



Modern Workplace and Zero Touch Deployment: Customer assessment for partners

Purpose of the document

This document is intended to provide questions that you can ask your customers to understand the limitations with which they are working and their current initiatives to better support their modern workforce, and to provide some of the key benefits of embracing the vision of Zero Touch Deployment, a core part of the Microsoft Modern Workplace.

Why is this important?

The Modern Workplace is a change in how employees and organizations work together. It requires organizations to shift how they're supporting their teams and the technology they're using to do this. It's also a shift in how organizations are empowering their teams to do their best, most collaborative, and creative work.

Supporting teams in the Modern Workplace is about providing them with an ecosystem of support that spans both software, such as Microsoft Office, Windows, and Azure, and devices. Zero Touch Deployment is an important element of the Modern Workplace because it closes the loop and gives organizations the flexibility and speed they need to help their teams accomplish more.

Asking questions about a customer's current IT solutions, pain points, operations, and ambitions will help you to:

- Gain a better understanding of your customers' initiatives in areas such as employee mobility, collaboration, and security.
- Identify problems that organizations are facing, namely with time-intensive, highly manual tasks, and help them consider new devices for employees.
- Have a successful conversation that taps into the bigger, more strategic challenges that your customers are facing and helps to build trust between them and you. When your customer becomes confident that you understand their current challenges, a long-term, more strategic, and profitable relationship can emerge.

What does the ideal customer look like?

Characteristics:

- Has a highly mobile workforce
- Has regular face-to-face interactions with their clients and customers
- Is expanding their business and recruiting young professionals
- Places a high value upon cybersecurity
- Wants to ensure that they are using the most up-to-date software and the devices their teams are using reflect their employer brand

Questions

General

1. What are some of your current initiatives in collaboration and mobility?

Why ask:

The Modern Workplace and Zero Touch Deployment are fundamentally about how organizations are supporting and empowering employees through a new way of working with software, devices, and how they're connected.

How the Modern Workplace can help:

It's the complete ecosystem that supports teams from purchase to out-of-the-box experience, using devices to access the best collaboration and productivity software and to also troubleshoot, if something goes wrong with the device. With Zero Touch Deployment, you don't have to miss a beat.

2. How would you describe your experience with your current devices?

Why ask:

Identify any pain points your customer may be experiencing with their current systems and, subsequently, potential opportunities for you to point out improvements the Modern Workplace could make.

How the Modern Workplace can help:

Customers may identify problems such as clutter, slowdown, inefficiency, and immobility. The Modern Workplace can immediately offer solutions through high-performance, highly mobile Microsoft Surface devices, bringing to life previously unrealized features, such as those in Microsoft 365. In this way, you can identify whether your customer would benefit from the devices of the Modern Workplace.

3. What is most important to you when buying devices for your business?

Why ask:

Gain insight into your customer's technology priorities. The buyer's role, business sector, and workplace will cause them to prioritize certain attributes over others, such as performance, capability, aesthetic, and mobility. This question provides insight into these priorities, and the nature of your customer's workplace, for you to better tailor a Modern Workplace solution.

How the Modern Workplace can help:

The Modern Workplace offers a range of devices through Zero Touch Deployment, depending on customer needs, with each designed to cater to these various priorities: creative capability, performance, aesthetic, and mobility.

4. What is your current experience with Microsoft devices and services?

Why ask:

Get useful feedback that grants you insight into how your customer perceives Microsoft devices or services in their current position, along with how they are using them. This question could provide crucial information needed to change or reinforce perceptions, introduce your customer to previously unknown capabilities, and help them to make better use of current and new devices or services.

How the Modern Workplace can help:

Customers are most likely not utilizing the full breadth of the devices and services available to them. The Modern Workplace is an ideal tool for you to show your customer previously unused services and benefits, all within an integrated package. Both positive and negative feedback can be addressed by discussing the improvements and potential that the Modern Workplace and its components offer. Additionally, customers may have little to no experience with Microsoft systems, but could be entrenched in competition hardware or software. Exploring your customer's experience with alternate systems can help you suggest areas where the Modern Workplace could make improvements.

Security

5. How well protected are you against cybersecurity threats?

Why ask:

Gain insight into the nature of your customer's cybersecurity stance—for example, the sensitivity of their data, their awareness of cybersecurity threats, and what their current protection systems consist of—to identify any potential gaps or issues that the Modern Workplace can address.

