many people are stuck working at home

right now and according to a new survey

seventy-seven percent of workers want to

continue to work from home once the

pandemic is over the Cova 19 crisis has

accelerated the global embrace of remote

by at least 10 years so you have tens of

millions of people now that are suddenly

remote many of whom are doing this for

the first time it's a new experience for

many employers too for some people

there's a real fear of if you send all

of your employees to work from home

won't they just watch Netflix play video

games you know not get dressed and

you'll still be paying them so some

employers are turning to productivity

management software or other kinds of

surveillance to attract their employees

while they work from home as a result

employee tracking software has seen a

significant spike in recent months

the idea of being tracked at work isn't

anything new we sign off a lot of our

rights when we go to work for someone

and you know it's in that big pile of

paper that you get on your first day in

many ways surveillance work goes back as

far as work does employers have an

interest in trying to understand what

people are doing when they're paying for

them to be at work anyone who works in

IT can tell you that if you are in fact

working in the employers place of

business using employer-provided laptops

and or other computer equipment and you

are transmitting information across

employer owned networks you are

absolutely being monitored in surveil

many of these kind of monitoring

processes have already been experimented

on on what people consider to be low

skilled workers in the UK for example

it's been very common to have biometric

scanners for cleaners to know you know

how long they've been in a room for and

you know how quickly things have been

done and so on is a lot of these

technologies have been introduced

already and now they're starting to kind

of flow up the chain of the workforce

and be used elsewhere and I think the

shifts are working from home means that

many of those forms of surveillance

which perhaps we have taken for granted

while we're at work and now reaching

into our homes many companies that

existed pre-pandemic have already

developed software to track employees in

a variety of ways there's proto score

hub staff inter guard time dr. Tara mind

very clock transparent business and many

others proto score alone has seen a 600

percent uptick in interest from

prospective customers since covered 19

recently CNBC's Eric chemi spoke with

its CEO we take a number of data points

beat a CRM tool that they're currently

using a phone system like a LAN edge and

email system it could be G suite or

Microsoft 365 we aggregate all those

data points in a real-time proprietary

dashboard that provides them a weighted

score we record and transcribe all your

phone calls well everything I say on the

it's transcribed so we have a caution

all of it is recorded we use AI tools to

massage that into a real-time store that

you see as does your boss and the CEO

and the VP of Sales and the chief

revenue officer everyone is seeing the

productivity every morning you come to

your desk you have an email from us you

have your productivity score your proto

scores on the first line of the enum

your score yesterday for hunter score

was 74 your colleagues were 90 they've

done more and it's a tool that you could

gauge yourself against your peers one

example of a company that uses proto

score is Vonage I've recently in the

last year pre-pandemic gone to our

virtual sales force because of the

capabilities for pros for was there ever

any pushback from employees that are

like I don't like that you're tracking

everything this feels a little too Big

Brother II you know that of course it

depends but I cannot always depends on

who you know in sales if you want to be

victim you can always you know guys who

go out and get things done or those who

use these tools for their advantage and

they know we're watching which is always

good another company working in the same

space is transparent business which

takes a different approach but has seen

a 500% spike in users month two months

since kovat 19 transparentbusiness is

different from proto score in that it

doesn't track anything until workers

manually clock in but it records those

exact times and uploads a stream of

desktop screenshots to your manager when

you are clocked in you do have the

ability to delete those screenshots

after the fact or clock out and stop

them entirely our technology allows for

the monitoring and tracking of the work

that the user the worker reports as work

done basically instead of reporting to

an office we report to the cloud and the

cloud is the canvas and digitizing the

work flow enables us to work better and

keep people accountable for the work

that they do transparent business says

that this type of system is both easier

for the worker and ultimately results in

them having more privacy it's a

consent when you have a worker going to

the office you are monitoring them all

the time there are cameras everywhere

and this is an invasion to the privacy

people are super stressed out they don't

need a micromanager on top of their head

so with these dishes can say okay my

process is transparent and worked early

working so as I'm working actually

working I can share with what I'm doing

with you for one registered nurse in

Arizona the implementation of new

tracking software at her job with a

major US healthcare company had a huge

impact about a year in they switched

over to this real-time energy so instead

of going her case it was her amount of

time that you were actively working and

they knew exactly what heal started your

computer and you locked in how much time

you're on the phone everything was

marked counted one of my friends said

I'm quitting this is micromanage me and

I just I'm not gonna do it and I thought

why are you getting so angry because if

you're doing your job it should measure

out but then don't my 1 and 1 I got in

trouble because I had too much

non-productive

word I didn't move my mouth sorry it was

I had too much lock time or something

and I got in trouble and that bad upset

me because I know I'm a hard worker and

that shouldn't happened the conclusion

of all of this is that I left my job it

just um it was just too stressful it was

I just didn't I didn't enjoy what it was

doing anymore but the big question is

does this actually get results because

for many managers and CEOs losing

productivity as a result of more workers

working from home is a huge concern as a

c-level employee or colleague myself as

a person I've always been very fearful

of employees being remote I've always

wanted in the office I want to look at

them feeling I'm a very tactile leader I

think I wanted that and I was always

uncomfortable are they working how do we

assess them working and this is

comforted me and a lot of CEOs I talk to

that are using the plug the product now

it's comforting them that

or actually getting activity and

productivity from their staff while

remote they're seen as an easy option

you know you buy a software package you

know you have it installed on people's

computers you then feel like as an

employer that you're somehow in control

of you know this new dispersed workforce

that are all working from home but if

