

Flexible Working

In 1994, Mercury Communications¹ introduced the concept of Flexible Working throughout its UK offices. The major benefit was perceived to be that of greater productivity of employees through reduced travelling time and broadening of the range of working practices. Employees were able to work from home, on the move and from other Mercury buildings. The then existing allocation of one desk per employee was rationalised so that the mobile workers utilised fewer desks, thereby optimising space utilisation and reducing accommodation costs. A key player at Mercury was Chris Ridgewell² and I was pleased to have been part of the virtual team that was leading the charge within Mercury, and with Mercury's clients as well, on Location Independent Working (LIW).

That was nearly thirty years ago. Today, because of the recent pandemic, many companies implemented the option of LIW as a means to avoid the spread of COVID-19, while keeping the company going. This option is, perhaps, even more important for SME and Micro companies going forward, where the loss of a single member of staff could be disastrous.

What Can You Do

So, what can you do as a key decision-maker in your company – particularly if the concept of LIW is new to you? I am pleased to advise that Wisework are able to help and you can download two useful guides as follows:

Working at Home – the Productivity Tool of the Future

This report is based on a survey of home workers carried out by Peter Thomson for the Telework Association. It shows major increases in productivity compared with working in conventional workplaces. [Download for free here](#)

A Brief Guide to Flexible Working

This guide was produced by Wisework as part of the government's Nomad Project to help spread the understanding of flexible and remote working. It provides a general overview of the benefits and gives advice on implementation. [Download for free here](#)

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¹ Mercury Communications was a national telephone company in the United Kingdom, formed in 1981 as a subsidiary of Cable & Wireless, to challenge the then-monopoly of British Telecom (BT).

² Chris Ridgewell was manager of flexible working applications at Mercury Communications. He later went on to co-found the flexible working management consultancy, Wisework Ltd