Kensington®

The Future of Working From Home

How to maximise wellbeing, productivity
and data protection in the home office.

Kensington help your employees and colleagues to work like pros – wherever they are.

1. Introduction

1.1 The growth of remote working

Remote working has been popular for some time now. People enjoy the flexibility it brings as well as the chance to save time and money from not having to commute. There are benefits for businesses too, as they can save on costs such as utilities and office space. However, until recently the average office worker still spent most, or at least some, of their time based in their organisation's physical building.

Then along came 2020. Remote work became a necessity for almost every organisation with office-based workers. It was tough for some to adjust initially. However, plenty of people have now embraced the working from home lifestyle. In fact, only 33% of digital workers would now select the office as their preferred place to work.

It's impossible to predict the future, but the speed at which many industries have started adapting to a work-from-home culture suggests working outside of the traditional office environment will continue to become the norm. It is time for organisations to take stock of their existing strategies for facilitating remote work and ask: are we doing enough to support employee wellbeing and productivity, and keep our data secure in a new IT landscape – over the long term?

1.2 Can you work effectively using just a laptop, 2-in-1 device or tablets?

Even pre-2020, working from a desktop PC every day was the exception instead of the norm. While desktop PCs are useful for tasks that need more computer power, many businesses prefer to kit their staff out with portable devices for added flexibility and mobility. This is important to employees. A 2019 Fuze survey showed that 54% of employees were willing to change jobs for greater flexibility – and 83% felt they didn't need to be in the office to be productive.

However, as so many remote working strategies had to be rushed through due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many people were left with far from ideal setups compared to their office workstations. People were working from sofas, dining tables and even in gardens when the weather was good. Most of the time employees worked from their laptop only with no other equipment. This approach was sufficient to keep business going and stay connected at the start of the pandemic. However, it is not a long-term solution for wellbeing, productivity, or data protection.

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1.3 The right equipment for remote workers

Fifty years ago, it was common practice for a PC screen to be integrated with the keyboard. However, this led to frequent complaints about musculoskeletal discomfort. The problem was that everything was crammed together – so new guidelines in the 1970s called for the separation of the keyboard, mouse and screen. This gave people the ability to adjust their individual workstations. Now, for the sake of mobility, laptops are designed with all the components crammed back together again.

The negative effects of working from a laptop in a non-ergonomic environment are not always immediately obvious. They start small and get worse over time. These effects can include fatigue and discomfort caused by bad posture, repetitive strains on joints, and eye strain. Laptops also create data security headaches for organisations, as people are not always as protected on their home networks as they are in the office. Plus, laptops are far easier to lose or steal.

Thankfully, Kensington have the tools to help anyone work like a pro – wherever they are. We aim to fully support the seamless adjustment to a work-from-home landscape by providing solutions for organisations in three key areas: wellbeing, productivity, and data security.

2. Wellbeing

2.1 Investing in ergonomics

When people work from laptops on unsuitable surfaces, aches and pains are an inevitability over time. Perhaps not after a week, but almost certainly after months or even years. When people work in a normal office setting, they tend to have proper furniture with an adjustable chair and height appropriate table because businesses are required to follow certain health and safety regulations. These typical office set ups may or may not include adjustable ergonomic equipment beyond adjustable furniture. Even then, work injuries are surprisingly common – almost 2 million workers a year suffer RSI injuries and almost 600,000 take time off each year for treatment.

The word ergonomics comes from the Greek word 'ergon' which means work and 'nomos' which means laws. It essentially means the 'laws of work' or 'science of work' and is all about optimising the interaction between the work environment and the worker. There's no enforceable requirement for remote users to work ergonomically – however changes to assessments and regulations may be on the horizon. Kensington can help you to proactively give your employees the support they need.

For example, we took a deep dive into how a curved or split type Kensington ergonomic keyboard stacked up against the competition. Our team gave typing tests to 30 regular computer users to complete over two weeks. The users had never typed on a curved or split keyboard before. Their average typing speed increased in less than two weeks of use, showing 68% less bilateral ulnar deviation and 77% less bilateral wrist extension than when using their old keyboard. If not addressed, these are movements that can potentially lead to discomfort, pain and injury.

