Business resiliency: Enterprise assessment of adapting to the new norms

January 2021

How enterprises are adapting to the new normal way of working

The current health crisis has triggered a massive transformation in businesses on multiple levels. An area that has increased overnight is teleworking and remote working practices.

To better understand the challenges business leaders face to keep employees safe while ensuring business continuity, we created an online needs assessment survey. We asked small, mid and large enterprises across industries to share with us their needs, how they are adapting to the new normal, and what their mission-critical priorities are in terms of supporting teleworking and remote working capabilities.

The responses from the first 200 enterprises provide an initial overview of how business leaders are handling the crisis and addressing the new way of working.

Geography

To compile the answers we received, we have grouped the enterprises into three main regions according to their country of origin as shown below:

Asia Pacific	Australia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan
Europe South	France, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Turkey, Bulgaria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Pakistan, UAE, Brazil, Mexico, Peru, Ecuador, Cameroon, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Mali
Europe North	Austria, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia & CIS, Sweden, Switzerland, UK

Typology

Of the total enterprises providing feedback, 42 percent were organizations of 1 to 200 employees, 31 percent had 200 to 1000 employees and 27 percent had 1000 or more employees.

The size of the enterprises varies, region by region, as shown on the graph below:

Figure 1. Typology of the participating enterprises (by region)

Enterprises by industry

Of the total enterprises providing feedback, 15 percent identified as being from the Government industry. This percentage varies region by region as shown on the graph below:

Figure 2. Industries in which participating enterprises operate (by region)

	Healthcare	Government	Education	Transport	Hospitality	All of the above	Healthcare, hospitality, government	Healthcare, hospitality, others	Others
Europe North	15%	19%	4%	4%	19%			4%	56%
Europe South	2%	17%	7%	10%	5%		2%		56%
Asia Pacific	5%	13%	17%	5%	5%	1%			52%

Current state of enterprises

1 - Top mission-critical priorities in the new normal

Across all enterprises:

- 37 percent said their main priorities are to secure their network infrastructure and upgrade their communications systems or adopt cloud-based communication for collaboration solutions to address teleworking/remote working
- 27 percent identified focusing on securing their network infrastructure as a top priority
- 15 percent are looking at upgrading their communications systems or adopting cloud-based communication and collaboration solutions

At the regional level, enterprises provided responses identified on the graph in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Mission-critical priorities (by region)

	Secure network infrastructure	Upgrade the communication systems adopt cloud-based communications	Secure network infrastructure upgrade the communication systems	Outsource IT management	Secure network infrastructure outsource IT management	All of the above	Other	I am unsure
Asia Pacific	28%	19%	31%	3%		12%		8%
Europe South	24%	10%	37%	2%	2%	15%	10%	
Europe North	29%	11%	54%			7%		

2 - Deployment of a team collaboration solution for employees to work remotely

In response to the health crisis, 74 percent of enterprises said they deployed a team collaboration solution to ensure business continuity while keeping employees safe.

Figure 4. Deployment of a collaboration solution to address remote working (by region)

