Using Microsoft Office 365 with a cloud communications system

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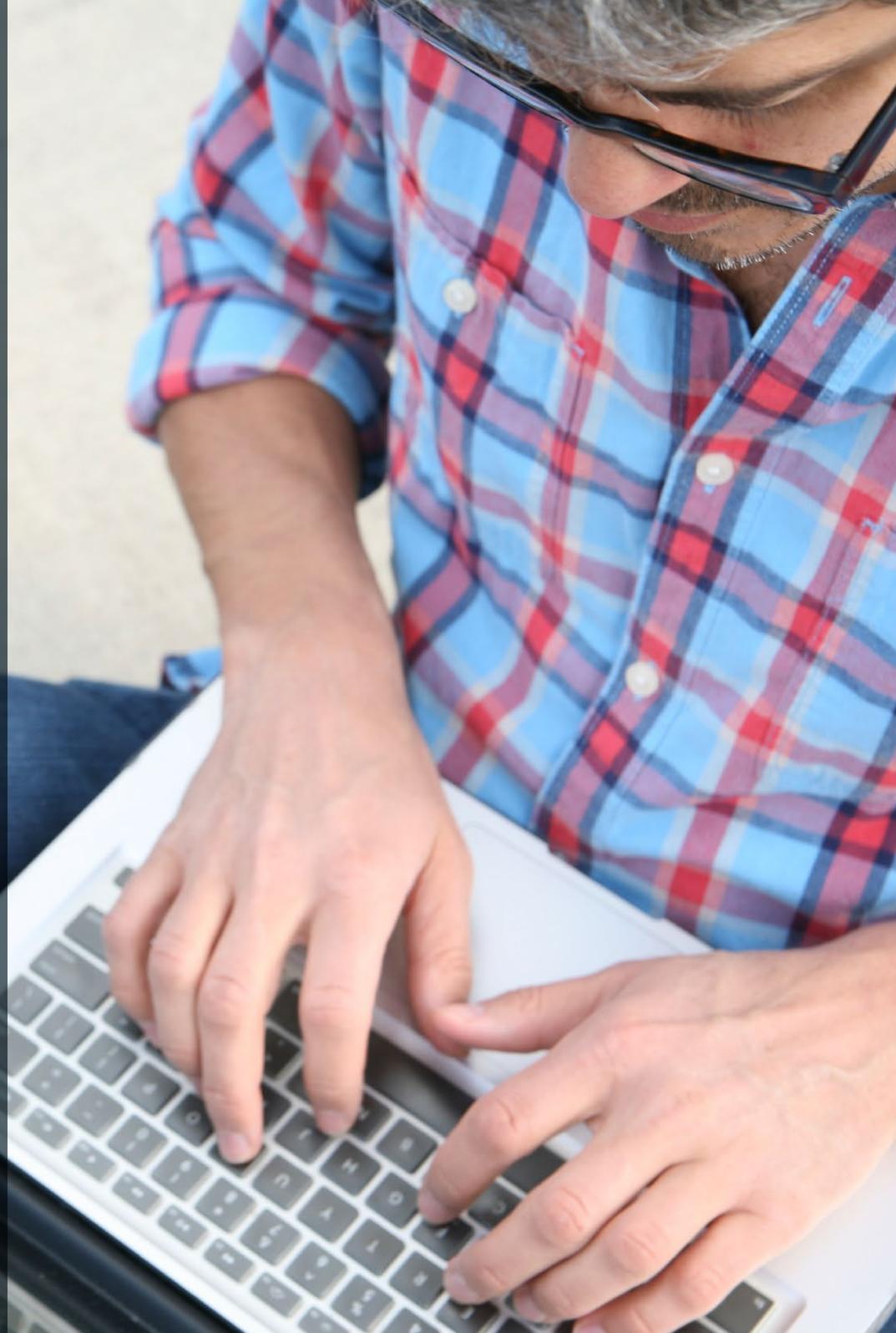
The move to integrated cloud solutions

Moving to Office 365 helps employees stay connected with others from anywhere, on any device. You can accelerate productivity while protecting corporate information—a win-win for your team and your organisation.

In addition, the cloud enables you to integrate disparate phone, fax, online meetings, and messaging into Office365, so workers can easily use these communication tools from within one familiar interface.

The sheer number of individual business applications used every day can be overwhelming. Managing multiple programs, platforms, interfaces, and devices across an organisation strains IT and distracts time and resources from mission-critical company objectives.

In addition, email and phone have generally been utilised as stand-alone applications, separated by a device wall. With the move from on-premise systems to cloud applications, consolidating these applications adds tremendous value to the end user.

