SCREENCAST ● MATIC

The Definitive Guide To Remote Work Success

Working From Home

Whether you've been working from home for a decade or are just starting to make the transition, we believe there are always improvements to habits and processes that can be made.

Our guide to working from home can help bosses, professionals, and entrepreneurs develop effective and productive work strategies for full- and part-time working from home scenarios.

Stay tuned as we explore the benefits of working from home, tips for staying productive, how to set up for success, and tools that make the work day fly by.

Don't forget to read through our case studies at the end that show how multiple industries can benefit when CEOs and team members work from home.

Benefits of Working from Home

Benefits For Employers

1. Hire top talent no matter their location
The best candidate for the job might live down the street...or across an ocean. When a job's requirements can be fulfilled entirely remotely, location no longer needs to be a part of the qualification process.

2. Save on expenses
With more employees working from home, employers can save on overhead costs like rent for office space and the cost of supplies. They also have the option of hiring contract workers who legally don't qualify or require insurance, sick days, or other benefits.

3. Higher productivity and retention
Studies often show that employees are more productive at home and put in more hours than their in-office counterparts. Of course, this is dependent on a healthy work/life balance and will require effort from both the employer and employee.

Benefits for Employees

1. Create a flexible schedule

Working from home often provides more flexibility for employees. While there may be time sensitive projects and meetings, other work can be scheduled around personal preferences. Employees can also work from anywhere with internet service, giving them additional flexibility.

2. Major time savings

If you typically spend 30 minutes commuting to the office, you'll find yourself with about 20 extra hours of free time per month when working exclusively from home. Will you take up a new hobby? Spend more time with family? Catch up on your sleep? The choice is yours!

3. Avoid office politics and drama

A stressful work environment can lead to anxiety and lessened productivity. When you work from home, you can skip the water cooler gossip and focus solely on your top tasks at hand.

Tips for Staying Productive

Setting Up Your Remote Space

1. Location, location
You don't need an elaborate home office to work from home. Head outdoors to your favorite park or commute to a local coffee shop. Don't be afraid to switch it up from day to day. Variety can help avoid burnout while boosting inspiration.

2. Don't work where you live
Your bed is for sleeping. Your couch is for relaxing. Your dining room table is for eating. Avoid getting comfortable with double-duty spaces for a better work/life balance. Instead of letting the borders blur, define living spaces and working spaces throughout your home.

3. Set physical boundaries
Family and friends should view your time at work the same, whether you're home or in the office. Simply put, when you're working, you're unavailable. At the same time, when you're with family, you should be focused on spending time together, not checking emails.

Make the Mental Switch

Dress for success
While you may be able to get away with sleeping in and staying in your pajamas all day, you'll be more productive if you approach working from home with the same professionalism as going to the office. Getting dressed, even if casually, will help to put you in the right mindset.

Keep a schedule
We don't recommend sleeping until noon. But routine is more important than an early alarm. Come up with a schedule that matches your preferences (are you an early bird or a night owl?) that also allows you to meet your requirements. Even if it's not traditional, and stick with it.

Guard your time
Make sure you don't lose track of work hours now that you're working from home. Tell your friends that you're not available for an impromptu two-hour lunch when you're up against a deadline. At the same time, protect your personal hours so you don't burn out.

Setting Up Expectations

1. Discuss protocol

Rather than either party assuming, both supervisors and team members should discuss in detail what's expected as far as a set schedule, asking for time off, or who to turn to when there's an issue or concern. Plan for the best but discuss how issues will be handled if necessary, from miniscule to major.

2. Communicate

When discussing protocol, decide what the main form of communication will be between management, team members, and clients. Whether it's an occasional email or daily conference calls, make sure you stick with the agreement and avoid going silent.

3. Plan for the future

Some jobs start as work-from-home while others transition. Either way, make sure you have an idea of what the future looks like for your role. Will you always enjoy the benefits of working from home or will you eventually transition back to a more traditional office setting? Having a plan in place will keep everything running smoothly, whichever direction the role takes you.

Tools Every Remote Worker Needs

File Sharing

Are you sharing work files through email? Attachments can be difficult to keep track of. You could also be setting yourself up for a data breach. Instead, choose from these safe file sharing options.

1. File transfer protocol programs
Also known as FTP, a file transfer protocol is used to access or edit files shared between a set number of users. A password is needed to gain access, keeping them safe from prying eyes. Examples include Cyberduck and Firefox.

