



# THE HYBRID WORKPLACE IS HERE TO STAY: ARE YOU READY?

Focus on Four Critical Areas to Ensure Impactful Collaboration and Communication from Anywhere

FROST & SULLIVAN VISUAL WHITEPAPER

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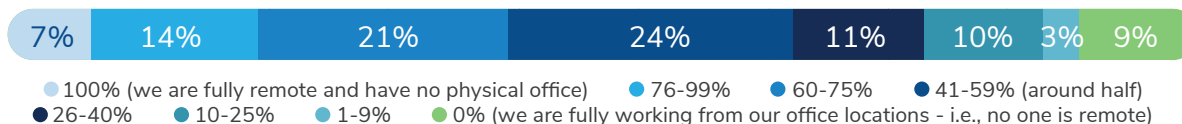
## Hybrid Work Is a Matter of Business Survival

Today, almost all organizations support some form of hybrid work—and Frost & Sullivan research shows the move is here to stay. The vast majority of companies are planning to support a hybrid workplace for the foreseeable future, with around 50% of knowledge workers working from home on any given day. The reason is simple: It’s the only way to compete in a changing work environment.

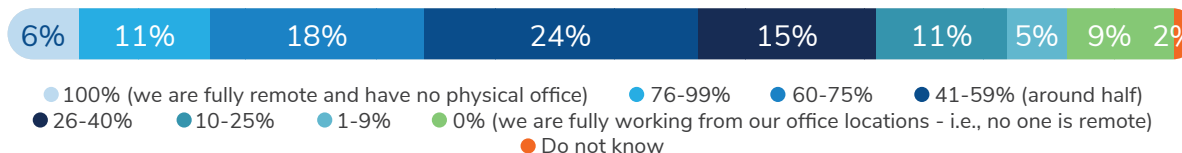
But while the benefits of hybrid work far outpace the challenges, IT and business leaders should approach the shift for what it is: a truly transformational change that will impact the way work gets done. Organizations must pay close attention to both technology and cultural and behavioral change if they want this new way of working to succeed long term.

Before the pandemic, around 5% of knowledge-worker employees, both full-time and part-time, spent at least part of their time working from home. As companies start to transition back to offices, about 80% of employees are still routinely working from home. We expect that number to settle at around 50% and become the new normal.

### WHAT PERCENT OF YOUR DESK WORKERS ARE CURRENTLY WORKING REMOTELY ON A PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME BASIS?



### APPROXIMATELY, WHAT PERCENT OF YOUR DESK WORKERS WILL BE WORKING REMOTELY ON A PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME BASIS IN TWO YEARS FROM NOW?



As we move into a world in which companies face the reality of a true hybrid workplace—where a constantly changing mix of employees work in person and from remote locations—organizations must shift from a reactive to a proactive approach. That means ensuring that they have the right technology and the right culture to support all their employees, regardless of where they are working from. Because each employee will be spending a different mix of time working virtually and in person, and because teams will need to continue to collaborate across these physical and online boundaries, companies must give everyone access to a variety of communication and collaboration tools.

In this paper, we will spotlight four key areas of focus: meeting equity, to ensure that all employees have equal opportunities regardless of where they are based; TrueCaaS, or truly Unified Communications as a Service (more on this later), to enable seamless integration across all forms of communication inside and outside the organization; artificial intelligence (AI), to leverage automation and machine learning for better, faster decisions and outcomes; and cloud services, to deliver best-in-class applications and services.

## Meeting Equity Matters

In the hybrid workplace, almost every meeting includes video and has at least one remote participant, but in many cases, remote attendees will outnumber their in-person counterparts. Organizations must ensure that the experience is consistent and equitable for all, regardless of where they are located.

In this new hybrid work model, the challenges of feeling excluded have been exacerbated. As workers slowly return to the office, and more meeting participants collaborate in person, it's even more important that companies leverage purpose-built meeting room devices to enable an equitable experience for those in the room as well as those who are joining remotely. At the same time, when more than half the participants are working remotely, the people in the room can feel excluded—especially when key stakeholders and decision makers are dialing in virtually. There must be a balanced approach that looks to democratize the experience, regardless of who is participating and from where.

