

Effective remote work plan

Information on the case study:

Organisation: Xataka, part of Webedia Spain

Size: SME with around 200-500 employees

Location: Headquarters in Madrid, Spain

Sector: Digital media and technology

Xataka is a prominent Spanish-language tech news platform, a subsidiary of Webedia Spain. The company focuses on technology journalism, producing articles, reviews, and analysis. It has a significant online presence and adapts to the fast-changing tech landscape. Xataka operates within the dynamic media sector where the need for continuous content generation and flexible work structures is crucial. Remote work became increasingly relevant, particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, pushing the organisation to reassess its work arrangements.

Operational context

The COVID-19 pandemic radically changed the way businesses operated globally, and Xataka was no exception. Before the pandemic, the company had a mixed approach to work, primarily centered around office work in Madrid. However, the need to maintain content production and stay competitive in the digital media market prompted the company to explore remote work as a viable alternative. The flexibility provided by remote work enabled Xataka to ensure the continuity of its operations during lockdowns and social distancing measures, while allowing employees to maintain productivity from home. This sudden shift also highlighted the importance of structured remote work policies to maintain consistency and employee satisfaction.

The problem/opportunity

The abrupt transition to remote work due to the pandemic exposed Xataka's lack of a formalised, structured remote work policy. While some employees had informal flexibility to work from home occasionally, there was no official strategy in place for long-term remote work. This posed several challenges: ensuring productivity, collaboration, and communication across teams, while also maintaining employee engagement and addressing concerns about work-life balance. Xataka identified this as an opportunity to develop a structured remote work plan that would allow flexibility, while also preserving the strong sense of teamwork and collaboration within the company's culture.

What was done

In response to these challenges, Xataka's leadership initiated the development of a formal remote work plan. The company conducted internal surveys to assess employee needs and preferences for remote work. Based on the feedback, Xataka established a hybrid work model

that allows employees to work remotely for part of the week, while maintaining some in-office days for collaborative tasks. Additionally, Xataka invested in digital collaboration tools such as Slack, Zoom, and project management platforms to facilitate communication. Regular check-ins with managers were introduced to ensure teams remained aligned and productive, and virtual team-building activities were incorporated to maintain company culture.

Outcomes

The implementation of a structured remote work plan resulted in several positive outcomes for Xataka. Employee satisfaction increased, as many appreciated the flexibility to balance personal and professional responsibilities. Productivity levels remained high, thanks to the use of digital tools and clearer expectations regarding remote work. The hybrid model also allowed the company to maintain a sense of team cohesion, as periodic in-person meetings fostered collaboration. Additionally, Xataka reported lower absenteeism rates and a slight decrease in operational costs, as the company was able to downsize some of its office space. Overall, the plan helped the company continue its operations effectively without significant disruptions.

Conclusion

Xataka's structured remote work plan proved to be a valuable asset, both during the pandemic and beyond. By listening to employee preferences and strategically implementing tools and processes, the company was able to create a flexible, hybrid work environment that enhanced both productivity and employee well-being. The key lesson learned from Xataka's experience is that remote work plans need to be well thought out and supported by the right technological infrastructure and managerial strategies. For other SMEs in the digital media sector, Xataka's approach highlights the importance of adaptability and clear communication in maintaining operations during challenging times.