



WORKFORCE  
OF TOMORROW





# The Workforce of Tomorrow

## FROM THE GARAGE BY HP

As Gen Z start to work, smart employers will want to understand who they are and what they want, while new technology will let them work anywhere, anytime.

Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012—seemingly with smartphones in hand—are entering the workforce in the U.S, all 61 million of them. With the oldest among them turning 22 this year, they are just beginning to make their mark, but it’s already substantial: Globally, they hold purchasing power of more than \$500 billion and mobile buying power of \$143 billion. By 2020, they will account for 40 percent of all consumers, as well as 10 percent of eligible voters in the next U.S. presidential election.

Gen Z expects tech to be integrated in their daily lives in a way that’s different from any other generation before them. Why? Consider what else was born in 1997: Google (along with many other now-defunct search engines) and Netflix (then a DVD-rentals-by-mail service). Amazon went public that same year. By the mid-2000s, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Hulu and Instagram were beginning to disrupt consumption habits forever. None of these were new to this generation, they were just always there.

“With Plurals and technology, there’s almost no division,” says Jack Mackenzie, executive vice president of market research firm PSB. “I don’t even know if they think of it as technology. They just think of it as the way it is. It’s just ingrained into their minute-by-minute behaviours.”

As Gen Z enters the workforce, they’re seeing remote work as the norm, with flexibility and work-life harmony enabled by technology.



## FLUID, GLOBAL, CONNECTED

As powerful as they are as a group, they support and embrace the individual, tossing aside definitive labels made standard by generations past and disregarding the status quo in many areas, from gender identification and sexual orientation to race and religion. For example, nearly half (48 percent) of the generation is non-white, compared with 39 percent of Millennials and just 18 percent of early Baby Boomers, according to the Pew Research Centre. A report from the Gen Z-focused think tank Irregular Labs found that a quarter of Gen Z expects their gender identity to change throughout their lives.

That's why market researcher Mackenzie dubbed the generation Plurals—because their identities are so fluid and individualistic. They are the first generation with no clear majority.



1997 - 2012

Gen Z births

And the digital connection is inherent to that sense of fluidity. Thanks to the 24/7 news cycle and always-on social media, the world's biggest problems—from structural inequality to the refugee crisis to climate change—are top of mind for Gen Z and also right in the palms of their hands.

“Gen Z is really the first global generation,” says Jennifer Wang, director of customer insights at HP. “In previous generations, Gen X, for example, in the U.S. was very different from Gen X in China. But we don't see that differentiation with Gen Z. They have grown up with access to the same information and they have all that information at their fingertips, regardless of where they live, as long as they have internet connectivity.”



32%

of the world's global population of 7.7 billion



## INTEGRATING TECH IRL

More than half of internet users around the world are under the age of 24, and this generation spends more than 70 hours a week on their devices, more than any other generation, according to a 2018 study from Metafacts. And that heavy usage begins at increasingly younger ages, with the average Gen Z-ers getting their own first phones when they're just 12 years old. As teens, a whopping 95 percent have access to a smartphone, and 45 percent say they are almost constantly online, according to 2018 Pew research.



Clearly, they see technology not just as devices and tools, but as essential to living their lives. Ninety-one percent of Gen Z members say they even keep their devices in bed with them, according to a study from consulting firm sparks & honey.

This intimate relationship with technology is blurring virtual and actual realities, creating a new sort of existence that older generations may have trouble understanding. For example, despite their affinity for digital connections, 84 percent of Gen Z-ers say they prefer face-to-face communication—more than any other demographic HP surveyed. But they count using FaceTime and other video conferencing services as modes of face-to-face communication. They're redefining what constitutes interpersonal communication.

**\$500 BILLION**

Gen Z's purchasing power



## A MOBILE REVOLUTION

As younger generations begin to take on more managerial positions, they're bringing an openness to remote working policies with them, building more remote teams, and encouraging more autonomy among their employees. A study this year by Upwork predicts that 73% of companies will have remote workers by 2028. In the same study, 69% of younger-generation managers said they allow team members to work remotely, compared with 58% of managers in the Boomer generation.