Kensington ergonomic keyboards encourage neutral postures in the wrists and forearms, preventing serious computer-related repetitive strain injuries. It's these types of benefits that make ergonomic products such a worthwhile investment.

When using an ergonomic keyboard

68%

less bilateral ulnar deviation.

77%

less bilateral wrist extension than when using their old keyboard.

28%

fewer sick days to deal with when workplace wellness programs are in place.

91%

of workers at companies that support wellbeing say they feel motivated to do their best.

2.2 The value of wellness

Wellness programs help people adopt and maintain behaviours that form long-term healthy lifestyles. This isn't just a nice-to-have only for the benefit of employees – it brings tangible business benefits too. Happier, healthier colleagues will produce far better results than people who contend with niggling aches and pains. Businesses have a significant 28% fewer sick days to deal with when workplace wellness programs are in place.

Kensington are able to make the remote office as healthy, productive and safe as the corporate office. Our products help you to make your employees' existing (and often sub-optimal) remote offices more ergonomic with just a few adjustments. In addition, a focus on wellbeing will always be received positively with your staff since they'll feel like you're investing in their health as well as their careers. That's why 91% of workers at companies that support wellbeing say they feel motivated to do their best.

From adjustable laptop risers, monitor stands and monitor arms to footrests, backrests and wrist supports that support posture and circulation; Kensington products enable each employee to find the right fit for all-day comfort. Of course, everyone's body is different – and one size doesn't always fit all. That's why we offer our SmartFit® hand chart to find the right fit for each individual.

Each ergonomic SmartFit product ships with a hand chart so users can easily find their correct SmartFit 'comfort colour'. By placing their hand on the chart, users can quickly determine the fit that represents their ideal setting and then adjust the SmartFit product according to the colour-coded instruction guide that is included in the package.

2.3 Ease of navigation

Aches and pains account for 24% of workdays missed through stress symptoms. The risk of this is reduced when using an external mouse and keyboard, allowing people to adjust their working posture to a more natural position, instead of being forced to bend their wrists or compress their carpal tunnel over a laptop's trackpad. The addition of wrist rests can then give a cushioned support for arms and wrists whilst adjusting the angle to ensure the wrist is resting in natural positions.

Using external IT peripherals and ergonomic equipment takes up more space, but it allows the user to expand their posture. By placing equipment at the correct distance from the user's body, it stops a hunched posture that is natural when using a laptop on its own. For example, the keyboard can be kept closer to the body while the monitor remains an arm's length away. To prevent repetitive strain injuries, the NHS also recommends:

- Screens are at eye level
- Wrists and forearms are straight and level with the floor
- Feet rest on the floor or a footrest
- Leaving a gap of about 4 to 6 inches (100mm-150mm) at the front of the desk to rest your wrists between bouts of typing

Kensington's vertical mice are ergonomically designed to fit to the shape of a user's hands. This means mouse is being moved by larger arm muscles, rather than constant pivoting from the elbow or wrist. Those small repetitive wrist movements can lead to repetitive strain injuries (RSIs) such as carpal tunnel, mouse elbow, or tenosynovitis.

2.4 Improved posture, comfort and circulation

Anyone who has suffered from back pain knows how uncomfortable it can be. 40% of work-related musculoskeletal disorders reported in the UK affect the worker's back. However, many of these could be prevented or lessened with a backrest or a footrest. Kensington offer a range of products to improve posture, comfort and circulation from head to toe. Laptop risers, height adjustable stands and monitor arms can bring screens up to eye level, avoiding eye strain and neck pain from sitting in a hunched position.

It's not all about upper body though – it can be easy to neglect the lower body when sitting down all day. Footrests support a natural stress-relieving posture, and they can be rocking, stationary or massaging. They help the user to move throughout the day and improve their posture and circulation with low-effort movements. Kensington also offer anti-fatigue mats that encourage active standing, which is great for the feet and energy levels when using a standing desk.

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2.5 Wellbeing checklist

Hopefully we have begun to show how a series of small changes can make a huge difference to employee wellbeing. Here is a set of instructions you can share with colleagues or employees to help them set their home workstations up more ergonomically, minimising the risk of ongoing discomfort and health issues.