Meetings have also become tightly integrated with team chat and collaboration tools. The next area of innovation will be in developing closer connections among the many asynchronous and synchronous forms of collaboration that workers use today. This is important for desktop, mobile, and conference room devices—ensuring that every participant has a consistent and equitable experience, regardless of where they are physically located. As virtual meetings remain the standard for workplace collaboration, inclusivity and wellbeing should be the hallmarks of the user experience.



The excessive use of video meetings in a hybrid work environment often leads to meeting fatigue. To ensure employees stay engaged, **LOOK FOR SOLUTIONS THAT DELIVER EXCELLENT USER ENGAGEMENT, FOR EFFORTLESS AND PRODUCTIVE COLLABORATION.**

## Technology Can Meet the Challenge

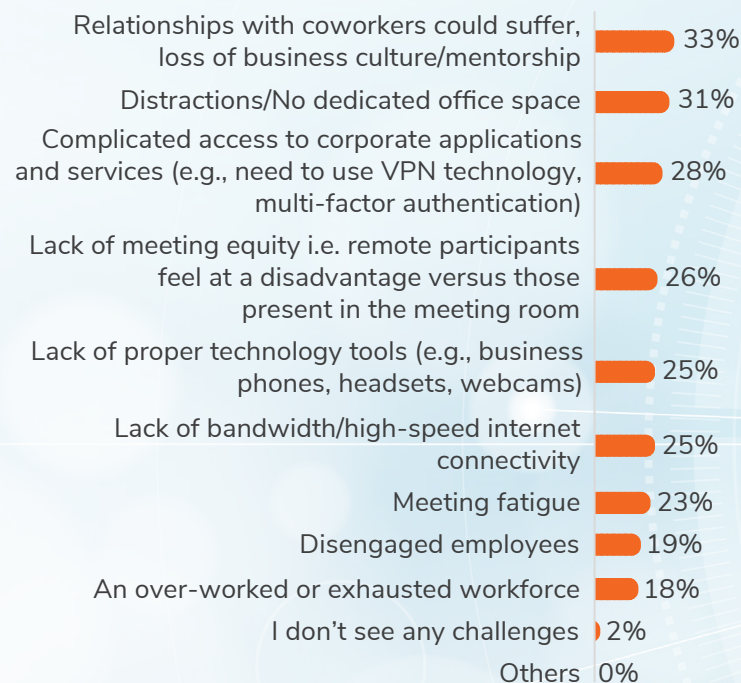
Companies that want to stay competitive and attract and retain talent must offer a range of options for employees based on user preference. Luckily, a growing array of flexible deployment models are giving users more choice when it comes to communications, conferencing, and collaboration at home, at the office, and on the go.

The right meeting room technology can address key issues, especially if it offers meeting software that's tightly integrated with purpose-built room devices and a consistent user experience across devices and apps, from the personal desktop to the in-room experience. For instance, high definition (HD) audio and video captures speakers and participants in the meeting room, blocks out distractions, and picks up every voice as needed. Applications that offer the ability to join meetings from any device or browser make transitions seamless, while built-in collaboration tools, including whiteboards, screen sharing, and app sharing, enable true teamwork.

**IT and business buyers should prioritize the participant experience. Look for meeting software that encourages and supports equitable participation.**

- Applications that don't require software downloads, PINs, or passwords, so everyone can join with a single click
- Integration with other apps, so users can easily move from messages to meetings on the fly
- Collaboration tools including whiteboards, screen sharing, and app sharing
- HD video and audio, so nothing gets lost in translation
- Personalization for everything from backgrounds to toolsets
- Integration with other business tools, including Microsoft, Google, and Salesforce

