

Adopting new technology in a post-pandemic landscape

As organizations adapt to their post-pandemic new normal, they are finding that the collective response to a global health crisis has drastically changed how they do business, both internally and externally. To maintain business continuity and productivity, many organizations turned to technology to support remote workers, move operations online, and find ways to stay relevant in a highly uncertain market.

For less tech-focused businesses, this approach required a massive shift in priorities and resources. In some cases, organizations accelerated their digital transformation initiatives from five years out—or even ten—to a matter of months.

This increased demand for technology—software-as-a-service (SaaS) solutions in particular—created even more work for IT departments that were already stretched thin. Now, IT teams are juggling their day-to-day responsibilities, supporting remote and hybrid work environments, implementing new infrastructure and technology, and doing it all during a historic [shortage of skilled technology talent](#).

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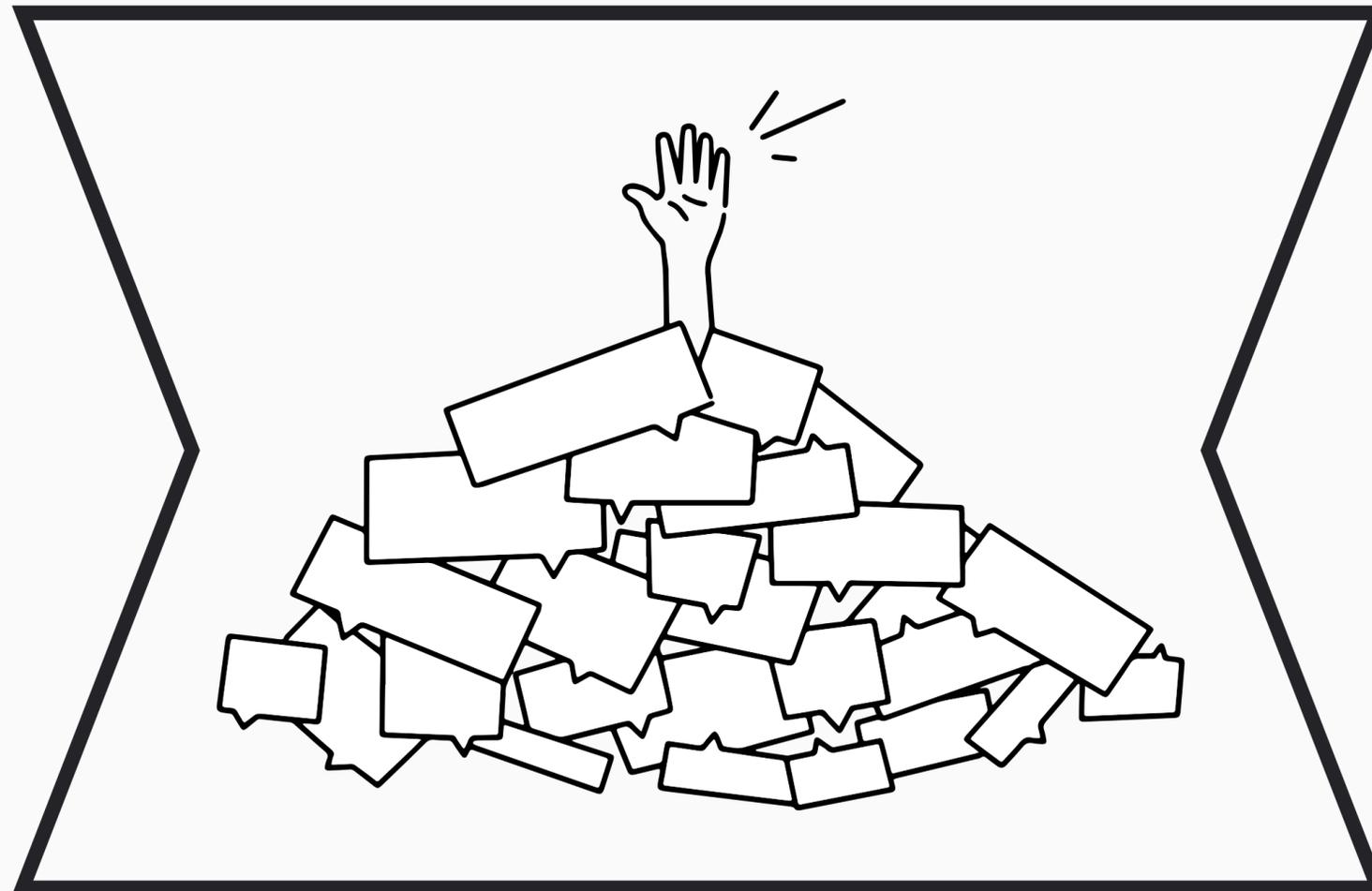
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Chapter 1

