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

- Over 70% of managers and employees agree that change has become the new constant in workplaces
- Over 70% of employees have increased news consumption during working hours; 75% say breaking news can impact their productivity for multiple hours
- Employees now rely on work technologies for both collaboration and peace of mind, while having higher expectations for purpose-driven business cultures

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Sept. 29, 2022 — Today, Adobe (Nasdaq:ADBE) Document Cloud released new research on the evolution of work in the second annual global “Future of Time” [study](#). The study reveals that over 70% of managers and employees agree that change has become the new constant in workplaces – and workers now rely on digital tools not only to keep productive, but also to achieve peace of mind during particularly uncertain times.

“Businesses of all sizes continue to grapple with considerable uncertainty, as well as frequent impacts on employee well-being and productivity,” said Todd Gerber, vice president of Document Cloud at Adobe. “Adapting to macroeconomic shifts necessitate that organizations 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, 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, 70% of managers and employees reported spending more time at work absorbing or discussing news coverage compared to a year ago — and 76% of employees said a breaking news event could impact their day for a few hours. This uncertainty has decreased efficiency and productivity for all employees, with Gen Z (93%) and millennials (87%) feeling stronger impacts compared with older generations, including 79% of Gen X employees, and 71% of boomers and their older peers.

However, a majority of employees (58%) 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

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that uncertainty has required them to innovate in their positions – such as utilizing new processes and creative problem-solving approaches – while one in four 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 Amid Uncertainty

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

- More than a third of enterprise managers have invested in new technologies to support employees through the past year’s uncertainty.
- The vast majority (84%) of managers observed at least one benefit of increased workplace innovation, including impacts on work efficiency (62% of SMBs, 66% of ENT managers) and work culture (58% of SMBs, 63% of ENT managers), with significant numbers noting improvements in work-life balance (31% of SMBs, 34% of ENT managers).

Employees Are Demanding Modern Technology and Well-being Support at Work

Given constant uncertainty, employees now seek purpose-driven work at companies that prioritize investments in modern technologies and employee well-being.

- Most leaders and employees – 56% of employees, 63% of SMB leaders and 71% of ENT managers – say they now have higher expectations for purpose-driven organizational 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 say their organizations’ cultures will be more collaborative (69% of SMBs, 76% of ENT managers) and digitized (71%, 81%) in the next year than ever before, helping both employees and businesses navigate future uncertainty.
- Nearly seven in ten managers and employees 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 59% of SMB leaders say they need more tools and resources to support employees through uncertain times.
- Over 70% of employees and managers say that digital solutions are facilitating and improving work relationships, including supporting managers in facilitating well-being check-ins, allowing easier feedback between employees and leaders, and fostering collaboration between employees.

“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](#).

Methodology

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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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