Move your chair in close to your desk. Your stomach should be able to touch the desk.

Sit with your feet flat on the floor, and with your thighs parallel to the floor.

If your legs are reaching for the floor, support them with a footrest.

If the desk is too high and you can't adjust your chair, use a seat cushion to elevate yourself to the correct height.

Sit so that you're leaning back against the chair's back support. If you don't have an ergonomic office chair, make sure your lumbar is supported with a backrest.

Make sure you're directly facing your screen and keyboard. This means you won't have to turn your neck to look at the screen.

Your arm should be making an 'L' shape from shoulder to wrist when typing. Adjust the height of your chair so your desk or table is level with your elbows.

Position your monitor so it is at eye level and arm's length. If you're just using just a laptop, it should be raised with a laptop raiser and be connected to a separate keyboard & mouse.

Look into the far distance every 20 minutes to vary focal length and avoid eyestrain. Anti-glare and blue light filters also help reduce the amount of harmful light emitted from screens.

Take microbreaks by dropping your arms to your sides and stretching every 20 or 30 minutes. Stand, move and stretch for 5 minutes once every hour.
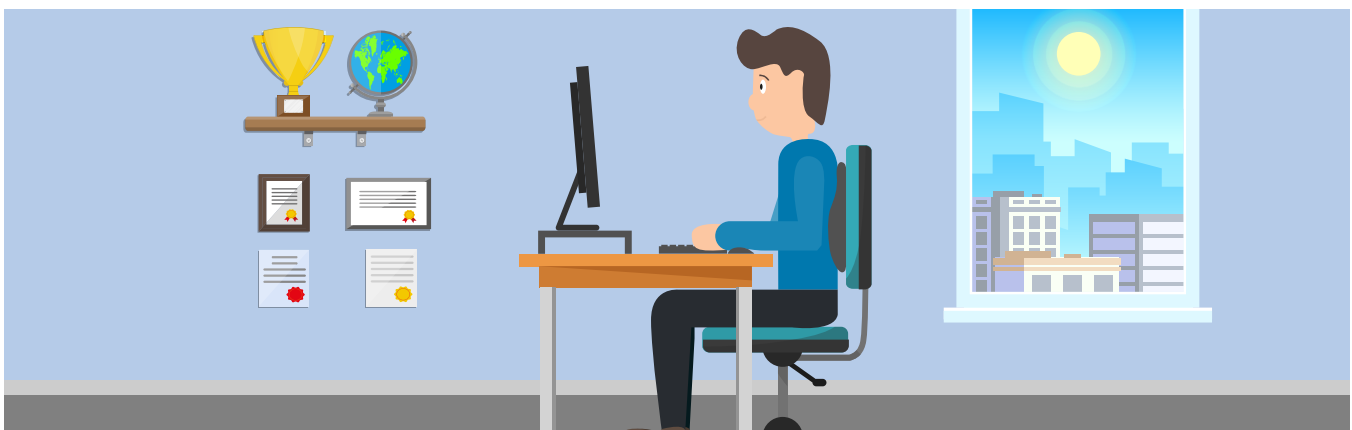
FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT KENSINGTON'S WELLBEING SOLUTIONS:

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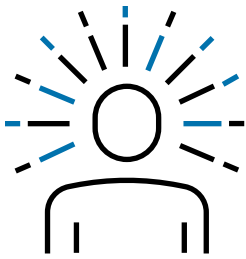
3. Productivity

3.1 The tools for productivity

The negative effects of working from a laptop in a home environment go beyond worker health. It can also have a significant impact on overall productivity. Working in an office environment typically constitutes having access to multiple monitors and a seamlessly connected range of external equipment and peripherals, including keyboards and mice. The sudden shift to widespread working from home has left a lot of people 'making do' with a laptop alone. However, the aforementioned equipment needs to be viewed as a required toolkit for productivity rather than a set of optional enhancements.

A second screen can provide a

42%

productivity increase over using a laptop alone.

Studies have shown that the addition of a second screen can provide a 42% productivity increase over using a laptop alone. An additional, larger screen enables the user to spread their work over more space and have more than one window open at any given time. This results in better visibility, easier navigation, and less time wasted opening and minimising windows.

