Burden or Benefit?

How technology is helping inspire positive change

Quinyx

Why technology really
is a force for good

Like it or loathe it, technology is part and parcel of humankind. Since the dawn of time, our ancestors sought new tools and techniques to make their lives easier and while we may take everyday necessities – infrastructure, electricity, vehicles and even domestic appliances - for granted, at one point in history each of these new innovations faced resistance.

Fast forward to 2021 and technology is commonplace in our homes and where we work, rest and play. It touches our lives at the most significant and insignificant times, making us better, directing us from A to B and connecting us with loved ones.

In this report, we explore how technology is helping inspire positive change in the workplace, the steps that can be taken to better integrate technology into your business systems and the benefits of digitalisation.

Key insights include:

- What areas savvy business leaders are choosing to invest in this year.
- The monetary gains of calling in a tech partner – imagine an extra 40% on your bottom line!
- Why it pays to keep staff happy and engaged.
- A six-point checklist to help you on the road to digitalisation.

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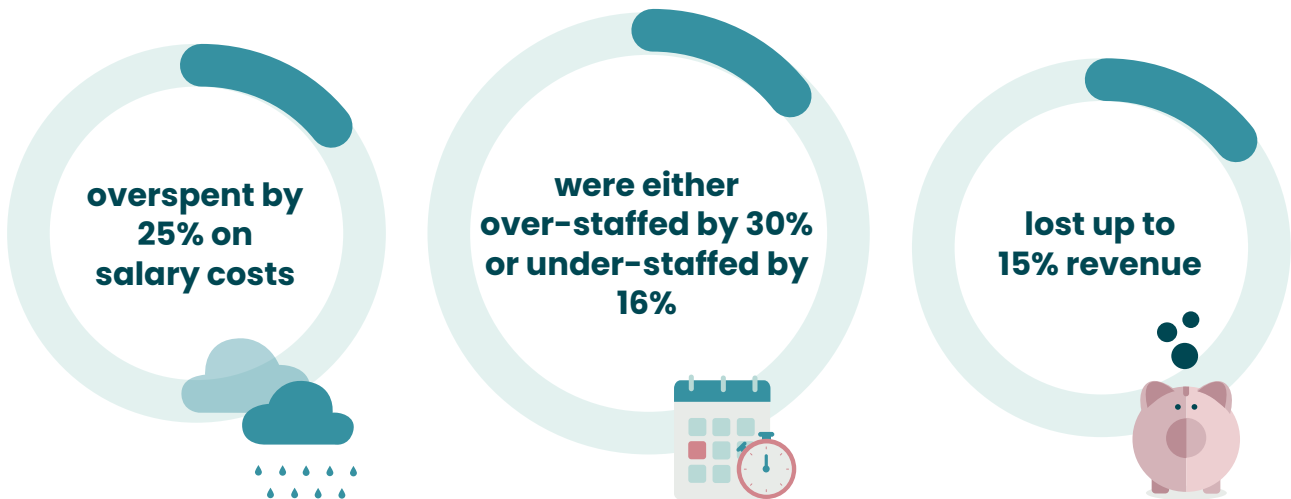
Overcoming the barriers

While the pandemic has been a catalyst for technological growth in some sectors – most predominantly healthcare, retail and banking – for others, uncertainty fuelled by lockdown restrictions has stagnated new adoptions.

Over half of UK decision-makers (**52%**), polled by **Capterra** in summer 2020, said the software purchases they make will be critical to their survival during and after the pandemic, with price and ease of use determining where investments should be made.

Although it may feel counterintuitive to invest in new technologies when the purse strings are tight, bringing in solutions that improve efficiencies makes good business sense.

Did you know? Due to ineffective scheduling...

... Global companies managing deskless workers during the pandemic on average:

overspent by 25% on salary costs

were either over-staffed by 30% or under-staffed by 16%

lost up to 15% revenue

Our studies also showed that:

AI-powered workforce management tools, like Quinyx, improved workforce efficiencies by more than **20%**, while identifying savings of around **40%**.

Thinking more holistically about tech

2020 hit businesses right where they were least prepared, but many companies successfully adapted to survive and thrive, with technology a critical tool being deployed.

In fact, global market research company **Forrester** reported that just 3% of companies had contingency for an epidemic or pandemic.

It found following the first wave of COVID, that while between 20 to 30% of businesses were in survival mode, 50% were in a quickly shifting, dynamic mode, changing their model in order to maintain revenue. These companies, such as grocery businesses, retained good customer flow, while also grappling with challenges in their supply chain, remote customer journeys, protecting employees from exposure to the pandemic, and focusing on increased scheduling requirements due to changing work patterns.

