

HYPED



BOUNDLESS COLLABORATION

10 years later.
How the pandemic ignited the hybrid working revolution

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"The most important thing to realize about the future is that it's a choice. People choose which visions to pursue, people choose which research gets funded, people choose how they will spend their careers."

This powerful quote from Brett Victor, brilliant mind and renowned interface designer, is at the core of what we are going to talk about in this number of HYPED that you are glancing through today. We collected stories about people's choices, projects and visions that have created the future we live in or that are shaping the one we will experience in the future to come. Everyone has the possibility to make their vision of the future closer to be realized. Technologies and connections all over the globe empowered us to be proactive citizens, to be able to communicate and collaborate with everyone, everywhere, and, thanks to this, to face and solve global problems.

The future is a choice and, for this reason, we at HYPED decided to highlight the virtuous stories of people that focus on improving wellbeing, creating sustainable jobs and connecting people for the sake of fulfilling humans' fundamental needs.

Within the world of Computer science, despite our technologies continuing to improve, we face challenges that are 50 years old when we think about user experience. Back in the days, groups like Xerox PARC (Palo Alto Research Center) - one of the leading companies that contributed largely to the "Silicon Valley phenomenon" - paved the way for the human and social focus in computer science research. Nowadays, designers from the IDE's StudioLab - the Research Community in the Netherlands leading the Human Centered Design field - are contributing to embed the human and social aspects in a systematic way.

Our greatest achievement is to spot a light on the efforts of all those designers. Today more than ever, the world is intertwined in a global net. The Earth population is connected, the supply chains, the goods and essential products, but especially the people are at the core of these networks. Many new opportunities arise, as well as new problems. To find out how to get the best out of it we all must participate in the process.

Alan Kay, one of the most influential computer scientists of history, once said: *"Don't worry about what anybody else is going to do. The best way to predict the future is to invent it"*. And this is what we do, we don't want to optimize what already exists, we want to create new ways to experience the world.

ANDREA RICCIO

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JOHN SNOE

On the cover:
Facilitare head office

“ This was a turning point for the hybrid trend worldwide, people wanted to go back to the office, but also keep the advantages of working from home, or in a coffee shop, or in Costa Rica. ”



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How this Southern Italian social enterprise is changing the way city culture impacts remote workers.

Wonder Cities

author

MINA MORO

Grottote, Southern Italy. This small town in the region of Basilicata is the city where the project was born 11 years ago. Here, Andrea Paoletti, versatile architect, social innovator and president of WonderCities, explains the values and the plan of his enterprise. In a minimalistic look reminding the rural area's simplicity, after some introductory remarks, Paoletti excitedly showed slides of the platform they built to facilitate the export of their social tourism business model worldwide.

Let's first take a step back and talk about how the project started. In 2018, Paoletti created WonderGrottote, one of his many social enterprises, with the aim of revitalizing the small village of Grottote through the rehabilitation of old houses and the creation of a new community made by locals and pro-active visitors. The project was so attractive that they started a collaboration with AirBnb in 2019 named Italian Sabbatical. During a 3 months period, five international participants lived in the city of Grottote, blending with the local community and helping to revitalize the town's historical →



centre. This event showed how a visitor can be an active part of a small community and how much the contribution and the connection enrich both the guest and the host.

This was just the first stepping stone of a much bigger project that Paoletti had in mind: in 2025, WonderGrottole became WonderCity. The initial idea of creating communities and tourism awareness to reactivate small villages evolved by bringing this concept to bigger cities, connecting and helping networks of locals and foreigners to collaborate and invest time together. The whole process was strengthened by the southern workers, people going back to their cities to work remotely, carrying experiences, but also the spark of different languages and the will power to create an international culture in their hometown.

The strength of this project, as Paoletti says, is embedded in the need of rooting and collaboration in shaping the environment by the participants. The volunteering element, encouraged and guided by a well structured facilitation service, ranks the quality of the activities always on a high standard and creates sustainable and socially aware business opportunities.

A recent study by Deloitte Italy stated that WonderCities produced an overall economic impact on the cities involved during the last 5 years of a total of 1 Billion €, including tourism revenue, social and cultural events, workshops and other activities.

Mr. Paoletti never stopped getting his hands dirty and from the beginning of this enterprise his activities ranged from cleaning old apartments to developing the most effective and sustainable business model.

