



Co-Authoring: The Future of Collaboration, Today

By Kris Saether

Recent events have had an indelible impact upon countries across the globe, with few places as disrupted as the workplace. One thing seems clear: the new workplace will be much different than the one we are used to.

Remote work and virtual teams will become a more prevalent way of working, with on-site employees becoming a rising exception rather than the rule. Now that work-from-home has, in many cases, proven to be a viable alternative, C-Suite executives and business owners will be less likely to invest in the resources, infrastructure, and space needed for all of their workers to return to business as usual.

89% of workers are now working remotely.

56% of the U.S. workforce holds a job that is compatible with remote work.

25-30% of the workforce will be working-from-home multiple days a week by the end of 2021.

Remote Work Will Be the Norm

Workers may not want to return to the office. In fact, a majority of the workforce say they want to continue to work from home, at least weekly. According to a global survey conducted by Global Workplace Analytics, [77% of the workforce wants to work from home](#). This is leading to profound changes in office space needs, workplace design, and workforce policies and practices.

The Office Will be Different

When and if employees return to the office, the office won't look the same as it did before. Single desks will give way to a greater focus on group work areas. The focus will be on teams, flexibility, and collaboration, with individual tasks delegated to the home office. An open office concept will take shape with common work areas replacing cubicles while workers work remotely for day-to-day tasks.

With thousands of employees having adapted to working from home, the traditional office environment may not have a place in the new normal. Organizations will adopt a much more flexible approach; asking staff to work for half of the week at home, for example, and the other half of the week in office. Employers will not just offer these flexible working options, but require them from employees. If carried out correctly, the open office paired with work-from-home may represent a transformative business opportunity.

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The Co-Authoring Advantage

To succeed today will require the ability to turn the remote workplace into a strength, and leverage team collaboration and document management as distinctive organizational skills. One important place to start is with document co-authoring.

The document creation process is one of the most essential activities for any company today, and certainly one of the most extensive, touching nearly everything: internal communications, customer relations, sales, legal compliance and much more. For large enterprises especially, managing the assembly of highly complex, high-stakes documents like proposals, contracts or regulatory submissions is a challenge that is made even more challenging now that most teams are working remotely. Often just hours before the deadline, authors and stakeholders struggle to assemble the correct content, elements, and drafts into an effective final product.

It doesn't have to be this way. Creating a professional business document can – and should – be an organizational skill that sets the organization apart from its competition. Document co-authoring strategies and tools provide a pathway to get your creation process on track. This is especially important as businesses are now driven to rethink their workflow and business models.

Let's explore some of the characteristics of a good co-authoring solution.

True Collaboration Capabilities

Many popular systems are very good at providing a platform for file sharing or video conferencing, but they are not well-suited for the task of co-authoring. The challenge is not just assembling data and teams; but also the ability to effectively output information in the form of highly polished, high-impact documents. The process involves a wide variety of content and people from across the enterprise. And while it's easy enough to share some files and schedule a Zoom call, team members commonly find that in reality, creating and co-authoring large, complex and highly polished documents can still be time-consuming and frustrating.

Document co-authoring brings about a level of collaboration that makes a difference in team performance in fundamental ways.

Teams work and collaborate on document creation from anywhere in the world, while having complete visibility and control over what changes are being made, what information is being used, and the layout, accuracy, and effectiveness of each element. In addition, it provides the ability to assign tasks to team members and create workflows, merging collaboration capabilities with process management for maximum efficiency, effectiveness, and advantage.

Central Content Repository

Another important advantage of co-authoring is that it uses a central content repository; a single place to manage all documents and content. This ensures that information is up-to-date and secure, and is reflected over the entire organization in real time. Anyone working on a document at any stage in the creation process will have access (if permission is granted) to all the tables, macros, and forms that are features of the final finished document.

Compared with common desktop tools and ad hoc workarounds, massive advantages in time, quality, and effort can be achieved with this approach. A central content repository maintains consistency and security across the enterprise while ensuring the kind of information agility and virtual collaboration that is needed to be most effective today.

Openness and Control

A mix of openness and control is crucial. While collaboration and teamwork are essential, so too is the need to control data privacy and security. Openness is the ability to share information and collaborate easily, and foster that interaction across the organization. Control is the ability to strictly limit and monitor access to private and sensitive information as needed, depending on context, content, and compliance demands.

For organizations in highly regulated and global operations, mission-critical documents like exploratory proposals, engineering contracts and regulatory submissions can grow to be hundreds of pages. Openness is essential because content elements come from a variety of systems and sources. Control is vital because different contributors need different access and permission levels. Integration with other core systems is a boost to ensure that content is available, accurate, and easy to find when it's needed most.



As economies begin to rebound, document co-authoring surfaces as a distinct competitive advantage.

Shaping the Future

Document co-authoring will have a dramatic role in shaping the future of collaboration. As countries and economies rebound, document co-authoring surfaces as a distinct competitive advantage and an essential corporate collaboration skill. Now is the time for organizations – both small companies and global names – to respond and adapt.

Find out more about our solutions for co-authoring at XaitPorter.com and [sign up here for a free demo](#). XaitPorter is the benchmark team co-authoring and automation software solution. Ideal for complex tenders, proposals and reports. Implemented by major corporations around the world. Now available on Salesforce AppExchange.

About XaitPorter

XaitPorter is a complete all-in-one co-authoring solution for teams to collaboratively create, manage and produce documents. Streamline and optimize your document production to maximize your revenue from bids and proposals and other business-critical documents.

We emphasize team productivity and manageability rather than individual creativity. And we offer parallel collaboration as well as facilitation of controlled collaboration. As such, XaitPorter is so much more than a writing tool or standard collaboration tool. XaitPorter is a solution that improves and optimizes both processes and documents. And at Xait, we are committed to seeing our customers succeed.

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