When using a second screen, the user will also need an external keyboard and mouse, much in the style of a conventional office set up. Having a full-sized keyboard enables a more natural posture for enhanced comfort. It also reduces the amount of typing errors made, thus increasing productivity.

However, it is also worth noting that not all keyboards are created equal. In the previous section, we discussed how the Kensington team conducted typing tests to compare standard external keyboards to Kensington's curved and split keyboard models. Not only did the results show the ergonomic benefits, but the use of our specialised keyboards also increased users' average typing speeds, boosting productivity across the board.

Replacing the trackpad with an external mouse or trackball will also provide productivity benefits as it allows for more efficient scrolling across the screen. These Kensington products all allow employees to work faster and more easily, meaning they can get far more done than when they're hunched over a laptop using an integrated trackpad.

3.2 Making collaboration easier

Having the right equipment also allows teams that are working from home to collaborate even when they're physically apart. Employees aren't always given the technology they need to work from home effectively. Studies have shown that 62% of remote workers want employers to provide better technology that helps them stay connected with their colleagues. Helping people connect makes collaborative work and relationship building much easier. This can be particularly important for people who miss their colleagues and human interaction from the office.

"I think you're on mute!" is a phrase many people will have been hearing throughout the past year. Video calls and conference calls have become a necessity for many. However, the integrated microphones and speakers in laptops tend to be poor quality and can sound unprofessional on conference calls. An external headset tends to sound much better. External webcams are also useful if using a second screen, as otherwise the laptop camera may show only one side of the user's face. Kensington offer a range headsets and webcams to ensure employees look and sound their best on calls and video meetings. These tools reduce the risk of miscommunication and help teams to continue working together at their best.

3.3 Connecting users to efficiency with docks

Ergonomic products and external equipment are great – however they need to be kept connected to each other to be truly effective. Having the ideal docking station is essential to keeping remote workers productive.

Kensington make it easy to connect to second screens, mice and keyboards with our range of docks and adapters. We offer mobile docks for both home and on-the-go working, so users can keep multiple pieces of IT equipment connected with ease. We offer fixed desktop docking solutions that support dual monitors, additional expansion ports and more. Kensington also offer remote workers support for dual 4K monitors, laptop charging points and multiple USB ports for peripherals and wired Gigabit network access – for the ultimate desktop setup and efficiency that easily matches the office workplace.

3.4 Why productivity feels good

Creating a comfortable, ergonomic workstation doesn't just have an impact on employee wellbeing; it has a knock-on effect on productivity.

Comfortable employees are happier – and happier employees are more productive. It's a positive feedback cycle that leads to strong business results. Organisations with highly effective health and productivity programs report 11% higher revenue per employee, 1.8 fewer days absent per employee per year and 28% greater shareholder returns.