2. Peer to peer networks
Peer to peer networks allow you to share files without a central server. Files are located on one computer and then shared over a P2P network. Think of instant messaging services like Skype.

3. Removable storage
Memory sticks, memory cards, and removable hard disks are a simple way to share files with less risk. However, they can delay progress when remote working as sharing isn't instantaneous.

4. Online file sharing services
Storing and sharing files online via the cloud is a common method remote workers use to share files with clients and team members alike. Choose a reputable company with a history of providing up-to-date security measures. Dropbox and Onehub are two examples of online file sharing services.

Video Communication

Video can be an exponential tool for individuals and teams working from home. Both live and recorded video can be used for communication and collaboration.

Live video
Live video conferencing is a great way to let everyone communicate in real-time. It does require everyone to synchronize their schedules, which can be difficult while working from home. But it does help recreate the traditional office meeting environment that many are accustomed to.

Recorded video
Many dismiss the benefits of recorded video in work from home settings. But utilizing this technology in everyday remote work processes can provide plenty of benefits for employers, employees, and bottom lines.

Meet Screencast-O-Matic

What holds many companies back from including recorded videos in their day to day processes is that they believe you need special equipment, expensive software, and additional personnel to get the job done.

But with services like Screencast-O-Matic, anyone, just about anywhere, can put together a professional video in record time.

Ways to Use Video

Ways to use video

Not sure if recorded video will benefit your business? Consider the following scenarios which have been used in remote situations.

Sales & Sales Enablement
Record trainings for your sales team or improve your closing numbers with personalized client presentations.

Account Management
Stay engaged with your team and clients through personalized recorded updates. When one-on-one meetings aren't possible, recorded video ensures nothing is overlooked.

Marketing
Small marketing budget? No problem! Create professional marketing videos created around your brand and message.

Customer Support
Recorded help videos can provide customers with the on-demand assistance call centers just can't match.

Product & UX
Create product walkthroughs and demo videos that will have customers getting the most out of your products.

Development
Understand and correct bugs through videos that capture code so you can review and remedy faster than ever.

Consulting
Long gone are the days of written proposals. Record customized project proposals and updates for deeper client relationships.

HR/Corporate Training
Record your training process. This ensures all employees are trained efficiently and consistently, whether in the office or in their living room.

Corporate/Executive
Emails might deliver your written message but not your intended message. Recording thoughts, feedback, and updates to share with your team improves communication and collaboration.

Case Studies

Video for Entrepreneurs

"There is no better way to explain something than to screencast your instructions with video and audio."

-Linh Podetti, Outsourcing Angel

89% of those surveyed say video reduces time to complete projects or tasks. (Lifesize)

OUTSOURCINGANGEL

Outsourcing Angel matches companies with employees in developing countries. All the work, both within Outsourcing Angel and the companies and workers they match, is done remotely. Podetti cites Screencast-O-Matic as one of the reasons her company is so successful. "This (video screencasts) is the ultimate tool," she says.

Outsourcing Angel matches companies from around the world with employees from around the world. Even the company's own employees are globally diverse, making traditional team meetings impossible. Podetti is able to record her computer screen while providing feedback and instructions to her team. This ensures productivity is always moving forward. Essentially, her business never sleeps thanks to the power of screencasts.

When working remotely, being able to "hold a meeting" at any time of the day by recording and displaying talking points through video ensures your fellow team members, no matter where they are or what their schedule allows, are always up to date. Screencasts also bridge the gap between team members when more than a cubicle separates them.

Video for Industrial Automation Industry

"Everybody at Festo can use it without any admin rights, so we offer the tool as a job applet within our own management system."

-Manuel Schmidt, Festo

40% of training budgets are spent on travel costs. (IBM)

FESTO

Festo, a global leader in industrial automation, offers more than a thousand videos to its employees, most of which were created by employees themselves. Because Screencast-O-Matic doesn't require admin rights like similar video platforms, it can be used by anyone within a company to create online tutorials and training guides. In an industry that is continuously evolving, it only makes sense to use a tool that allows for quick adaptation.

This doesn't mean every business takes hold of such an opportunity. Because of their advanced approach to video, Festo won a national prize in 2011. While the competition focused on manuals, Festo was finding ways to engage with user-generated content. "That made us very happy, "Schmidt recalls.

Video is becoming more popular in just about every industry. But it's never too late to start generating your own video content library with the help of Screencast-O-Matic, especially when working from home. Remember, the work can be spread out amongst employees so you can quickly build up a library for your team and/or customers. No fancy studio required.