How the Modern Workplace can help:

You can address potential issues, which may include expensive third-party protection systems, personal experience of ransomware attacks, or even simple ignorance of the scale of security threats and the nature of your customer's own protection systems. The Modern Workplace offers uncompromising security with Microsoft Azure identity and access management, Windows Hello login, Microsoft Office 365 Advanced Threat Protection, and Windows Defender. The Modern Workplace provides increased security, granting more peace of mind and less time spent on this issue.

6. Do you have a contingency plan if successfully attacked?

Why ask:

Address a worst-case scenario: what happens in the event of a successful attack and its consequences (for example, loss of data or malware infiltration). This helps to establish any customer history with this problem and their current means of response, in addition to highlighting the severity of potential threats. Most security functions focus on prevention, rather than contingencies.

How the Modern Workplace can help:

Devices of the Modern Workplace can be enabled with Microsoft Advanced Threat Analytics, providing a real-time view of attack timelines, impact, and recommendations for investigation and remediation. This reassures customers of a safety net, even in the unlikely event of a breach.

Updates

7. How do you currently update your devices?

Why ask:

With this intro, get familiar with your customer's IT maintenance and update procedures and how much time and expenditure cost is devoted to them. This question also provides insight into how "up to date" your customer actually is.

How the Modern Workplace can help:

Windows automatic updates can help drastically reduce the time spent by in-house customer IT on updates and provide peace of mind that software or firmware is always the most recent version available.

End of Life

8. Do you have a transition strategy in place for the end of Windows 7 support in January 2020?

Why ask:

As of August 2019, Windows 7 still holds 30.34% of operating-system market share* and is likely still in use by most customers in some capacity. However, extended support—including updates that protect PCs from viruses, spyware, and other malicious software—will end in January 2020. Your customer may not yet have a clear strategy of transition or may perceive transition as costly and problematic. You can then address these concerns through the Modern Workplace.

How the Modern Workplace can help:

The Modern Workplace offers an integrated, state-of-the-art, and minimum-effort solution via Zero Touch Point, all at a low upfront cost (subscription versus CAPEX), which is fully supported and can be automatically updated. Zero Touch Deployment minimizes transition complications and provides safe and secure disposal practices for retired devices.

*www.netmarketshare.com/operating-system-market-share.aspx

Modern IT

9. What is your current onboarding process for new starters, as far as IT is concerned?

Why ask:

Gain insight into company policies for new staff and the role of IT, which can be time consuming and inefficient. IT often has to work closely and continuously with new company staff to customize devices according to employee needs, manage features, and educate staff. This question provides you with more potential pain points to solve.

How the Modern Workplace can help:

Devices of the Modern Workplace can be configured with Windows Autopilot to drastically reduce the amount of intervention and oversight required of company IT. Employees sign in to a new device, which is then automatically configured according to the organization's requirements. With their time freed up, IT staff can add value elsewhere.

Windows Autopilot

10. How much time does IT spend setting up devices?

Why ask:

This question targets a likely customer pain point: time invested by IT in simply getting devices up and running. Although the customer may not reveal a number, they will have to consider the true value being added by IT and the cost of time spent on setup and maintenance of new devices.

How Windows Autopilot can help:

Devices are automatically configured to the role and work of the user immediately upon sign-in. Transformation occurs with minimal interaction between users and IT, and the device is ready for use without need for costly manual setup. Key benefits:

- No more maintenance of images and drivers
- No need for IT to touch the devices
- Simplified process for users and IT, so both parties can focus instead on other ways of adding value to the business
- Integration in the device supply chain
- Devices immediately reset to business-ready state

Microsoft Intune

11. To what extent are your devices customized for different roles?

Why ask:

Use this as an avenue to open a conversation about customer pain points within this process and lead into discussion of Microsoft Intune. Depending on the customer, devices may be customized minimally or not at all. Devices could also be adapted manually, depending on the role in question, and require time and investment from the customer or IT.

How Intune can help:

Intune offers a flexible mobile device and app management control system, so employees can work with the devices and apps they choose while protecting company information.

12. How much control do you have over your business's mobile devices?

Why ask:

Address another potential pain point: decentralized mobile devices and security. Few customers are likely to have a high degree of control over employee devices and usage, least of all their security. Mobile devices are among the biggest security risks for a business.

How Intune can help:

With Intune, employers can secure data on any associated device. They can control access to, and add or remove data on, any selected devices through both mobile device management and mobile application management.

