The Impact of COVID-19 on the Future of Work

May 2020
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Methodology

WorldatWork, in partnership with Greenwich.HR, invited its broader membership and customer base to participate in an electronic survey. Email invitations were sent directly to participants on 04/29/2020 and results were collected over a seven-day period.

A total of 523 responses were received, representing organizations of different sizes and across multiple industries. Results have not been weighted, but respondent profiles have been included to assist with interpretation of results. Results are skewed to be more representative of mid-large employers, but statistical differences have been highlighted when present.

The survey has a 3% overall margin of error at a confidence level of 90%. The error rate was based on how representative the results are for medium-large organizations.

Sample sizes vary by question. Please note that statistical reliability will fluctuate based on sample sizes.
Key Findings

• For organizations with an estimated timeline for survival, almost one-third are feeling the extreme pain of the pandemic and have reached critical mass; and potentially another 20% by July and 32% sometime in 2021

• 37% of organizations reported that COVID-19 has accelerated their technology investment and 17% signifying a slowdown; the remaining 47% are leaving their investment stable, possibly indicating it may be too early to tell the impact
  • Also, for organizations’ investment in technology supporting automation efforts, 61% have not adjusted their investment level

• Service enhancement is the most influential motivation of organizations’ automation efforts with time and financial drivers following far behind

• Microsoft Teams and Zoom Meetings are the most reported videoconferencing solutions
  • 62% of organizations using Zoom Meetings are tightening security protocols as a result of recent concerns, with most regulating instructions on protecting links and access and carefully checking attendees

• For organizations with multiple locations, the majority are adhering to local COVID-19 mandates versus a centralized policy
COVID-19
One-third of organizations are either still conducting sufficient business or have substantial liquid assets to survive.

Many businesses are estimating how long they can survive before making drastic cuts to their operations or closing the business altogether. Has your organization established similar timelines?

- **Yes**: 34%
- **No**: 44%
- **Not sure**: 23%

During which month will your organization reach that critical point of survival?

- **Already reached this point**: 20%
- **May**: 8%
- **June**: 9%
- **July**: 10%
- **August**: 6%
- **September**: 5%
- **October**: 7%
- **November**: 1%
- **December**: 2%
- **Sometime in 2021**: 32%
37% of organizations indicated they have accelerated their investment in technology as a result of COVID-19

In general, how has COVID-19 impacted your organization’s investment in technology?

- Greatly accelerated our investment: 7%
- Accelerated our investment: 30%
- About the same level of investment: 47%
- Decelerated our investment: 11%
- Greatly decelerated our investment: 6%

n = 417
COVID-19 has yielded a small increase in the rate of technology investment

Specifically thinking about technologies that support automation efforts, how has COVID-19 impacted your investments in that area?

- Greatly accelerated our investment: 4%
- Accelerated our investment: 22%
- About the same level of investment: 61%
- Decelerated our investment: 10%
- Greatly decelerated our investment: 3%

n = 323
Automation is not necessarily driven by cost or time reductions

How influential are the following factors driving the acceleration of your organization’s automation efforts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Not at all influential</th>
<th>Slightly influential</th>
<th>Somewhat influential</th>
<th>Very influential</th>
<th>Extremely influential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service enhancement</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production capacity</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality enhancement</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Time savings</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>26%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labor reliability</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial savings</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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n = 78
Microsoft Teams and Zoom Meetings are leading in videoconferencing software

What videoconferencing software is your organization using?

- Microsoft Teams: 36%
- Zoom Meetings: 25%
- WebEx Meetings: 15%
- Skype: 10%
- GoToMeeting: 3%
- Google Hangouts Meet: 3%
- We are not using videoconferencing software: 1%
- Other: 9%

n = 474
Over two-thirds of Zoom Meetings users have changed their security protocols

As a Zoom Meetings user, how have the security concerns impacted the way you use the system? Please select all that apply.

- We have issued instructions to associates on how to better protect meeting links and access: 62%
- We have not changed the way we use Zoom: 30%
- We have been carefully checking meeting attendees: 28%
- We have stopped using Zoom and moved to another platform: 1%

n = 115
Nearly two-thirds of organizations are following local government guidance

**If your organization employs associates in multiple geographic locations, are you adhering to local mandates or do you have a centralized policy?**

- 59%: We are adhering to local mandates
- 22%: We have our own centralized policy for all associates to follow
- 19%: We do not have associates in multiple geographic locations

n = 466
Respondent Profile
Company Sector

Your organization is:

- Private, privately-held: 43%
- Private, publicly traded: 31%
- Nonprofit/ Not-for-profit: 15%
- Government/ Public sector: 11%

n = 463
Company Industry and Size

Under which industry does your organization fall?

- Financial services: 13%
- Consulting/profession...: 13%
- Manufacturing: 13%
- Information technology: 9%
- Energy: 8%
- Healthcare/pharma: 7%
- Retail: 4%
- Other: 27%

n = 463

How many full-time equivalent (FTE) employees does your organization have?

- Fewer than 100 employees: 15%
- 100 to 999: 24%
- 1,000 to 9,999: 41%
- 10,000 to 39,999: 13%
- 40,000 or more employees: 7%

n = 463
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