Businesses are looking to products like Microsoft Office 365™ to provide a consolidated experience for the end user, simplified management for IT, and increased productivity for the entire company.
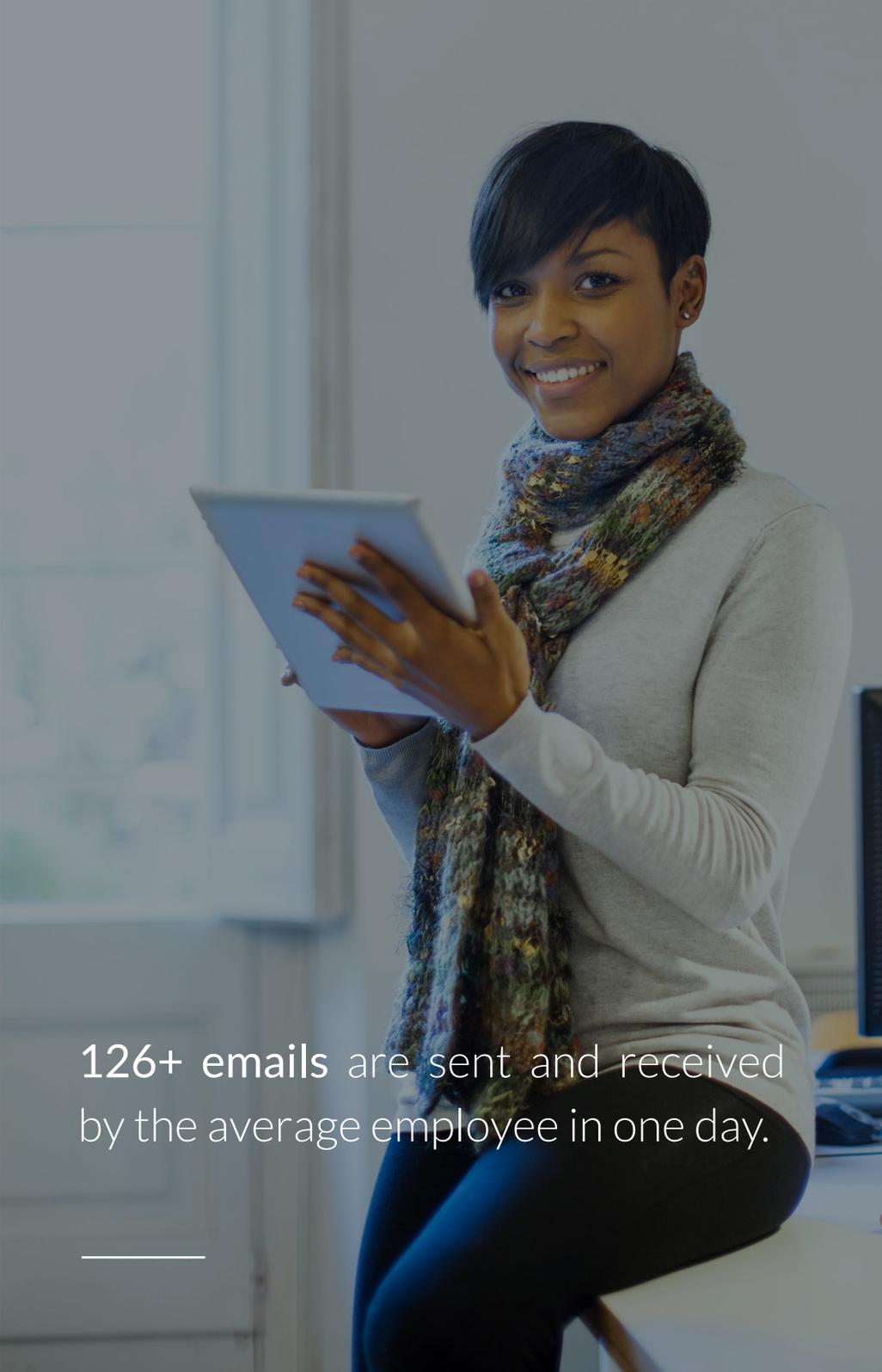
126+ emails are sent and received by the average employee in one day.

