

Delivering business continuity and agility with **StarTek Cloud**



Introduction

This white paper focuses on the technical capabilities of **Startek Cloud**, Startek's in-house unified cloud that forms the core of the company's approach—enabling customer engagement specialists to work via any device whether a PC, thin client, mobile, or tablet. **Startek Cloud's** hybrid approach enables home-based agents to complement services delivered by those in

contact centers. It creates and enables **Campus in the Cloud** at Startek, helping teams to work easily and securely across countries, geographies, and locations. The benefit to customers is a series of tools that deliver seamless customer engagement, drive contextual conversations, enable faster outcomes, and engage customers across multiple channels, while reducing the cost of customer care.

Cloud and Digital

Cloud accelerates telecomputing, storage and networking resources on demand; it also facilitates eLearning, business conferencing and digital collaboration of tools. Today, much of our lives online depend on these capabilities whether it be online banking, shopping or social media. For organizations, cloud provides a platform which—depending on services selected—can help grow business by expanding locations, and quickly launching products and services. It helps integrate

multi-channel customer engagement, reduce overhead costs and increased employee and customer satisfaction by incorporating work-at-home capabilities. '**Startek Cloud**' increases the value of tele-working further by integrating applications, services, and digital platforms using a common software framework, or stack. This enables a work-from-anywhere model that helps companies maximize performance and productivity, especially critical for BPM companies and their

Startek Cloud enables 'Campus in the Cloud'

While Startek's move to a campus in the cloud was always planned as a strategic shift, it was accelerated by the global pandemic of 2020. Today, over 55% of Startek's workforce works from home, with state-of-the-art information security protocols in place to protect customer information, layered with webcams and an AI-based application deployed for real-time tracking of performance.

Work-From-Home (WFH) creates a very different paradigm – the idea of a workplace that is largely cloud-based. In other words, a campus in the cloud that enables teams to be formed in different

geographies based on customer requirements, working seamlessly to deliver performances above and beyond.

Startek's Business Continuity Planning has evolved from multi-site BPO campuses to cloud-enabled WFH and brick and mortar operations, with the belief that this hybrid model is here to stay. Thus, ensuring the same operational standards for remote agents as those in a brick & mortar model. High quality, AI-enabled tools and feature-rich remote connectivity is critical for a streamlined experience and effective engagement.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the pace; for the first time in recorded human history all of mankind is dealing with a singular problem across the world. Governments, companies, communities, and families are all searching for ways to address the unpredictable and find a workaround not just for today, but for potentially the next 12 months. The pandemic is dramatically changing the way we all work; it has less to do with the unpredictability of unanticipated market conditions and far more to do with the volatility of an unseen enemy. Companies across the globe have announced they will have employees work from home through the end of 2020, with Google extending that period through the middle of 2021. Over the last few years, there has already been a steady rise in the number of employees working from home; over a 12-year period between 2005 and 2017, Global Workplace Analytics reports a 159% increase in remote working. The pandemic has simply focused an increasingly urgent spotlight on this area.

Through it all, business as always must go on and find ways to adapt to new circumstances. And somewhere, threading its way through these

Estimates show that by 2023, crowdsourcing, work-at-home or telework, and the gig economy will account for **37%** of the total customer service workforce, up from **5%** in 2017.

By 2023, **73%** of customer service organizations will deliver proactive and predictive customer service enhanced by analytics, AI and process orchestration.

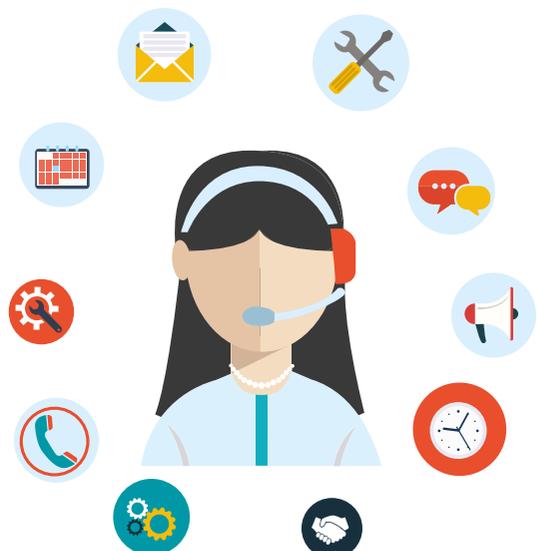
“

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the pace; for the first time in recorded human history all of mankind is dealing with a singular problem across the world.