Adopting technology in the age of COVID-19

During the pandemic, the need to maintain business continuity and hold on to normalcy drove high adoption rates for cloud-based tools. And with millions of employees working remotely, the demand for productivity, collaboration, and storage solutions skyrocketed. As a result, IT teams had to take fast action to secure remote access to sensitive company data and applications. Here are some of the biggest challenges organizations faced in the wake of COVID-19:



Productivity

Solutions like Microsoft 365 and Google Workspace were already widely used before the pandemic. However, with the abrupt pivot to remote work, these solutions became a lifeline for organizations to continue operations. And because they already had the licenses, many organizations expanded to other parts of the Microsoft 365 stack—such as Microsoft Teams.

Collaboration

One of the biggest challenges faced by remote teams was effectively collaborating without sharing the same physical space. Soon enough, Zoom became a household name as the gathering place for everything from quarterly profit-and-loss (P&L) meetings to employee reviews to birthday celebrations.

Security

[Ransomware and phishing scams increased significantly](#) over the past two years as hackers zeroed in on distracted remote workers and their less-secure environments. Without the protection of the office security perimeter, bad actors found it much easier to exploit vulnerabilities and find an “in.”

Storage

Remote workers still needed to access and share company files and documents. Unfortunately, many organizations relied on internal storage solutions that were no longer useful when the company moved out of the office en masse.

From the IT team’s perspective, new technology adoption was both a blessing and a curse. Yes, cloud-based solutions made supporting a remote workforce easier. However, as the people tasked with acquiring the best solutions and training the entire organization on how to use them effectively, IT teams were again asked to perform superhuman feats.

As IT entered the maelstrom of researching end-user training—usually without an efficient training strategy—many workers jumped in and tried to learn the technology proactively. Not because the organization required it, but because self-learning was necessary to do their jobs effectively.

So essentially, millions of new remote workers were leveraging unfamiliar technology to do their jobs in less-than-ideal conditions.

As organizations settle into more permanent working arrangements—whether it’s remote, in-office, or a combination of the two—many are opting to continue using technologies they initially adopted to meet pandemic business needs.

But even now, these organizations lack the knowledge required to make the most of these tools and achieve the best business ROI.





Chapter 2

Saving money and enabling innovation is an uphill battle for IT

One of the biggest challenges IT teams face is ensuring the organization's investments in new technology pay off.

The fact is, most new technology is purchased because leadership wants to achieve one of two goals: increasing cost savings and efficiency or enabling innovation with best-in-class software.

Enterprise IT managers are tasked with creating a strategy that meets both of these goals. However, balancing individual and departmental needs with the security and business objectives of the organization can feel impossible.

Cost savings

If IT needs to reduce costs and maximize efficiency by centralizing all of the organization's tools, they should address factors like shadow IT first.

When individual departments buy their own software, IT can't track the tech. This means IT can't know how much the department is spending on a software solution, how well the tools are being used, whether security protocols are being followed, or if the tool is the most economical or productive option.

Innovation

If innovating with best-in-class solutions is the primary objective, IT will want to deploy tools best aligned with every organizational need.

As noted earlier, departments other than IT often invest in software that meets specific use cases. So for many large enterprises, instead of having one or two applications beyond the standard Microsoft 365, three or more is standard.

But when organizations use multiple stacks, the IT manager must support disparate needs across the organization and encourage correct usage of multiple applications if they want to maximize the company's investments.

Otherwise, after a year or two, the IT manager will end up in an uncomfortable conversation with an executive who wants to know why they are spending so much money on a tool nobody is using correctly.