Video for Real Estate Industry

"I get over 100,000 visitors now every year to my site."
Jeff Howell, Lease Ref

Video marketers get 66% more qualified leads per year. (Optinmonster)
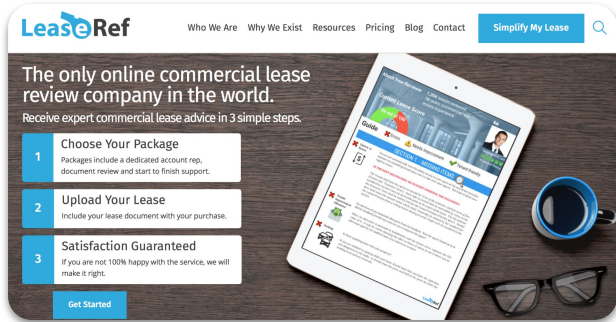
Video tours are commonplace in real estate listings and for good reason. Being able to show an open floor plan will always get more potential buyers in the door than a written description. But every industry offers multiple avenues for video. Take Lease Ref for example. Developed by entrepreneur Jeff Howell, the company helps tenants leverage their leases in a more favorable direction.

So how does Screencast-O-Matic help Howell reach the renting market? Through video recordings featured on Howell's blog. Videos have helped the blog reach prospective customers at a record pace. "The ones (blogs) I've done video for really had a big impact on my search engine optimization as well as building trust," says Howell.

Content will always be king. But don't make the assumption that all content must be written. Adding video to existing content is a simple way to boost your online presence without reinventing the wheel in your industry. When working from home, focusing on your online presence can get you ahead of your competition who may be scrambling to develop remote processes.

Video for EdTech Companies

"What appealed to me initially is how doggone easy it is to use. Because if something is going to confuse me, it's going to confuse a busy teacher."
-Leslie Fisher, Learning Technology Expert

62% of surveyed teachers believe video helps educators be more effective. (Cisco)

Leslie Fisher admits she wasn't the best student and often struggled with reading. Her first encounter with a computer showed her that she wasn't a bad learner. She just learned differently than most. After being one of the first Apple employees to study the internet, Fisher knew technology could help her and others like her learn on their level. "The iPhone was the boom for me because then I could celebrate my own individual learning ability...", says Fisher.

Fisher now runs her own business as an expert in Learning Technology. She shows educators how to use the latest technology trends and tools so they can reach students on all different types of learning levels. When she's not leading conferences, she uses screencasts on her blog to educate and inspire her audience. She's found that Screencast-O-Matic provides the most features for the best price and shares her love of the platform with the teachers she works with.

Remote teaching is no longer taboo. In fact, the concept is growing in demand. Whether you've taught in a traditional school setting or work in an industry that allows you to share your knowledge with eager students, being able to teach through video can help you reach all different types of learners.

Video for Professional Development Industry

"Screencast-O-Matic was actually the only tool that offered something where you can have a record button on the website and a callback that immediately uploads the video."
-Samuel Boguslawski, CareerFoundry

54% of consumers want to see more video content from businesses they support. (Hubspot)

CareerFoundry is a professional development and training company using screencasts to provide feedback to their students learning skills related to iOS development and UI design. They not only teach with such features but also use it to provide feedback on student work. But what they love the most is that the Screencast-O-Matic system offers API integration. This allows them to hit "record" in their own platform, record their review, and upload the finished product without having to jump from app to app.

"It's definitely a feature that our students very much enjoy," says Boguslawski. For companies interested in distance learning and training, whether for students or their own team, being able to implement and leverage APIs is crucial to their success.

When learning how to make video part of a business process, looking for a company offering API integration should be at the top of your list. Doing so will allow you to expand into markets you may have previously never considered. With screencasts, your business can be in multiple locations at once, helping to grow your impact.

Content Creation Tools

Video tools

There's no shortage of tools and resources available to learn, implement, and excel with when taking on the challenge of e-learning. Here are a few to keep in mind.

Screen recorder

A screen recorder allows you to capture any area of your screen, add narration, and edit video until you have a professional and impactful final product.

When looking for a screen recorder, there are a few features you'll want to make sure your service offers, including the ability to:

- Capture any part of your screen and start recording.
- Add and size your webcam for picture in picture effect.
- Narrate from your selected microphone as you record.
- Add stock music and captions to your recording.
- Trim the start and end to remove unnecessary parts
- Pan and zoom to capture the most important screen area
- Automated and interactive captioning for accessibility

Screencast-O-Matic offers all of these features and more with their user-friendly screen recorder.

