

# Inc.

THE  
**50**  
BEST  
PLACES FOR  
STARTUPS  
IN AMERICA

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THE  
NEW  
RÉSUMÉ  
FRAUD  
PAGE 13

WHY  
AARON  
LEVIE  
TOOK  
BOX  
PUBLIC  
"It was a  
do-or-die  
moment."

PAGE 44



"We are, right now,  
the most important tech  
company on earth."  
—Impossible Foods  
founder Pat Brown

IMPOSSIBLE  
FOODS  
COMPANY  
OF THE  
YEAR

HOW THE  
IMPOSSIBLE  
BURGER  
CHANGED  
THE WORLD

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**"People think immigrants are here to become a nanny or to clean houses, and that's not true."** —Rosibel Hurst, a Honduran immigrant and the founder of Bakersfield, California-based Bellissima Medical Aesthetics. For more from Hurst, see page 82

DISCUSS

# Should Your Employees Work From Anywhere?

According to a survey of 2,000 working professionals conducted online for LinkedIn by Censuswide, 50 percent of U.S. employees work from home at least one day per week. And some companies, like GitLab, have built successful workforces that are entirely remote. But what do we lose when we ditch the office? —AS TOLD TO BRIT MORSE



← ROUSSEAU KAZI

Co-founder and CEO of workplace-collaboration software maker Threads, and a remote-work believer



RANDY NICOLAU →

Co-founder and CEO of Poppin—an office furniture company with eight locations across the globe—who thinks remote work is limiting

Look at how people typically make connections. From dating to social networks, online community building is already happening, and businesses are just catching up.

Is the couch the office of the future?

There's no doubt that digital platforms and community can become a part of your culture, but to say that they can become the entire culture is just dismissing us as humans. That's not human nature.

Meetings are really useful when things are urgent or emotional. Most things aren't. And if you're physically limited by the number of people you can fit in a room, you won't get the context you need to make your best decisions.

Can people collaborate digitally as easily as they do in an office?

If my design team wants to change the radius from 36 degrees to 32 degrees on this one corner of a prototype, they're pointing, they're physically touching. In any business, time is your enemy, and physical collaboration is usually faster.

Companies and leaders have to trust their employees. Giving them the flexibility of "Hey, go where you need to go to get your best work done" is a net benefit.

Does remote work hinder productivity?

There's a reason I don't work from home. Some people don't have the discipline. I know I will be more productive in a work environment. And some need the social interaction they get in an office.

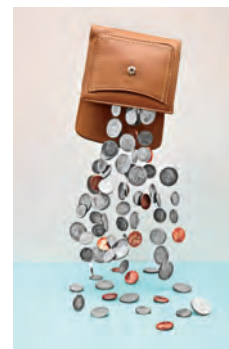
Louder folks have a bit of an in-person advantage in meetings. In a remote format, it's not a bunch of people in a room yelling at one another.

How does a remote workplace impact company culture?

We have eight offices. Our challenge is making sure that we don't have eight different cultures. We've defined a framework of core values within which these offices can create distinct but unified subcultures.

We're engaging through platforms that allow us to take our time and leave thoughtful comments.

**ADVANTAGE → KAZI** According to Gallup research published in September, productivity is highest among those who work remotely three to four days per week. It may require thinking outside the box—and the cubicle—about how to keep everyone connected, but your bottom line will benefit. And your employees will almost certainly thank you for saving them the commute.



## A LOVABLE DEBT COLLECTOR?

In 2013, Ohad Samet started getting calls from strange numbers. When he finally answered, he discovered the reason: He had a \$120 balance on a store credit card. The agent making the call was not particularly pleasant, so, though Samet could afford the payment, he started thinking about what it must be like for those who can't. "You get all these calls, then it's, 'You owe money. Cash, check, or credit card?' And if you can't pay," he says, "you risk financial ruin."

So Samet founded TrueAccord, a collections agency that today counts Yelp and LendUp among its clients and communicates via friendly—even playful—texts and emails. ("I've been sitting here eating ice cream and listening to breakup songs because I feel like you're avoiding me," reads one dispatch the company's sent.) Artificial intelligence analyzes an individual's response patterns to decide what kinds of messages to send and when.

A little creepy? Maybe, but TrueAccord says it collects money 50 percent more effectively than traditional agencies—and it works with customers to set up payment plans they can afford. Reviews from customers on Google and the Better Business Bureau site are shockingly positive. "Thank you, you did great," says one. "I can't believe I am saying this to a collection agency." —Kevin J. Ryan

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