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ACCOUNTING

U.S. Companies Embrace Automation and Digitization

The number of companies in the U.S. that automate some of their work is expected to climb to 74% in three years, up from 65% this year and 51% three years ago.

Isaac M. O'Bannon • May. 15, 2023



The drive to reshape work at organizations keeps on trucking, according to a new survey by leading global advisory, broking and solutions company [WTW](#).

Furthermore, a relatively small number of organizations reported they are effectively managing the various business and people risks associated with the ever-changing work landscape.

According to WTW's Dynamics of Work Survey, the number of companies in the U.S. that automate some of their work is expected to climb to 74% in three years, up from 65% this year and 51% three years ago. Additionally, those organizations expect that more than one-quarter (27%) of their work will be automated in three years, nearly double (14%) from three years ago. Respondents also said they expect over half of their employees (55%) will work either fully remotely or hybrid in three years, compared with 15% before the pandemic.

“As employers emerge from the pandemic, their need to reimagine how and where work gets done is at an all-time high,” said Tracey Malcolm, global leader, Future of Work and Risk, WTW. “This transformation, including the shift to remote work, has led to an increase in people, business and operational risks. Unfortunately, many employers believe they are falling short in the critical responsibility of managing these risks.”

Indeed, only one-third of respondents (33%) report they have effectively managed the risks associated with the dynamics of work — changing work conditions, digitalization and alternative sources of talent — over the past three years.

Employers are currently taking or planning to take action to address these risks. These include:

- **Digitalization:** One in five U.S. respondents (22%) is expecting and is prepared for greater use of digitalization and automation. This compares with one-third of respondents (33%) globally. Among those, 39% are redesigning jobs or roles to reallocate work between employees, nonemployees and new technologies; another 19% are planning to do so this year.
- **Working conditions:** Two in five U.S. respondents (40%) are expecting and are prepared for greater use of changing working conditions. Globally, over four in 10 respondents (44%) are expecting and prepared. Among those, 37% have conducted employee listening activities to identify changes in employee preferences or measure the impact of changing work conditions. Another 36% are redesigning the employee experience to promote the shift to the new work culture.

- **Alternative talent sources:** Over one-fourth of U.S. respondents (28%) are expecting and are prepared for greater use of alternative talent sources. Two in 10 respondents globally (21%) are expecting and prepared. Among those, 39% are redesigning the employee experience to align with new work and career models; another 15% are planning to strength external communication about changes to potential employees this year.

“The dynamics of work will continue to evolve for many years. Creating a sustainable competitive advantage will require robust strategies to unlock the potential of these shifts and careful management of people and operational risks. Effective plans will start by placing talent at the heart of work changes by understanding employee preferences and perceptions, aligning work and total rewards programs, and strengthening risk management frameworks,” said Amol Mhatre, head of Intellectual Capital, Research and Innovation, WTW.

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