Easy editing software

Video editor: It's rare that a video is shot perfectly from start to finish. Chances are, you'll need to do some editing. Look for a video editor that has basic editing tools so you can quickly edit and share your videos.

Cut: Dealing with a bit of awkward silence? Cut out unnecessary pauses or bloopers to keep students engaged and focused.

Insert existing recordings: Being able to insert an existing recording from a separate lecture or a guest speaker can help you add further value to your video without additional leg work.

Overlay overview: Incorporate pictures, images, logos, titles, or even Picture in Picture effect with overlay editing options, instantly improving the quality and value of your message.

At Screencast-O-Matic, our video editor is available for anyone to try for free with a 30-day trial. It's easy-to-use editing tools will help you create videos that engage with your students and keep communication alive.

Hosting management

Digital clutter can quickly become overwhelming. But frustration can be avoided with an effective hosting management platform. Educators appreciate the additional control hosting provides them as they're able to:

- Securely store videos in one place
- Organize videos by topic or course into playlist channels
- Password protect videos
- Share videos on demand via emailed links

Educators appreciate the privacy and organization video hosting gives them while students enjoy being able to access course videos with one click.

(Add more)
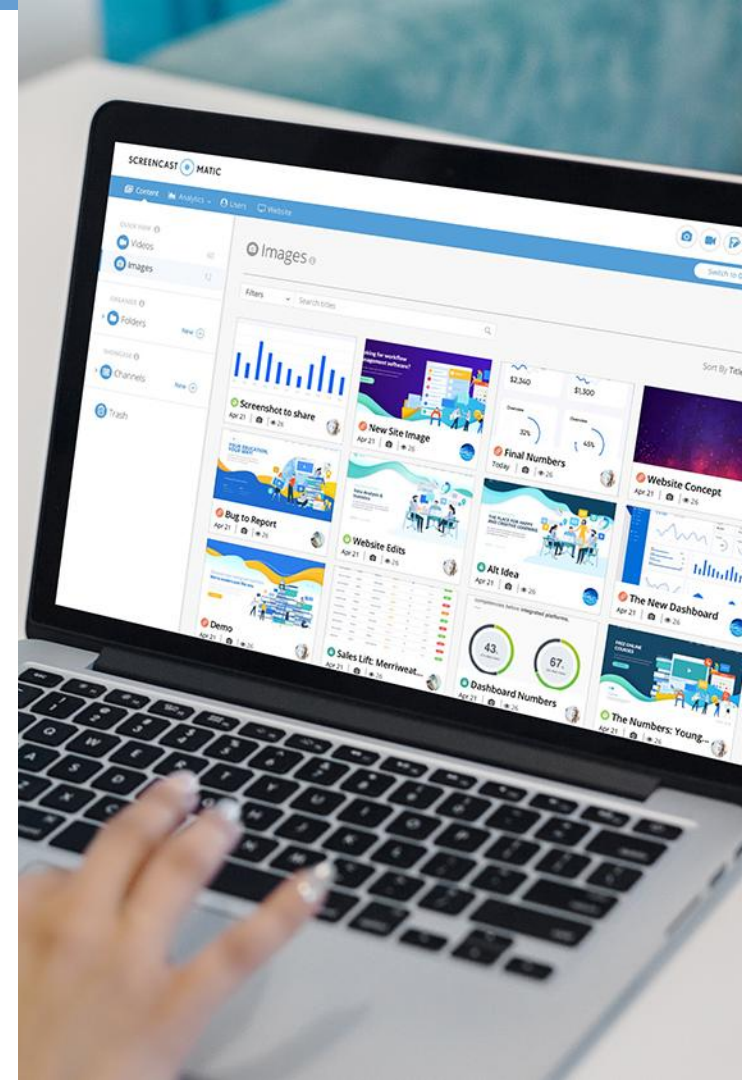
Remote Work Success

Whether you're a team of two working a town away from each other or a global company with hundreds of employees sprinkled in dozens of countries, adding a video recording service to your virtual tool belt can bring about massive positive change.

Reach out to the team at Screencast-O-Matic to see how we can help you grow your business, expand your reach, improve your marketing, boost collaboration, and make it easier to change the world through video screencasts.

For more tips, visit our blog!

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