### WHAT ARE THE TOP CHALLENGES YOUR EMPLOYEES EXPERIENCE WHEN WORKING REMOTELY/FROM HOME?



### KEY FEATURES TO LOOK FOR:

Shareable agendas

Team channels for ongoing collaboration

Content and screen sharing

Time management and other host controls

Call summaries

Shareable action items

## The Value of TrueCaaS

Although the debate about the benefits of best-of-breed vs. single-vendor solutions continues, **IT decision makers are showing a strong inclination toward investing in end-to-end, single-vendor solutions** as they move forward with their hybrid plans. While there are a range of benefits to having a consolidated tech stack, the biggest one is return on investment (ROI). Buying a single, truly unified platform from a single vendor can lower pricing (thanks to scaled licensing fees), reduce support costs (since IT and users are trained across a single solution and learn it well), and increase usability (because business users reside in that platform throughout the day, rather than on an ad-hoc basis).

### OTHER BENEFITS THAT IT LEADERS ARE POINTING TO INCLUDE:

**ONE-STOP SHOP:** When purchasing communications and collaboration technology over the next year, a broad portfolio for one-stop shopping is a must-have for **37%** of organizations and is a desired factor for **44%**. This means using a single platform that includes telephony, video meetings, instant messaging, SMS/MMS, and contact center functionality.

**END-TO-END CAPABILITIES:** The ability to purchase infrastructure, services, apps, and devices for frontline employees is a crucial factor for **27%**; it's very important for **42%**; and important for **22%**.

**ALL-INCLUSIVE:** **37%** of IT decision makers prefer to purchase UCaaS in all-inclusive bundles.

**UCAAS + CCAAS INTEGRATION:** When moving business telephony to the cloud, **36%** of companies must also have an integrated contact center—not a reseller partnership or white-labeled product; **41%** would like it. This allows customer-facing teams to handle internal communications (with team members) and external communications (with customers or prospects) from the same platform, increasing productivity.

**MANAGEMENT:** Unified management across all communications modalities is a must-have for **38%** of buyers; **41%** would like to have it.

**SINGLE-SOURCE CONNECTIVITY:** **54%** say it's important to purchase broadband from their PBX/UCaaS provider; **51%** for mobile voice and data services; and **44%** for SIP trunking services.

**CALLING PLANS:** **27%** prefer to purchase UCaaS separately from their telecom carrier; **42%** prefer to bundle calling plans with UCaaS; **30%** say it varies by region/country/location.

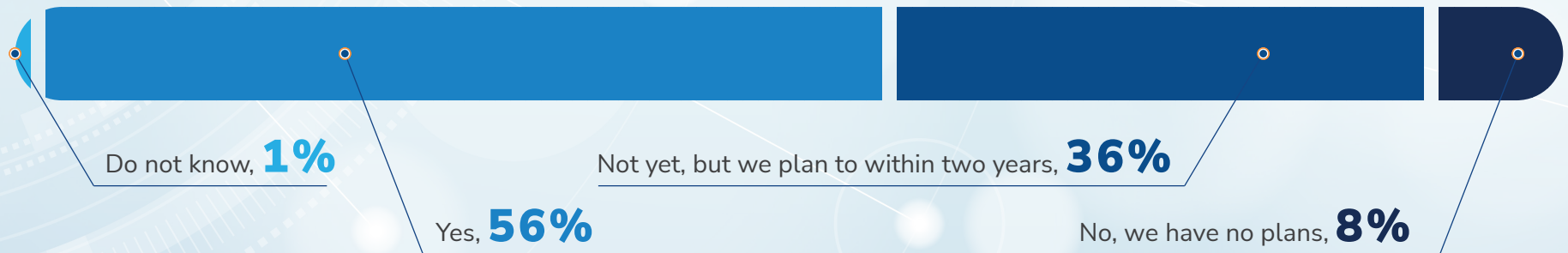
**BYOC:** the ability to support multiple regional telecom carriers is a factor for **76%** of ITDMs when choosing an enterprise telephony/UC platform.

