

Press release

Paris, 25 November 2020

Employees and managers agree on the need to accelerate the digitalisation of their companies, but differ on the goals, according to a survey on Inetum's digital flow conducted with CSA.

The survey reveals that even if digital transformation is already under way and seen as fundamental to the upheavals caused by the health crisis, it is not yet a reality in all organisations. However, it is seen as a motivating perspective, a necessary adjustment, and a source of benefits for all stakeholders, including employees. While the health crisis is reshuffling the cards in many sectors, bringing to the fore those that have managed to get digitalised early and adapt fast, it is time for organisations to look at the opportunities and obstacles that this digital acceleration brings. For Inetum, it shows the urgency of harnessing digital flow to make it a real driver of the impact that organisations can have on the economy and on society.

The new phase of the global Covid-19 crisis has brought to the fore the challenges of a digital transformation that has become a permanent necessity, with a need for continuous renewal – in other words, digital flow. As an expert in the field, Inetum wants to give as many players as possible the keys to understanding societal changes and digital developments. This survey, conducted with the Institute CSA, allows us to compare the understanding and expectations that company managers and employees have, in order to identify and analyse common ground or, on the contrary, areas where these expectations differ. This initiative gives substance to Inetum's promise to help organisations – private or public – to adapt to new digital expectations and uses and thereby make the most of this digital flow.

Summary of the results of the digital flow survey: "In the opinion of managers and employees, what are the stakes involved in the digitalisation of companies?"

They agree on the importance of the issue, but the objective differs – managers above all see it in terms of performance, while employees emphasise the quality of life at work.

Digital technology now has a central place in the daily life of managers and the working population, regardless of the sector. **79% of all company managers** have made this aspect an important part of their daily activity, like **75% of the working population** for whom digital transformation is particularly important in their daily work (for 80% of the men, and 71% of the women).

But managers and staff do not necessarily have the same view of what the main goals of this transformation should be:

- **The view shared by 47% of them is to improve work processes.** Digitalisation should first of all lead to improvement in work processes, which is the number 1 priority for managers and for the working population, mentioned by 47% of the people interviewed in each sample.
- **For 26% of the employees, the priority is to introduce work flexibility.** The working population in general insists more on flexibility at work which includes the possibility to work from home (at 26%, a major expectation among French employees) and team work (for 24% of the

respondents – 27% for men, and 20% for women), as well as the financial benefits that these changes will bring to their company (24%).

- **For 33% of the managers, the priority is to maximise and facilitate customer relations.** The focus is secondly on external considerations: maximising and facilitating customer relations (33%), and the visibility of the company and its community (23%).

An issue that opens new perspectives for working together on the transformation of the company. Employees and managers agree on the importance of digital transformation in improving the quality of life at work. **For 35% of the managers and 38% of the employees, digitalisation should lead to improvement in the work that is delivered.**

But for employees, an improved quality of life at work also means the ability to be autonomous and find new professional horizons. For 41% of the employees, this digital development should bring new tools that will favour flexibility and coworking. For 35% of them, this involves the use of personal organisation tools. 37% mention tools that will help them improve their skills (online training, knowledge-sharing platforms, etc.).

As for managers, business and customer relations remain the chief priority. 41% of all company managers underline the benefits that digital solutions have in terms of production, with the question of task automation. For 29% of them, it is about finetuning customer relations, with a clear improvement in terms of CRM.

A major issue, but not yet a tangible reality or a daily concern.

Employees and managers feel that they are “not ahead” on these matters. Only 51% of the working population believe that their companies are ahead of the pack in these matters... an assessment that is relatively close to what company managers and CIO themselves think: a small majority believe that their structure is ahead in terms of their goals (58%), and compared to their market (62%). While managers and CIOs judge this slightly less severely than the working population, they nevertheless talk of widespread gaps when it comes to digitalisation – and, between the lines, show their awareness of the challenge. A view that is reflected in the reality of French companies: **nearly a third of them have never set up a digitalisation project.**

However, the situation is urgent, and for most companies, digital transformation has only just started. 61% of them foresee that it will accelerate for them in the coming months. Internal obstacles in organisations persist in the face of this transformation, but of a different order for managers and employees. 40% of company managers are worried about the cost of software and digital solutions. And 31% of them fear that their staff will show resistance to change. 30% of the employees emphasise the fear that there they will not get enough support in using these new tools.

Key observations: what French companies can learn from this survey.

- 1) When we talk of digital transformation, it is necessary to think wider and look at the work revolution that it implies: digitalisation more than ever enables people to work from home. It will mean hybrid workspaces, all of the time. The challenge for companies and organisations is to adapt to a permanent digital flow that will bring new opportunities.
- 2) The current crisis is a driver for adopting digital solutions: at the beginning of the year, we were still wondering about the possibility of telecommuting. In November, we are looking at hybrid workspaces. A milestone has been reached in the way organisations think about the matter, and it is up to us to think of digital strategies and the future of their business in this respect.

- 3) Digital transformation today has a societal dimension: it will increase performance, and give organisations the possibility to define new work standards in line with the expectations of their employees, who are the driving force of any organisation. Digital flow must be harnessed to serve the performance and positive impact of these organisations.

Today more than ever, digital technology is seen as a lever for managers to bring employees on board and let them adhere to the corporate project. At the same time, it is a way for employees to get that hybrid work setup that they want!

As Inetum CEO Vincent Rouaix points out, "This survey lifts the veil on a topic that people generally take for granted: digital transformation is well under way, even if it is not a reality for all organisations. But in this period of upheaval in a world that keeps moving, what is now of fundamental importance is the ability to harness the digital flow, and our capacity to adapt."

Julie Gaillot, Head of the Society division at CSA, adds: "This type of survey gives us a comparative view of the real issues that two distinct populations may encounter at the same time. It helps to understand French people's views, with a fine analysis of opinions regarding the digital shift at work, and brings out the differences between managers and employees. With our expertise, we are proud to be able to contribute to the rise of a positive digital approach driven by Inetum."

Survey method: 2 representative samples questioned

- **1,005 French employees** aged 18 and above, selected according to quota (gender, age, socio-professional category, and agglomeration), who answered an online questionnaire of about 10 minutes between 03 and 25 September 2020;
- **250 managers of companies** with 10 or more employees, selected according to quota (sectors, staff numbers, and geographic location), to get a sample that was interpreted according to staff size, and questioned for about 10 min by telephone between 03 and 28 September 2020.

About Inetum, Positive digital flow:

Inetum est une ESN agile, une société de services et de solutions digitales, et un groupe international qui aide les entreprises et institutions à tirer le meilleur du digital flow. Dans un contexte de mouvement permanent, où les besoins et les usages se réinventent sans cesse, le groupe Inetum s'engage auprès de tous les acteurs pour innover, s'adapter continuellement et garder une longueur d'avance. Avec son profil de multi-spécialiste, Inetum met au service de ses clients une combinaison unique de proximité, d'organisation sectorielle et de solutions de qualité industrielle. Présent dans plus de 26 pays, le Groupe compte près de 27 000 collaborateurs et a réalisé en 2019 un chiffre d'affaires de 2,3 milliards d'euros (pro forma).

For more information, please contact:

Inetum Press Relations

press@gfi.world

Claudine Morel Le-Berre
VP Group Communications Director
Tel.: +33 (0)6 68 01 22 56

Marion Latapy
Group Communications Manager
Tel.: +33 (0)6 60 13 50 71

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