Trusting in Tomorrow: Gen Z's digital confidence required across the board, business report shows

Further digital education may be required to instil Gen Z's level of technology confidence throughout the business, as latest findings reveal that business leaders' confidence in technology is declining with age.

Technology has been evolving at an alarming rate since the Industrial Revolution.

1783 marks the first hot air balloon flight.

In 1903, The Wright brothers fly the first plane, which serves only once because damaged on landing.

In 1969, the first man steps on the moon.

Today, NASA is planning to send astronauts to Mars in the 2030s.

Such dire and fast evolution is getting more and more people lost as they grow old. As children, we are raised with the codes of a world that will not exist once we become adults. By the time we retire, the risk to be out of touch with at least two younger generations is huge.

But this fact is not a fatality, as keeping up with evolution is not easy but also

not impossible. Environment is a key factor to this issue, as well as curiosity and awareness. However, the most important thing might be being able to let go.

As mentioned above, the world we are raised in will be gone by the time we reach adulthood. Even though it can be difficult, it is important not to give in to nostalgia. It is easy to fall for the sweet trap of the past, never to move forward again.

Clash of generations

The new report, published by business software firm, _Advanced_, surveyed more than 6,600 senior executives, identifying a disparity between the youngest and eldest groups of business leaders:

Just 17% of business leaders over age 55 say they are very confident about their IT solutions supporting their business model, compared to 50% of those aged 18-24.

Only 1 in 5 business leaders feel that their current technology infrastructure allows them to work with confidence in a cyber-secure environment.

43% of young business leaders believe that their leadership has a strong strategy for digital enablement, compared to less 22% of those aged 55+.

"It may be that older employees have a broader understanding of the challenges inherent in their role and function and can more easily see where technology falls short, particularly within the context of the entire organisation"

suggests _Simon Walsh_, CEO of Advanced.

"Although, it may also be the case that young people are right to be confident as they potentially understand the technology better and may be able to get more out of it for their organisation."

The report also found that 77% of young business leaders are planning to upgrade their digital systems, which is a significant difference from the 45% of leaders over 55 who have these plans in place.

Beliefs vs Technology

The current barriers appears to be based mostly on people's beliefs and attitudes, rather than the suitability of the technology itself. Four in ten of those surveyed say this resistance to new technology is down to an attachment to traditional methods. Over one-third state it is because of a lack of buy-in from employees and 30% claim it is down to lack of buy-in from leaders.

"This does raise some concern, as employees and leaders must want to adopt new technology and be prepared to go through the 'pain' of investing time for training, learning and migrating data, for example, in order to experience all of the benefits", Simon adds.

There is some understanding of this, as on average only 29% of all respondents say that there are no areas of the business that lack the digital solutions to

operate efficiently.

As for how steps toward digital transformation can be achieved, the eldest age group surveyed did state that better systems integration, improved functionality and improved security would help them feel more confident in how their technology infrastructure supports their business model, thus implying that technology solutions which address these concerns are key to complete transformation across the board.

The workplace technology is therefore not currently being optimised and used to its full potential by more experienced leaders, as there are already solutions available that should meet these needs. Therefore, instilling Gen Z's level of confidence and understanding of such technology is going to be crucial not only for a wider digital uptake but also as a step toward closing the digital skills gap.

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