



5 Ways Device as a Service (DaaS) Is Transforming Workplace IT

The emergence of drastically new ways of working, along with the growing employee expectation for an exceptional work experience, are driving organizations to embrace transformative workplace solutions that cater to people's needs. Contemporary workers now demand workplace experiences that mirror those they get with their personal devices from consumer-focused service providers. They see their devices as an extension of their personality and seek to surround themselves with the latest technology at all times, and they want it working flawlessly, all the time, from anywhere. Millennials, who now represent 1 in 3 American workers, want their devices to be stylish, flexible and powerful, as well as small and lightweight.ⁱ They also expect the user experience on those devices to be hassle-free and to get support that's just as fast, friendly, and effective as they'd get from high-end technology retailers.

To support the technology needs of an ever-evolving workforce, organizations must refresh their fleet of workplace devices such as laptops, desktops, smartphones, and tablets every three to four years. This is also important from a security standpoint, as aging assets can introduce potential vulnerabilities and increase the organization's attack surface, derailing security and compliance strategies. The catch? Device lifecycle management – which encompasses procurement, deployment, software licensing, support services, recovery services, and device retirement/refresh – demands a substantial investment in terms of time, money, and manpower. 63% of IT managers say their resources are constrained by device management, which leaves them with little time to focus on strategic projects.ⁱⁱ

Unsurprisingly, many organizations are addressing this problem by turning to Device as a Service (DaaS), which helps them significantly reduce the cost and complexity of device procurement and deployment and provide secure and high-quality services to their end users.

This paper explores how DaaS can be a game-changer by transforming workplace IT, enabling organizations to better control their assets and costs, reducing the burden on IT, and offering employees a consumer-like experience.

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Devices, devices everywhere: Navigating the device deluge

Today's corporate IT environment faces a monumental influx of devices. Besides the growth in company-owned hardware, the growing adoption of BYOD at many organizations has meant more employees using their own devices. By 2020, the average employee is expected to carry four devices on any given day.ⁱⁱⁱ Managing these multi-device, multi-platform, and multi-OS environments is challenging for corporate IT departments that do not have the requisite skills/resources, budgets, or even the time to take on such an arduous task. According to a recent IDC study, 22% of the average IT budget is allocated toward purchasing devices – a figure that is expected to continue increasing – and 14% of IT personnel's time is spent managing these devices.^{iv} A recent study by Spiceworks gives us insight into IT teams' strategies to improve the device standards they manage for their users. According to the study, 44% of businesses plan to increase tech spend in 2020, while 2 out of every 3 large enterprises plan to deploy 5G technology by 2021.^v

There's a clear need in IT to address device management with a polished plan, but often, there's a disconnect between the services that IT deploys and the ever-evolving expectations of their user base. 78% of employees say devices are an important part of their workplace experience, but a majority of employees perceive their organizations to be slow when it comes to recycling outdated devices and adopting new workplace solutions.^{vi}

As "Anything as a Service" (XaaS) becomes an increasingly common part of our vernacular, and a routine part of everyday life both inside and outside of the workplace, organizations are turning to the DaaS model more and more to provide a cost-effective and efficient solution for managing not only the deluge of devices, but also the software and services that come along with them. DaaS offers a subscription-based model to manage devices, similar to the way businesses procure other services. Besides eliminating the cost and time burden, DaaS also introduces customization and innovation into the devices and systems an organization deploys – a critical factor in driving user productivity and therefore creating a competitive advantage in a rapidly evolving digital workplace.

Migrating to DaaS: Transforming device lifecycle management

Moving to a subscription model like DaaS allows businesses to transform IT provisioning and support by taking advantage of efficiencies and simplifying device management processes. Here are five ways in which DaaS is transforming workplace IT.

#1 Flexible device selection and simpler deployment and configuration services:

Vendor-specific leasing programs limit device options, forcing organizations to partner with several vendors to obtain the range of devices that their users need, increasing cost and complexity. Zones, on the other hand, uses a vendor-agnostic approach to provide organizations with any devices their employees need or desire. Not only that, as the influx of devices continues, Zones can handle deployment and configuration services to simplify and fast-track device rollouts. The result: ready-to-go devices that do not require any intervention from IT staff, allowing clients to focus on high-value IT initiatives and enabling a consumer-style out-of-box experience for the user.

#2 Proactive device support: Device downtime is simply not acceptable in today's hypercompetitive business environment. DaaS includes services that allow enterprises to monitor and collect data regularly across their fleet of corporate devices to proactively identify and resolve issues (such as OS failures or defective hardware) and ensure business continuity. This proactive maintenance strategy also includes timely device refreshes, OS upgrades, and so on, paving the way for a superior user experience and improved productivity.