Understanding user pushback against new skills and technologies

In today's organizations, IT teams often struggle to support so many technologies, never mind all the possible use cases. But at the end of the day, the end user is the real victim.

Now more than ever, users are having new technology thrown at them with the directive: "Here are your tools, here is your work—go make things happen."

But without high levels of support, end users can't use these tools effectively, meaning productivity, morale, and work quality all suffer. There are also times when support and technology training are readily available, but users are less than open to the opportunity.

Getting users on board with [adopting new technology](#) or learning a new skill set is rarely easy. Humans are naturally resistant to change, even when that change benefits them.

There are many reasons users tend to push back against new technology, ranging from fear of the unknown to lack of bandwidth to an "if it's not broken, don't fix it" mentality.

When introducing new tools and technologies, IT teams need to prepare for some level of reluctance, arm themselves with empathy and understanding, and find a partner who can enable them to resolve common tech adoption challenges.



Building skills with BrainStorm QuickHelp™

If the events of 2020 taught the business world one thing, it's that technology can be deployed. And it can happen in a matter of months, not years.

However, just because IT can deploy new software doesn't mean employees will fully adopt it and permanently change their behaviors.

BrainStorm enables organizations to drive new technology adoption beyond deployment and initial use. By using a simple ladder framework that embraces a "deploy-use-adopt-change" approach, BrainStorm creates a culture of real, transformative change.

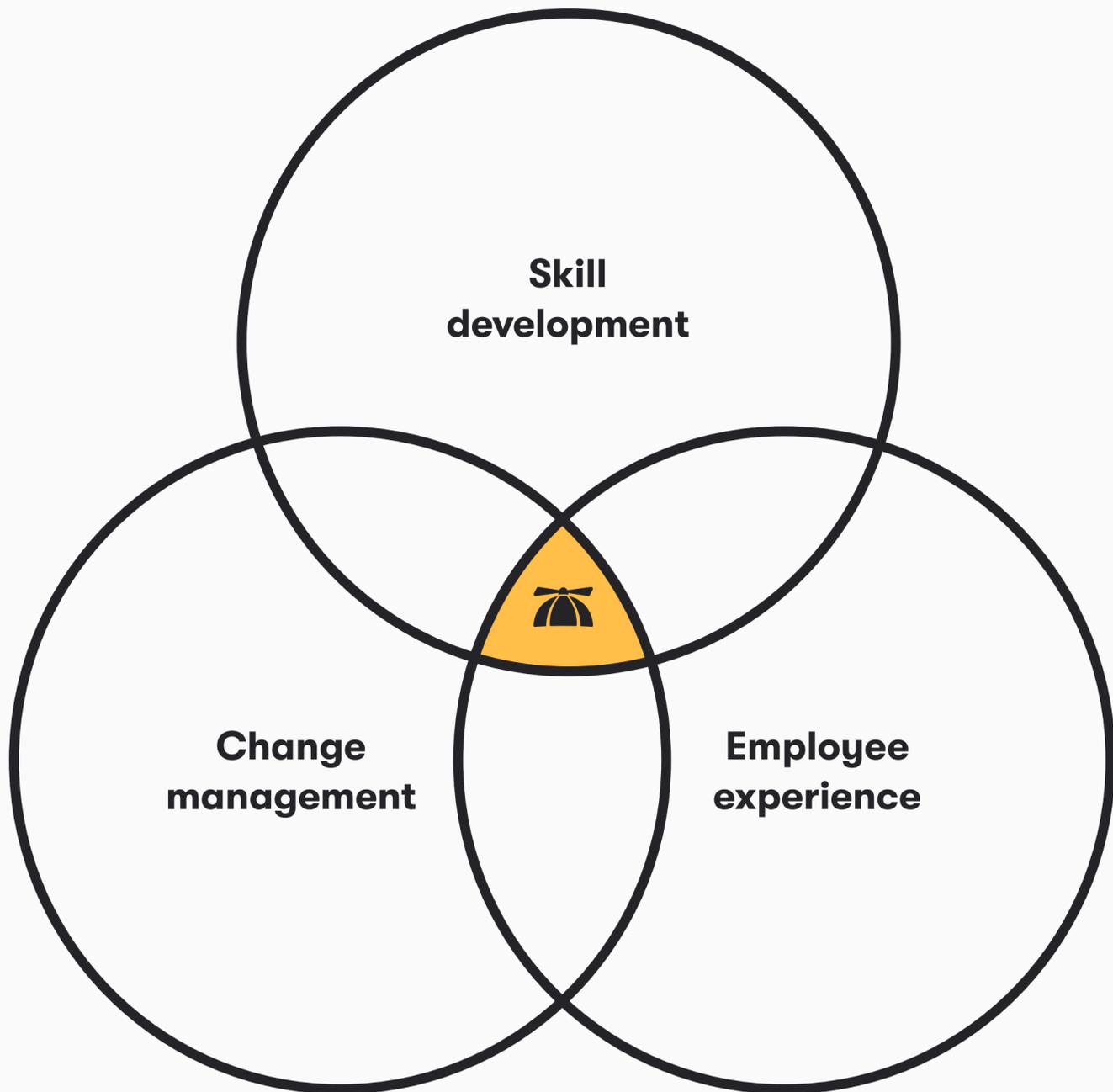
Case in point: As companies ramped up their remote workplaces in 2020, the most viewed BrainStorm QuickHelp video was "How do I join a meeting in Microsoft Teams?" More recently, users have searched QuickHelp content about using the @ symbol to mention users, teams, and channels.

