



**Improving the security and productivity of remote working using Surface as a service**

# Increasing the security, productivity and value of remote working

*For organisations that rely on Windows-based systems, Microsoft Surface is the device of choice to support secure remote working. A partnership with Ricoh now makes Surface available through a 'device as a service' subscription, allowing businesses to buy devices as operational expenditure*

**E**ven before the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic, flexible working was becoming a higher priority for most organisations. But with the mass switch to remote working as a result of lockdowns across Europe, the provision and support of suitable user computing devices to maintain productivity and connectivity has become the top concern for businesses.

According to TechTarget's latest IT Priorities survey of IT buyers across Europe, 46% of organisations have accelerated investment in enabling remote working since the pandemic started.

Research by Gartner further shows that the device as a service (DaaS) category is one of the fastest growing technologies in support of this move, with spending during 2020 almost doubling worldwide, to \$1.2bn. In 2021, this figure is predicted to reach \$1.9bn – and in 2022, to hit \$2.5bn.

Gartner says DaaS offers an inexpensive option for enterprises supporting an expansion in remote working and needing to securely access enterprise applications from multiple devices and locations. It's very much in line with the growth of the public cloud, says Gartner vice-president Sid Nag.

"It responded to increased demand and catered to customers' preference of elastic, pay-as-you-go consumption models," he says.

For organisations that already rely on Windows-based systems, Microsoft Surface has become the device of choice to support secure remote working.

Now, as the result of a partnership with Ricoh, Microsoft Surface is available to enterprises through a DaaS-style subscription model, allowing businesses to purchase devices as a predictable, manageable and sustainable operational expenditure solution, achieving economies of scale and reducing waste.

## Surface as a service

Delivering Surface as a service is the final piece of the puzzle for the success of workplace transformation. Microsoft already delivers software as a service, with offerings such as Microsoft 365 via a cloud-based subscription model. Buying Surface devices as a service is a natural extension of this trend.

"While supporting organisations on their digital transformation journey, Microsoft wants to enable employees – via the best devices – to increase their productivity and collaboration, and ensure they remain secure while working remotely," says Tom Cripps, partner development manager for Surface at Microsoft.

Surface allows people to use their workplace device in the way that works best for them – whether through touchscreen, digital inking, OneNote for digital note-taking, or speech input through Cortana, everything is digitally secure and backed up in one place on OneDrive.

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“Microsoft 365 works seamlessly with Surface. The hardware and software teams have developed the proposition hand in hand to ensure the best user experience,” says Cripps.

## Preparing your organisation for DaaS

Ricoh offers a Discovery process, whereby organisations can undertake a digital experience assessment to establish the right DaaS solution for each user estate, based on factors such as work styles and the level of technology and communication services required to enhance productivity.

This process ensures that employees – from engineers in the field to accountants – get the right tools for their daily tasks. The Discovery process can start with a simple survey, or can be a more comprehensive review with key stakeholders that incorporates departmental interviews.

“All too often the IT strategy is set by the IT department, but we have moved towards key stakeholder engagement with CIOs and CFOs to ensure users are involved in the decision-making process,” says Paul Ryder, digital services director at Ricoh.

“This means users can do their jobs better and organisations invest in the right technologies to ensure that business goals and ambitions are achieved.”

Surface as a service combined with Windows Autopilot – a set of technologies within Microsoft Intune used to pre-configure new devices – ensures remote users receive their device ready to use. They can unpack it and plug it into the network with all the credentials, certificates, applications and tools to do their day-to-day work, downloaded from the cloud.

“Windows Autopilot enables Windows-based devices, such as Surface, to be shipped to customers ready to use out of the box, reducing deployment time and helping employees be productive from day one,” says Cripps.



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## Flexible funding for flexible working

The DaaS model allows CFOs to switch from capital expenditure (capex) purchasing to operational expenditure (opex), where payment is based on usage. This is proving a key benefit for organisations to adopt DaaS – analyst IDC says 40% of companies are expecting or have already engaged in discussions to move IT to a per-user, per-month subscription service within the next 12 months.

By adopting this model, enterprises can be confident that Surface as a service improves employee productivity, while providing seamless integration of devices, software, accessories and services – with a predictable monthly cost.

IT leaders will have access to the latest devices and software, with full support and the most up-to-date security, while CFOs have a better way to introduce Microsoft Surface that does not break the bank. The cost can be spread to allow optimum uptake because the organisation is only required to pay for actual employee usage.

This pay-as-you-go model also extends beyond the device itself. Ricoh has developed a package of funding that allows businesses to buy Surface devices and supporting software and services for a monthly subscription fee.

As the workplace continues to evolve in the midst of the global pandemic, incorporating a mixture of remote and office-based working, CIOs and CFOs now have the optimum way to deliver Surface devices that is efficient, reliable and empowers users to work more effectively, which results in an increase in productivity.