Legend: ■ Yes ■ No

Asia Pacific — Yes 77%, No 23%
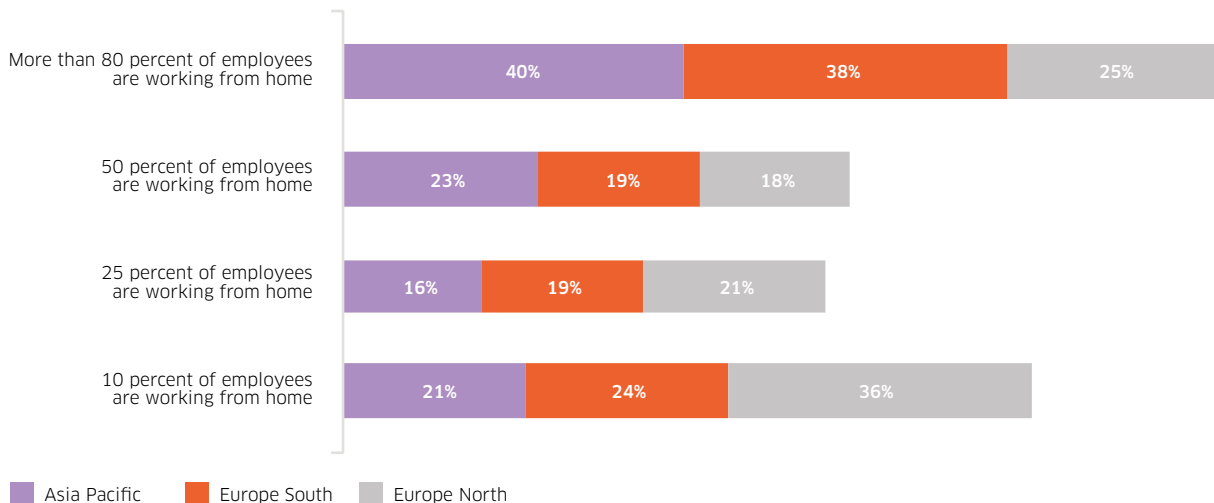Europe South — Yes 71%, No 29%
Europe North — Yes 71%, No 29%
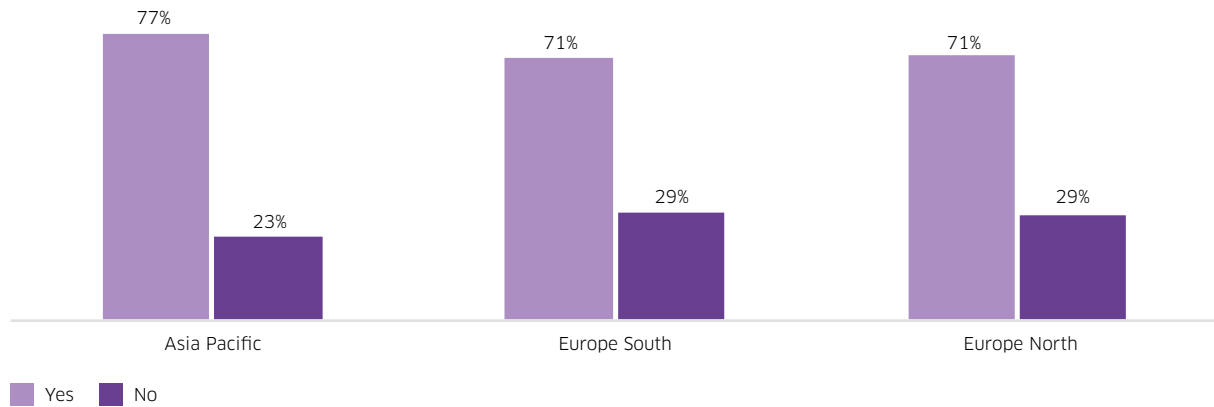
3 - Enterprise workforce currently working from home

Of total respondents, 37 percent indicated they have more than 80 percent of their employees working from home.

The percentages vary by region. These could be explained by factors such as employee functions, the industries in which the companies operate, among others.

Figure 5. Percentage of employees working from home (by region)

	Asia Pacific	Europe South	Europe North
More than 80 percent of employees are working from home	40%	38%	25%
50 percent of employees are working from home	23%	19%	18%
25 percent of employees are working from home	16%	19%	21%
10 percent of employees are working from home	21%	24%	36%

Legend: ■ Asia Pacific ■ Europe South ■ Europe North

4 – Enterprises that plan to implement remote working/teleworking moving forward

41 percent of total enterprises surveyed reported having a long term plan to implement a remote/teleworking solution, while 21 percent said they have no plan to do so.

At the regional level, long term plans are predominant as shown in the graph in FIgure 6.

Figure 6. Enterprise plans to implement remote working and teleworking (by region)