# Bringing business communications and applications together

The shift to the cloud has caused companies to rethink how their employees interact with critical programs. We've grown accustomed to applications and communications tools. We now intuitively accept email and calendar as one application, so why not the same for phone, messaging, fax, voice etc.
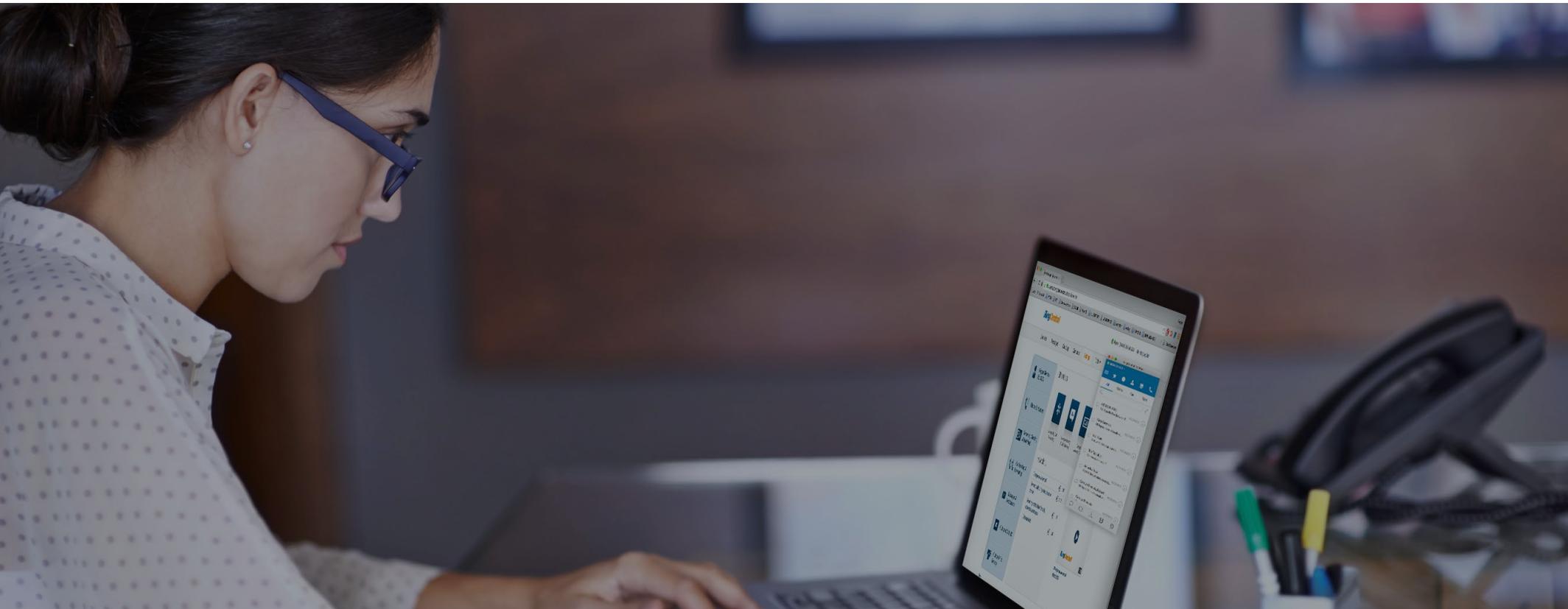
Phone and email services are two of the most heavily used communication tools, with calendars and collaborative tools like messaging, conferencing and video meetings following close behind.

Today's workforce is moving toward integrated solutions that combine tools like email, calendars, and conferencing over stand-alone applications and programs in order to streamline workflow, easily manage their scheduling and correspondence, and maintain a unified business identity.

