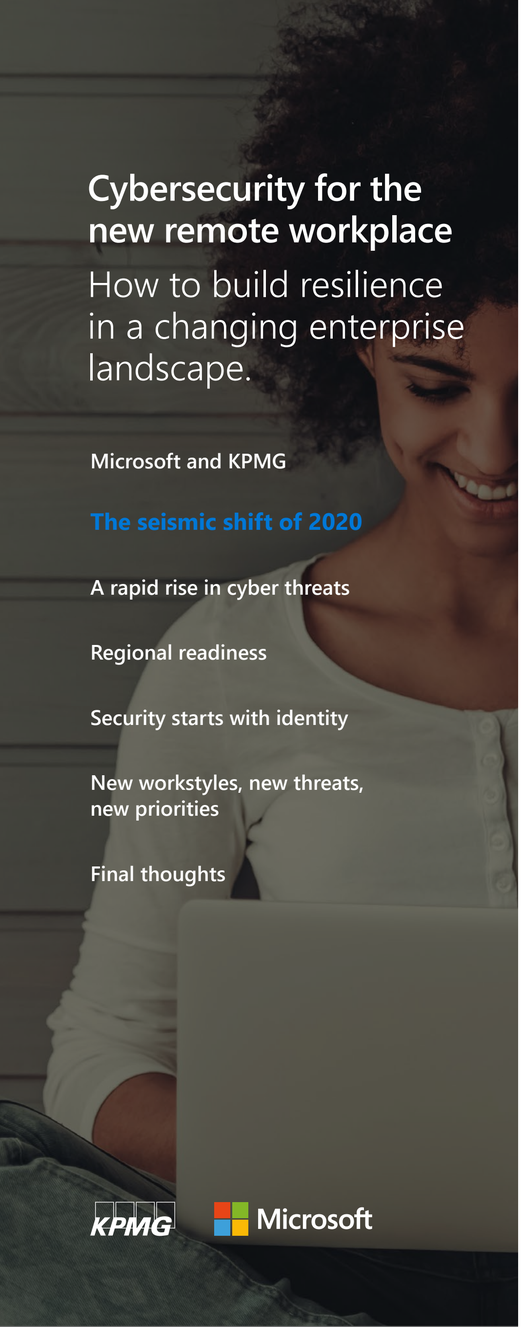

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The seismic shift of 2020

The global societal and economic cost of the COVID-19 pandemic has yet to be fully realized, with the recovery forecast not in months, but years. The impact on business operations is set to be just as long-lasting.

Many organizations quickly put measures in place to adhere to social distancing, which have – on the whole – proved the case for remote working.

These may be unprecedented times, but a clear precedent has now been set for organizations to move to modern, digital, flexible workplaces.

The data backs this up. Remote office work increased by 70% between February 4 and April 7, 2020 as a result of COVID-19 prevention measures.[1] Prior to the outbreak, just 30% of employees worked remotely at least part of the time, but this figure jumped to 81% by April 2.[2]

In practical terms, this has seen a massive spike in virtual conversations on platforms like Teams, Zoom and Slack. People have embraced digital tools to collaborate more effectively in real time with their colleagues, using online documents, notebooks, whiteboards, and screen sharing. There has been a collective energy to try out new ways of working and not let physical distancing be a barrier to productivity.

From an organizational perspective, IT teams have been working exceptionally hard, at pace, to enable remote working.

They have been rolling out the apps and tools people need to get their work done, provisioning people's own devices so they can access corporate resources remotely, and moving services to the cloud to take pressure off their on-premises infrastructure.

The urgency around the COVID-19 pandemic has compelled digital transformation projects to be completed within just weeks, which might otherwise have taken years.

However, in doing so, companies have taken security risks that they might never have accepted in other circumstances[3]—which is a heightened danger at a time when cybersecurity threats have also increased.

[1] https://www.carbonblack.com/2020/04/15/amid-covid-19-global-orgs-see-a-148-spike-in-ransomware-attacks-finance-industry-heavily-targeted/
[2] https://www.computerweekly.com/news/252481579/Coronavirus-More-than-two-fifths-of-employees-likely-to-continue-remote-working-after-pandemic
[3] https://home.kpmg/xx/en/home/insights/2020/05/securing-the-new-reality.html

Cybersecurity for the new remote workplace

How to build resilience in a changing enterprise landscape.

KPMG Microsoft

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