Legend: Asia Pacific, Europe South, Europe North
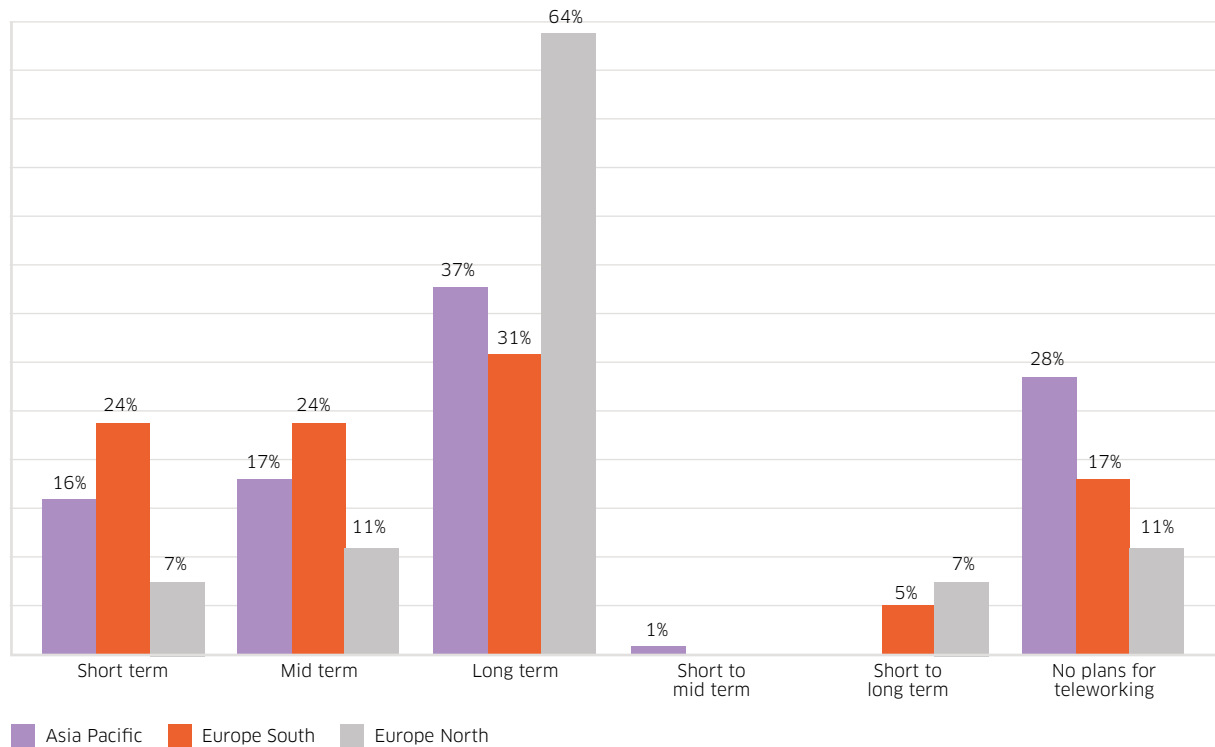
5 – Enterprise plans to maintain/increase teleworking/remote working

We asked enterprises how they plan to manage working models going forward:

- 56 percent of total respondents envision a **hybrid model** with some employees working on-premises and others working remotely/teleworking
- A hybrid model was the top answer for the three regions: With 49 percent in Asia Pacific, 68 percent in Europe North, and 61 percent in Europe South.
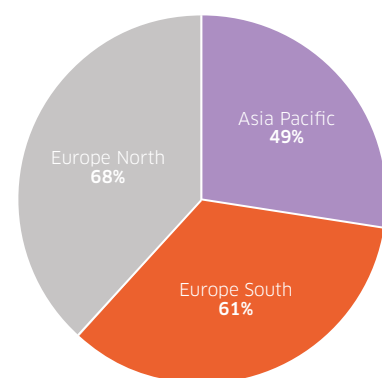
Many organizations are considering asking their employees to return to the office as a second option with: 34 percent in Asia Pacific, 29 percent in Europe South, and 25 percent in Europe North. Others will keep teleworking/remote working in place 100% as identified in Figure 7.

There is no doubt the percentages will evolve from time-to-time with the evolution of the health crisis and the associated governmental measures to ensure employee safety.