The new direction the organization is taking now is to export their model to the entire world, by using an open source platform that facilitates and guides other social entrepreneurs to replicate what they successfully did.

By using the natural tendency of people to stay together and the large number of remote workers worldwide, the WonderCities platform

aims to enhance the construction of social bonds between locals and newcomers and the possibility to achieve a greater goal for the wellbeing of a global community.

When asked why he did this and what is the main goal of his project, Paoletti answered: "Something more than working, more than just studying...the culture of staying together is my desired interaction. Our aim is to create spaces to converse, to create relationships, to be creative, generate new opportunities and experiment new productivity. Our project represents at the same time residency, a place of conviviality and exchange as well as an open-air laboratory."

In his last slides, Paoletti underlines the need to find new dimensions for people to live together, to spend their time more flexibly and take advantage of the new technological and social opportunities. He states how important it is to create communities that support each other and decrease the stress and pressure of a work-oriented society.

“Something more than working, more than just studying, the culture of staying together is my desired interaction. ”

After the presentation, when I asked some more questions about the impact they had on the city, he showed me other data from the Deloitte report. They interviewed 400 remote workers participating in several activities over the last year, asking questions ranging from the time they spent volunteering and the kind of jobs they had. The interesting results highlight how much the small interactions between them and the community created high distress and gratification among the workers employed in high-responsibility jobs.

Overall, the greatest impact of WonderCities may lie in the subtle effects it has on all

the people touching the community, even marginally, thanks to the positive energy embedded in the project.

Mr. Paoletti greets us quickly at the end of our conversation as he has a flight to Athens, where he will present the project to the first tester local communities outside Italy. We will keep our eyes open, looking forward to seeing if this small revolution will take off globally, without hiding our hope for it to succeed. ▣

MINA MORO is a writer and storyteller.

She has always been interested in the contact point between society, nature and technology.



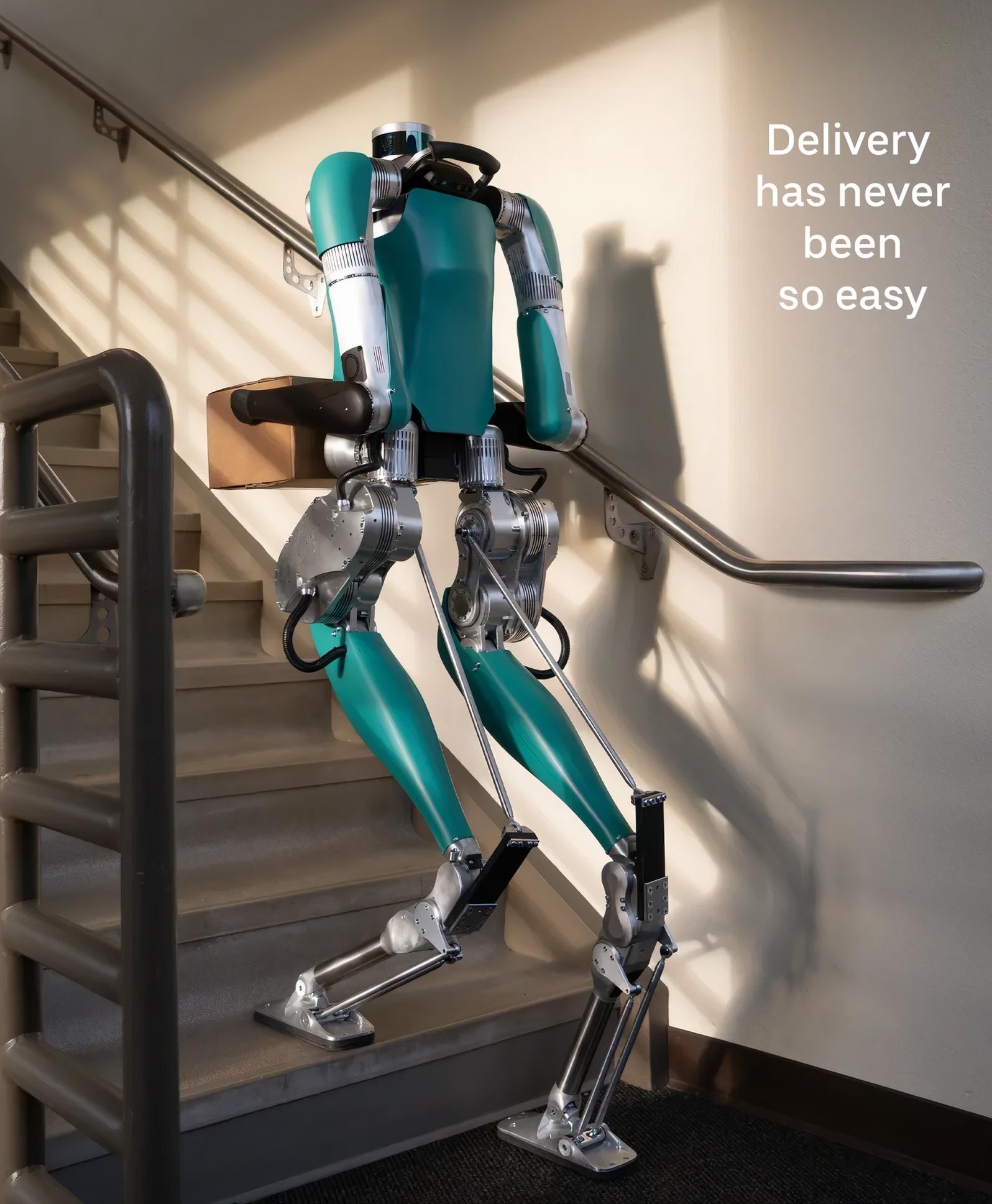
Discover the nature outside the chaotic city life.
Grottole, Italy. Credit: WonderGrottole