By integrating applications like Microsoft Office 365 with a cloud phone and fax into one consolidated interface, all employees are able to access everything they need.
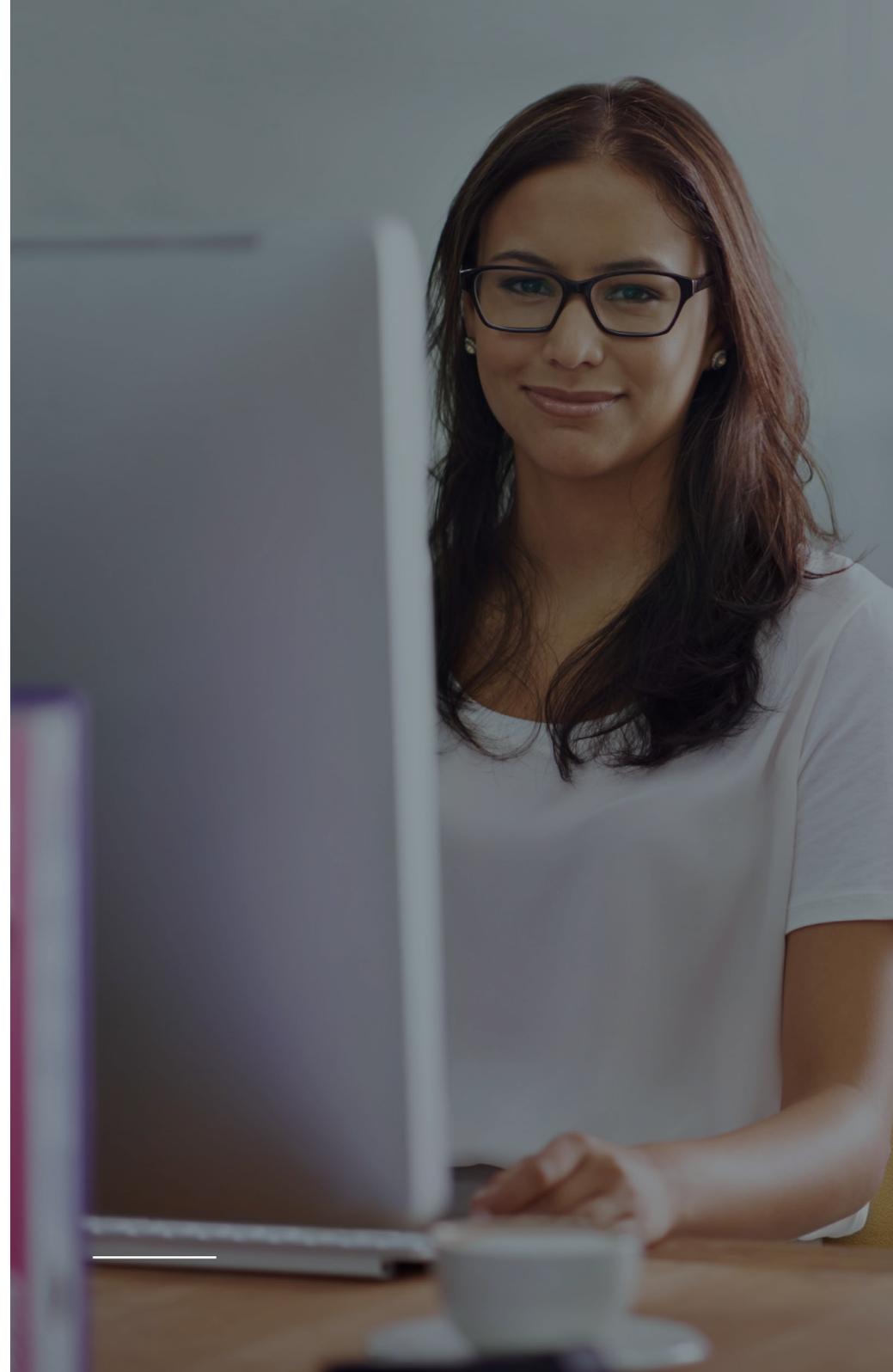
Integrations use case: The office worker

Carl, office worker

Carl is accustomed to juggling multiple devices and stand-alone applications. On any given day, he is tied to his