



Modernizing end user computing for distributed work



The biggest shift since the industrial revolution

Early in the pandemic era an article by Intel declared that “the status quo is officially dead” for end user computing (EUC), due to the need to adapt to remote work. With remote and hybrid work becoming a permanent factor, IT teams face the reality that end user computing (EUC) must transform for the long-term.

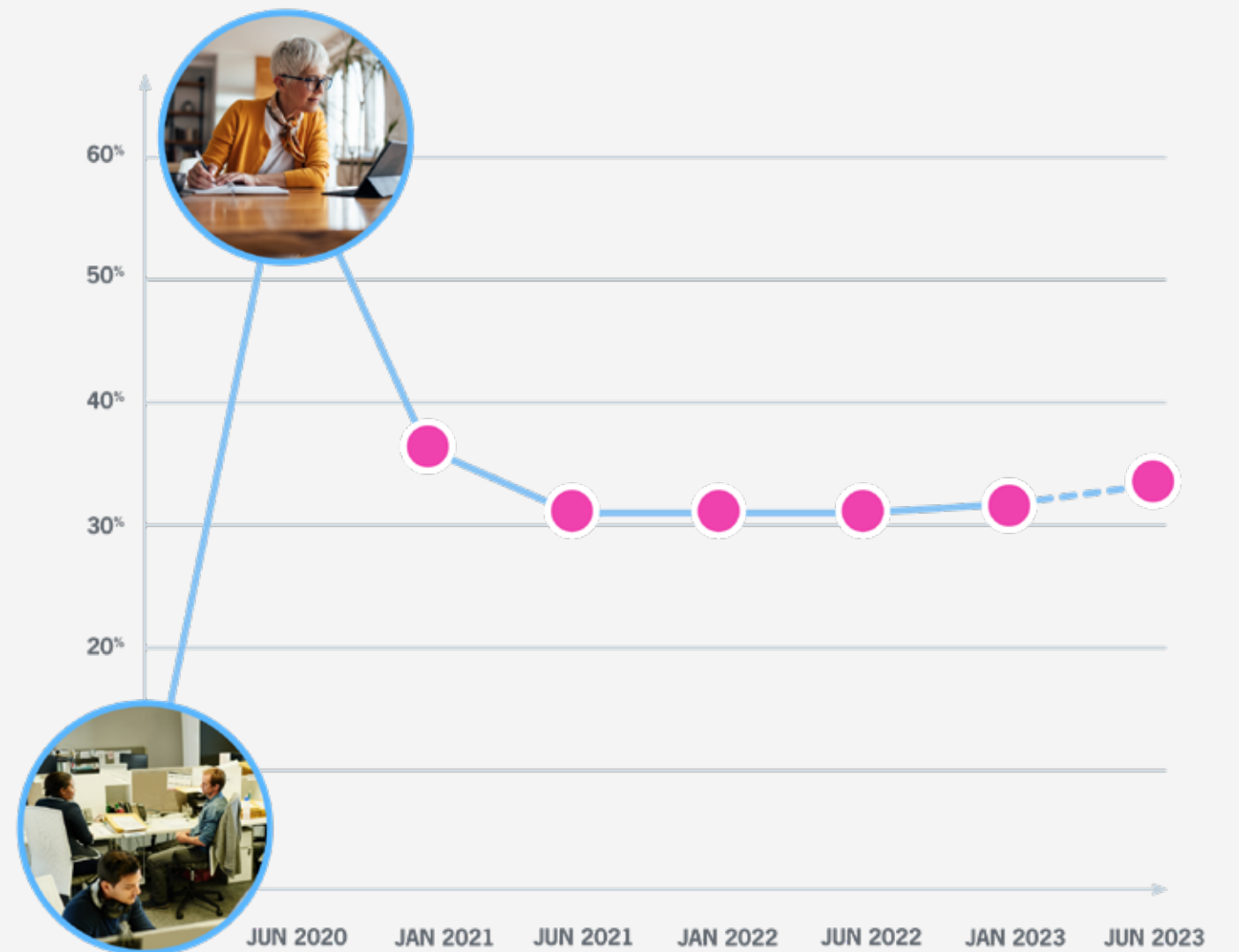
Sticking with outmoded methods puts organizations at a significant competitive disadvantage due to poor employee experiences, asset waste, operational inefficiencies, and IT opportunity costs.

Yet, simply knowing you need to modernize doesn't mean you know how. In this ebook, we'll identify the challenges, the costs of doing nothing, and provide an architecture for transformation.

Work from home will follow a Nike™ swoosh. A modest drop in the near-term as the economy slows and labor demand weakens, followed by a gradual rise in the role of remote work.

— Nick Bloom, Stanford Professor

Percentage of employees working from home





Defining end-user computing

End user computing services deliver foundational IT infrastructure—most obviously the desktops and laptops needed by employees to access corporate apps. In some cases, end user computing environments also involve virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) running in on-premises data centers or in public cloud providers like AWS. In most cases, laptops are supplied by corporate IT while employees are allowed to “bring your own device” (BYOD) for mobile devices like iOS or Android smartphones. EUC also includes the software functionality needed to perform device management or endpoint management, addressing control and security over operating systems and application management for suites that run on end user computer systems (think MS Office).