Technology as a Service (TaaS)

13. How do you currently purchase your devices?

Why ask:

Quickly establish whether your customer finances IT systems primarily through CAPEX or subscription—and work out their subsequent preference and possible pain points.

How TaaS can help:

CAPEX versus subscription: Customers that primarily use a CAPEX purchasing system may favor “one-time” expenditure, acquiring permanent IT assets, manual systems control, and IT “independence.” However, these all have drawbacks. CAPEX expenditure is high and not really a “one-off” due to maintenance and disposal costs. In addition, permanent assets quickly become dated assets; manual systems require large time investments to maintain; and independence comes at the cost of company time and investment, greater exposure to security risks, and slower update cycles.

14. How often do you update your devices?

Why ask:

Use this particularly relevant question for customers that primarily use CAPEX for IT. This allows you to discuss one of the principal benefits of the TaaS subscription system without directly pitching it. Upgrade cycles on CAPEX are often heavily delayed and overdue. Refresh cycles are simultaneously being sped up as a result of rapid change in technology innovation, compounding the issue and leaving businesses behind.

How TaaS can help:

Microsoft TaaS provides customers with flexible, all-inclusive technology solutions at fixed, monthly rates. Customers gain access to the latest technology without a large expense up front. Retired devices are handled by the system, instead of remaining a legacy cost of the customer, and the best technology is always available, with minimal time required for installation and setup, thanks to Zero Touch Deployment.

15. Do you have any reservations about using a subscription system? (And if so, what are they?)

Why ask:

Some customers may see TaaS as a lease offering, which could lead to concerns and misunderstandings. Asking about their perception helps you figure out what the real problem or concern is. TaaS has numerous benefits, and understanding your customer’s concerns will enable you to educate them on which benefits of TaaS are most relevant to them.

How TaaS can help:

TaaS is not just a device lease service. Along with the latest devices, customers also gain access to software (Microsoft 365 and Azure), accessories, services, and support in a fully customized package, all under one monthly bill. Customers are buying a partnership, not a product. This is in addition to the tangible benefits of a subscription: reduced upfront costs, scalability, flexibility, and access to the best available technology.

Azure Active Directory

16. How do you store your data?

Why ask:

This is a good establishing question to familiarize you with the degree of customer cloud integration versus on-premises data storage servers and legacy costs. It also helps to establish customer attitudes toward cloud-based systems and what perceptions may need to be addressed.

17. Why do you use (x) system?

Why ask:

This follow-up question helps you to gain a better understanding of your customer's priorities and position and to build trust with them. Depending on the reasons given, you can offer the solutions and benefits of Azure. Customers not using cloud-based systems may have reservations because of:

- Data security concerns
- Lack of physical data control (particularly concerning destruction)
- Attachment to incompatible hardware
- Cost of transition (legacy)

How Azure can help:

Stress that Azure is about simplification and consolidation, not just another add-on to company systems. Azure Active Directory integrates company users, data, devices, and applications into a single management system. As a result, employees and partners can access data and apps from any location, at any time. All data is protected through intelligent security, threat detection, and complete oversight of user information and access.

Microsoft Teams

18. How do your employees collaborate on projects?

Why ask:

Quite literally, how do the staff of potential companies work together on projects? Do they rely mostly on regular physical meetings, emails, Skype calls, Google Docs, or other ways? The question forces your customer to consider the logic behind these processes, their limitations, and whether there should be a better system.

How Teams can help:

For this question, stress the importance of working effectively and cooperatively, which is increasingly the method by which work is carried out. Teamwork and collaboration are how work gets done today, and methods have to be optimized to maximize quality output.

19. What can go wrong during collaborative projects?

Why ask:

A follow-up if the first exploratory question fails to produce these considerations, this question uses an open-ended and less agenda-driven approach. It gets the customer to consider personal experiences of limitations and complications when working collaboratively in a team. Examples may include:

- Miscommunication
- Fragmentation
- Inefficiency
- Data loss

How Teams can help:

The ecosystem of the Modern Workplace is collaborative. Teams recognizes this and gives customers a better way of working together:

- Collaboration features: all project files accessible to all team members through integration with Microsoft SharePoint, OneDrive, and OneNote
- Messaging and Calendaring: integrated and shareable among team members to reduce inefficiencies and help them stay on track
- Content sharing: share files inside and outside the organization, track changes, make recommendations, and work offline if needed
- Enterprise security and compliance: Multi-Factor Authentication and data encryption at all times