email, responding to and following up on queries. He also makes several calls to clients throughout the day, and even uses his personal mobile phone to text a colleague questions that can't wait for a response.
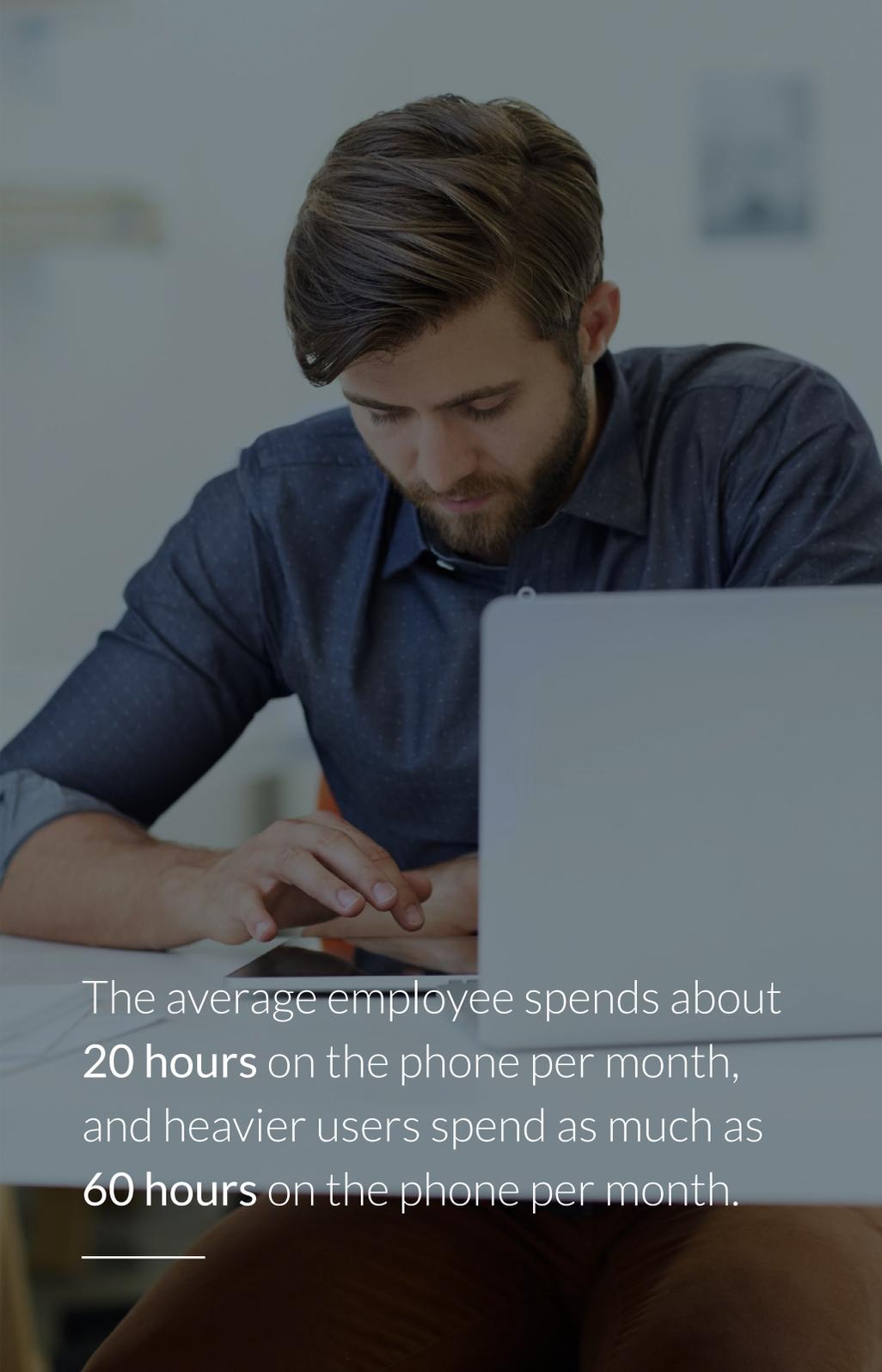
The average employee spends about **20 hours** on the phone per month, and heavier users spend as much as **60 hours** on the phone per month.

