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Description

As more employees are finding it difficult to disconnect from work related emails after leaving the office, employers are getting the message and are making changes.

Keywords

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Citation

MLA
"Too Many Emails? Relief in Sight." Ron Allen, correspondent. NBC Nightly News. NBCUniversal
LESTER HOLT, anchor:

Back now with something a lot of folks can relate to, being tethered to e-mail at all hours, responding to those BlackBerry messages long after you've left the office. Seems more and more employees are fed up with being unable to disconnect from work-related email, and now a growing number of companies are getting the message and making changes. Here's NBC's Ron Allen.

RON ALLEN, reporting:

It is a problem that is only getting worse in our constantly connected world.

Unidentified Man: First thing I do when I wake up is I check my BlackBerry.

Unidentified Woman: It's pretty much the last thing that I look at before I go to bed at night.

ALLEN: Information overload. E-mail all hours of the day and night virtually eliminating the line between being on and off the job.

J.P. FAIELLA: I walked down the aisle with my BlackBerry.

ALLEN: And that's when J.P. Faiella knew he had a problem.

FAIELLA: Had to grab my BlackBerry.

ALLEN: He runs a small Boston PR firm that gets 1200 e-mails each day.

FAIELLA: You're putting in 12, 13, 14-hour days here, and then you're going home and communicating for another four or five hours. It was just too much.

ALLEN: So he's trying to give his team a break. He's put up an out of office response to e-mail received after 5:30 PM until 8:30 the next morning. In the US, a recent study shows that 22% of employees who use email at work say they're expected to read and respond to messages away from the office. And that number nearly doubles to 48% if they company has issued workers a smartphone or BlackBerry. And there may be a worldwide backlash brewing. In Brazil, workers who answer e-mails after the work day ends now may qualify for overtime pay. A new law says company e-mail is the same as an order from the boss. And in Germany, car giant Volkswagen has agreed to stop sending e-mail to some workers after
their shifts.
DAVID GROSSMAN (The Grossman Group): I do expect that we will see more companies with policies that limit e-mail. It solves a long-standing irritant and organizations should see productivity improvements from limiting e-mail.
ALLEN: Back in Boston, the new limited e-mail policy is just a few weeks old.
SHANNON IGOE (Image Unlimited Communications): We're still getting the e-mails at night and on the weekends, but we don't have to respond to them.
ALLEN: And if all of this turns out to be bad for business, the boss can still reach everyone with a cellphone. Ron Allen, NBC News, New York.