



## **Working from home: An Experiment**

A virus is turning the world's business world upside down. Karl Heinz Mosbach, CEO of ELO Digital Office GmbH, explains that the degree of digitization at companies is ultimately the deciding factor when it comes to productive remote work.

### **Mr. Mosbach, the corona crisis has managed to do something that many years of technological progress couldn't basically overnight: The OECD world is working from home. How is this going?**

It's definitely an experience sending 100% of the team to work from home. At least it is for us – and as a company focused on digitizing business processes, of course we are ahead of the pack. I'd go as far as saying that this experiment has gone astoundingly well for ELO Digital Office up to now. And there are sure to be many companies experiencing the same positive results. Businesses where digitization didn't play a large role up to now – they are having trouble with remote working or aren't even able to offer the option at all. This is the case in many areas of public administration, for example, and goes to show how far behind some countries are in terms of digitization compared to other countries.

### **Does this mean that the crisis may result in some rethinking and, in particular, increased investments into digitization?**

I hope so! After all, people are inclined to quickly forget a crisis once it's over. The fact is: Considering our expertise and knowledge, we could be much farther down the road.

### **So, what's holding us back?**

Prosperity tends to make us sluggish, and some economies have been excellent in recent years. The corona crisis will likely reshuffle the deck. Policy makers have demonstrated that it's possible to act quickly and with determination. This is what we need when it comes to digitization if we don't want to become the extended workbench of China and the US.

### **Is now the time to invest and encourage digitization?**

Right now. Take a look at the countries that are managing the corona crisis relatively well. The degree of digitization in these nations is very high, for example in Singapore or South Korea, where both communication and the testing situation are considerably better, which has a positive effect on the number of cases.

**Many industries have become quite creative in response to the corona crisis in order to keep their businesses running. What has impressed you most?**

Honestly, what impresses me most is how everyone is sticking together – pictures of people singing on their balconies in Italy, companies introducing initiatives to donate alcohol for disinfectant or converting their production facilities to manufacture protective clothing without hesitation.

**Do you think this forced work-from-home "experiment" will develop into a new work culture?**

As working from home was only an option for a small number of employees up to now, I think that both companies and employees can learn lots from the current situation – for example that it's possible to manage an entire company from home, that productivity remains high with staff working from home, and that communication may even improve. The increase in communication brought about by distance was a pleasant surprise. We will definitely learn some lessons from this current situation, and I am certain that we are not alone in this.

**Demand for your products must be relatively high right now.**

Indeed, it is. And we have responded with special offers for our customers. For example, we have prepared custom solution packages for working at home that companies can roll out very quickly. These offers are also tailored to the company's current situation. We want to help our customers quickly without red tape, and make sure they can keep working.

**Are there any products that are currently of particular use and value to your customers?**

Definitely. Our collaboration solution ELO Teamroom, which is currently undergoing further development, is obviously a great relief for our customers. This solution allows communication to be moved to virtual project rooms, enabling participants – external service providers included – to discuss and edit documents. But ELO Learning and ELO Knowledge also provide immense relief in this kind of situation, as positive customer feedback has shown.

**Has the crisis provided you with inspiration for your digital solutions?**

In fact, it has. After all, as a company, we are also learning a great deal from this unusual work situation. We've already come up with a bunch of new ideas that we will incorporate into existing ELO solutions – and some may be transformed into totally new products. Challenges are simply opportunities in disguise.

*The interview was conducted by Julia Thiem*

**About ELO Digital Office GmbH**

ELO Digital Office GmbH is a leading provider of enterprise content management (ECM) software. The Stuttgart-based company specializes in digital solutions for businesses of all sizes across every industry. ELO Digital Office emerged as a spin-off from the Louis Leitz group of companies in 1998, two years after the ELO brand was established, and is headed by Karl Heinz Mosbach, Matthias Thiele, and Nils Mosbach. The company's offices in Europe, North America, Asia, and Australia have 736 employees, about 360 of whom are based in Germany. ELO Digital Office maintains a dense network of system partners as well as numerous technological partnerships with software and hardware manufacturers such as Microsoft, SAP, and IBM

**About ELO Digital Office Australia:**

ELO Digital Office Australia is a provider of Document Management, Records Management, workflow and mobile software solutions to entities of all sizes in the private or public sector. Headquartered in Sydney, ELO has staff and certified Business Partners in all states and territories. Our motto: A Global Company with Australian Expertise extends to Australian based consultants, support, developers.

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