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been
so easy



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together.

Probably you have already seen it on many news channels, but the powerful image of a young 16 years old girl leading more than 100 thousands people protesting in Mumbai sticks like fire in my mind. Aadya Chandra Gupta, this is the name of the young girl, is a Mobile worker, coming from the city of Malda in East India and is well known now as the leading personality for the mobile workers protests.

Mobile workers are part of a rising phenomenon in the digital retail businesses, as customer service moved to a fully digital experience. When we connect to our favourite shopping website such as Zalando or Amazon Market, online mobile workers take us through the choice of the best garment or the perfect gift for our partner.

However, reports from private agencies showed that despite some of those mobile workers coming from regulated countries, many others are hired through a series of shady companies which employ underaged and underpaid people in need of a job.

As the Indian market is highly developed in high-tech and financial services, the automation of farming and transport systems caused a significant job loss. This created a huge void in workplaces and the high demand of workers available 24h to help online customers all over the globe became one of the best available options.

Nevertheless, in the last months, workers are raising their voices to ask for regulations and they are receiving strong support from workers worldwide. Aadya shook the public opinion with her clear and direct requests during the protest a few weeks ago. She proposed a fundamental workers' rights law, ratified by the United Nation and supported by all the countries that are part of it. She collected online a collaborative work of more than 10 thousands international policy makers and politicians that, thanks to tools like Google Collaboration suite, were able to integrate and present a clear and ready proposal.

The incredible ability of this young girl to align and convey the work of such a large number of →

Aadya

Who is the 16y/o girl



author
ARYA NAFRENI

Chandra Gupta

leading the global mobile workers protests?



Aadya during the demonstration after police stopped the protesters from arriving to the government buildings. New Delhi, India, Feb. 16, 2030.

Credit: Adnan Abidi/Reuters

participants is incredible and to understand how she did it, it is important to look at her background. She studied on her mobile phone everything she needed since the age of 6. She learned English, the basics of International law and facilitation processes. Moreover, she connected and contributed on different forums for International law disputes. This allowed her to be known among the active users of the forum and get their help once she revealed her plan.

During the last year she worked mostly as a freelance consultant on platforms like upwork or supersourcing, connected for up to 12 hours, but earning barely the amount to survive. This is one of the reasons why the workers are trying to align with people all over the globe to support some easy requests like a global minimum salary as well as the right to disconnect.