In the past, office workers have been accustomed to and relied on disparate hardware and age-old office equipment, such as fax machines, copy machines, and desk phones. This was the standard way of the workforce: to switch between devices, even walking to different locations, to get the work done.

Today, Carl relies on multiple devices: his desktop computer, desk phone, personal phone, and even his tablet, making it challenging to track his business communications and transition between applications with ease. The separation between email and phone communications causes a natural lapse in productivity and concentration, particularly when a call must be made to follow up on critical email messages.

Scheduling meetings involves additional steps, including managing calendars, email, and sometimes third-party conference or video meeting tools.

Making his situation even more difficult, Carl has been working remotely more often. He has to keep track of schedules, invites, calls, email responses, and more across devices and in different locations.
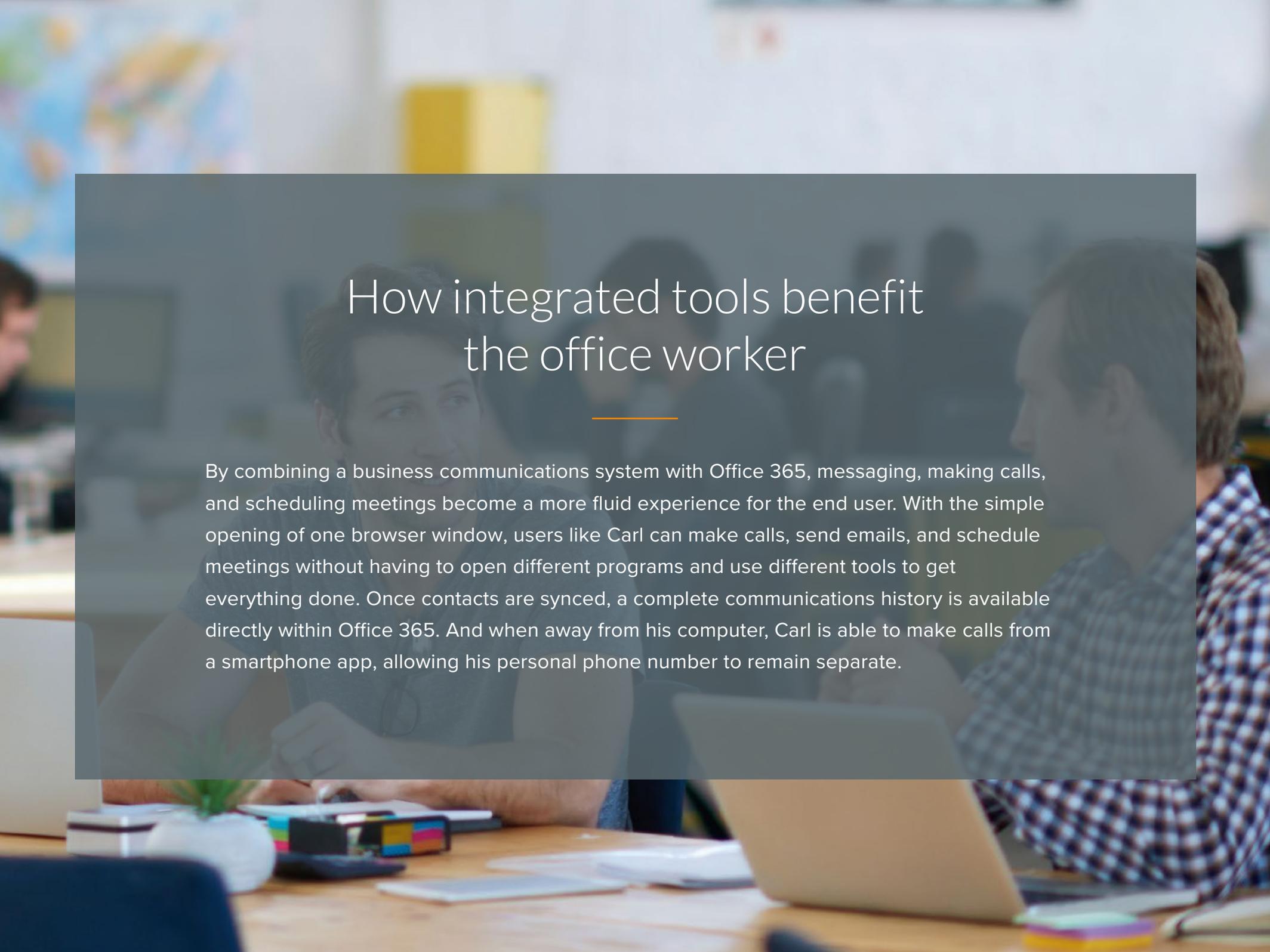
How integrated tools benefit
the office worker