Figure 7. Enterprise plans to maintain/increase teleworking/remote working (by region)
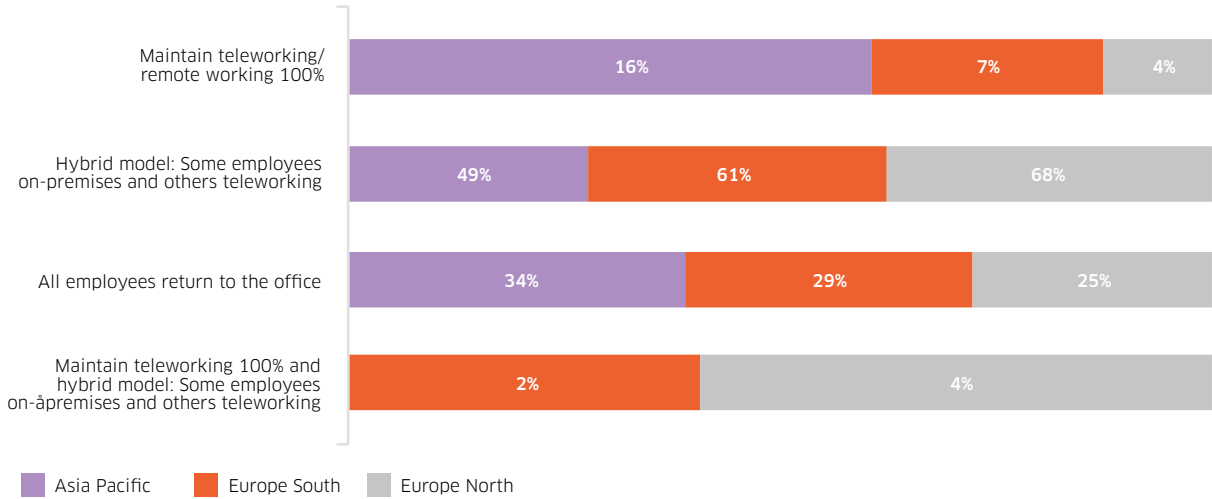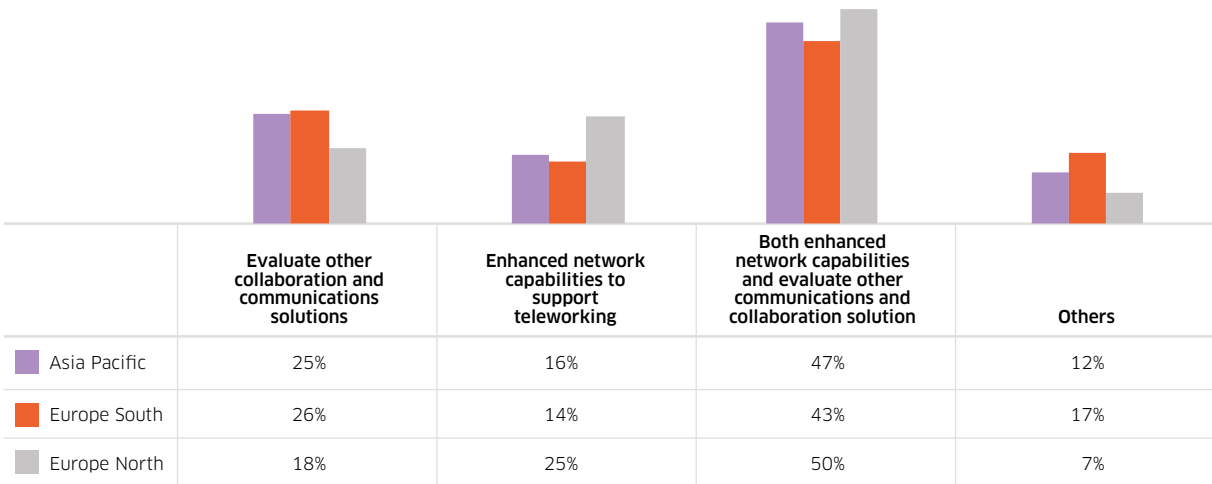

6 – Other types of solutions enterprises are evaluating to support teleworking/remote working

Moving forward, 46 percent of total respondents are looking at evaluating other solutions to enhance their network capabilities, as well as to improve communications and collaboration.

Details of the responses, by region, are provided in Figure 8.

Figure 8. Enterprises looking at other solutions to support teleworking/remote working (by region)

	Evaluate other collaboration and communications solutions	Enhanced network capabilities to support teleworking	Both enhanced network capabilities and evaluate other communications and collaboration solution	Others
Asia Pacific	25%	16%	47%	12%
Europe South	26%	14%	43%	17%
Europe North	18%	25%	50%	7%

Summary

It is no surprise to see that the health crisis has impacted the priorities of the respondents. Of the total enterprises that responded, 37 percent said their mission-critical priorities in facing the new normal were to secure their network infrastructure to support remote working/teleworking, as well as to update their communications systems and/or adopt cloud-based communications and collaboration solutions.