Talking about the rights of remote and mobile workers, Jonathan Walker OBE, a well-known british lawyer, stated something that was at the base of this global effort:

“**To divide the workers means to make them weaker, for example what happens now is that when you work home extra time, you don't get it paid, while if you did it at the office it counted like extra hours.**”

“To divide the workers means to make them weaker, for example, what happens now is that when you work home extra time, you don't get it paid, while if you did it at the office it counted like extra hours. The amount of work that is request now, just replaced the whole advantages of the remote flexibility, switching the time spent commuting with extra duties to accomplish”

European policy makers have been working on such policies already since 2024, when the remote



workers' number of contracts became too large and overboarded the standard regulations. Other than the minimum salary for mobile workers, the European Union had written guidelines, according to ISO standards, to improve and assist workers' well-being and to enhance the support from companies during remote or hybrid work. Both psychological and physical help has been embedded in the guidelines for Remote Workers' contracts. Issues included in the guidelines range from working hours limits and mental support for stressed workers, to support for physical activities and breaks during working hours.

This phenomena made the south of Europe one of the most beneficial locations to stay and work remotely, activating the



phenomenon of inverse-emigration, with workers going back to their hometowns.

On a darker side, this whole set of regulations pushed companies looking for light and cheap digital workforce to hire employees from developing countries with loose regulations and high requests for jobs, as in the case of India.

Aadya demonstrated that connecting and facilitating the collaboration among different personalities with a common goal and shared ground can have a massive impact on the public opinion and that tools for online collaboration can spark changes on a global scale. If you remember, this is how the Swedish Prime Minister Greta Thunberg started the new green deal movement more than 10 years ago .

Mobile workers while providing
online customer support

Credit: Shailesh Andrade/Reuters

What will happen now? It is hard to tell, but with this large number of people asking for mobile workers rights' worldwide the international institution will hardly stay silent. ♦

ARYA NAFRENI is a journalist and activist. She advocated for workers' rights since 2020 and wrote several articles denouncing violation of human rights committed by Governments worldwide.

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Interview with

Roberto Corici

CEO & founder of Facilitare consultancy firm



W

With no doubts, during the past 10 years, hybrid working had a huge impact on how companies and workplaces are run and organized. Many aspects needed to be re-imagined and re-developed in order to facilitate and enhance the overall work experience.

My guest on this week's issue is Roberto Corici, CEO of Facilitare, which was founded in 2023 and has since emerged as one of the pioneers in the revolution of the hybrid work model. Facilitare is a singular business that has the ambitious goal to help companies adjust and re-arrange to the hybrid workplace. In this interview, Roberto shares his thoughts on the role of hybrid working and how his company plays a fundamental part in the market.

What is your view on hybrid working? 10 years ago it was often regarded as a passing trend and yet, here we are. Do you think by now it is a well-established model?

Back in 2020, remote working was a rising trend only for a small minority of companies and workers worldwide, since collaboration in a remote team has always represented a complex matter. Then, COVID-19 happened and by that time, people experienced what working remotely really meant. They started having more time to spend with their families, to commute less, to find easier ways to collaborate and exchange information with people all over the globe in a matter of seconds. At the same time, they realized how such a working mode could also make you feel alone, disconnected from your colleagues and how difficult it was to balance working life and private life.

This was a turning point for the hybrid trend worldwide, people wanted to go back to the office, but also keep the advantages of spending some time working from home, or in a coffee shop, or in Costa Rica. Now, 10 years after that dramatic global pandemic, hybrid working environments are spreading everywhere, more and more companies are interested in taking advantage of the hybrid setup and this helps them to retain the best talents worldwide. So, yes, I guess it may be considered as a well-established model by now.



Roberto Corici, CEO of Facilitare, founded in 2023. His consultancy firm focuses on how to facilitate hybrid collaboration in dispersed teams.

How can Facilitare actually help companies adapt to a successful hybrid work experience?

When I started studying the remote working topic during the peak of the pandemic, I was looking at the potential of remote collaboration and how it impacts workers. During my research, I reached three main conclusions: first, the hybrid was meant to stay. People were too satisfied with that flexibility to go back to the 9 to 5 working day.

Second, while experimenting with hybrid and fully online experiences, I understood that teams, especially in hybrid environments, needed facilitation in order to collaborate properly. This is because the communication rules that are part of our face-to-face and digital environment are not the same in a hybrid one. The hybrid interactions are complicated, the sharing of information across the physical neighbours are richer and tend to be more continuous; the virtual neighbours are unconsciously marginalized and most of the body language gets lost. Moreover, hybrid collaboration requires a greater attention to the set-up, in order to achieve a successful participation of every member.