By combining a business communications system with Office 365, messaging, making calls, and scheduling meetings become a more fluid experience for the end user. With the simple opening of one browser window, users like Carl can make calls, send emails, and schedule meetings without having to open different programs and use different tools to get everything done. Once contacts are synced, a complete communications history is available directly within Office 365. And when away from his computer, Carl is able to make calls from a smartphone app, allowing his personal phone number to remain separate.

Integrations use case: The remote worker

Susan, remote worker

Susan works from her home office quite far from company headquarters. With distance as a major factor, effective communication becomes even more crucial in order to complete team projects and meet company objectives in a timely manner. She works during business hours and often works overtime, so moving efficiently through her workday is of the utmost importance. For Susan, solutions like the Office 365 integration with a business communication platform save her time and effort, allowing her to feel connected while staying focused on the project at hand.
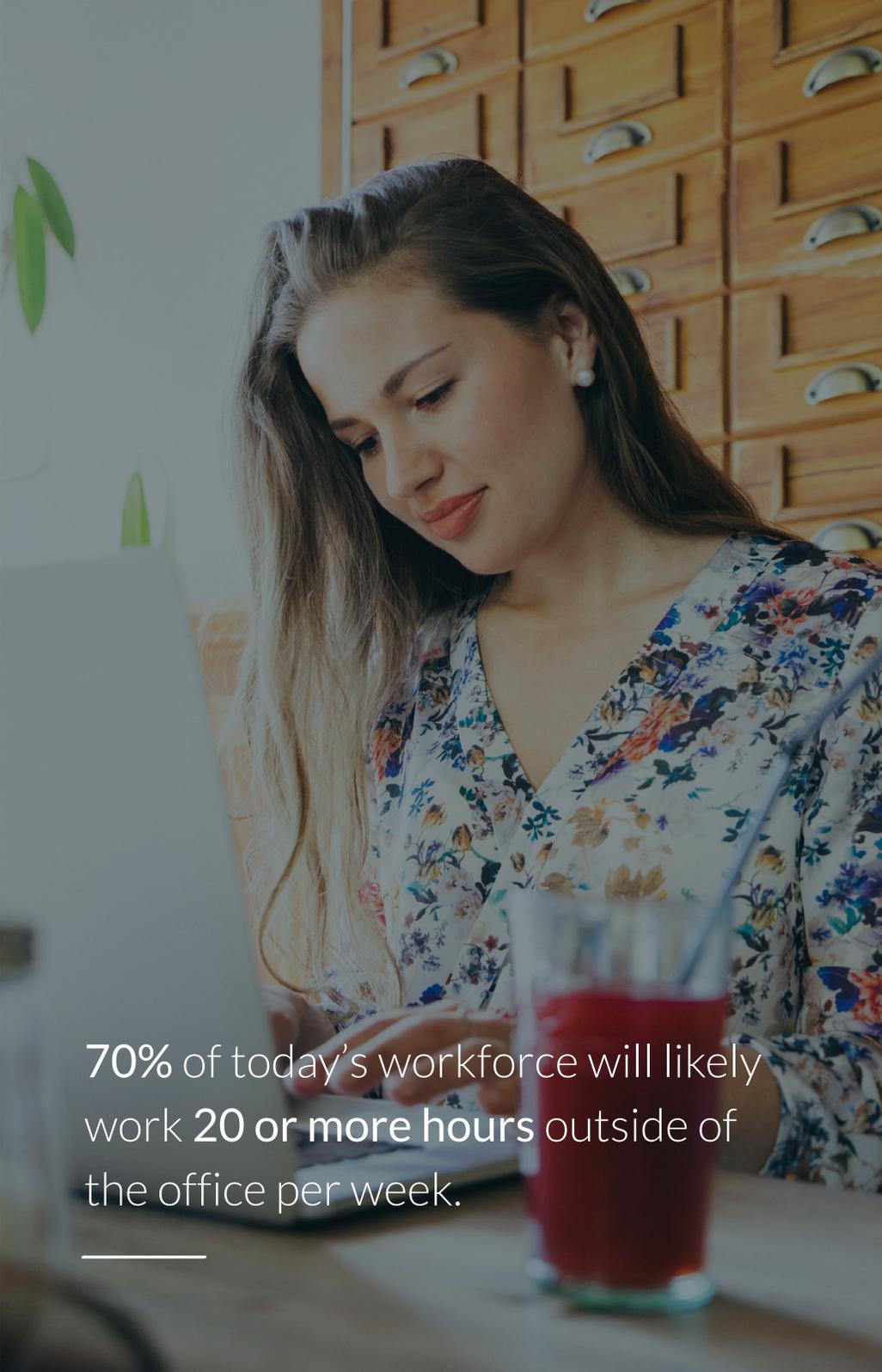
70% of today's workforce will likely work **20 or more hours** outside of the office per week.

