



The Impact of a Digital Workforce on Business Agility & Survival

Global Study Highlights: South Africa



What the Numbers Tell Us



90 percent

of decision makers believe that RPA is important for driving digital transformation



71 percent

of business decision makers see RPA as a solution to the global productivity problem



78 percent

of knowledge workers agree that automation will make their organisation more innovative



72 percent

of business decision makers believe that RPA and/or automation offers more to the business than just time and cost savings



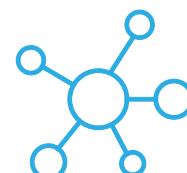
81 percent

of business decision makers believe that their employees would trust working alongside a digital workforce



90 percent

of business decision makers plan to extend the use of automation across their organisations



87 percent

of knowledge workers feel comfortable in reskilling for a change in work role



86 percent

of knowledge workers believe that using tech to automate tasks would improve their work life

RPA & Automation - Their Effects on Organisations

Tackling the Global Productivity Problem

RPA AND AUTOMATION PRESENT SOLUTIONS TO MANY CHALLENGES THAT ORGANISATIONS FACE

Just under half of knowledge workers in South Africa are struggling with workload demands, of which 92% believe automation would help alleviate the problem.

BUSINESS DECISION MAKERS

2 in 5 business leaders reported a struggle to meet customer demand, of which a majority felt that automation would help address this challenge. As these businesses try to return to a new normal, customer service will be a critical differentiator in the effort to woo back customers at scale.

41%

of business decision makers feel as though they are struggling to meet customer demand

90%

of those business decision makers believe that automation would help solve the problem

BUSINESS DECISION MAKERS

About two thirds of business decision makers see automation (65%) and RPA (71%) as solutions to the global productivity problem.

Automation



RPA



Knowledge workers are struggling with workload demands, decision makers are struggling to meet customer demands, and too much time is being spent on administrative tasks. These are all issues which the majority believe could be alleviated through automation. With global productivity growth stagnating at one-tenth of what it was 40 years ago for some economies, according to research from the [Brookings Institute](#), new data points to automation technology as a likely solution, and workers are willing and ready to embrace it.



Implementation of Automation and RPA

Business Implementation of RPA on Upswing

DECISION MAKERS ARE READY TO REAP THE BENEFITS, KNOWLEDGE WORKERS CLOSE BEHIND

Business leaders in South Africa are ready to deploy automation and reap the benefits. A significant majority have plans in place to roll out automation across their organisations, with a goal of seeing benefits not just in time and cost savings, but also the ability to scale other emerging technologies. While there's an eagerness to deploy automation and, in many cases, plans in place to do so, there remain challenges as business leaders pursue their automation ambitions.

BUSINESS DECISION MAKERS AND KNOWLEDGE WORKERS

The majority of both knowledge workers and decision makers agree that their organisations understand and are prepared for automation, from how it can scale the business (67%), meeting requirements (82%) or having solid security processes (75%).

My organisation dedicates time to understand how automation can grow and scale across the business

67%

Our digital workers meet policy requirements set by our organisation

82%

We have solid security processes in place for our digital workers

75%

BUSINESS DECISION MAKERS

Almost all organisations plan to extend their use of automation.

90% of business decision makers plan to extend the use of automation across their business

83% of business decision makers have a clear plan for rolling out the use of automation across their business

BUSINESS DECISION MAKERS

Three quarters of decision makers believe that despite automation being rolled out and understood, they are struggling to apply it (75%) and more thought needs to be put into its application (68%).



An Adapting Workforce

Growing Trust in Automation and a Willingness to Reskill Alongside Digital Colleagues

BUSINESS DECISION MAKERS

Decision makers in South Africa are positive in their outlook on the relationship between staff and digital workforces:

Adopting new tech will attract the most talent



New hires are prepared to work with a digital workforce



KNOWLEDGE WORKERS

A majority of knowledge workers in South Africa feel that they understand how technology will impact their jobs. More than two thirds are even excited at the opportunities that automation will create, an aspect that is underestimated by decision makers.

93% of knowledge workers understand how technology will impact their jobs

70% of knowledge workers are excited at the opportunities that automation will create

59% of business decision makers are excited at the opportunities that automation will create

Overall, there's a growing level of trust in and adaptation to digital colleagues. With more than two thirds of knowledge workers excited at the opportunities that automation will create, employees are continuously moving to embrace the benefits of automation. The businesses that provide employees with guidance and learning as Digital Workers are introduced will enable the smoothest transition.

BUSINESS DECISION MAKERS AND KNOWLEDGE WORKERS

4 in 5 knowledge workers in South Africa believe that their employers should do more to build trust between the human and digital workforces (82%) while 87% of decision makers agree that this is something they have to work on.

- 85%** of companies provide learning opportunities for new skills/qualifications when they introduce technologies that will transform their job
- 79%** of these do so on a continuous basis
- 79%** believe it is the employers' responsibility to reskill or re-educate staff if they implement automation
- 87%** of knowledge workers feel comfortable in reskilling for a change in work role
- 86%** of knowledge workers believe that using tech to automate tasks would improve their work life

BUSINESS DECISION MAKERS

According to a majority of business decision makers in South Africa:

Their employees would trust working alongside a digital workforce

81%

They would trust a digital colleague to manage their employees

74%

Organisations are still overcoming challenges to introducing automation, but leaders see positive change on the horizon. Two-thirds of knowledge workers report that automation improves their job, and 4 in 5 feel comfortable reskilling for a change in work role (87%). As organisations become more adept at communicating automation strategies, both business leaders and employees alike will reap the benefits of RPA and automation with greater speed and frequency.



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About Blue Prism

Blue Prism's vision is to provide a Digital Workforce for Every Enterprise. The company's purpose is to unleash the collaborative potential of humans, operating in harmony with a Digital Workforce, so every enterprise can exceed their business goals and drive meaningful growth, with unmatched speed and agility.

Fortune 500 and public-sector organisations, among customers across 70 commercial sectors, trust Blue Prism's enterprise-grade connected-RPA platform, which has users in more than 170 countries. By strategically applying intelligent automation, these organisations are creating new opportunities and services, while unlocking massive efficiencies that return millions of hours of work back into their business.

Available on-premises, in the cloud, hybrid, or as an integrated SaaS solution, Blue Prism's Digital Workforce automates ever more complex, end-to-end processes that drive a true digital transformation, collaboratively, at scale and across the entire enterprise.

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Methodology

The research was conducted by independent research firm Sapio on behalf of Blue Prism. 1,725 business decision makers (those with a final say over budget spend of technology implementations) were surveyed in the UK (202), US (402), Japan (106), India (101) Australia (106), Germany (101), Singapore (100), France (100), Sweden (103), United Arab Emirates (103), Russia (100), China (100) and South Africa (101). A further 5,063 knowledge workers (workers whose main capital is knowledge, whose job is to “think for a living” and who have access to technology as part of their day-to-day jobs) were surveyed in the UK (510), US (1023), Japan (250), India (503) Australia (250), Germany (253), Singapore (255), France (251), Sweden (250), United Arab Emirates(250), Russia (507), China (599) and South Africa (250). All respondents worked in organisations with 250+ employees. In addition, the respondents worked in companies in which automation had already been adopted. All interviews were conducted online by Sapio Research during March 2020.

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