Forrester surveyed business leaders and decision makers to determine the most innovative companies. It found that those identified as 'leading innovators':

- Were growing at 3.6 x their industry average.
- Were willing to be adaptive and prioritise business model change.
- Focused on improving customer and employee experience.

Conversely, the trailing innovators - those who did not score well on criteria for innovation based on Forrester's research - were:

- Experiencing negative growth.
- Focusing on growing revenue and reducing costs.

The key takeaway of these studies was that **innovation directly influences revenue growth.**

What does the HR leaders say?

A survey amongst HR chiefs, led by **Gartner** in early 2021, echoed these findings. When it came to identifying their top business-level priorities for the year ahead:

65% want to improve operational excellence

54% see business transformations as the top priority

50%, up 13% year-on-year, want to focus on optimising costs in 2021

Why a people-first
approach pays

Displacement of staff, illness, mental health concerns, furlough, lockdown restrictions, even Brexit, have had serious implications on how staff have been able to perform their duties over the past year and the knock-on effect for HR departments, has been cataclysmic.

While the media headlines have focused on a national effort to work from home, for the 2.7 billion global deskless workers, this isn't an option.

At the start of the pandemic we spoke to 1,200 deskless workers in the UK about how their working life and their attitudes to work had changed, as a result of COVID-19, and the findings were stark. They highlighted:

- **54%** believed their employer viewed them as a disposable or temporary worker.
- **61%** considered quitting their job because they were unhappy with their work environment, while **52%** said their job negatively impacted their mental health.
- **30%** wouldn't talk to their employer about scheduling issues affecting their personal life.

Nearly a year on from that study and these issues have been further exacerbated. And while technology isn't the only answer to righting these wrongs, it does provide the mechanic to better engage with personnel, while opening up clear and honest channels of communication.

Why your workforce is your best asset.....

A happy and engaged workforce makes for a more efficient and productive one – ultimately reducing staff headcount and absenteeism. But don't just take our word for it...

The Department of Economics at the University of Warwick cites that happy workers are 12% more productive than the average worker, while unhappy ones are 10% less productive.

Shawn Achor wrote in the Harvard Business Review: "A decade of research proves that happiness raises nearly every business and educational outcome: raising sales by 37%, productivity by 31%, and accuracy on tasks by 19%, as well as a myriad of health and quality of life improvements."

NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) guidance for workplace health predicts the average cost of staff absenteeism per day is £158.28, while the average cost per case of staff turnover is an incredible £15,334!

The journey to change –
a checklist

Many of the numbers in this report may be daunting, but what they do prove is that **technology can affect positive change and shoulder some of the burden**. Despite the list of cons that may be putting you off – lack of time and knowledge, budget restrictions, which provider to use - the pros such as **cost savings, increased efficiencies and a happy team**, far outweigh the negatives.

To help even the most uncertain managers on the road to change, we've developed a **six-point checklist** to get you started.

1. Be honest about what isn't working. Take some time to reflect on the last year of business and look ahead – what have you learned and where do you need to make improvements? Are there specific areas of the business that are losing money? Why? Could technology help?

2. Now you know what your problem is, it's time to find a partner. The next step is to assign a realistic budget, while having a clear idea of what your return on investment should be.

3. Develop a brief detailing the problem areas that need supporting, whilst identifying the aims and objectives of bringing in a technology partner. maximising compliance with labour laws and employee preferences.

4. Approach three service providers and ask them to come back to you with a clear breakdown of budget, ROI and timings.
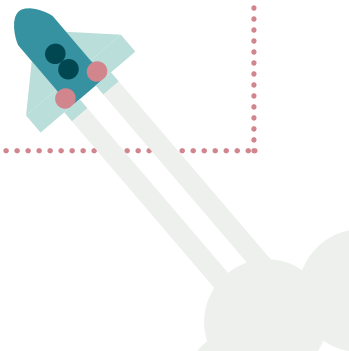
5. Make your contractual appointment but ensure it can be easily adopted by the team, is future-proofed and you have specific key performance indicators in place from the outset.

6. Keep up the measurement and be sure that the technology is not only paying for itself, but making savings too.

Flying high, thanks to Quinyx

Juggling manual scheduling with ineffective internal communication was hindering **London City Airport's** efficiency levels. With **600 staff** to manage, the team at the busy capital hub credit Quinyx with **reducing the time spent scheduling by 50%**, now organising their employee system through the cloud and on mobile.

Employee engagement has massively improved since **London City Airport** began using Quinyx to communicate with their staff. They now send out annual employee surveys through the tool and have seen an **80% response rate** - more than double the number they had before.

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