

# 'Work from anywhere, collaborate in office'

IT industry insiders say the pandemic has forever changed the way offices work

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For over 25 years, the Indian IT industry, a key global offshore IT services destination, depended on 12-15 locations for delivery of IT services.

This seems to be changing as the pandemic forced the IT firms to let the bulk of the 45 lakh employees work from home.

As they moved to villages and towns, the industry is now delivering its services from over 180 locations.

"Traditionally, IT services are delivered from around 12-15 locations. Now, they are talking about over 180 locations from where work is getting down. They are planning to build ca-

pacities nearer home (to augment the work)," said KS Viswanathan, Vice-President (Industry Initiatives) of National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom). Nitin Rakesh, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Mphasis, said that the future of work would be completely different from what it was two years ago.

### 'Hybrid First'

"We are not going back to the pre-pandemic world. Firms will look at converting offices spaces into collaboration workspaces," he said.

The 'Hybrid First' model will allow the employees to work from any where but "collabor-



Some IT companies need to address the issues of IP protection, say experts GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

ate in the office".

IT firms will engage with customers to understand their requirements on the number employees required to work from office.

"The spectrum is wide. Some might need fewer employees

(working on the campus), while others may need more," he said.

Rakesh said his firm held a brainstorming design workshop with top managers to discuss and evolve a hybrid-first model for the company.

Karthikeyan Natarajan, Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer of Cyient, said that labs are getting virtualised to facilitate employees to collaborate as they take part in engineering product development.

The pandemic has helped the IT industry to access a new talent pool. "Earlier, people had to relocate to places where offices are located. The pandemic has opened a new vista as the talent can work from where they are located," Ramkumar Narayanan, Vice-President (Technology and Managing Director) of VMware and Chairperson of Nasscom's Product Council, said.

He cited this as one of the reasons for attrition.

"Attrition is happening because now it opens up opportunities which they couldn't think about earlier for various

personal reasons," he said.

### Challenges

Karthik Natarajan, who also heads Nasscom's Engineering, Research and Development Council Chair, said that different verticals of the IT industry had faced different set of challenges as they moved work to remote locations.

"Some IT companies need to address the issues of IP protection. Cyber security issues too have been a challenge," he said.

Ramkumar Narayanan felt that there could be changes in office space capacity utilisation.

"We are moving away from one-to-one offices. People can book a seat and come in to work. I think those kinds of things will change the way people are going to work in the future," he said.