”

issues is the increasing importance of focusing on how customers will connect with brands in a changed, and rapidly changing world. What that requires is the stability of a flexible, scalable, and agile system; one that has already proven its maturity and business value. A system very much like **Startek Cloud** and Startek’s Campus in the Cloud.

Looking ahead, Startek expects to see their partners increasingly seek to optimize talent and reduce OPEX and CAPEX while enhancing service delivery. The company’s focus today is on digitizing customer channels; a focus which gathers increasing importance given a global workforce that spreads across 13 countries. Work-From-Home technologies intended to further ease overstressed contact center channels include among others, hyper adoption of AI-based technologies, virtual self-help, chat bots,



The benefits of working from home



A seamless work environment around the world

Campus in the Cloud enables productivity regardless of where our employees are located



Employee Safety

We don't expose employees to potentially greater levels of risk by commuting to work



Increased job satisfaction and reduced turnover

Flexible schedules can increase job satisfaction and reduce turnover, helping us retain long-term staff with greater knowledge of the business



Increased Productivity

Employees working at home have greater autonomy, face fewer interruptions and can focus on their work



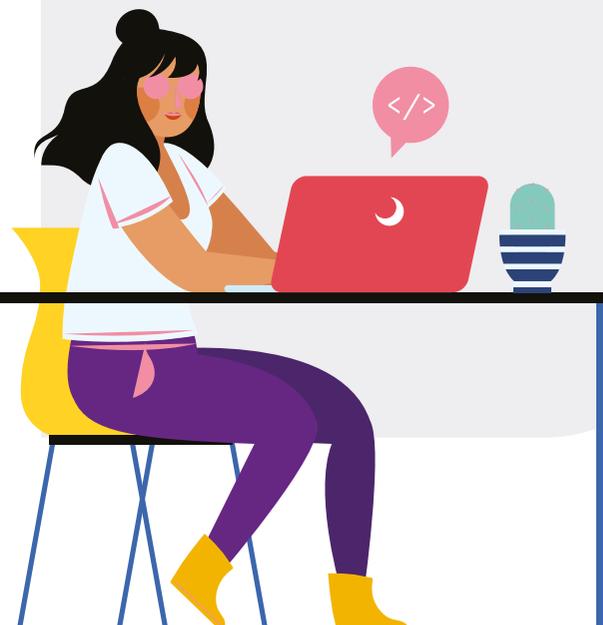
Higher Morale

Employees with flexible work options often have higher morale and enjoy their job responsibilities more than those in a traditional office environment; this benefits the business in terms of bottom-line earnings