In the past, some might have assumed that people do less work remotely. In fact, a study by Stanford of 16,000 workers over 9 months found that working from home increases productivity by 13%. This increase in performance was due to more calls per minute attributed to a quieter, more convenient working environment, and working more minutes per shift because of fewer breaks and sick days.
In this same study, workers also reported improved work satisfaction, and attrition rates were cut by 50%. These statistics show that by combining the traditional benefits of external equipment with the emerging productivity perks of working from home, organisations can get the best from their people going forward – wherever they work.
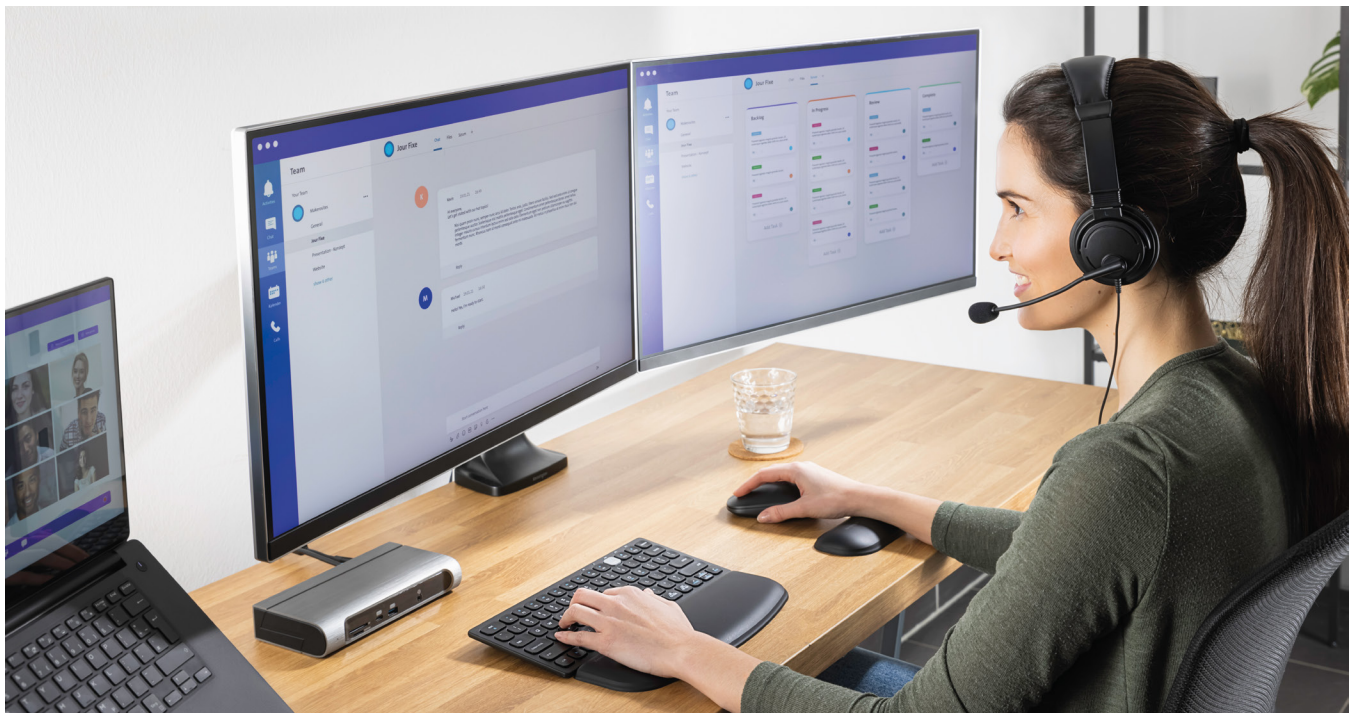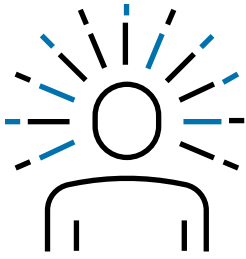
3.5 Productivity checklist

Investing in the right tools to keep people productive anywhere is a crucial step to setting up your organisation for the future of working from home. Here is a set of instructions you can use to help create home office workstations that optimise productivity for your colleagues or employees.

Give workers access to external monitors for a quick win and potential 40%+ boost in productivity.

Provide mobile or fixed desktop docking stations so people can easily and safely connect their new and existing desktop peripherals.

Offer workers ergonomic mice, keyboards and trackballs – they'll work much more effectively than from a laptop alone.

Provide headsets to make it easier for employees to make hands-free calls.

Give employees access to webcams so they can communicate via video with colleagues. External webcams can be positioned more flexibly, providing a better angle and video quality for video calls throughout the day.

Supply workers with ergonomic equipment when they are working from home. An uncomfortable employee is an unproductive employee.