The shift to remote and hybrid is here to stay



Historically, the vast majority of employees worked out of offices, so the entire EUC lifecycle was office-centric. IT teams gave out laptops and other IT equipment during onboarding; handled repairs, loaners, and replacements; and received laptops during offboarding at the office. Typically, there would be an on-site IT closet to receive, store, and deploy equipment.



Now, according to McKinsey's Spring 2022 American Opportunity Survey, 87% of workers will choose remote work if offered the choice. And according to Gartner, **66% of HR leaders report their company is operating in a hybrid work environment today and 30% say they're already planning to make that model permanent.**

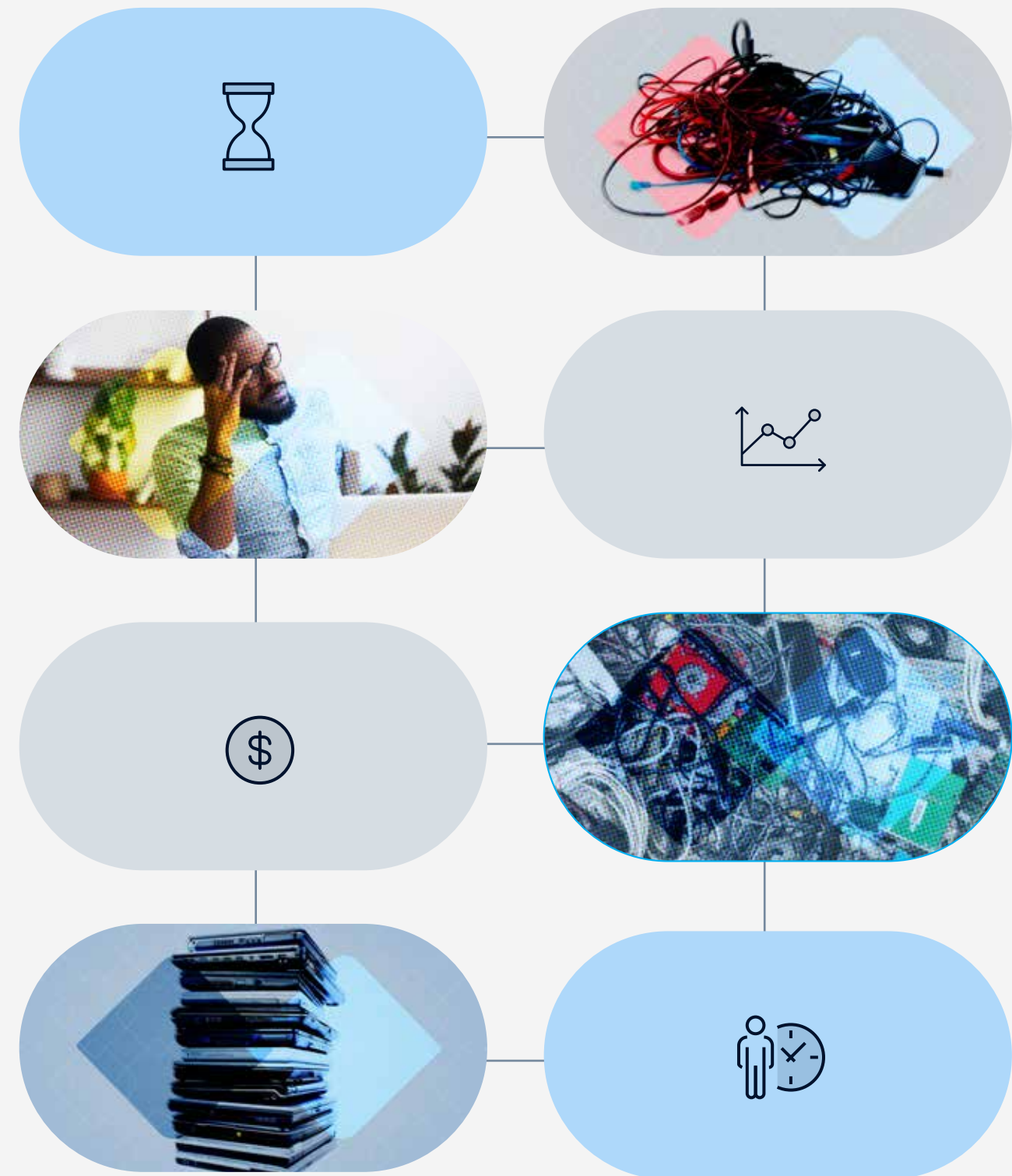
Employee equipment processes were already outdated

Dealing with employee laptops and other devices is one of the least interesting and most thankless jobs in IT. It can be driven both by surges of activity when classes of employee onboard, as well as unpredictable interrupts when employees require different equipment, peripherals, repairs, replacements, and upgrades, or leave the company.