Environmental Impact

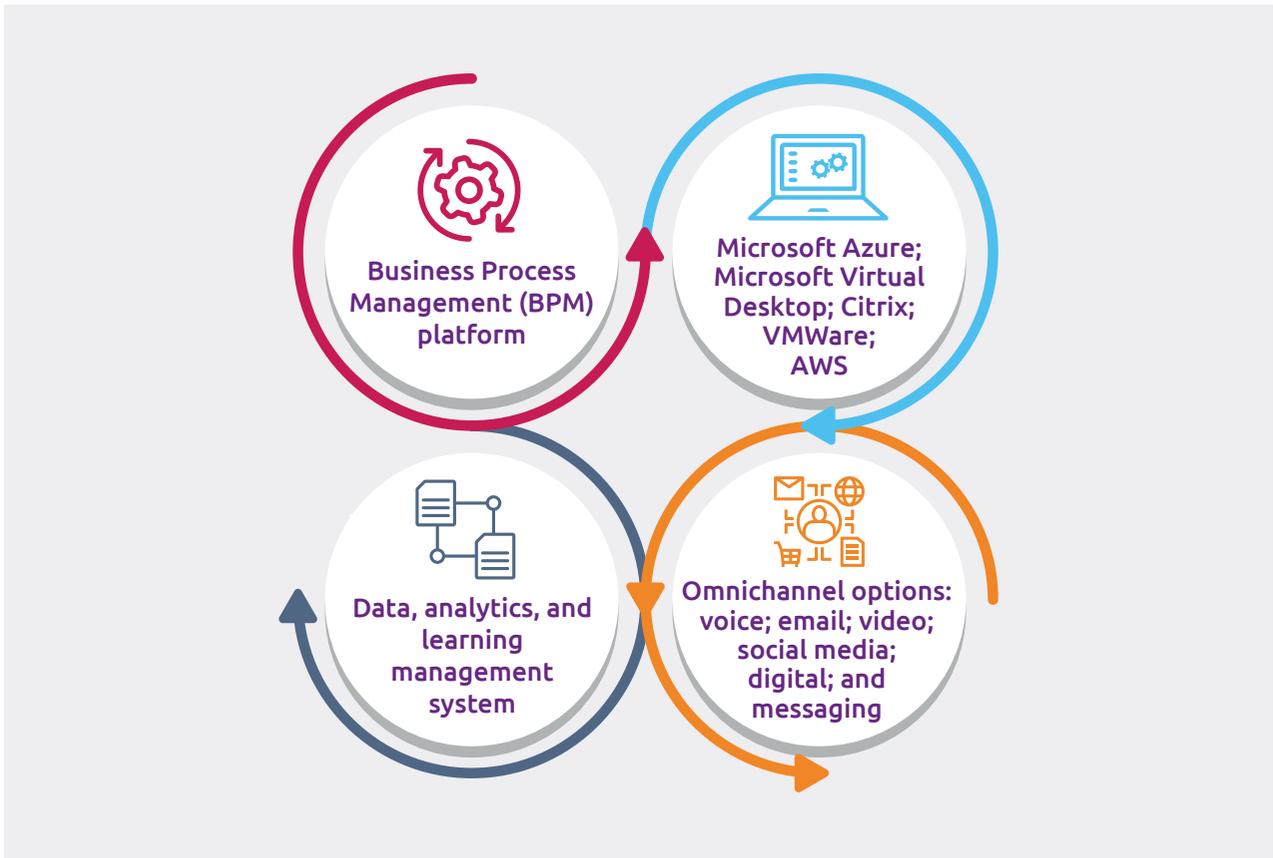
Virtual meetings and electronic communication helps protect the environment through reduced automobile emissions. This helps the environment and helps us be a good corporate steward



Campus in the Cloud is enabled by a Secured **Startek Cloud ecosystem**

Startek's innovative **Startek Cloud** uses a selection of platforms depending on client requirements. These range from: Microsoft Azure; Microsoft Virtual Desktop; Citrix; VMWare; AWS; and an

internally-built Business Process Management (BPM) platform all supporting and integrating a variety of omnichannel options including voice, email, video, social media, digital, and messaging.



A centralized control that ensures information security and compliance

Every Startek Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) is individually built and deployed to fit the vertical and application configuration of each client. In turn, every cloud VDI platform is certified Payment Card Industry (PCI) and Healthcare Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant and mirrors the contact center

User Interface (UI) and policies for a seamless transition.