Fitting into that way of life means equipping employees with the devices they need to work productively and securely on the go. To stay competitive, employers are not only allowing employees to untether from their desks and the physical office, they're helping to make it possible— offering remote access to internal systems, establishing partnerships with co-working spaces, and providing technology designed for mobile work.

"Organisations will only become more receptive to different workforce structures and individual managers will customise arrangements specific to single employees," says Levit. "Any company that insists on a traditional 9-to-5 schedule is going to be left behind in terms of its ability to recruit and retain top talent."



**40%**

of all consumers will be Gen Z by 2020



Employees who consider their employers to be pioneers in providing mobile technology scored themselves 16% higher for productivity, 23% higher for satisfaction, and 21% higher for loyalty than employees without good mobile technology support, according to a study from the Economist Intelligence Unit and Aruba, a Hewlett-Packard Enterprise company. And, as more employers and employees realise the benefits of mobile work, technological advances will continue to improve their experience.



## WHAT A WORKER NEEDS TODAY

So what does the modern mobile employee need? A laptop, a smartphone, a speedy internet connection, cloud-based collaboration, security — and technology that fits their personal style, whether they're working in a hotel lobby on an international trip or their neighbourhood coffee shop.

The mobile workstyle means communicating via video calls, collaborating using apps such as Slack and Zoom, and coordinating with far-flung team members through project management platforms like Basecamp.

Employees who work away from the office are often working in public or in front of clients, and they want their technology to fit their personal aesthetic. They may want to use their own personal devices for work or request more consumer-style devices from their IT departments.

Caleb Fleming, premium new product introduction lead at HP, says the shift to a mobile workstyle informed the HP Elite Dragonfly's design inside and out. "It's light and sleek, and also durable and secure," he says. "Essentially, it's a device that meets corporate standards but doesn't look like a corporate device."

Starting at under 1kg, the HP Elite Dragonfly lightens the load for employees working on the move. Its up to 24.5 hours of battery life gives them the reliability they need as they move from location to location, and its 1,000 nit screen makes it possible to work in extremely bright light. The HP Elite Dragonfly's clean, modern design is available in a unique, iridescent blue that also hits a sustainability milestone as the world's first notebook containing ocean bound plastic.



73%

of companies will have remote workers by 2028



## THEY DON'T JUST LIKE AND FOLLOW — THEY LEAD

Among Gen Z small-business owners, 57 percent say a goal of their entrepreneurial efforts is to make a significant mark on the world. "This generation is very interested in addressing the root causes of issues rather than the symptoms of the problems," says Corey Seemiller, co-author of Generation Z Leads. According to data from sparks & honey, 54 percent of Gen Z-ers say they want to make an impact on the world.

For example, in her role as an associate professor in leadership studies at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, Seemiller saw Millennial students enter college wanting to volunteer by, say, putting in a few hours serving food at a local shelter. When Gen Z students matriculated, they approached the same cause in a new way.



“They were asking different questions,” Seemiller says. “They said, ‘I want to create a business that might solve this problem. I want to create an invention or research solutions. I want to give back in a way that’s going to change these issues so that we’re not constantly playing catch-up.’”

And they are doing it. From activists Malala Yousafzai and students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, to entrepreneurs like Alina Morse, the 13-year-old CEO of Zollipop, a \$6 million candy company that makes lollipops that are good for your teeth, the kids are doing more than all right. Using technology, Generation Z is creating solutions to the problems they see plaguing the world, and they’re just getting started, says PSB’s Mackenzie.

**“Technology has always proven to be a fuel,” he says. “They use it in a way that makes sense for who they are.”**



This article originally appeared on Garage by HP.

Visit <https://garage.ext.hp.com/us/en/modern-life/generation-z-redefining-the-world.html> to read the article in full.



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