## TrueCaaS by the Numbers

The number of companies using an integrated UCaaS suite from a single vendor has **INCREASED BY 10% OVER THE PAST YEAR.**



**DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION TAKE ADVANTAGE OF UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS AND COLLABORATION CAPABILITIES TO RESOLVE CUSTOMER ISSUES QUICKLY AND SEAMLESSLY?**

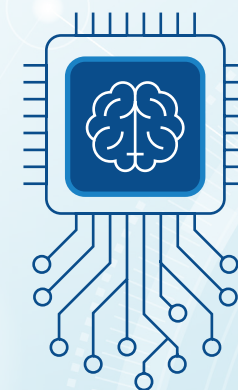


## Artificial Intelligence for Better Outcomes

Frost & Sullivan research continues to show a shift from traditional to digital interactions. This is especially true in the contact center, where customers are moving toward more automated and digital channels (like chat and social messaging) because they want anytime access to customized information, on any device and from any location. Meanwhile, agents want to offload mundane tasks and focus on the high-value interactions that keep them engaged and increase their value to the organization.

Digitalization has also led to an increase in data, with the fastest growth in high tech and other industry verticals. Much of this is structured data. However, with the advent of AI tools such as sentiment analysis, image, and conversational analytics, organizations can also mine unstructured data from sources such as social media to glean business insights.

**AI CAN CLEARLY IMPROVE THE KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)** that contact centers are measured on—everything from the time it takes for a contact to be handled (first-response times, abandonment rates, blocked calls, time on hold) to call quality and efficiency (service levels, first-call resolution) to customer and agent satisfaction. Data-driven analytics ensure agents can offer a more effective and satisfactory experience.



Many companies start using AI to automate simple, repetitive processes, and by using historical and real-time information to contextualize customer interactions. But AI can also transform human-driven exchanges by determining customer intents for routing and highlighting the most relevant customer data and history for agents (who can leverage that information to deliver a more personalized experience).

AI can also help companies be more proactive, by allowing agents and bots to anticipate customer needs and by analyzing incoming contacts to determine how important they are, and then properly placing them in the queue. And AI can help managers improve the customer experience going forward, by recording calls and running them through a language processor to track common keywords, detect customer sentiment, and review post-call summaries.

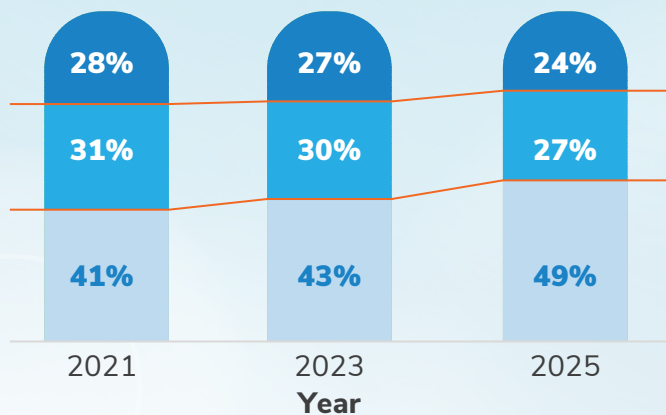
The same capabilities can be used inside the organization to improve collaboration and communication among employees. Natural language processing (NLP) allows companies to accurately transcribe calls and meetings, so participants and others have access to the information whenever they need it. Machine learning ensures the system will improve over time, as it gets used to the types of conversations employees have, what they're working on, and what matters most to the organization. Software that can accurately distinguish among speakers makes it easy to see who said what, and post-call summaries highlight key points, action items, and even manual notes—all of which improves meeting equity for remote participants.



## AI by the Numbers

### ENTERPRISES ARE BECOMING DATA CENTRIC

Percentage of Structured, Semi, and Unstructured Data in Organizations, Global, 2021, 2023 and 2025