Remember to consider the total health picture when evaluating the ROI of ergonomic equipment – send the message that you value your employee's wellbeing and want to help them be happy and productive.
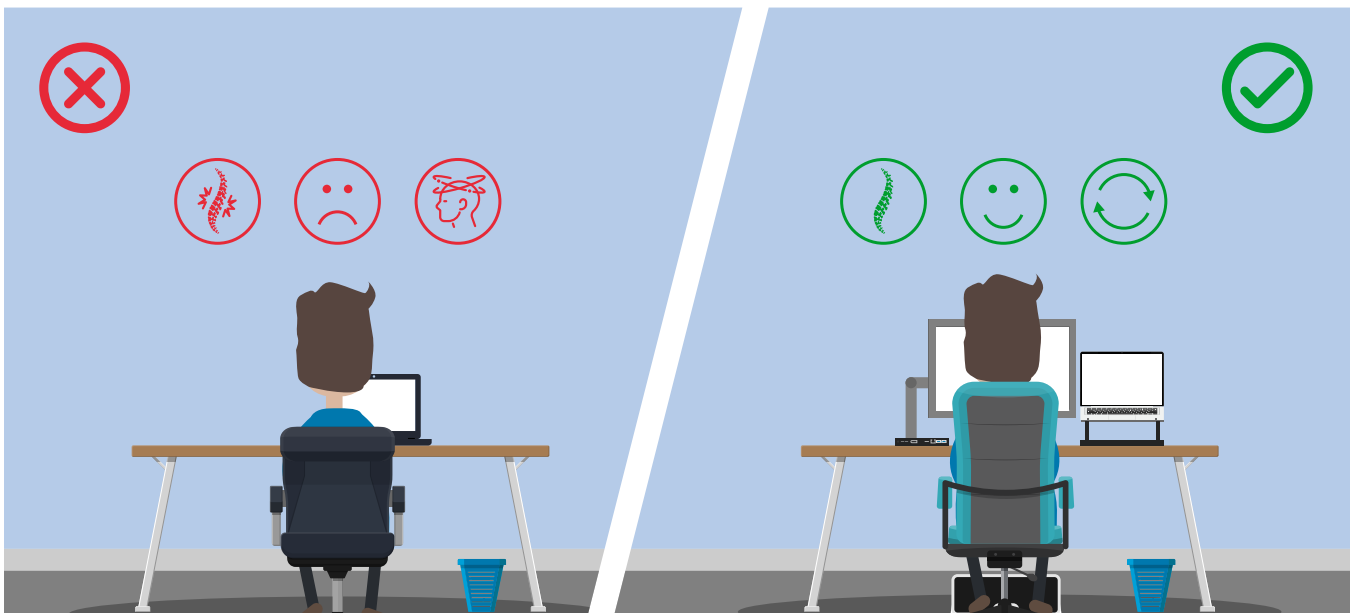
FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT KENSINGTON'S PRODUCTIVITY SOLUTIONS:

www.kensington.com/work-like-a-pro/productivity

4. Data protection

4.1 Perimeter expansion

Expensive IT equipment is closely protected in an office. Businesses employ locks, security guards, doors, cameras and alarms to guard their valuable assets. When working remotely, the reality is very different and company assets might be left in far from secure places. If an IT manager had 1,000 devices to secure in one location, now they need to consider 1,000 devices in 1,000 different locations.

Your traditional security perimeter has been scattered far and wide. Flexible and remote working mean the modern workplace is no longer a single, easy-to-secure location. And unfortunately, remote workers aren't the ones concerned about your data – which is why you need to invest in keeping your devices secure and your data safe. Thankfully, home offices don't have to be second best for security.

4.2 Risks of a breach

When 41% of data breaches are caused by a lost or stolen device, remote working has given IT managers a headache when it comes to securing devices – and more importantly, data. In modern business, it's the data stored within these devices that can be more damaging to lose when compared to the physical assets themselves. With regulations such as GDPR in place, businesses can receive serious fines for losing personal data. It's estimated that the average data breach costs $3.86M to resolve. However, the bigger the business, the larger the fines.

Cybersecurity will rightly remain a major concern for organisations. However, the physical security of devices is just as critical and can't be overlooked by IT teams. Organisations storing personally identifiable information (PII) are among the most susceptible and are highly prized targets. In the current business climate, this sensitive data is often stored on laptops within remote workers' homes. The size and portability of laptops make it much easier for them to be stolen over desktop PCs. In fact, one in ten laptops will be stolen from an organisation over the lifetime of each computer.

Visual hacking (the act of spying on someone's computer screen) is another consideration – and it's so simple that many businesses don't even consider it, instead focusing their efforts on firewalls and antivirus software. The more agile your workforce is, the more vulnerable they are to visual hacking. In more than 90% of cases where a screen is exposed, confidential data is accessed. If your employees are handling sensitive businesses data or customer information, you want to know they have complete privacy, wherever they choose to work.