you look at the academic research on the

topic you find that these systems might

not be accomplishing what you expect the

evidence most broadly in the academic

literature is the hard quantitative

targets don't work they don't make

people feel good about their work they

don't make people feel happy and secure

in their employment and so they tend to

have an effect of well burnout is one of

the main ones and decreasing morale

implementing a surveillance for

productivity tracking essentially masks

a deeper more systemic issue and that is

do people actually know what makes them

successful at work we've known since the

50s that people do their best when

they're given their goals but given the

tools to meet their goals and they're

set on their way there are ways in which

the psychological pressures of being

watched can actually impair productivity

you want to say to an employer have you

thought about talking to your workers

you know like asking them what's going

on like having a discussion because

often you know it's that kind of genuine

engagement that is what makes

everybody's experience of work better

data generally shows that employees are

actually more productive when they work

from home because they usually start

earlier and they work later with fewer

interruptions than they do in the office

so if people are on average as

productive or more productive at home

are there still reasons to use a system

like this inevitably averages mask

people who are both less productive and

more productive and so because you can't

distinguish who those employees

individually are who are more productive

and less productive unless you actually

track them that's the justification for

tracking them when you don't have

visibility you don't know who is like

really working super hard and who is

taking a copy 19 back Asian I do think

that there are very few times in the

work place where you could reasonably

say the employer doesn't have

you know what I'm doing or to not

control my behavior or my conduct and so

we increasingly find that some employees

are willing to forego some of their

privacy in exchange for jobs

particularly in the current economy a

lot of these questions lead to bigger

ongoing issues about data and privacy I

think there's this idea that you know if

you're generating data capturing data

from people when they're working from

home at least then you as a manager can

say well I you know I I bought this

software in you know I tried to do

everything I could do for me it's okay

if they use it in terms of big data okay

in general these are the things that we

need to work on we've got people

spending too much time on chat or

whatever it is but when it gets down to

two individual data it's just I can't

think of any other reason you would do

it then you don't trust your people and

while workers surveillance isn't

anything new much of this particular

kind of surveillance is new the law

simply is not keeping up with this

technology right now what we have are

general laws that say while employees

don't have a lot of privacy they do have

some right and so the law really does

need to play catch-up I think it is

probably true that we need to be

advocating for greater legal protections

and greater restrictions on what

employers reasonably can and cannot do

both proto score and transparent

business promote the idea of openness

and keeping workers informed on what's

happening but companies are not legally

required to do that so you don't need

you don't need their permission because

it's all company it's all company days

it's all company data it's the company

the systems they are currently using so

there's a lot of data points that

companies get they don't have to share

we advocate for sharing so if they don't

track and surveil workers what should

companies be doing when their employees

are working from home

Darren Murph is head of remote for

gitlab a company that has operated it's

more than 1,200 person work force all

remotely since its inception for a lot

of managers this is a jarring moment for

them where they have to kind of question

everything that has got them thus far

and

learn in real time what it takes to be a

great remote manager gitlab doesn't use

surveillance software it instead focuses

on documenting metrics and objectives

fostering open communication and

emphasizing results the key here is

don't just look at how often someone is

sitting in front of their keyboard or in

front of their desk that was never a

great way to measure productivity even

in the office

fundamentally we believe that you should

measure results not our spent and that's

how it already works for many people in

management what are we going to start

measuring the CEOs productivity at the

end of the day's investor returns and

how we do that grow the stock price

right for public or private companies we

have milestones we have due dates we

have reminders but it's on each

individual and team and leader to use

these functions to keep us all on track

at the core of it humans are not robots

we are empathetic beings and especially

in a remote setting a fabric of that the

culture of that is really important for

morale to stay high and for people to

feel like they're connected as a team

and not just another cog in the wheel

for some much of this comes down to what

it is you're trying to accomplish in the

first place is that drive towards

productivity the only thing that we want

from work you know if it is by the

software packages have a viewing of

people's desktops while they were at

home the whole time but I don't think

that's the kind of organization that

many people want to work for today one

of the kind of lessons that people maybe

can take away from this during the

pandemic is just because a new tool is

going to be used

always proposed to be used doesn't mean

it has to be work should be a

negotiation so this is a point of

inflection for managers and workers both

there are many employers that are

looking at this and thinking this is a

real opportunity to reshape work to

change whether people think surveillance

is acceptable or not to change who needs

to be in the office and who doesn't will

it benefit people who are working and

they're now able to work in new ways or

will it benefit employers who will find

new ways to to get the most out of of

people's time they've fought to make

people work even harder and so on

employees can help - you can manage up

working from home particularly when

you're new to it and particularly your

manager is due to it requires more

communication not less checking in in

the morning checking in in the afternoon

you having once a week get together x'

and micro goals so that you know you

both understand okay am i working on the

right thing am i getting my job done and

you're sort of telling your manager

don't worry about it I'm getting my job

done I think for companies far and wide

you're starting to see that the further

people are from you the more you have to

let go and enable them and empower them

to move the business forward you cannot

run a remote team successfully long term

through micromanagement and fear as

we're seeing the world open up and

remote opportunities are everywhere now

people that are under that type of

duress will inevitably start to look at

other companies which are more trusting

and more autonomous