In this way, the Microsoft and Ricoh partnership can help accelerate digital transformation to deliver a modern hybrid workspace, with budgets controlled and cashflow managed. CIOs, meanwhile, can continue to drive innovation.

“As customers move to purchasing software on a flexible licensing model, they have come to expect the same for devices, and a DaaS solution meets this demand,” says Cripps. He adds that as consumers, we are familiar with buying smartphones and personal technology in this model, rather than as a bulky upfront expenditure.

The prospect of transforming the workplace with flexible funding and services to access the latest in Surface technology is compelling. The benefits of accessing Surface capabilities as they develop, while only paying for use, reduces wasted expenditure.

Ricoh wraps support for the device, end of life and asset management into the DaaS solution for Surface. When a product lifecycle ends, enterprises can equip users with the latest version in a regular refresh, so employees are not expected to cope with out-of-warranty devices for their work compared with their personal devices.

“CIOs want to sweat assets for longer, while users have an expectation of having best-in-class devices,” says Cripps.

## Securing the remote workspace

Ryder emphasises that security is enhanced with DaaS. Through working with the enterprise in the Discovery stage, Ricoh can gauge its security policy and posture and cater for that in the service provided.

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additional security policies around devices, which can protect against ransomware and cyber crime, for example,” he says.

Every layer of a Surface device, from the hardened firmware that is adopted from a Microsoft open source Unified Extensible Firmware Interface (UEFI), to the operating system, is maintained by Microsoft to give the highest level of security and control from the chip to the cloud.

Microsoft 365 and Surface ensure sophisticated protection across the following three areas:

- Inside the endpoint – Microsoft Surface integrates perfectly with the required secure boot protocols utilising the Trusted Platform Module (TPM), for encrypting data and authorising access, and the Microsoft-maintained UEFI, to implement better security on the device and to react quickly to changing situations.
- Access to the endpoint – features such as Windows Hello for secure biometric authentication; Microsoft 365 Conditional Access, which gives users access to data when meeting specific criteria; and the Microsoft Authenticator phone app allowing multifactor authentication (MFA) all significantly reduce the need for passwords, even enabling users to remove passwords from their identity directory entirely.
- Deployment, redeployment and retirement of the device – Microsoft allows IT to automate robust security practices across each phase, with tools such as Windows Autopilot, Microsoft Endpoint Manager and Microsoft Intune.



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Cripps says ongoing support is equally vital to managing security.

“With our Microsoft created and built UEFI, a customer will have the advantage of a single point of contact for all firmware drivers and updates,” he says.

Cripps adds that the experience is seamless and offers time savings to the organisation and the individual. Software is kept up to date, and since support for Windows 7 came to an end in January 2020, customers can take advantage of Windows 10 to avoid being exposed to unnecessary security risks.

“Users feel more valued and empowered as employees due to the increased efficiency and productivity of Surface devices and Microsoft software. A recent Forrester study found that users equipped with Surface devices see significant time savings when paired with Microsoft 365 Enterprise collaboration and cloud storage technologies. It found that this pairing saved each user on average two hours daily in terms of efficiency and productivity,” he says.

### **Microsoft and Ricoh – the right partnership for DaaS**

Microsoft partnered with Ricoh because of its history of finding the right people-centric solution for customers’ businesses. Over the past two years there has been an evolution of Ricoh’s technology capabilities that aligns with Microsoft.

“Ricoh has been a global manufacturer of technology solutions for almost 100 years and in the IT services sector for tens of years. We have our own financial arm – Ricoh Capital – and we can take the asset of a device, such as Surface, and wrap it into a financial model of cost per user, per month,” says Ryder.

The partnership will enable organisations to pursue their workplace transformation strategies by securing Surface devices that are focused on providing the best user experience, to further collaboration and innovation.

CFOs can be confident that IT budgets are easily managed, while the CIO is able to deliver the most up-to-date devices to employees. This enables the employees to demonstrate their value to the organisation and allows them to work at their optimum capability – putting ideas into action seamlessly and boosting productivity.

“Ricoh has the reach and level of service to take customers on a transformation journey from the top down. It understands the drive and proposition for transformation and Microsoft is looking for partners that see this vision.

“Ricoh can validate the journey that customers are on. With Ricoh, we are moving away from transactional device sales and offering a solution and a service that gives customers the best experience from their software and device,” says Cripps.

Ricoh has the necessary experience of working in all industries and businesses, to ensure customers get the technology they need to achieve their business goals – to save money, increase productivity, and streamline business processes. Its expertise with people and the technology they need ensures that enterprises keep going with workplace transformation and keep the business running as they face the challenges of operating in a global pandemic.

Ryder concludes: “We are providing more than just a device – we are providing an IT experience that benefits everyone in the process. Surface as a service enables getting great ideas from people, empowering them with the tools they need to work collaboratively.” ■

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