

# Work from home: When the iPad Pro and Surface became the best working machines, more than smartphones and traditional PCs

Since PCs and smartphones have been in dire straits, the new consumer market has seen a need to return: the need to work from home on thin, light devices.

When "social isolation" became the indispensable key to stopping the spread of the Covid-19 epidemic, working from home also became a way that companies were forced to support to maintain their operations in a timely manner. Disease.

## When the PC is replaced

To be able to work from home, the indispensable need for employees to have a personal computer. The problem is that the number of people who own a traditional PC (laptop and desktop) today has probably decreased significantly compared to previous years. According to Gartner data, it was not until 2019 that the PC market turned to grow at a mere 0.6%. This is the first time this market has not declined since 2011.



Tablet and smartphone have replaced the PC as a personal device for simple, everyday tasks.

It's not hard to see the culprit that pushed the PC industry into a predicament: smartphones and tablets. Because the computing needs of most users stop at basic tasks like surfing the web, calling / messaging and entertainment, small mobile devices have depleted most of the PC to become a device type. "personal", most used. Android has deposed the planet's most popular Windows operating system since 2017, and in the last year, the total number of smartphones / tablets shipped was five times that of PCs.

And the PC from the "personal" device covering the digital life of users has gradually become a symbol for work. In fact, the biggest reason for the PC market's growth over the past year is that companies are forced to upgrade from Windows 7 to Windows 10 before Microsoft dies the old version (IDC). When companies all provided computers for their employees' work, and when every employee came home, he or she had a different machine to relax, and the need for PCs would decline.

### **The most versatile device type**

The demand for social isolation suddenly brought the need for computing back to the past: personal devices had to be both used for entertainment and good for work. With this demand, smartphones suddenly weak. Even smartphones with the largest screens have an actual display area of ??only 1/4 or 1/5 of a small (11-12 inch) laptop.



Smartphones will never become efficient machines.

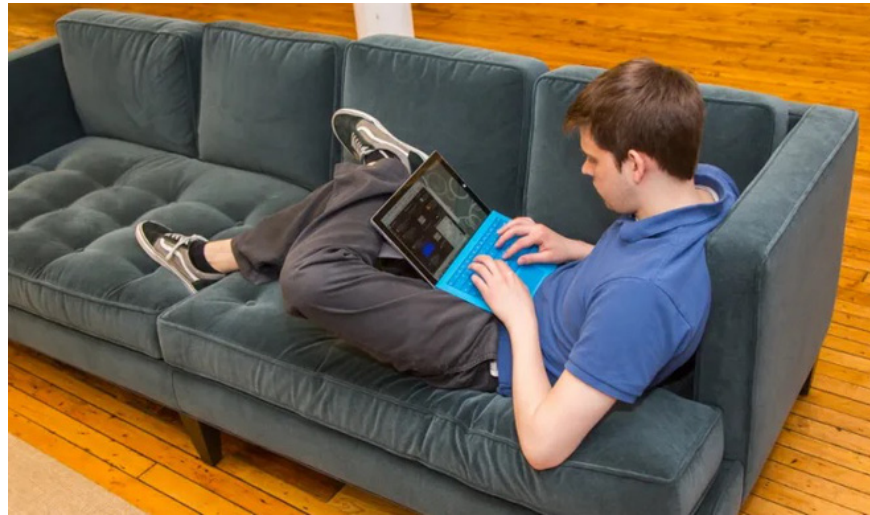
More importantly, smartphone operating systems are very limited in mouse / keyboard support, which is a must-have tool for work. Phone makers have tried to turn smartphones into machines that can integrate PC mode (like Samsung and DeX), but so far these efforts can be considered a failure. No other major manufacturer has developed an expanded PC experience from smartphones.

But on the other hand, for mainstream users who haven't needed a home PC for a long time, a laptop or desktop will bring its own problems. The first problem is funding: should users invest in a machine that is only really useful in the present situation - and abundant when the epidemic ends? The second problem is the context of use: not everyone can easily create a comfortable space to use traditional PCs in the house.

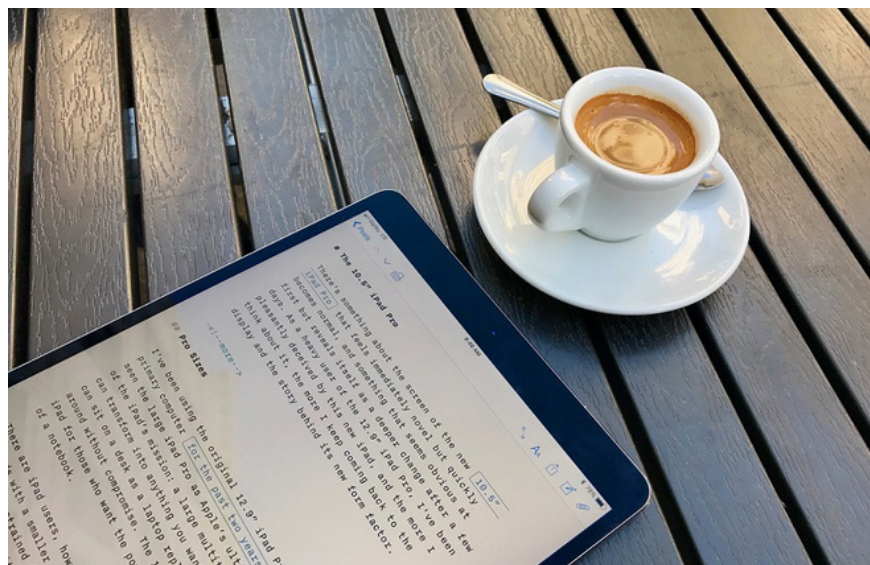
### **Which equipment to work with**

Therefore, the special circumstances generated by Covid-19 may be an unexpected leverage for a type of device that is rarely talked about: "hybrid" tablet, such as Apple's iPad Pro and Microsoft's Surface. Thanks to the tablets, they can act as entertainment like any "regular" tablet before. More importantly, with a design that is half as thin as a laptop, they fulfill the role of a PC wherever you are: on the couch, on the balcony, even . in bed. Compared to desktop PCs and laptops, hybrid tablets are simply more convenient in terms of convenience.

Of course, the iPad Pro and Surface Pro can hardly perform heavy computing tasks. However, the trend of cloud computing in recent years has solved this problem for the majority of users: tablet-based tools have been brought to the cloud. Machines only need to act as a "bridge" between users and the cloud. As long as they have a browser, as long as they have a good keyboard, mouse (and pen), hybrid tablets have become the perfect PC to work from home.



"Hybrid Tablet": Machines that allow working anytime, anywhere .



And at the same time, they are still super handy devices for personal digital life.

This is probably the vision that Microsoft has pursued when the concept of tablet "transform" more than 7 years ago. And this is also the way Apple has been constantly calling the iPad "PC replacement" (a replacement device for the PC) since the unveiling of this tablet line in 2014. Unfortunately, until 2020, sales The Surface Pro or iPad Pro has never been so high. With smartphones and PCs at businesses, consumers have never really had to find the slimmest working machines possible.

Covid-19 changed everything. For the first time since the IBM PC started the personal computing trend in the 1980s, consumers around the globe had to consider finding a PC to work from home. Will this special situation become an unexpected leverage that will completely change users' thoughts about PCs and mobile devices? Let's wait and see.

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