, GoTo Resolve, is an all-in-one IT support and management solution designed for IT teams in small-to-medium-sized businesses. The second is Rescue, an enterprise-grade remote IT support tool for larger IT teams supporting more than 1,000 employees or customers.

Both products enable IT technicians to deliver rapid support, with advanced zero-trust security protection, on any device, backed up by easy administration and monitoring. Each product offers a consolidated solution that enables IT teams to provide fast and efficient remote access and support, carry out remote monitoring and device management, and manage ticketing processes without having to switch between tools.

Find out how GoTo Resolve and Rescue can address the key challenges facing IT support teams today.

Learn More