Last but not least, we have the need for dispersed teams to connect with each other, to create bonding and maximize the serendipitous and casual encounters, because the knowledge and casual information shared during those moments can't be just replaced by structured meetings to get to know each other. Co-workers' bonding is not something that should be forced, it should feel real and easy, as much as having a cup of coffee.

This is why at Facilitare we create solutions to facilitate hybrid teams collaboration. We don't provide just tools or suggestions for an optimal working space, we provide the best practices and solutions to connect the employees in a spontaneous way, wherever they live or whatever tasks they have. This enhances the possibility to be creative, to spark new ideas, to bond and reach the great level of communication needed for a company that faces the challenges of 2030.

“ Co-workers' bonding is not something that should be forced, it should feel real and easy, as much as taking a cup of coffee. ”

Why is the focus on the workers and not on other aspects of the hybrid workplace, like the spaces, the tools and the management of the workflow?

We provide solutions for the workplace organization and the technologies involved in a hybrid team, but we are proud to say that our motto is: "Give serendipity a chance."

To live the office life does not only mean to commute to the workplace, to work in your cubicle, to eat at the company canteen and use the office printer; it also means to meet colleagues, to find out new things while having a walk outside your workplace, to meet someone in the elevator or to randomly engage in a conversation at the coffee machine. Working is mainly about collaborating with your colleagues, and a great collaboration happens when the teams are aligned and trust each other.

What the hybrid workplace challenges is the creation of bonds and alignment between co-workers. If you imagine a workplace

where people rarely meet each other outside working duties, it is clearly a work oriented relationship. But in the traditional office serendipitous connections happen, people start talking about ideas or their life while drinking a coffee or during a lunch, and by opening up and connecting in this natural, human way they start to know each other better and collaborate better.

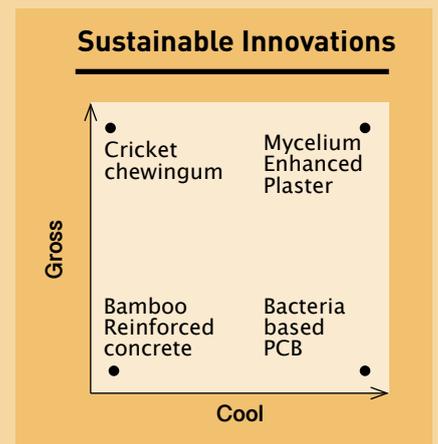
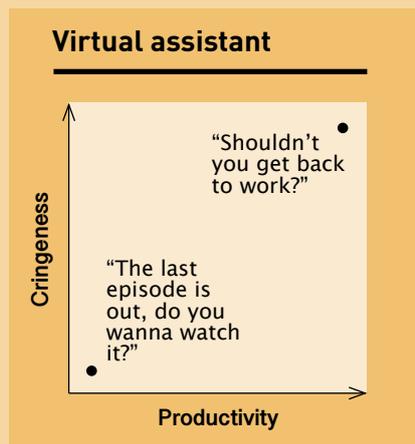
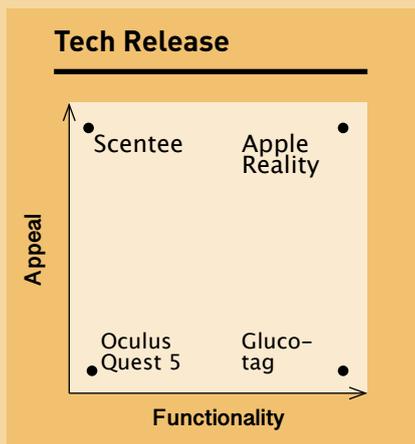
This is why we focus on workers and facilitate their experience of the connection with each other.

What are the solutions that Facilitate provides to address these challenges?

Usually the solutions to fulfill this need are forced, let's take for example the scheduled meetings to get to know each other...well, this is not how people work. →

CHARTGEIST

by Luka Nietu



People don't need to know every colleague, they need to have the freedom of looking at each other while randomly crossing their paths or to exchange a few words between a meeting and another one.