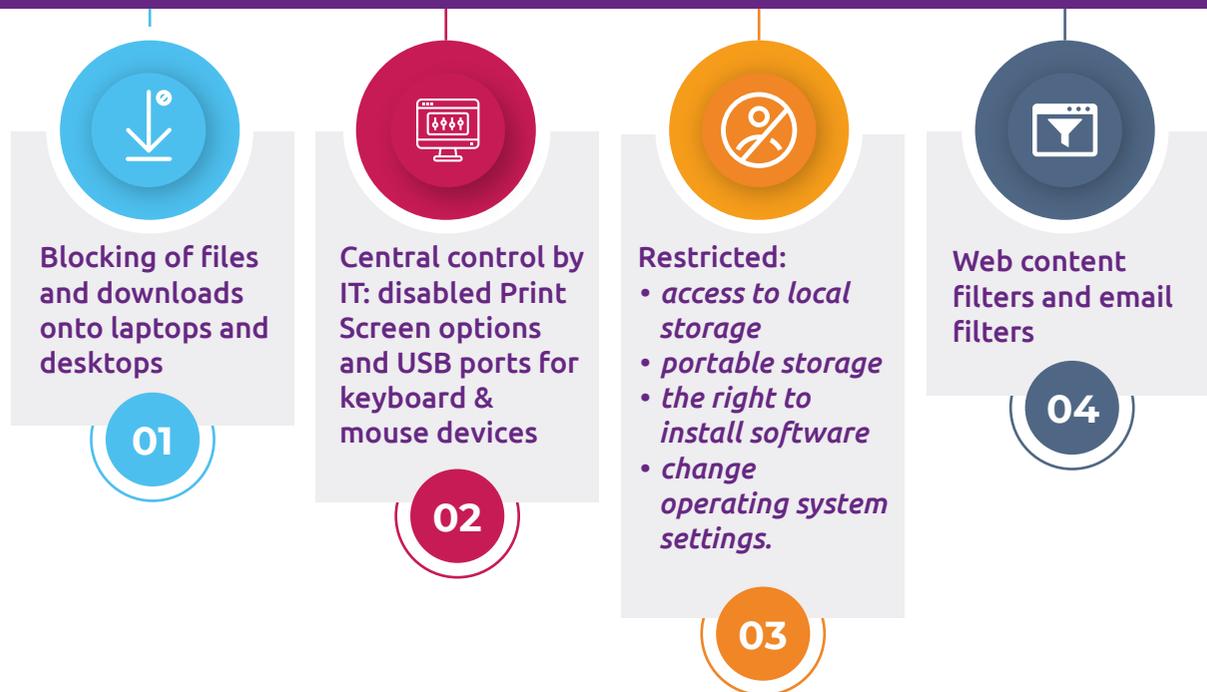
These steps ensure centralized control, with dual and multi-factor authenticity to ensure information security and compliance features critical to building and sustaining client trust.

Security is centrally and remotely managed with Windows patches, antivirus packages and other protective controls such as Implemented Advance Threat Protection from malware and cyber intrusion; these can sometimes be a challenge to manage in an on-premise set-up.

Startek Cloud monitors all 100% of its contacts with end-to-end data encryption. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for system(s) and

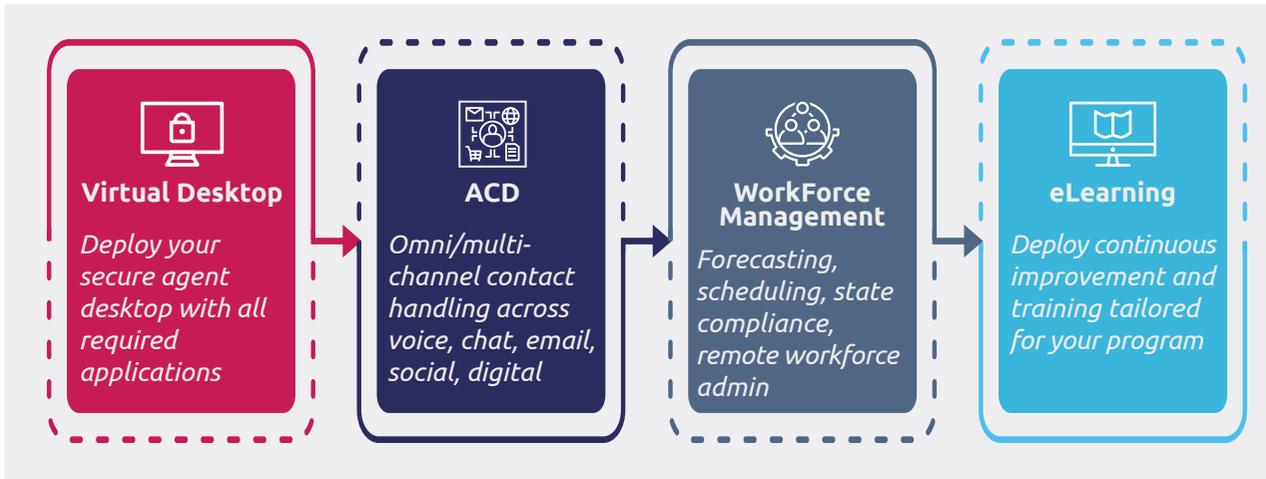
security compliance include the blocking of files and downloads onto laptops and desktops, disabled Print Screen options and USB ports for keyboard & mouse devices. All of these functionalities are centrally controlled by IT. Also restricted are: access to local storage, portable storage, the right to install software, and change operating system settings. Web content filters and email filters avoid any personal use and access to malicious content on the internet.

