



**Stay Agile & Efficient  
Through COVID and Beyond**

“For some organizations, near-term survival is the only agenda item. Others are peering through the fog of uncertainty, thinking about how to position themselves once the crisis has passed and things return to normal. The question is, ‘What will normal look like?’. While no one can say how long the crisis will last, what we find on the other side will not look like the normal of recent years.”

**Ian Davis**

Managing Partner at McKinsey

The words from Ian Davis were written 11 years ago, during the global financial crisis, but they could easily have been written about the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Since March of 2020, the coronavirus crisis has demanded sweeping changes in the way industry conducts operations. Many experts say some of these changes will remain in place even after the outbreak recedes.

As technicians, inspectors and contractors prepare to take up the backlog of work on sites that have been operating on a ghostcrew by shelter-in-place initiatives, they will face a workplace that has been drastically changed by the both public health and economic effects of the pandemic.

From a renewed emphasis on jobsite safety to longer delivery times, the virus has upended many facets of industry operations. Companies that try to return to a business-as-usual mentality may face a harsh new reality.

The ongoing COVID-19 crisis is forcing business leaders worldwide to take quick actions to respond to the pandemic and its effects on their businesses. The essential ability these companies are showing is agility. Agility is the capability to be adaptive, flexible and creative to a changing environment. In what ways is the environment changing for industrial operations? The following list describes seven ways that COVID-19 has altered the industry operations for the near future and beyond.

## **1. JOB SITES / WORK SITES WILL BE CLEANER AND SAFER**

Coronavirus puts a spotlight on the importance of worker health and safety, and Industry has responded by implementing new jobsite policies such as staggered shifts, employee temperature checks and top-to-bottom disinfections of jobsites, tools and machinery.

Industry will have to include a lot more health and safety measures so that employees are comfortable returning to work.

The new normal will be reinforced by state, local and federal regulations. In the near future, OSHA could require employers to develop written infectious disease preparedness and response plans.

Epidemiologists' expectations that outbreaks across the world will come in waves for months or even years to come makes long-term safety plans important now.

All of our clients in the energy industry report that worker shifts are now staggered to avoid violating distancing requirements, and enhanced cleaning is in effect at operations centers and buildings.

Additionally, vendors and third-party contractors are not allowed on site, at least temporarily.

## 2. DISTANCING WILL BE THE NEW NORM, ENABLED BY TECHNOLOGY

The current emphasis on social distancing on worksites will likely continue even after the current health threat passes. The need for social distancing has also changed how employees at every level interact with project teams and with customers. Zoom, Skype, Google Meet and other remote meeting applications have taken the place of in-person, face-to-face meetings.

Referring to Zoom alone, daily downloads of the Zoom app have increased 30x year-over-year and the app has been the top free app for iPhones in the United States since March 18, according to Bernstein Research and Apptopia. Zoom said daily users spiked to 200 million in March, up from 10 million in December.

## 3. PROJECTS WILL TAKE LONGER

Many of the major safety changes on industrial sites will add to the time it takes to complete projects. While crucial to keeping workers healthy, techniques such as suiting up with PPE, limiting vendor access to sites and staggering work shifts will slow down work progress.

A good illustration of this is the slowdown in construction of Shell’s Northeast petrochemical hub in Pennsylvania. The site had 3,700 workers in June, down from nearly 8,000 workers in early March. Construction paused in March due to the COVID lockdown. The restart and ramp-up efforts in May were subsequently paused a second time when 17 workers tested positive for COVID.

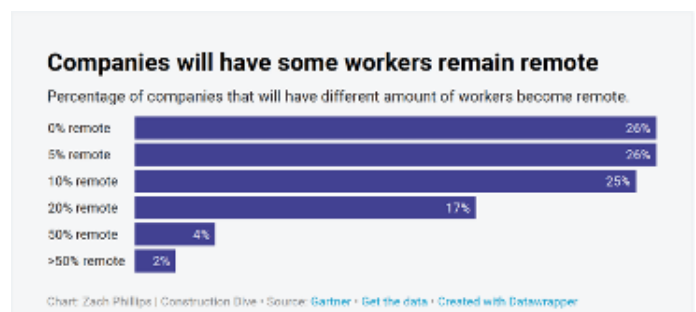
Plant turnarounds are typically intense periods of work with high headcounts on

site. These activities will have to have modified project scopes and deliverables if they are to be accomplished with distancing and worker safety concerns in mind.

## 4. TELE-WORK WILL BECOME MORE COMMON

COVID has also brought major changes to industries back offices. Forced to stay at home, many office employees have kept business operations running via remote work, relying on technology like videoconferencing, emailing and texting to stay in touch.

This nationwide experiment in telework will likely cause many leaders to think about making the practice permanent. A recent Gartner study found that 74% of American companies will move at least 5% of their office workforce to permanently remote and nearly a quarter of respondents said they will move at least 20% to permanently remote positions, according to a survey of the company’s chief financial officers.



## 5. DEMAND FOR SERVICES AND INSPECTION TYPES WILL CHANGE

In the areas of industrial inspection, maintenance, and repair, a massive reprioritization effort is underway. Companies are putting off or deferring non-essential work. Many third-party inspection companies are feeling the brunt of this, unable to get contracts or facing delays in

contracted work due to these delays and site restrictions. Similarly, repair vendors are seeing work deferred.

Ultimately, most maintenance and repairs that are deferred will have to be undertaken eventually. Prioritizing which deferred items need to be addressed first should be a data-driven decision, based upon factors such as maintenance / repair cost, risk, asset economic impact, and cost of repair deferral.

## 6. REMOTE INSPECTIONS WILL INCREASE

One of the most interesting trends in the most recent 6 months is the rise of telemedicine. In April, Vonage CEO Alan Masarek reported an unprecedented a 2,000% increase in video usage in the telehealth vertical. This trend is directly relatable to remote inspection. Remote inspection utilizes much of the same foundational technology as telemedicine. Given the pressure to maintain social distancing in the workplace, industry will transition to remote inspection, using smaller, distanced teams wherever possible.

## 7. COMPANIES WILL TAKE A STRONGER LOOK AT THEIR DATA, ANALYTICS, AND AI

A recent (March 30, 2020) survey by Burtch Works and the International Institute for Analytics asked survey respondents about the use of analytics during the current pandemic. The data, from over 300 respondents, showed over 43% placed analytics “front and center” in helping inform major decisions.



One of the best tools currently available is to utilize existing data to drive decisions, and to help predict the state of their assets with a reduced physical inspection footprint.

## CONCLUSION

As industry leaders chart a course through the “fog of uncertainty”, two trends are emerging; meticulous planning, and leveraging of asset inspection data in decision making. Both of these trends help enterprises maximize their assets utilization and productivity.

HUVR designed and created a data platform for usability, flexibility, and scalability from the outset. Inspectors and technicians can use mobile devices such as iPhones, iPads, and Android devices to enter their data in the field. Inspection devices such as borescopes and UT thickness gauges feed data into the HUVR system via Bluetooth or WiFi connectivity. This enables instantaneous results reporting. The instant the data is submitted, it is available for review electronically, eliminating the need for close social interactions. When the time comes to allow contractors back on site, our clients can remotely grant limited access to specific projects to their contractors and third-party vendors. Robust API’s allow our clients to easily transfer their data to other systems as needed.

Due to this built-in flexibility, the HUVR SaaS system is being utilized in industries ranging from Oil & Gas, Renewable energy, to Maritime. Contact us to find out how we can help your business break out of the static reporting paradigm and unleash the power of your data.



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