● Structured Data ● Semi-structured Data ● Unstructured Data

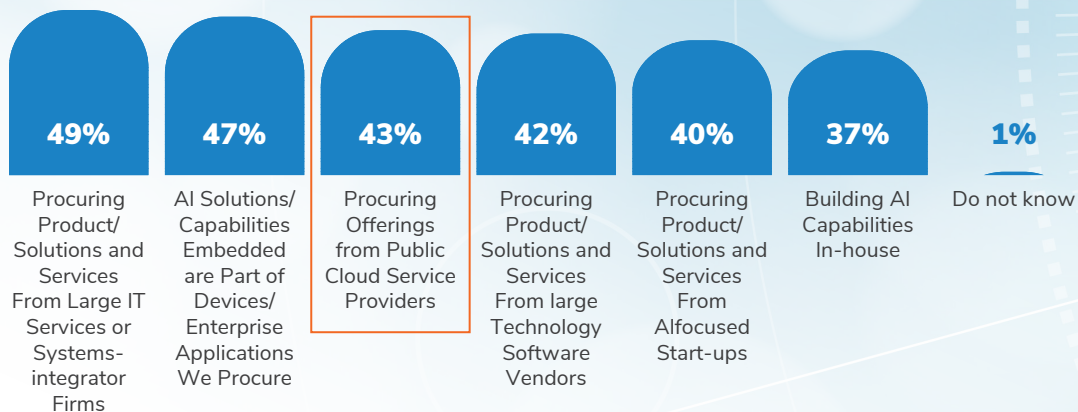
#### Definitions

- **Structured Data** refers to data organized into a formatted repository, typically a database.
- **Semi-structured Data** is information that does not reside in a relational database, but has some organizational properties that make it easier to analyze (e.g., email, web pages).
- **Unstructured Data** is stored in its natural format without a predefined data model and is not organized in a predefined manner (e.g., images and weather data).



### WHY CLOUD SERVICE PROVIDERS ARE EMERGING AS A KEY POINT OF CONTACT TO PROCURE AI SOLUTIONS

#### Mode of AI Solutions Procurement



Source: Frost & Sullivan

## Benefits of the Cloud

Frost & Sullivan research shows that when it comes to meeting software, 47% of organizations use cloud services and 25% use a combination of private and public clouds.

Frost & Sullivan sees myriad reasons for turning to the cloud to better enable the hybrid workplace. For starters, a cloud services provider can get companies up and running within hours, or even minutes, once the deal is signed—and they make it easy and fast to add or remove users as needed. Users always have access to the most up-to-date versions of the software, and they can get help with a simple click.

Costs are reliable and fixed, and because they come out of the op-ex budget, they are often easier to justify, even for the same total spend. Service providers can offer excellent support, too, freeing up IT resources for more strategic projects. And because they build redundancy into the business, cloud-based solutions deliver reliable business continuity and disaster recovery capabilities, so users are protected in the event of outages and other unexpected events.

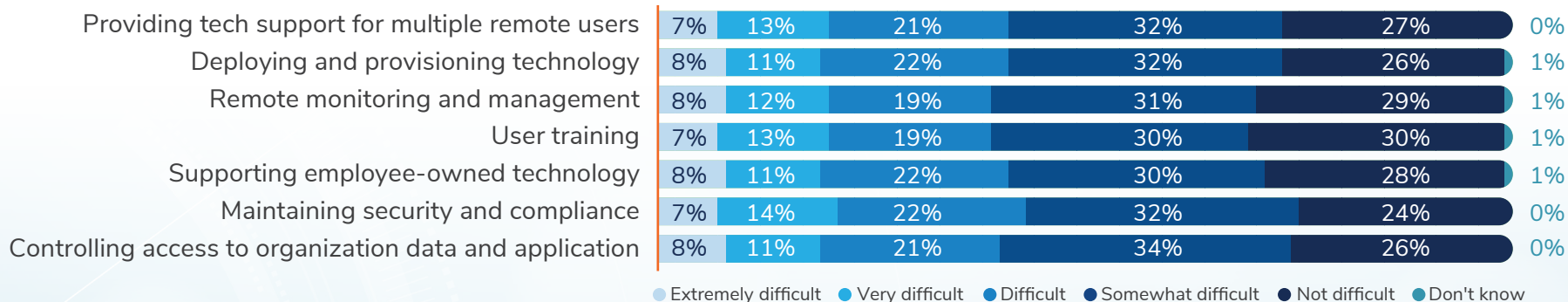
### NAVIGATING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION



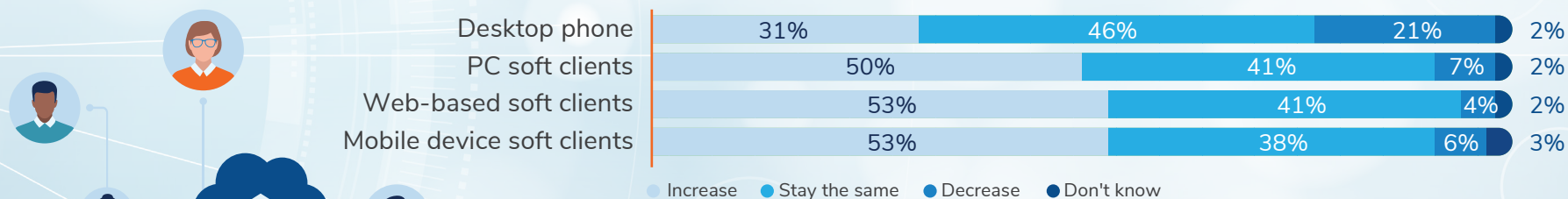
Source: Frost & Sullivan

## Cloud by the Numbers

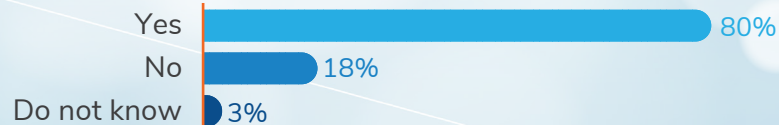
### HOW DIFFICULT ARE THE FOLLOWING FACTORS FOR IT ADMINISTRATORS WHEN SUPPORTING REMOTE WORKERS?



### OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS, WILL YOUR WORKFORCE'S USE OF THE FOLLOWING ENDPOINTS INCREASE, DECREASE, OR STAY THE SAME OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS?



### IS YOUR ORGANIZATION MOVING APPLICATIONS TO THE CLOUD?



## Frost & Sullivan Best Practices Recommendations

According to Frost & Sullivan's latest research, IT decision makers cite three top priorities for investing in communications and collaboration tools: encouraging teamwork, enabling remote work, and improving the customer experience. As a result, IT is transitioning from technology enablement toward a focus on optimization, security, and support. Choosing the right tools and the right provider is key to success.




**Look for end-to-end solutions.** A single source for all communications, collaboration, and customer-focused tools—including voice, messaging, and contact center—makes it easier for employees to succeed in a hybrid workplace. If they're using a single platform, users can seamlessly transition from one application to another, reducing frustration and increasing usage rates, which in turn boosts the return on investment. To do that, IT must ensure their communications platform supports a range of use cases and employee needs, and that it integrates easily with other business and industry applications.

**Look for a provider that supports a seamless experience across all applications and devices.** This will support meeting equity and help teams work together to be more innovative and effective, while allowing individual users to stay productive and ensuring agents and back-office employees can always deliver an exceptional customer experience. Tech that works across all devices allows employees to stay connected and engaged, whether they are at home, in the office, or on the go.

**Look for intuitive solutions that are easy to use and support.** As meetings become more distributed, frequent, and ad-hoc, users need devices and applications that make it easy to join meetings and transition from one device to another midstream—including mobile devices. Look for a vendor that understands that improving the employee experience is just as important as refining the customer experience. They should be actively investing in robust capabilities that enhance workflows and prepare users for whatever the future of work brings.

**Look for centralized management and support.** For IT, centralized management ensures the team can fully support users regardless of where they are located, while also having the time and resources to spend on the organization's more strategic initiatives. And of course, security, privacy, and compliance are must-haves. Invest in enterprise-grade technology and a provider with deep experience in the industry.

Learn more about Dialpad, the leader in truly unified business and customer communications that includes phone calling, video meetings, messaging, and the world's most advanced AI contact center — all in one beautiful app.

 [Click here to learn more](#)

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