



smartERPblog

# 10 SIGNS YOU NEED MORE AND BETTER - DIGITAL WORKFORCE

and what it is



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Artificial Intelligence opens new doors for creating better-fitting business software. The era of a true Digital Workforce alongside humans has come.

## What is a Digital Workforce and how does it change doing business?

Software can achieve an enormous amount of work for business, and greatly extends how we humans work. Also because software has some exceptional superhuman abilities, it can do more or better work in areas requiring memory, calculations and patience.

The Digital Workforce is distinct from general business software.

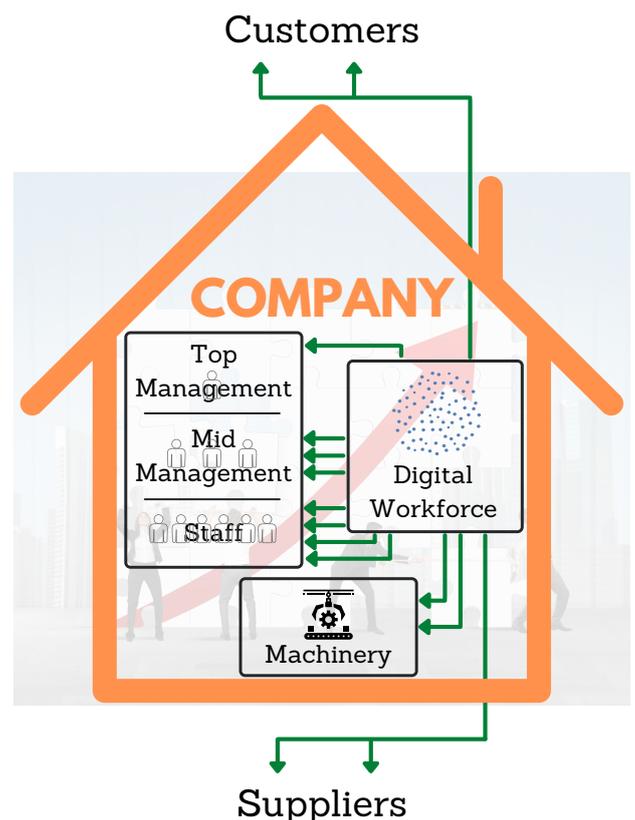
Only at first sight, they look like they achieve the same functionality.

Digital Workforce operates as an integral part of the entire business, closely fitting in with the human workforce and all other resources in the whole company.

The Digital Workforce closely and flexibly fits, integrating each company's varied activities.

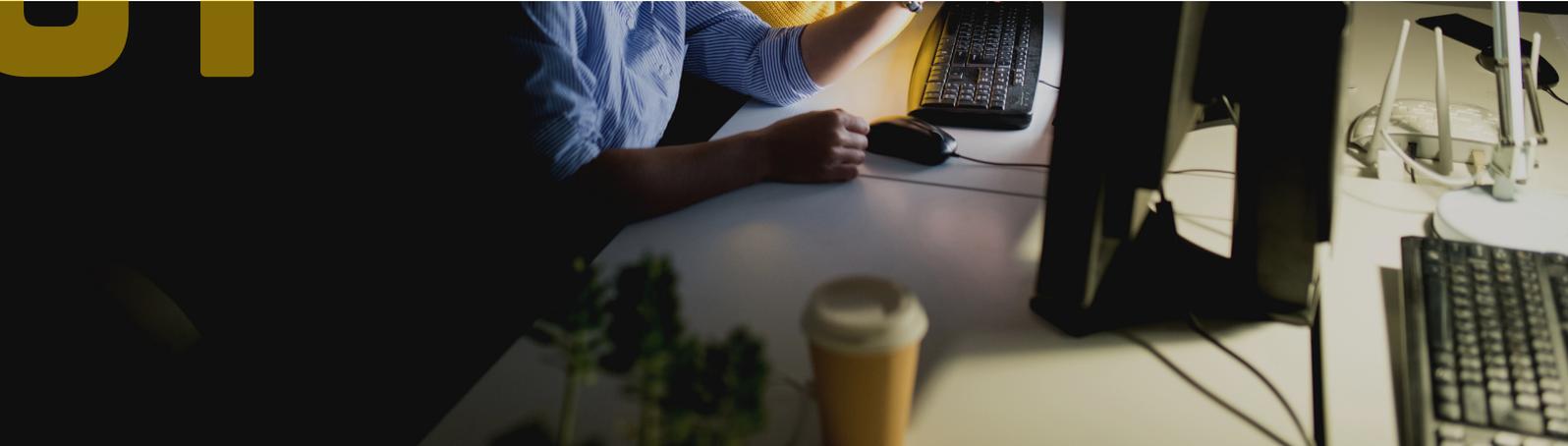
As you'd expect with a high-quality workforce - both digital and human - businesses gain efficiency, freedom and security, while also becoming happier workplaces, conducive for development and growth.