End user computing isn't just an IT matter. Finance needs accurate asset tracking. HR needs smooth onboarding and support for employee productivity. Infosec needs control over device disposition. Facilities may also need to supply ergonomic furniture.

Sadly, the state of the art in most end user computing work streams has been spreadsheets, post-it notes, and inter-departmental email.

The only reason these manual processes ever worked was due to the close physical proximity of all parties in office settings.



It gets worse with remote and hybrid work



When end users become geographically distributed, traditional processes break down. Due to the constraints of time, distance, and the complexities of coordinating procurement and logistics, IT teams struggle to deliver positive and timely employee onboarding and offboarding experiences, manage equipment

life cycles such as replacements and upgrades, and provide service assurance with responsive break-fix operations.

This is certainly the case when employees are working remotely at a moderate distance, but gets far harder when the workforce is distributed across multiple countries, continents, and trade zones.



Firstbase customers have shared that simply attempting to manage the logistics of one hundred remote employees takes up to 500 IT staff hours per year.

The high costs of doing nothing



💰 Costly staff turnover. Countless studies show that poor employee experiences, particularly during onboarding, negatively impact retention and productivity. According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) it costs 6-9 months of pay to replace a salaried worker.

🔗 Unrecovered assets. According to pre-pandemic Gartner research, 30% of fixed IT assets were “ghosts” in many enterprises. Now, Gartner analysts estimate that many organizations only collect 50% of laptops deployed to remote workers.

🧩 Staff inefficiencies. Firstbase customers report that it takes roughly 500 IT staff hours to manage end user device logistics for every hundred remote employees. This doesn't count HR, finance, security, and facilities teams wasting time due to outdated, manual processes.

🕒 Lost productivity. When end users are stuck with outdated technology, they are losing productivity. Intel research found that employees with outdated tech suffer \$3.6K in annual productivity losses.

📈 Opportunity cost. In today's hyper-competitive environment, it is neither feasible for most IT teams to build their own way forward, nor is it worth it. EUC is a critical function, but is non-strategic. Delivering laptops on time will never increase your company's revenue.

🛡️ Security and compliance. If you're not in control of your laptops and other devices that carry data, you're at a heightened risk of data loss that carries outsized costs.

The answer is cloud transformation

The key to transforming EUC is to shift to a cloud architecture.

Organizations have realized that it no longer makes sense to build their own data centers and shifted most of their enterprise applications to cloud providers. Likewise, modern IT teams are realizing that turning to a new generation of cloud providers that offers a formula of employee self-service, SaaS automation for administrative workflows, and outsourced physical operations is the way forward for end-user computing.



Employee self-service offers a familiar and seamless digital storefront experience that is expected in a large workforce of millennial and Gen-Z staff. This unburdens IT and HR teams from tedious and error-prone and manual tasks.

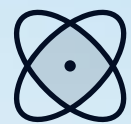
SaaS workflow automation makes every step of employee equipment lifecycle visible, controllable, and approvable by IT and HR teams. API-based integrations with HRIS and ITAM/ITSM platforms ensure the smoothest and most auditable process possible.



Outsourced physical operations relieves IT and HR personnel from mind-numbing and wasteful manual fulfillment tasks. When automated through self-service and SaaS workflows, IT teams achieve far higher rates of timely success across onboarding, repair/replacement, refresh, and offboarding.

Flexible procurement is key

Buying laptops and peripherals is not new. Even amidst a dramatically new level of distribution across the workforce, organizations have long-standing patterns, preferences, and prerogatives around how they procure laptops and other IT equipment. It is critical to avoid procurement lock-in, which is a significant downside to so-called PCaaS offerings that are typically linked to a particular PC Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) brand.



A modern EUC approach gains all the power of self-service, SaaS automation, and outsourced physical operations without sacrificing procurement flexibility. In practice, this means that your provider should offer vendor-neutral purchase and leasing (Hardware-as-a-Service) options, as well as allow you to purchase your own gear and ship it to the provider.

Procurement flexibility offers organizations a valuable advantage in the digital transformation age: business agility. The ability to mix, match, and shift how you procure hardware including but not limited to IT equipment, is what's needed to ensure both continuity and velocity in your business.





The Firstbase Advantage

Firstbase is the industry pioneer and leader in transforming employee equipment processes for the distributed work era. Firstbase built the industry's most powerful, global platform that combines delightful employee experience and self-service, streamlined SaaS automation across administrative workflows and asset management, plus powerful integrations with Workday, BambooHR, Namely, ServiceNow, Omnitza, and other leading HRIS and ITSM/ITAM platforms.

The Firstbase platform executes all your physical operations and logistics to support workers from before day one through to offboarding. And Firstbase offers a vendor-neutral, flexible procurement approach. Purchase or lease from Firstbase, or simply ship us your equipment. Finally, Firstbase can not only handle your new equipment, but your legacy fleet as well. Learn more and request a demo at firstbase.com.