74 percent of all respondents said they have deployed a team collaboration solution to address the need for remote working/teleworking. And, 37 percent have more than 80 percent of their workforce working from home. Moving forward, 56 percent are planning to put in place a "hybrid model", in which some employees will be on-premises and some working from home/remotely.

Overall, 41 percent of the respondents still have long term plans to implement remote working/teleworking solutions and 46 percent are evaluating other solutions to support teleworking/remote working such as enhancing their networking capabilities and evaluating communications and collaboration solutions.

The prevalence of remote working/teleworking varies from region-to-region and will continue to evolve as the health crisis unfolds. We will continue to engage with enterprises to gather feedback and assist them in navigating these unprecedented times.

Guide for the new normal way of working

Overview

The 2020 health crisis has created unprecedented challenges for business leaders. Our online survey has provided insights into how enterprises are adapting to the new normal of working as well as identifying their mission-critical priorities to support teleworking and remote working capabilities within their organizations.

Based on the first responses we received, we have created this guide to provide enterprises with the solutions to adapt to the new norms.

1 – Top mission-critical priorities

37 percent of all enterprises said their main priorities are to secure their network infrastructure and upgrade their communications systems, or adopt cloud-based communications/collaboration solutions to address teleworking/remote working.

Since the start of the crisis, business communications have proven to be critical for many organizations. These include an increase in customer enquiries in need of additional information, fast growing remote selling, ensuring call continuity between employees working remotely and those working from the office, among others. Taking all this into account, as well as new and future continuity requirements, it will take a solid infrastructure to deliver the personalized digital experience customers expect.

Following are few recommendations to help address enterprises' top mission-critical priorities:

Strengthen your network infrastructure

Upgrade your network to handle increases in traffic and prevent security breaches.

As network bandwidth nears saturation, organizations need to ready their networks to deliver high-speed, efficient bandwidth to support latency-sensitive video and voice traffic, as well as address the looming increase in the number and density of clients.
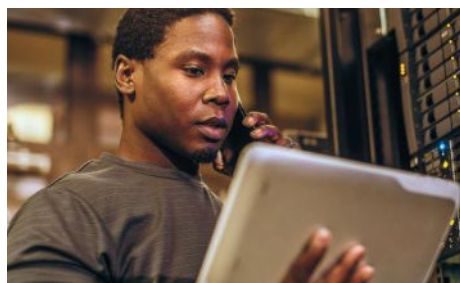
The explosion of Internet of Things (IoT) devices across retail, healthcare and manufacturing, among others, are stressing the network in terms of capacity, operations and security. Simplified provisioning, device classification and visibility, and network security can help ensure efficient and secure IoT deployment.

The rise in cybercrime, including data breaches and ransomware, is a reality of our time. Today's enterprises require a secure environment across all network levels to ensure users, devices, IoT, and network components are not compromised.

Global events have accelerated the need to focus on the evolution of networks and technology. As IoT device adoption increases, and businesses and employees move online, the need to deliver efficient Wi-Fi, ensure bandwidth availability, and provide secure, simple network management makes upgrading your network imperative.

Future-proof your network with high performance multi-gig switches (Alcatel-Lucent OmniSwitch® 6560, Alcatel-Lucent OmniSwitch 6860 (E and N) Stackable LAN Switch) and Wi-Fi 6 access points (Alcatel-Lucent OmniAccess® Stellar WLAN access points) with built-in security.

Upgrade your communications systems

Migrate your communications systems to the latest releases to reinforce multi-channel capabilities and digitally engage with your customers. Once your system is up-to-date, employees working from home will benefit from all the communications features as if they were at the office. They can also stay connected to colleagues with our cloud-based communications and collaborations services, Rainbow™ by Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise, which enables secure audio and video interactions, conferencing capabilities, screen and file sharing, and much more.

ALE communication systems connect natively to the Rainbow Collaboration Cloud Service so users can communicate with each other naturally from their mobile, computer, desk phone or mobile handset.

In addition, a valid maintenance contract provides you with access to the latest software versions to ensure your communications system is always up-to-date and so that you can successfully navigate any changes that may occur.

