



Born Digital Poised to Deliver Substantial Economic Gains – But They’ll Need Some Help

Latest Citrix® research shows young workers can drive an extra \$1.9 trillion in corporate profits if given support to adapt to new realities of work

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. – May 25, 2021 – Today’s young employees are the engines of the knowledge economy and tomorrow’s business leaders. And according to [The Born Digital Effect](#), the latest research from [Citrix Systems, Inc.](#) (NASDAQ:CTXS), they’re primed to deliver an extra \$1.9 trillion in corporate profits. But they’ll need some help to pull it off.

Made up of Millennials (born 1981 to 1996) and Generation Z (born after 1997) workers, the Born Digital are the first generation to grow up in an entirely digital world, and now account for most of the global workforce.

“These young employees are different from previous generations in that they have only ever known a tech-driven world of work,” said Donna Kimmel, Executive Vice President of Chief People Officer, Citrix. “To shore up their future business success, companies must understand their values, career aspirations and working styles and invest in their development.”

To help them do this, Citrix, together with Coleman Parks Research and Oxford Analytica, conducted The Born Digital Effect, a study that combined global opinion research from 1,000 business leaders and 2,000 knowledge workers in 10 countries to understand what the Born Digital want from work with economic modeling to quantify the impact they can have on business and the larger economy.

A Fundamental Disconnect

And it revealed that when it comes to understanding what engages and motivates younger workers, leaders are out of touch. Among the key findings:

Job stability and work-life balance matter most to employees - Faced with an uncertain job environment, younger workers are most focused on fundamental work factors like career stability and security (87 percent) and a good work-life balance (87 percent). This is poorly understood by leaders, who think their young workers value access to the latest workplace technology and opportunities for training.

Leaders overestimate office appeal – 90 percent of Born Digital employees do not want to return to full-time office work post-pandemic, preferring a hybrid model instead.

- Over half (51 percent) want to remain working from home most or all of the time.
- 18 percent would like hybrid working with more time in the office
- 21 percent would like hybrid working with time evenly split between home and the office
- Only 10 percent would like to be in the office full time

But 58 percent of leaders believe that young workers will want to spend most or all of their time working in the office.

While they may prefer to work remote, Born Digital workers recognize that social interaction is crucial in a business context (68 percent).

“As companies move forward in enabling work from anywhere, they will need to provide opportunities for employees to come together both physically in offices and virtually from home to keep them connected, engaged and prepared for the future of work,” Kimmel said.

More than anything, the Born Digital want employers who give them flexibility and choice –Although a five-day week is still a popular working pattern, the Born Digital believe that they should be given the opportunity to work a four-day week if they choose (17 percent). They also expect to be able to decide when to begin and end their working day (27 percent), and a few want to work unstructured or output-based hours (7 percent).

And they want to be given freedom and recognized for their performance - When asked to identify the three most important aspects of company culture they look for in choosing an employer, the Born Digital cited:

- Autonomy, or the opportunity to work in a high-trust environment (83 percent)
- Compensation that recognizes and rewards performance (81 percent)
- Strong and visible leadership (79 percent)

Young workers and leaders inhabit different digital worlds - Only 21 percent of business leaders use instant messaging apps like Slack or WhatsApp for work purposes, compared to 81 percent of Born Digital employees. And only 26 percent of business leaders like using these apps for work, compared to 82 percent of Born Digital workers.

Purpose is a privilege, not a priority - Only 30 percent of Born Digital employees would leave an organization that lacked purpose, compared to 69 percent of business leaders. And only 28 percent of Born Digital workers would leave a role if they felt the culture did not reflect their personality adequately, compared to 58 percent of business leaders.

As the data makes clear, today’s business leaders are clearly disconnected from what the Born Digital really want from work. And in order to unlock their full potential and the value they can deliver, they need to plug in.

The Future is in Their Hands

“Successfully attracting and retaining the Born Digital will require organizations to invest in the work model and tools to create the flexible, efficient and engaged work environment that this next generation of leaders craves and thrives in,” said Tim Minahan, Executive Vice President of Business Strategy, Citrix. “And there is clear commercial benefit to doing so.”

To quantify these benefits, Citrix worked with economists to build an economic model that assessed the impact of Born Digital employees on companies' profitability, examining the relationship between the size of a country's Born Digital population and the profitability of that country's businesses.

"As the model shows, businesses in countries with above-average Born Digital populations can see an increase in corporate profits equivalent to more than the entire market capitalization of the FTSE 100."

Countries in the study with relatively well-developed education systems or younger populations compared to their peers – such as the US, China, the UAE, Mexico, the UK and the Netherlands – are benefiting most from the Born Digital dividend as their above-average Born Digital populations are helping to ensure their businesses enjoy greater profitability, now and in the future.

Conversely, countries with relatively older populations such as France, Germany and Japan or lower levels of higher education among the younger population such as India, have the potential to reap greater rewards if they invest in higher education and digital infrastructure, actively recruit younger workers, and adapt their workplaces and working practices to suit them.

"The Born Digital are the C-Suite of tomorrow and in 2035, the success or failure of business and the global economy will be in their hands," Minahan said. "To secure the future, companies need to cultivate younger workers and adapt their workplaces and working practices to groom them today."

To gain additional insights into the Born Digital and creating an environment in which they can thrive and deliver the future of business, click [here](#).

About the Study

Research methodology developed by Man Bites Dog, with support from Citrix. Economic modeling work carried out by consulting firm Oxford Analytica and independent opinion research carried out by research company Coleman Parkes.

Economic modeling: A five-step economic model was built to estimate the association of the Born Digital (defined as highly skilled, digitally-savvy employees aged 18-40) population with corporate profitability. The model estimated this association at the firm level across 53 countries, which we subsequently used to highlight implications for France, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, Mexico, the US, the UAE, China, India and Japan.

Opinion research: In 2020 and 2021 we interviewed 2,000 Born Digital knowledge workers (750 Generation Z and 1,250 Millennials) and 1,000 business leaders working in both large, established corporations and mid-market businesses. Respondents were based in France, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, Mexico, the US, the UAE, China, India and Japan. The study focused on the following sectors: financial services; healthcare and life sciences; technology; professional services; manufacturing and retail.

###