#3 An all-inclusive approach that addresses security and compliance: Mobile devices are a hot target for malicious software. The number of new malware variants on mobile OSs increased 54% in 2017.^{vii} DaaS providers can ensure continuous security monitoring, enabling deployment of timely updates, patches, intrusion detection systems, and firewalls. When evaluating a DaaS vendor, it is important to choose a vendor that has experience providing always-on security for corporate devices – whether in-house or remote. DaaS vendors that provide customized and compliant solutions for data encryption, access control, and key management can also help address stringent compliance requirements.

#4 Data-driven device optimization: Unified management of all corporate-owned devices helps provide valuable insights on the entire device inventory – its health, usage, and so on. These insights help organizations quickly optimize device procurement, deployment, and user support services.

#5 Eco-friendly IT strategy: Environmentally conscious organizations are increasingly looking to ensure that their devices are energy efficient (aging devices consume more energy) and are disposed of in an eco-friendly manner when they reach their end of life. DaaS also opens up the opportunity to refurbish and re-sell or reuse devices, either internally or externally, to donate to worthwhile philanthropic causes.

Organizations understand that DaaS is much more than device leasing – it's a holistic solution that enables flexibility, on-demand hardware scalability, and lifecycle management of devices.

DaaS for the digital workplace: Key benefits

According to IDC, 40% of enterprises already leverage or are planning on leveraging DaaS by 2020 to address their growing IT challenges.^{viii} Organizations understand that DaaS is much more than device leasing – it's a holistic solution that enables flexibility, on-demand hardware scalability, and lifecycle management of devices. The major benefits of DaaS include:

- **Stabilizing costs and reducing burden on IT:** By eliminating the large upfront capital expenditure of outright device purchases and instead moving to a consolidated monthly bill for the devices, services, and software an organization needs, enterprises can use DaaS to add budget flexibility and predictability to the budget, which in turn will free up cash for other strategic initiatives. Organizations are able to pursue ambitious digital transformation goals rather than wasting their time chasing down vendors and addressing issues that should no longer be a part of their environment.
- **Simplifying the multi-device environment with round-the-clock support:** With DaaS, organizations are able to outsource the end-to-end management of workplace devices to a single vendor. This includes critical aspects such as keeping hardware functioning; updating OSs and other technology; pushing out security patches, policies, and updates; and handling end-of-device lifecycle tasks such as data wiping, migration, and disposal. With just a single contract and a single provider to deal with, enterprises have the flexibility, control, and visibility they desire along with round-the-clock, multi-channel support to ensure that users can always get their work done, regardless of where they are.
- **Increasing productivity through cost-effective scaling:** Whether organizations are hiring new employees for seasonal reasons or to add resources for tackling bigger projects, they often need the ability to provision new devices without having to wait for extended periods of time. In addition, they get end-to-end visibility into device refresh cycles with simplified warranty management and license renewals.
- **Delivering fast user support and a superior customer experience:** Meeting the growing demands of an increasingly mobile workforce is a daunting task. DaaS offerings come bundled with software and 24/7 support services that are designed to create a rich and secure end user experience across time zones – and all without additional cost implications for the enterprise.

Realizing the true potential of DaaS

To maximize the value of DaaS, it's important for organizations to identify an offering that goes beyond workplace device leasing – one that offers a customizable model for end-to-end device lifecycle management and holistic device and user experience management. As DaaS goes mainstream, value-added services such as backup and restoration, mobile device management (MDM), device warranty, insurance, licensing, and others will be integrated into the DaaS package. Currently, most of these services are offered separately, increasing complexity for IT managers. Incorporating these value-added services into the DaaS package will further amplify an organization's ability to deliver seamless digital workplace experiences for enhanced productivity and sustained competitive advantage.

About the Author

Alex Pérez is the Director of Workplace Solutions at Zones and owns the development and success of the portfolio of solutions which fall under End User Compute & Productivity, Collaboration, and Store & Branch Modernization.

More Information

Visit our website [Zones.com](https://www.zones.com)

To speak with a solution specialist in the U.S. call toll-free **1-800-408-9663**.

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For over 30 years, Zones has worked with industry-leading partners to offer comprehensive IT solutions to clients around the world. Our Workplace Modernization, Network Optimization, Data Center Transformation, and Security Fortification solutions lead clients through their digital transformations, and our services offer support every step of the way. That's what makes us the First Choice for IT.™

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Corporate Headquarters

Zones, LLC
1102 15th Street SW, Suite 102
Auburn, WA 98001-6524

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