The implications of this QuickHelp data are interesting. Earlier in the pandemic, remote workers were unfamiliar with the basics of joining a Teams meeting. Now, they are learning to collaborate in productive, efficient, and organic ways that more closely align with pre-pandemic practices.

BrainStorm QuickHelp personalizes the learning experience in a way that empowers users to embrace lasting behavioral changes that apply not only to the current deployment, but also to all future technology adoptions.

And because BrainStorm offers support for mixed environments, organizations can take a Lego-like approach to technology training and stack on elements that align to their organizational objectives and tools, whether that happens inside Teams, Zoom, Slack, Dropbox, Smartsheet, or any combination thereof.





Chapter 5

Driving technology adoption with BrainStorm QuickHelp

BrainStorm QuickHelp is a SaaS platform that combines research-backed training methodologies with big data and machine learning to support every organization's technology adoption journey.



Understand

BrainStorm focuses on the people-side of learning, with technology that moves beyond learning management systems to:

- Personalize the experience: BrainStorm QuickHelp creates unique learning journeys that focus on users' specific job roles and skill sets. Engaging, bite-size lessons and Quick Start Cards make learning easy.
- Foster multimodal learning: Unlike many in-house training initiatives, QuickHelp uses a variety of teaching formats that give users the ability to learn their own way, including videos, PDF files, and live events.
- Reinforce skills: Hands-on practice and targeted challenges strengthen learning and encourage users to apply their new skills. Gamification using badges and company standings highlights users' achievements and shows how their efforts stack up against that of their peers.
- Track success: BrainStorm QuickHelp uses customized dashboards with graphical data to show IT where the software adoption initiatives are succeeding and where there is room for improvement.

Change management

BrainStorm believes in a highly personalized approach to [change management](#). Our focus on user experience [gets users on board with the technology adoption](#) in a way that prevents frustration, alleviates IT workloads, and helps organizations reach their goals.