Some of our customers are taking the opportunity to upgrade to the Alcatel-Lucent OpenTouch® Enterprise Cloud subscription model. With this solution, they received all the benefits of ALE communications solutions and pay only for what they use. Each month, they can remove or add on-demand options to tailor their communications to their business needs.

Adopt cloud-based communication/collaboration solutions to address teleworking/remote working

Enterprises cannot afford to cease operations in periods of unpredictable volatility. Rainbow, the ALE cloud-based communication and collaboration platform, helps your business to get through difficult times by providing your teams with the services that enable them to remain connected to each other, to your customers, and to business contacts wherever they are working.

Rainbow enables remote working with secure online collaboration tools. With Rainbow you can:

- Conduct video meetings with customers, partners or colleagues from home
- Call from any device (computer, mobile phone, tablet) using audio and video
- Create or join audio and video meetings with up to 120 participants and up to 12 simultaneous video streams
- Share screen and files for efficient interactions
- Schedule your outlook events and calendar invites with one-click without ever leaving Rainbow

A secure solution that respects your data

The security and privacy of your data is of utmost importance. Rainbow ensures your data is safe by always storing data locally and by closely linking technology and processes to provide the highest level of security.

Rainbow is ISO 27001, HDS (French health certification), and BSI certified.

Increase secure access to your company network and databases

- Most employees can easily continue their duties by connecting to the VPN through remote access software. However, employees working on sensitive and confidential information need more direct and secure access to the corporate network and databases.
- Extend your secure corporate network connection to remote locations, such as an employee home office, with a remote access point, to get the connectivity and security you need.

Why use a remote access point?

A remote access point, such as the Alcatel-Lucent OmniAccess Stellar AP1201H, provides a secure and automatic connection to your corporate network, including your non-cloud-based enterprise applications and databases. Other vendors depend on controller-based architectures. Our Remote Access points (RAPs) are based on a distributed intelligence architecture, vendor agnostic, and offer centralized orchestration and management.

2 - Enterprises plan to implement remote working/teleworking in short, mid and long term period of time

41 percent of total enterprises reported having a long-term plan to implement a remote/teleworking solution.

It is difficult to say how business will evolve when we look at the situation today. But, at the present time we expect enterprises to review their plans and accelerate the implementation of remote/teleworking solutions. In order to be ready anytime, whatever the situation, following are some solutions to keep your employees' performance at the highest level wherever they work; at home, at the office, on the road.

Solutions to stay connected to your customers while working remotely

Alcatel-Lucent IP Desktop Softphone

ALE provides agents and customer service representatives with the IP Desktop SoftPhone solution, enabling them to maintain a consistent level of customer service while working remotely. The IP Desktop Softphone provides all the call management features of your office deskphones, on your personal laptop.
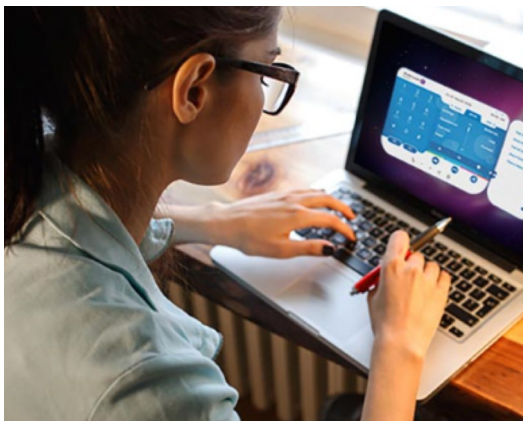
With the IP Desktop Softphone you can communicate from home the same as if you were the office and you can:

- Leverage all Alcatel-Lucent 8068s Premium DeskPhone features from your computer or laptop
- Access your corporate directory and connect to your hunt-groups directly from your screen
- Offer impactful conversations with customers through high quality Voice over IP (VoIP). Combine with Rainbow, the ALE collaboration tool, for seamless interactions.

