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ZOHO REMOTELY MANAGES PRODUCTIVITY DURING THE CRISIS

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THE BOTTOM LINE

Organizations are facing the inevitability of remote work caused by the global COVID-19 outbreak. In response, several vendors have offered their conferencing and collaboration solutions at no cost to help mitigate some of the productivity issues experienced by businesses that are not well equipped for telecommuting. Zoho Corporation has offered, at no cost, its full suite of existing products used in remote work scenarios, called Zoho Remotely. The suite propels individual and team output by offering the broad functionality of multiple remote working software solutions, all on a single platform.

OVERVIEW

Remote work has seen an increase in popularity in recent years. Flexibility is more important to millennial workers, and the shrinking labor market is an advantage to candidates seeking positions that allow employees to work from home. Additionally, organizations that permit remote work typically report higher employee engagement and lower turnover. However, the current COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent rise in self-isolation has pushed many who never considered working remotely into a situation where it's the only option.

To maximize productivity in light of the mass exodus to the home office, some vendors are offering extended trials of their enterprise communication and collaboration platforms, at no cost. The products offered are helpful, but most vendors focus on specific functionalities, leaving users without a solution that meets the needs of an employee's typical workday. While many large enterprises already have existing meeting and remote work technology, these can be cost prohibitive for small and mid-sized organizations (SMBs). Zoho Remotely allows SMBs who are already facing challenges in this unstable business environment to access the same technology as multimillion-dollar enterprises without putting a strain on already tight resources.

ZOHO REMOTELY

Zoho Remotely is a suite of 11 mobile and web applications with functionality that spans team communication, collaboration, productivity, and remote support. Several of the tools in the suite serve a similar function to those of other vendors, but additional capabilities and a single, unified platform set Zoho Remotely apart.

The suite was natively built by Zoho staff, using already developed applications and input from remote work customers. Utilizing existing customer data, the vendor was able to identify the applications that were essential to maintaining productivity and engagement among employees. Zoho has committed to offering Zoho Remotely at no cost at least until the end of June, allowing organizations to respond to public health needs while also continuing to meet the needs of its employees and customers.

COMMUNICATION

Zoho offers the applications Cliq, Meeting, and ShowTime to tackle communication barriers that are presented by remote work. Cliq manages multiple channels of communication, including text chats, and video and audio calls, while the Meeting application aids with scheduling conferences across different time zones. ShowTime is a unique offering that

allows users to build and share training courses online. By using ShowTime, businesses can continue onboarding and training processes without disruption, and audiences can engage with the content by leaving real-time feedback.

COLLABORATION

The WorkDrive, Projects, and Sprints applications help teams maintain a high level of collaboration regardless of where they physically are. WorkDrive acts as shared storage that keeps files organized, while encrypting data and maintaining ISO 27001 and SOC 2 Type II security compliance. Employees working together on a project can track who made changes and when they were made. Projects aids with task management, allowing team members to record their progress and milestones while keeping track of others' as well. Sprints is a solution that incorporates live feedback such as site visitor comments into projects and allows teams to create customized scrum boards to track project development.

PRODUCTIVITY

Office applications are vital to maintaining employee productivity. Zoho Remotely also includes the Write, Sheet, and Show applications to allow employees to create and collaborate on documents, spreadsheets, and slide decks. Changes are autosaved, helping teams to avoid instances of saving over others' work, and facilitating easier co-editing either through the web or on a mobile device.

SUPPORT

Zoho offers Assist and Lens as tools for workers to help customers with support issues. For example, Assist can allow an IT support worker to remotely access a customer's malfunctioning desktop and help to fix an issue. Lens, which is currently only available in the US, leverages augmented reality (AR) technology to allow support workers to view their customer's surroundings through live video shot with their device camera. The support worker can annotate images sent, allowing explanations to be clearer. This, in turn, simplifies the overall support experience.

LOOKING AHEAD

Organizations employ many types of different workers, each requiring specific tools and functionalities. Zoho Remotely appeals to a wider range of industries by covering baseline functionality while providing additional capabilities that allow more employees to take advantage of the solution. Because the Remotely suite is currently available at no cost,

SMBs can access the technology to help their businesses survive (and potentially thrive) during the disruption and uncertainty that they must cope with during this time. Zoho identified and responded to an urgent need for remote working tools that extend beyond conferences, shared storage and standard collaboration.