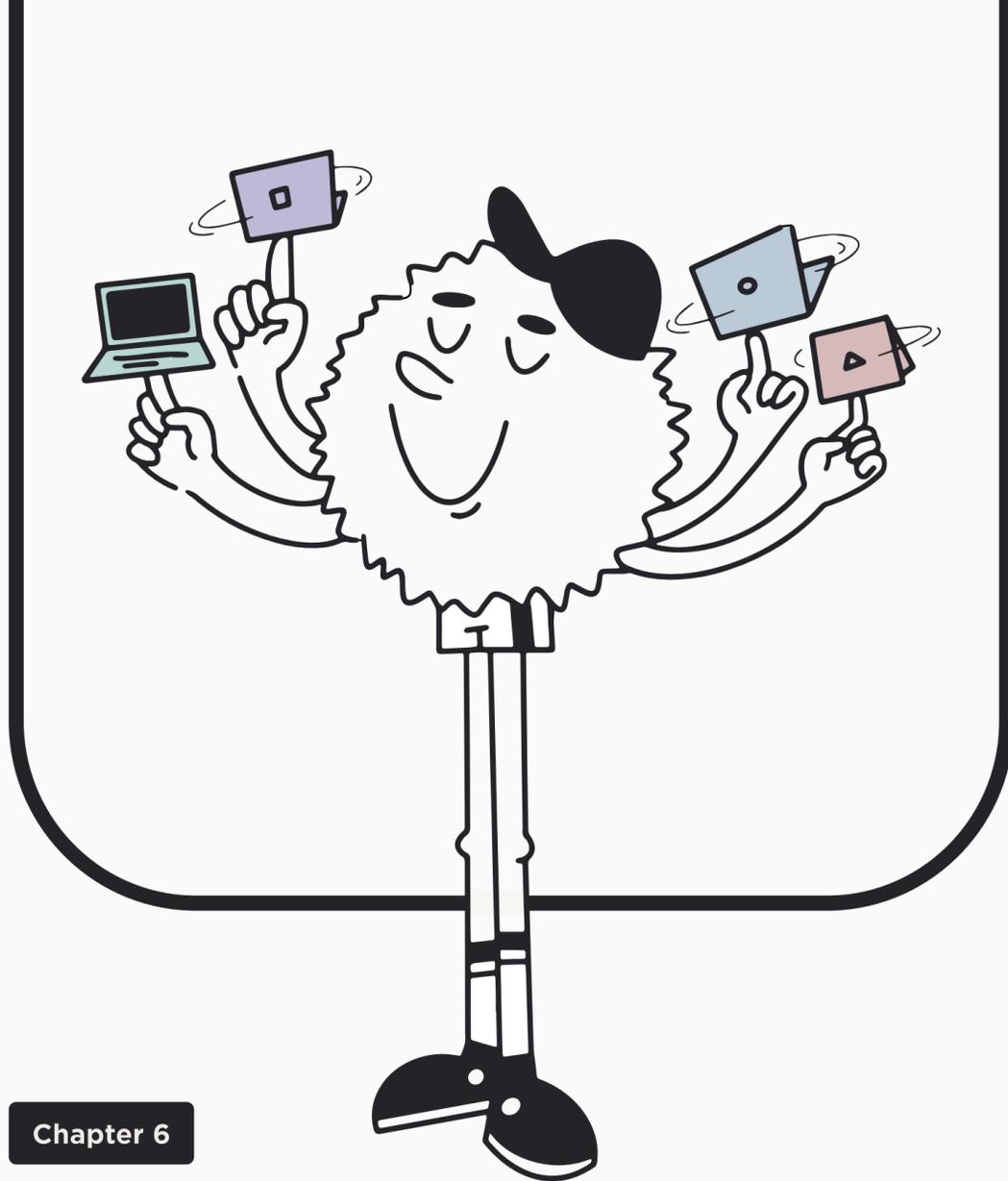
Skill development

BrainStorm offers an individualized approach to organizational change by leveraging machine learning and meeting users where they are. With its open platform, BrainStorm also helps organizations create their own proprietary content, customizing the learning experience to the specific needs of users and teams.

Employee experience

BrainStorm's content is based on real-life business scenarios. This means users don't just tolerate their tech—they are empowered to change their technology habits. The BrainStorm platform engages users from every angle with multiple types of content available at their fingertips.





Chapter 6

Empowering users to own new technology adoption

There is a misconception that IT just needs a place to send people for training on the business' tools and technology. But empowering users to own their technology doesn't start there—that's where the journey ends.

Even when organizations have a place to send users for training and skill development, they still need to create a culture that personalizes relevant information at scale for end-user audiences.

Targeting users and groups with content relevant to them and their specific needs creates proactive user journeys and drives the adoption of new technologies.

Still—if the whole plan is to create a portal, add training materials for all the applications the organization uses, and hope users show up, the plan will not succeed.

The ideal training process ends with users who are more engaged with the technology and proactive in supporting themselves. QuickHelp offers tier-zero support to users, meaning IT doesn't constantly have to help them. Users are empowered to take control of their technology with resources that meet their specific needs.

Don't just hope users will get on board ... help them take control of their learning with BrainStorm.

[See BrainStorm in action](#)