SOP's for system(s) and security compliance include:



Reports generated by **Startek Cloud's** Quality Management include the analyses of continuous improvement and customer satisfaction and net promoter scores. Designed to automate a variety of activities within the quality ecosystem, ClearMetrix integrates quality platforms with remote and secure automatic call distribution (ACD) recording storage. Among the metrics captured are: precision and consistency; standardized blind calibration; audits and evaluator reviews; multi-system, multi-site and enterprise-level to agent-level reporting.

These options highlight the need for rich, interactive, training content and **Startek Cloud** is equipped with eLearning solutions powered by **e-abyas** info solutions. It includes a corporate training Learning Management System (LMS) that is robust and flexible, with options for multitenancy. It is also scalable for all workspaces, enabling clients to add specific modules for their customer training content, process documents, campaign roll outs, and product knowledge.



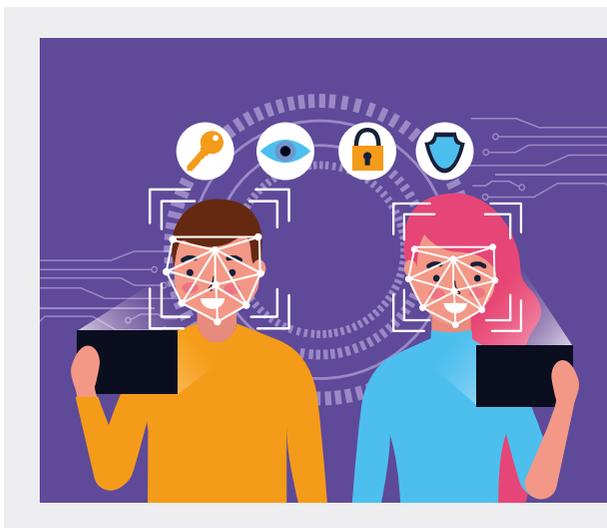
These elements work together as a series of four tool sets that deliver seamless customer engagement, drive contextual conversations, enable faster outcomes, and engage customers across multiple channels, while reducing the cost

of customer care. **Startek Cloud** is on 24 hours a day and seven days a week helping clients reduce OPEX and creating a smaller carbon footprint by not running a traditional office space.

The adoption of Artificial Intelligence

One of **Startek Cloud**'s unique features is its integration and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). It underpins all the methodologies used on Startek's multi-cloud, making interactions highly responsive, collaborative, virtually connected, and future-ready. Requests for maximum system

control of client information are handled by the use of webcams with an AI-based application for real-time tracking of a specialist's performance. Requests for maximum restraint are handled by an AI-enabled application that senses if a device is brought near the system; an alert is automatically sent in case of a violation.



Artificial Intelligence currently deployed within Startek Cloud monitors conduct; offers facial detection systems; watermarks and masks secure content; uses byte biometrics; and checks browsing details.

In the future, the platform is also expected to deploy conversational AI bots that monitor employee productivity and generate an automated report at the end of the workday.

Enabling business continuity for our partners



At Flipkart, our effort is to ensure that as a marketplace, we enable growth for our sellers' community. The pandemic no doubt has posed several challenges for MSME across sectors. It has been our endeavor to ensure business continuity and provide required support in these tough times to bounce back more effectively. We found a like-minded partner in Startek who has played an integral role in helping our marketplace team to work from home during these unprecedented times. To accommodate the COVID-19 pandemic, the Startek team reviewed our business continuity plans

and supported it with their emergency response and mitigation teams as we moved through the various phases of the lockdown. A team comprising of Startek Operations, Training, HR, IT, and Security & Compliance worked with our team to ensure smooth service for our seller community. Their planning and resource management in terms of providing IT assets and infrastructure is commendable.

Jagjeet Harode
*Head and Senior Director
Marketplace, Flipkart*



Startek managed to switch seamlessly to Work-From-Home, thanks to their robust business continuity plan which was already put in place. Most of our engagements also involved online AI-

enabled chat support, which they were able to transition quickly and efficiently.

Jerry Oversen
SVP, GoGo Internet