It's estimated that over 30% of today's workforce works remotely. With more employees working from home or on the go, business communications and tools have changed to keep pace with them.

Besides the given location difference, remote employees have a unique set of challenges, including clear and consistent communication, effective team collaboration, and time-management skills.

How integrated tools benefit the remote worker

Working remotely means having to rely heavily on multiple communication tools to not only perform required tasks but to build camaraderie with fellow employees. Calls, email, messaging and even fax are considered essential for remote workers to stay in close contact with colleagues and clients.

By combining Office 365 with an enterprise communications platform, Susan can perform all these tasks from one window on her computer screen. Plus, she can easily search all her contacts, combined from both applications, on one single interface. If she chooses to use her mobile phone or a tablet, she can still keep track of all her communications, and her messages are synced. And she can still be as effective as if she was in the office.

The end benefit for remote workers like Susan is a seamless experience with maximised productivity and less time juggling multiple devices. All business communications are tracked in one single place, so she doesn't have to waste time searching for important emails, missed messages, or contact information. With an improved workflow, Susan can spend more time focusing on important projects.

Integrated tools use case:
IT manager

Peter, IT

With an already wide range of applications to maintain, adding new and individual applications to the mix can be a daunting task. Peter is responsible for the implementation and maintenance of new programs. For Peter, the ideal situation is to integrate proven, best-of-breed productivity and communication tools into one solution. This valuable type of integration provides a better-together scenario that benefits Peter and satisfies the employees he serves in the company.
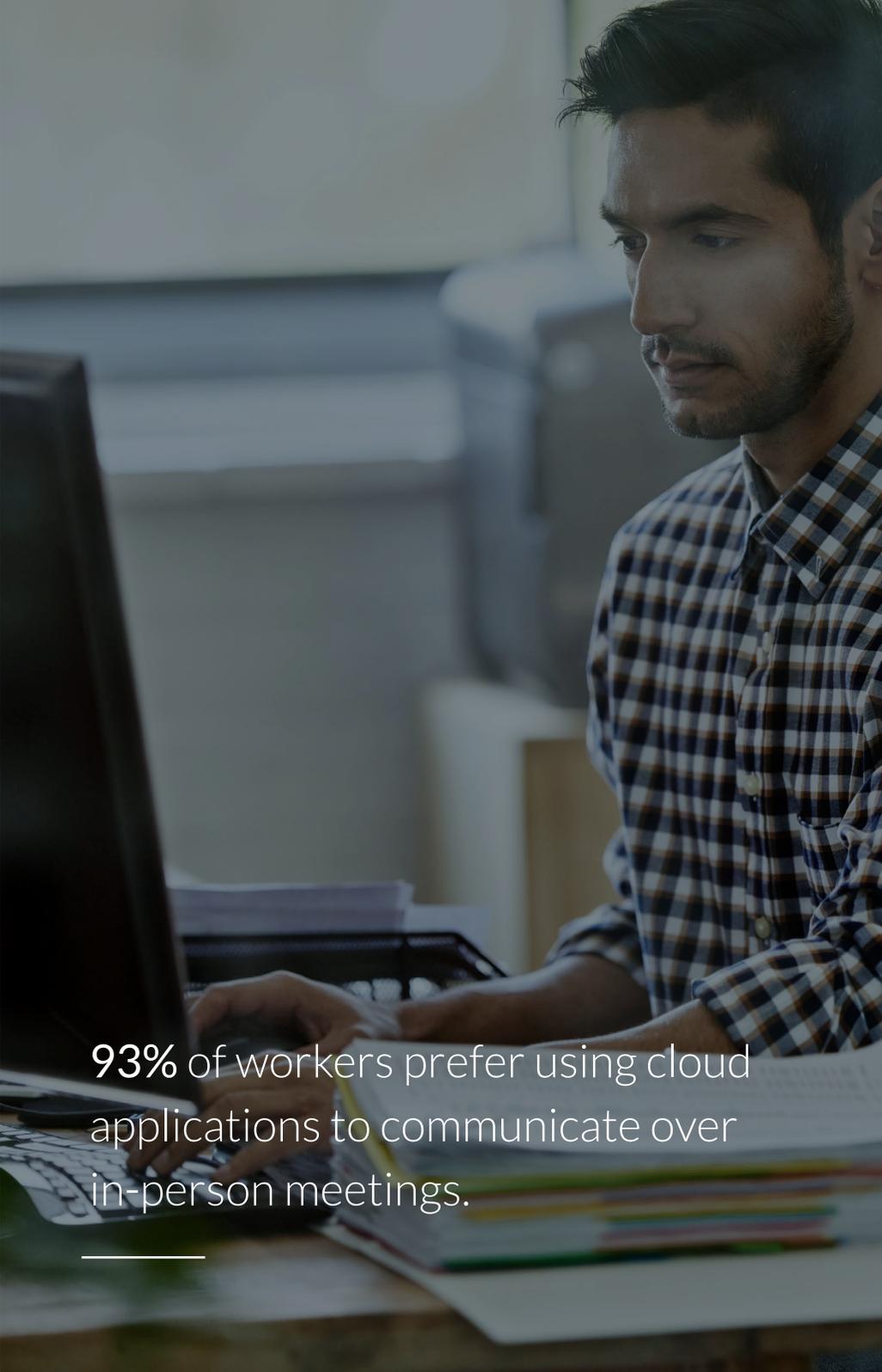
93% of workers prefer using cloud applications to communicate over in-person meetings.

In recent years, businesses have become more aware of the benefits of migrating to the cloud. IT teams have transitioned a number of applications into the cloud to support mission-critical objectives. Today, IT is also tasked with integrating unified communications into their programs.

How integrated tools benefit IT

As a critical business-initiative provider, adopting best-of-breed enterprise capabilities at scale is a requirement for Peter. By procuring out-of-the-box integrations built to blend seamlessly with existing solutions, businesses simplify administration and maintenance, while reaping the benefits of better team collaboration and increased productivity for the employees.

Most cloud applications update automatically, so Peter doesn't have to manually update a number of machines with every new feature release or patch. By default, the use of cloud applications is as good for those at headquarters as it is for the remote worker working from a home office or mobile worker traveling several days per week, leveling the playing field for all involved.

Integrations today and tomorrow

Installing and managing legacy on-premise systems depletes IT time and resources, and can easily be avoided. Now and in the future, tools that boost productivity and cloud-powered solutions are critical for businesses of all sizes. Flexible, agile, and easily scalable solutions deliver greater benefits to end users and IT alike. Effortless communications and workflow efficiency become part of the day-to-day context of business activities.

By integrating a cloud communications system with Office 365, businesses gain a robust, best-of-breed solution that merges all business communications into one productive cloud work environment. Programs like Microsoft Office 365 are transformed into the hub for efficient, enterprise-grade communications that boost productivity across the organisation.

About RingCentral

RingCentral, Inc. (NYSE: RNG) is a leading provider of global enterprise cloud communications, collaboration, and contact centre solutions. More flexible and cost-effective than legacy on-premises systems, the RingCentral platform empowers employees to work better together from any location, on any device, and via any mode to serve customers, improving business efficiency and customer satisfaction. The company provides unified voice, video meetings, team messaging, digital customer engagement, and integrated contact centre solutions for enterprises globally. RingCentral's open platform integrates with leading business apps and enables customers to easily customise business workflows. RingCentral is headquartered in Belmont, California, and has offices around the world.