41%
of data breaches are caused by a lost or stolen device.

4.3 How to physically protect your data

It makes sense for physical security to be a mandatory part of your security policy for both office and remote workers. The best way is to create a device policy that outlines the proper use and storage of devices for employees. However, it's not always easy to make sure people follow the policy. The simple answer is to make sure your security devices are easy to implement and use, without hindering user productivity.

Well-implemented security can decrease laptop theft by as much as

85%

Data protection starts with secured hardware. You need to lock down your data, whatever device your employees access it from. Kensington make it easy with our advanced selection of locks for laptops, tablets and USB ports. Unlike some of the more complicated aspects of cybersecurity, mitigating the risk of data breaches through device theft is easily attainable with Kensington. Well-implemented security can decrease laptop theft by as much as 85% .

High-quality physical locks can provide IT managers with valuable peace of mind by preventing device theft and subsequent data loss that could cost their business millions of dollars. If you're unsure which locks would be best for your employees' devices, take advantage of the Kensington Lock Selector. The user can enter their device and we'll let them know which lock works best with it.

Kensington's Register & Retrieve™ (R&R) system also makes the management of master keys simple and is ideal for when employees are working in various locations. If each user registers their lock on the R&R portal, then replacement keys can be easily re-ordered in the event of their loss. The system allows the keys to be dispatched to the user's home address rather than requiring the IT manager to use their master key to unlock the device.

Finally, Kensington also offer privacy screen filters for a quick and simple way to prevent unauthorised viewing. With features such as anti-glare and blue light filtering, they're now a multipurpose tool that not only shield sensitive data from prying eyes, but make using a laptop, desktop computer or tablet a lot more comfortable for the user. Users or IT managers can enter their specific device into the Kensington Privacy Selector to find the filter that works best for them. With all our data security products, our mission is to offer simple solutions with seamless security.

4.4 From locks to biometrics and encryption

Kensington invented the first computer cable lock over 25 years ago, so we know a thing or two about computer security. We're the world's most trusted brand when it comes to securing electronics – and we've actually sold enough locks and cables to circle the globe twice. Kensington's offering of traditional locks includes keyed locks, combination locks, desktop locks and anchor points.

We've sold enough locks and cables to circle the globe twice.

Of course, times have advanced, and our security offerings have evolved with them. We now offer biometric and electric locking along with traditional locks to make sure your belongings stay exactly where they are. Our next-generation security solutions include compact, slimline locks for ultra-thin laptops, locking stations for devices without a security slot such as Apple MacBooks, and solutions for the Microsoft Surface family.

Our biometric fingerprint keys create an extra layer of protection while still being easy for remote workers to use. Biometric finger keys give devices and online services the protection of single-factor (passwordless), dual, multi-factor, and Tap-and-Go authentication. This means someone would either authenticate with a fingerprint or need both a biometric key (fingerprint) and password to gain access to a device or online service.

Tap-and-Go combines a username and password with second-factor security key authentication. Windows Hello and Hello for business offer secure biometric login to Windows 10 devices, using FIDO U2F and FIDO2 protocols which are the latest in comprehensive online security. When using cloud services that store sensitive information, two-factor authentication (2FA) should always be used for increased security. Kensington's biometric solutions for 2FA are compatible with various cloud services such as AWS, Dropbox, Github, Google Cloud, Salesforce, Shopify, & more. With new services being added all the time, our biometric fingerprint keys offer the latest standards for a secure and reliable authentication.

Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) is another key security measure that comes as standard on many Kensington accessories. AES is a security standard chosen by the U.S. government to protect classified information in software and hardware throughout the world. Using cryptographic keys of 128, 192, and 256 bits, this standard provides end-to-end encryption that ensures data can't be deciphered even if it's intercepted. Without this security feature, your corporate network is vulnerable to cyberattacks.

Whether they use traditional or cutting-edge technology, Kensington devices all have three things in common: they're tough, innovative, and easy to use. They're also compatible with 95% of laptops, as well as many other devices such as hard drives, projectors, printers and monitors. Kensington's locking solutions enable you to easily protect your most vital business assets – your devices and the confidential data that's on them.

