

Gartner®

6 Digital Workplace Trends



Introduction

Digital workplace advances haven't slowed down since pre-COVID. As organizations grapple with work changes including hybrid, remote, skills-based talent and gig workers, we are already seeing the beginnings of the next deep disruption — AI. By integrating human centricity with AI augmentation through an adaptive, outcome-driven approach, IT and digital workplace leaders can drive significant new business value.

The time is now to prepare for the digital evolution. Don't get left behind: Read on to find out the top 6 trends for the future of work.

Gartner Digital Workplace Summit

March 23 – 24, 2026 | San Diego, CA

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Trend No. 1: Digital enablement through GenAI

Organizations should pursue a data-driven experimentation approach to GenAI that boosts productivity and performance while also improving EX.

The power of GenAI to transform work caught everyone off guard. IT leaders are rushing to find competitive advantages by leveraging it across their technology stack, while vendors are scrambling to deliver products. Generative AI ushers in a new computing era that we call Everyday AI, whereby AI services become embedded in most processes. This will be a year of experimentation and maturation, and the learning curve will be steep. Potential rewards are large, as are the risks and level of disruption.



Take a look back at last year's #GartnerDW sessions on GenAI:

- How to Secure and Govern Microsoft 365 Copilot at Scale
Max Goss, Senior Director Analyst
- Harness No-Code Agent Builders for the Digital Workplace
Jason Wong, Distinguished VP Analyst
- A Guide to Measuring the Value of Everyday AI
Nikos Drakos, VP Analyst

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Trend No. 2: Human-centric work design

Boost engagement, performance, productivity and well-being by giving employees more agency and purpose in their work and work environment.

In a competitive labor market, human-centric work designs — which place people and teams at the center — will continue to differentiate employers. Many organizations' rigid return-to-office mandates are meeting employee resistance and risking lower performance and higher attrition. AI will be the next work disruption for which executive leaders will need to develop a strategic approach to leverage its potential for empowering employees while overcoming skills challenges and alleviating concerns about risk.



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Trend No. 3: Shifting talent and skills

Adopt an agile and skills-based approach to talent, including a continuous learning culture to keep pace with future work trends.

Hype around GenAI has accelerated investments in AI, with high executive expectations for productivity gains and work improvements. Achieving such benefits requires new skills and competencies, while significantly disrupting many tasks, roles and even careers. IT leaders must shift to more agile and skills-based talent strategies, while investing in employee experience, including digital employee experience. Both leaders and employees must dramatically increase the pace of upskilling and reskilling.



Take a look back at last year's #GartnerDW sessions on shifting talent and skills:

- Best Practices for Scaling Collaborative Work Management
Nikos Drakos, VP Analyst
- Contextualize Upskilling and Enablement to Drive Business Outcomes
Joe Mariano, Director Analyst
- Empowering Business Teams With Digital Adoption Platforms
Melissa Hilbert, VP Analyst

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Trend No. 4: Reshaping the culture

Preserve and evolve the culture to thrive in a hybrid work environment, while laying the groundwork to adapt to future disruptions.

As organizations evolve the way they operate in an AI-infused and hybrid world, they also uncover new barriers to maintaining culture connectedness. Ongoing economic disruption, accelerating change and tensions between leaders' preferences and employees' expectations for hybrid work have challenged organizations' ability to drive culture change and strengthen employees' connection to the organization. Executive leaders must instill accountability at all levels to collaboratively reshape the culture and behavioral norms to thrive in the modern working environment.



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Trend No. 5: Managing in a hybrid world

Equip managers to coach, develop and support employees equitably to deliver sustainable performance in a hybrid and AI-infused work environment.

In an increasingly AI-infused environment, managers are critical. They are employees' primary contact and connection to company values, goals and culture, yet they are strained by accelerating disruption, expanding responsibilities and fragmented resources. Senior leaders direct them to implement corporate strategy, including AI adoption and return to office, while employees expect them to provide purpose, flexibility and growth. Executives must evolve managers' roles and equip them to drive performance amid AI and hybrid work change.



Take a look back at last year's #GartnerDW sessions on tackling hybrid:

- Ask the Expert: How Are Meeting Practices and Technologies Evolving?
Adam Preset, VP Analyst
- Beyond the Megavendors: Alternative Approaches to Improve Productivity With GenAI
Adam Preset, VP Analyst
- Top Ways to Improve the Digital Employee Experience in 2025
Autumn Stanish, Director Analyst

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Trend No. 6: Rethinking the workplace

Modify the office to create an equitable, engaging and effective workplace better suited to the hybrid work environment.

Today's workplace is digital. The traditional concept of the office as just a physical space has evolved into an environment designed for purposeful and impactful work experiences. Yet, executive demand for more in-office time without clarity of purpose ignores employee motivations, and is often met by employee resistance and noncompliance. Leaders must invest in creating workplaces that deliver on “moments that matter” to achieve the harmonization of focus, socialization and collaboration.



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Gartner digital workplace experts will be convening with 900+ leading digital workplace executives at Gartner Digital Workplace Summit next March. Join us to build a GenAI action plan for 2025 and beyond.

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