



## Is Workplace **Obsolete?**

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**How will the massive deployment of real-time collaboration technologies change the workplaces of the future?**

The concept of a 'work – place' will slowly vanish. Places if any will be virtual spaces where people meet using their digital personas or avatars. The concept of work-time will become relevant. So these technologies will span vast virtual organizations with people working from anywhere and at anytime.

One of the major challenges in this new environment for organizations will be to maintain employer loyalty and peer to peer informal communications (water cooler talks). These virtual offices will need to replicate the look and feel of the organization and being used as virtual workforce to meet, attend trainings, collaborate, strategize and socialize.

**In technology years, how far are we from practically deploying a feasible virtual office space?**

We are already there. It's a matter of unifying disparate communication channels in one single suite. We believe a virtual office is that solution. Where everything from document sharing, whiteboards, video conferencing to interactive training and collaboration can be enabled.

**What is your view on how online collaboration will change employee-employer relationship, information security and quality monitoring?**

It's important that companies keep on top of this emerging virtual culture and suitably adapt. Else, they'll fail in retaining and maintaining their human capital. Important issues around information security will arise. I believe sensitive data like financial and strategic data will still require people to get into physical offices but a lot of other procedural work can be and should be virtualized. Quality monitoring can be easily carried out virtually and as such is already done by companies having geographically distributed teams. ■