



Public Relations Contact

Megan Magee

Adobe

mmagee@adobe.com

Adobe “Future of Time” Study: Continued Uncertainty Motivates Businesses to Increase Digitisation, Collaboration

- **83% of managers and 77% of employees in the UK agree that change has become the new constant in workplaces**
- **58% of UK ENT managers and 71% of employees have increased news consumption during working hours, with around a quarter admitting breaking news can impact their productivity for several hours**
- **British employees now rely on work technologies for both collaboration and peace of mind, while having higher expectations for purpose-driven business cultures**

LONDON, UK — 29th September, 2022 — Today, Adobe Document Cloud released new research on the evolution of work in the second annual global [“Future of Time” study](#). The study reveals that 83% of managers and 77% of employees in the UK agree that change has become the new constant in workplaces – and workers now rely on digital tools not only to keep productive, but also achieve peace of mind during particularly uncertain times.

“Businesses of all sizes now grapple with considerable uncertainty, as well as frequent impacts on employee wellbeing and productivity,” said Todd Gerber, vice president of Document Cloud, Adobe. “In order to adapt to macroeconomic shifts organizations must prioritize strategic investments in digital technologies – including modern productivity and workflow tools like Document Cloud – that will enable better workforce productivity, collaboration and innovation.”

Adobe’s study, “The Future of Time: Redefining Productivity During Uncertainty,” surveyed more than 9,700 employees, enterprise (ENT) managers and small business (SMB) leaders across eight global markets including the UK, offering a comprehensive look at how uncertainty has impacted workforce productivity, collaboration and innovation. Economic instability, climate changes, and COVID-19 variants emerged as some of the top global concerns, in addition to regionally specific issues.

Due to continued uncertainty, 58% of UK ENT managers and 71% of UK employees reported spending more time at work absorbing or discussing news coverage compared to a year ago — and 27% of employees said a breaking news event could impact their day for multiple hours. This uncertainty has decreased efficiency and productivity for all employees in the UK, with Gen Z (86%) and millennials (83%) feeling stronger impacts compared with older generations, including 71% of Gen X employees, and 64% of Boomers and their older peers.

However, a majority of employees in the UK (62%) now view work as a welcome distraction in uncertain times. Companies of all sizes are innovatively keeping employees engaged and supported by leveraging digital tools in new, creative ways, then finding that employees are eager to co-create the future of work and impact transformational projects. Most employees reported that uncertainty has required them to innovate in their positions – such as utilising new processes and creative problem-solving approaches – while over one in five in the UK expect their employers to innovate in the next year by giving them the opportunity to experiment with new processes.

Technology Is Creating Opportunities for Better Collaboration and Innovation in UK Businesses Amid Uncertainty

Persistent workplace uncertainty has fuelled innovation, as companies in the UK replace legacy processes to improve their competitiveness and resilience in an ever-changing world.

- 15% of SMB leaders in the UK have invested in new technologies to support employees through the past year's uncertainty.
- The vast majority (82%) of managers in the UK observed at least one benefit of increased workplace innovation, including impacts on work efficiency (34% of SMBs, 27% of ENT managers) and working relationships among employees (22% SMBs, 26% of ENT managers), with significant numbers noting improvements in work-life balance (32% SMBs, 37% ENT managers).

Employees in the UK Are Demanding Modern Technology and Wellbeing Support at Work

Given constant uncertainty, employees in the UK now seek purpose-driven work at companies that prioritise investments in modern technologies and employee wellbeing.

- Most leaders and employees in the UK – 54% of employees, 58% of SMB leaders, and 73% of ENT managers – say they now have higher expectations for purpose-driven organisational cultures than they did one year ago, and workers who are actively shaping their work cultures are more likely to be satisfied.
- Over two-thirds of managers in the UK say their organisations' cultures will be more collaborative (70% SMB, 78% ENT managers) and digitised (72%, 85%) in the next year than ever before, helping both employees and businesses navigate future uncertainty.
- Nearly seven in ten SMB leaders and employees in the UK rely on digital tools to achieve peace of mind at work, stay productive when they're having trouble focusing, and ease the stress of completing work when a coworker needs to take time off unexpectedly. Yet 68% of ENT managers and 51% of SMB leaders say they need more tools and resources to support employees through uncertain times.
- Over two thirds of SMB leaders in the UK say that digital solutions allow easier feedback between employees and leaders, with this figure increasing to 76% for employees and 88% for ENT managers.
- For 62% of SMB leaders in the UK, digital tools are supporting managers in facilitating wellbeing check-ins. This increased to 72% for employees and 87% for ENT managers.

“Creating the best processes and using the right technology should all be for the purpose of supporting everyone from scientists to consumers in this new era of hybrid work and life,” said Jai Gulati, global head of application services & intelligent automation at Regeneron, a leading biotechnology company that invents, develops, and commercializes life-transforming medicines. “For example, we use digital solutions including Adobe Acrobat Sign to increase internal efficiencies, but more importantly, to improve the experience for document signers so they have a fast, easy and touchless method of handling records.”

Adobe Document Cloud gives individuals and businesses of all sizes the tools to transform outdated processes into modern, efficient digital experiences. Document Cloud includes Adobe Acrobat, Adobe Acrobat Sign, and powerful companion mobile apps such as Acrobat Reader and Adobe Scan. Adobe Acrobat is the world's best and most trusted PDF solution, helping people get work done across desktop, mobile and online platforms, as well as inside popular Microsoft and G-Suite apps. Adobe Acrobat Sign is the leading e-signature solution that allows anyone to sign and send documents from any device.

Adobe's full study, Future of Time: Redefining Productivity During Uncertainty, can be downloaded here:

<https://www.adobe.com/documentcloud/business/reports/sdk/future-of-time-report-2022.html>

Methodology

In August 2022, Adobe fielded a 20-minute online survey to a representative sample of 1,400 enterprise managers, 3,500 enterprise employees, 1,400 small business leaders, and 3,503 small business employees across eight global markets, including the U.S., UK, France, Germany, Australia and New Zealand, Japan, and India. The survey asked how global uncertainty and change — defined as the occurrence of unplanned news or events, globally and in the workplace — are impacting organizational productivity, work culture, and innovation.

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