

Collaboration Applications: A Love-Hate Affair

Written by Frederick Douglas
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A survey by monitoring and management software and services provider Unify Square reveals 74% of employees do not see a "significant" decrease in emails since they started using collaboration applications, even as 66% have managed to balance the use of both email and such apps.

The survey involves over 500 enterprise end-user employees working at organisations with at least 1000 employees. The employees come from varied industries, namely government, healthcare, consumer, education, finance, manufacturing, legal, transportation, insurance and marketing, and come from all age groups and levels of the corporate pecking order, starting from entry level up to the C-suite.

Many of the surveyed employees-- 43% to be precise-- believe preventing distractions caused by collaboration applications is a shared responsibility between them and management, while 40% believe their employers should enforce stricter rules around collaboration application use. Nearly 60% say stricter rules would improve work-life balance, and 42% believe a more enforced set of rules would help set usage expectations. As for the kinds of distractions, the employees count personal conversations (41%) and incoming requests (39%) as the biggest culprits.

Interestingly, nearly 40% of employees in high-tech industry companies are downloading collaboration apps for personal use without IT approval. In comparison, over 90% of respondents working on consumer-packaged goods companies have never downloaded collaboration applications without IT approval. More importantly, over 60% of employees believe the responsibility of securing collaboration apps lies solely in the hands of the IT department.

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"In today's digital workplace, information security paradigms have changed. Employees' ever-changing preferences coupled with the introduction of new collaboration technology rolling out regularly, creates a constant need for IT to be in check with employees' usage of collaboration tools," Unify Square says. "Because of your users, your data is alive, moving, and continually evolving. It's critical for IT to develop in concert, actively engaging business units to understand the risks and the role users play in managing collaboration risk."

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