That's why we provide some tools specifically designed for that. Our technology empowers the worker to communicate his availability in the transitional moments, when he moves from one task to another one or when he enters the virtual office, and, during those moments, casual encounters may happen. The control is totally in the hands of the workers and, even more importantly, they are not concerned about their privacy or to be controlled, as the system control is in their hands. Moreover, we provide in the physical office spaces an integrated system to connect with remote colleagues, opening a channel for visual and audio communication.

When managing and supporting the facilitation of the hybrid workplace, what are the main obstacles that a potential client might face?

I would say that the main obstacle is the fact that every employee and every company is different. For example, people behave in a different way when a spontaneous encounter arises: some employees are more shy, others more extroverted. However, there are some general rules that apply. Workers tend to get distracted more easily with colleagues around and focus more when alone, but, at the same time, everyone enjoys taking a break with colleagues every now and then. In addition, companies that work hybrid come from many different fields, from law firms to design studios, and they need specific set-ups. The former may require the right practice and conference room setting in order to enhance daily catch-up meetings, the latter may need help to facilitate a

hybrid creative session with clients or users. It is a challenge to find solutions that work for everyone and our job is to understand these specific needs and provide solutions that fit that particular context.

What is the impact on productivity and innovation when the facilitation is successful?

Our solutions impact the wellbeing of the workers on many different layers. For example, some employees have problems in self-regulating their schedule, the amount of work they should load themselves with and the amount of daily working hours. Our technology proved to be successful in letting coworkers confront each other about those problems and concerns to find suggestions and help from their colleagues. Moreover, the serendipitous encounter we provide helps build metaknowledge among the workers, so the knowledge of who knows what or who knows who. This kind of knowledge is a fundamental help to optimize productivity and pave the way for innovation. 🗨

JOHN SNOE is a regular contributor to *Hyped*. His new book, *New Working Landscapes*, comes out in October this year.

Check out the video interview here





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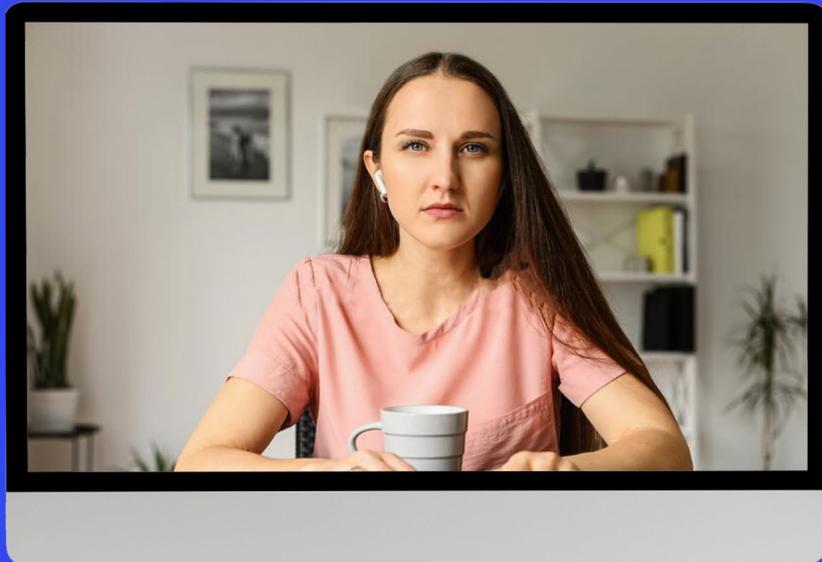
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colleagues is just a
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The author, Andrea Riccio, while working on the project. Delft, 24/06/21

Note from the author

This Magazine is for study purpose only. It represents the visual output of my Master Graduation project - *Boundeless Collaboration. A post pandemic vision for distributed teams* - at Design For Interaction, TU Delft Univeristy.

HYPED is openly inspired to the WIRED magazine and includes some aesthetic elements which recall its features.

Below, I would like to cite and thank the additional sources from which I drew content for this issue.

- Charles Deluvio, Cover Page
- Patagonia, pg. 1-2
- Idrop news, pg. 6
- [WonderGrottole](#), pg. 7-10
- Hillary Ungson, pg. 8
- The Ordinary DECIEM, pg. 10
- Ford Digit Robot, pg. 11
- Binance, pg. 17-18
- Tim Gouw, pg. 19-20
- [Scuole Open Source](#) ✖, Font **Freak Grotesk Next**

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