The IP Desktop Softphone allows your teams to stay connected to your customers and benefit from:

- Extensive contact center* features available from home. Manage large volumes of calls with no need to re-train your agents
- Maintain existing call distribution and routing instructions
- Log in and out of your agent profile as usual
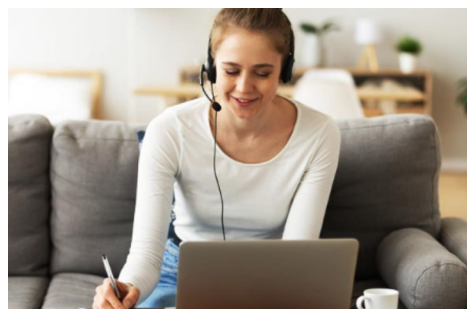
*Alcatel-Lucent OmniTouch Contact Center Standard Edition

The solution is easy to deploy and does not require additional hardware to get started (headset recommended). It can be deployed remotely through your IT department - no need to change the Alcatel-Lucent OmniTouch® Contact Center Standard Edition configuration.

Combine with [Rainbow](#), the ALE collaboration tool, for seamless interactions. Increased teleworking requires redefining communications, particularly with remote meetings and the use of video to stay connected. Rainbow cloud service offers group messaging, mobile and desktop communications, and video meetings in a single, easy-to-use, ISO 27001 certified secure application.

To complete the remote worker's toolbox we provide secure professional phones for employees to use at home. The ergonomic communications is the same at the office and at home, and the numbers and call routing rules are preserved.

3 - Enterprise plans to maintain/increase teleworking/remote working

> 56 percent of total enterprises envision a hybrid model with some employees working on-premises and others working remotely/teleworking.

Some job functions can be adapted to teleworking, while others are difficult to perform outside of the company's premises. That is why at ALE , we provide solutions for enterprises looking at "hybrid models" where remote, home and on-site workers remain connected to keep on serving customers and ensure business continuity.

With today's need to constantly adapt, some organizations are looking for more flexibility to easily deploy teleworking and new on-demand communications to fit needs of the moment.

[Alcatel-Lucent OpenTouch Enterprise Cloud (OTEC)](#), our cloud-based enterprise communications solution offers the flexibility organizations need: Communications services are accessible through a single license per user, per month. The company only pays for what it consumes such as; the number of users and options such as softphone, and video collaboration, as well the automated customer welcome can vary from month-to-month to quickly respond to any new demands.

Designed for enterprises of any size, OpenTouch Enterprise Cloud, digitally transforms your business. It is a full-featured solution encompassing communication, collaboration and contact center tools, as well as specific add-ons for the hospitality industry. This flexible, secure, and comprehensive solution can be deployed in a private cloud (off or on-premises), or in an overlay installation.

4 - Other type of solutions enterprises are evaluating to support teleworking/remote working

Moving forward, 46 percent of total enterprise respondents are looking at evaluating solutions to enhance their network capabilities as well as to communicate and collaborate.

At the beginning of the health crisis, companies had to make quick decisions to pick a communication and collaboration solution for their remote/teleworking and on-site employees, and to ensure business continuity. They were not always able to take the time necessary to select the most appropriate solutions to ensure the security of their data and that of their customers. Now, as the months have passed, they can look back and choose solutions that best meet their current and future requirements.

Organizations that have already selected a collaboration solution other than Rainbow can still move to our secure professional communications and collaboration services. With Rainbow, your remote, home, and on-site employees are empowered with real-time communications and collaboration capabilities. They can successfully answer every customer call and inquiry - no matter where they are.

Rainbow cloud services provide group messaging, mobile and desktop communications, and video meetings in a single, easy-to-use secure application.

Organizations can also connect their all their users through open technology. ALE connectors are available for Microsoft Teams® and Google Suite, and business applications such as SalesForce, Microsoft Dynamics, ServiceNow, and ZenDesk.
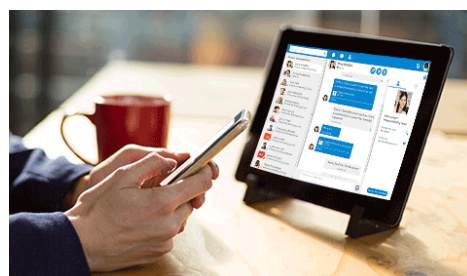
Choosing Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise means choosing business communications that can be integrated into any business or collaboration application with native cloud connectors or through on-demand integration from an open "Communication as a Service" programming platform.

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