Kensington®

4.5 Data Security Checklist

We have detailed the new dispersed landscape of data security and have started to show you how to keep your organisation's data secure now employees work beyond the traditional security perimeter. Here is a set of instructions you can use to determine you have the right measures in place for a more secure future of working from home.

Assess your risk profile – where are your devices and what's stored on them?

Decide which type of locking solution suits your staff and business best.

Invest in the right locks for your business – at least one for every device.

Ensure that all lock users register their locks on registerandretrieve.kensington.com to enable IT to source replacement keys easily if needed.

Create a lock policy and compliance document that shows employees what they need to do.

Provide employees with privacy screens that prevent visual hacking.

Upgrade to biometric locks for an added layer of authentication on user devices.

Enforce 2FA when logging in to cloud-based services where sensitive data is stored.

Choose devices with AES encrypted peripherals.

Revisit your data security policy regularly, and update your locking solution as and when required.

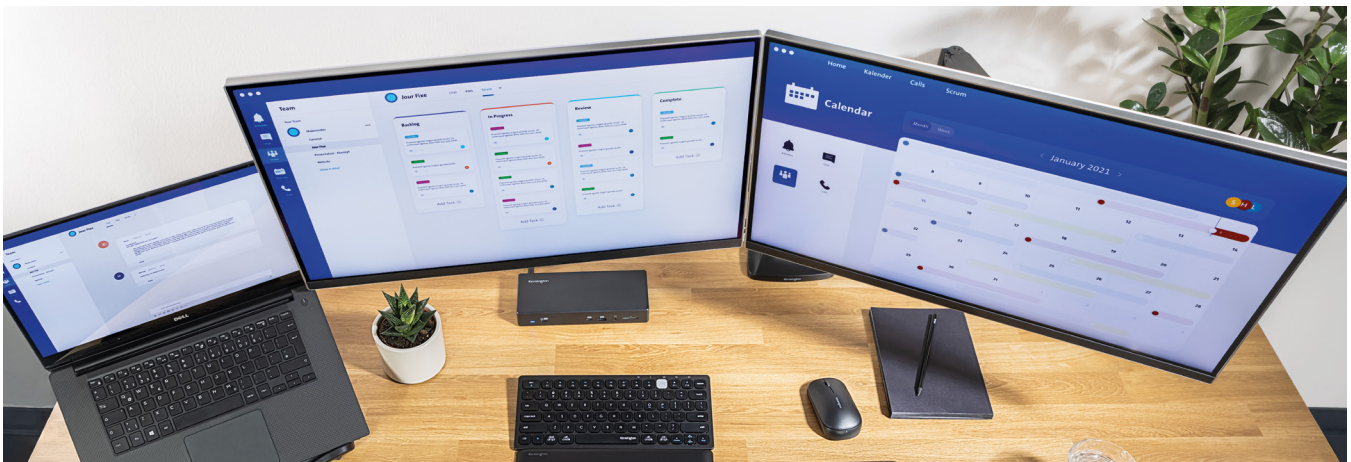**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT KENSINGTON'S DATA PROTECTION SOLUTIONS:**

www.kensington.com/work-like-a-pro/data-protection

5. Summary

The time to think about tomorrow's work-from-home culture...is today. With the events of 2020 accelerating the shift to remote working as the new standard practice, organisations need to have comprehensive, long-term strategies in place. These strategies need to protect both their employees and their data beyond the boundaries of the traditional workspace.

Thankfully, Kensington offer the tools you need to make the remote office as productive, healthy and safe as the workplace going forward. Our longstanding commitment to creating ergonomic work environments allows us to provide a full range of equipment that can continuously support the wellbeing and comfort of people working from home. Your organisation can also equip remote employees for productivity by investing in our external equipment and docking solutions. When it comes to keeping your organisation's data secure beyond the traditional IT perimeter, Kensington offer a combination of hardware security (from high-quality device locks to privacy screens), biometrics, and encryption for long-term data protection.

Kensington provide support for large one-off IT projects, rollouts, or tenders – as well as offering post-purchase tech support across our portfolio. Only Kensington offers a complete work-from-home solution to maximise productivity and wellbeing while keeping your organisation's data protected in the years to come.

Kensington

The Professionals' Choice™