Technology itself is not enough. Because of the amount of work software can perform, company leaders must now consciously organise work between humans, machines and the digital workforce.



# 01

## *Takes too much time to manage and control the company*



Leading a company is a huge responsibility. Putting food on many a family's table needs the company to run well for a very long time. Also you are probably driven by ambition to achieve greater success.

This pressure can soon lock a leader into a position of endless hours while life and other opportunities go by.

Part of the reason for you to employ your Digital Workforce is to take some of that pressure off you. The Digital Workforce is in ideal position to do so. It connects to more jobs, at any levels, than anybody else. While it works with the CEO, it also works with mid-management or warehouse staff at the same time.

Its embeddedness provides the opportunity to manage workflows and data, making sure everything is performed as planned.

## *Trust issues within the company*

# 02



Intentional theft, unintentional negligence or simple ignorance can all be threats to a company. The damage also goes more deeply than the initial costs. Observed by staff it can have a grave effect on culture, behaviour and expectations.

Both staff and management are very attuned to trust. There needs to be mutual respect and trust among all in the company. If trust is broken, the environment can become poisonous.

The Digital Workforce can perform a crucial positive role for trust. Its software literally follows rules to the letter. Once the software is tested properly, you can rely on it to do its job. This provides "permanent fairness" into operations.

The fairness protects staff like a blanket. It gets rid of imagined or real "degrading suspicion". They can focus on doing their jobs without constantly looking over their shoulders. Generally it is much easier to accept the objective assessment of software not influenced by personal feelings or opinions.

The factual nature of the Digital Workforce takes the "load of suspicion" off management as well. They get dependable results, checked for discrepancies from data collected from all over the company - less strain in gathering data, more time to analyse and to make decisions.

# 03

## *Employees getting lost frequently, unclear procedures*



Whatever a company does, it is always the sum total of the work of the workforce. Therefore steering the company in the right direction demands the harmonising of every job and stakeholder.

This is an ever-changing challenge with the market, the competition, the workforce, products and customers never staying the same for long. Few companies can boast of having this challenge under total control - it is a barrier for many companies and the profit-eating monster of others.

The Digital Workforce is in a cohesive central position, because just about every job is connected to it - designed so that the flow of data, the workflows provide a framework for everybody. Procedures are clearer so that staff are much less likely to vary from them.

Even the planning and designing of the Digital Workforce is a strong step towards clarity. Procedures, workflows are revised, job structures assessed, and key workers consulted to find best practices and good ideas. Often just talking about problems make the problems go away.

# Too much time wasted on mundane tasks

# 04



One of the superhuman qualities of software is its untiring attention to details and supreme tolerance of monotonous tasks. So why not then delegate mundane tasks to the Digital Workforce wherever possible? Use everything and everybody for what they are best at.

In an ever-growing number of cases, Artificial Intelligence can also enhance what we can expect the Digital Workforce to do for us. This never means super-intelligent robots chatting in the cafeteria! Rather, it is about down-to-earth but very useful algorithms working on big sets of data, making millions of calculations and making tiny "if-then" decisions.

However, the Digital Workforce is no match for humans when it comes to interpreting unstructured information like scribbles on paper, or human conversations. So using the Digital Workforce requires re-planning of how data are stored and shared. For the Digital Workforce to be effective, company data have to be made accessible for it.



Maybe you want to spend more time with grandchildren. Maybe after toiling for so many years, you finally want more of the spoils of life. Maybe you want to take on new business challenges elsewhere. But unless you sell your company, you probably want it to be maintained or even to grow. If you have children or loyal talent interested in carrying the flag, a generational transition can take place.

Your Digital Workforce is a good "regent" for making this possible. When old management is no longer fully in charge and new management is not yet fully able, Digital Workforce can offer a steady helping hand in steering the company. The procedures and job structure built into the Digital Workforce will keep it "steady as she goes".

If this is the plan, then actually two transitions will have to take place. First, the Digital Workforce has to be positioned inside the company while old management is still at its full capacity. Once the company is running well on a "steering-aided" course, the second transition can take place - management successors can become fully familiar and expert in company systems, with plenty of opportunity to hone their skills.

This is another good example of the loyalty and dependability of a Digital Workforce.

# *Data breaks down in the company - jigsaw of systems is a mish-mash*

# 06



You have already recognised the importance of technology years ago. You are spending serious money to have task-oriented specific software and complex worksheets serving every department and top executives. You could show off an endless list of functionalities offered by all the software you have at your disposal, half of which you don't even know about.

Still, from the Digital Workforce's perspective, a poorly communicating mish-mash of systems with many functions overlapping each other several times (while others are not used), is an underperforming workforce. It should be judged the same way as you would your human workforce. It's unlikely you want your teams and departments to resemble the three monkeys, blind, dumb and deaf!

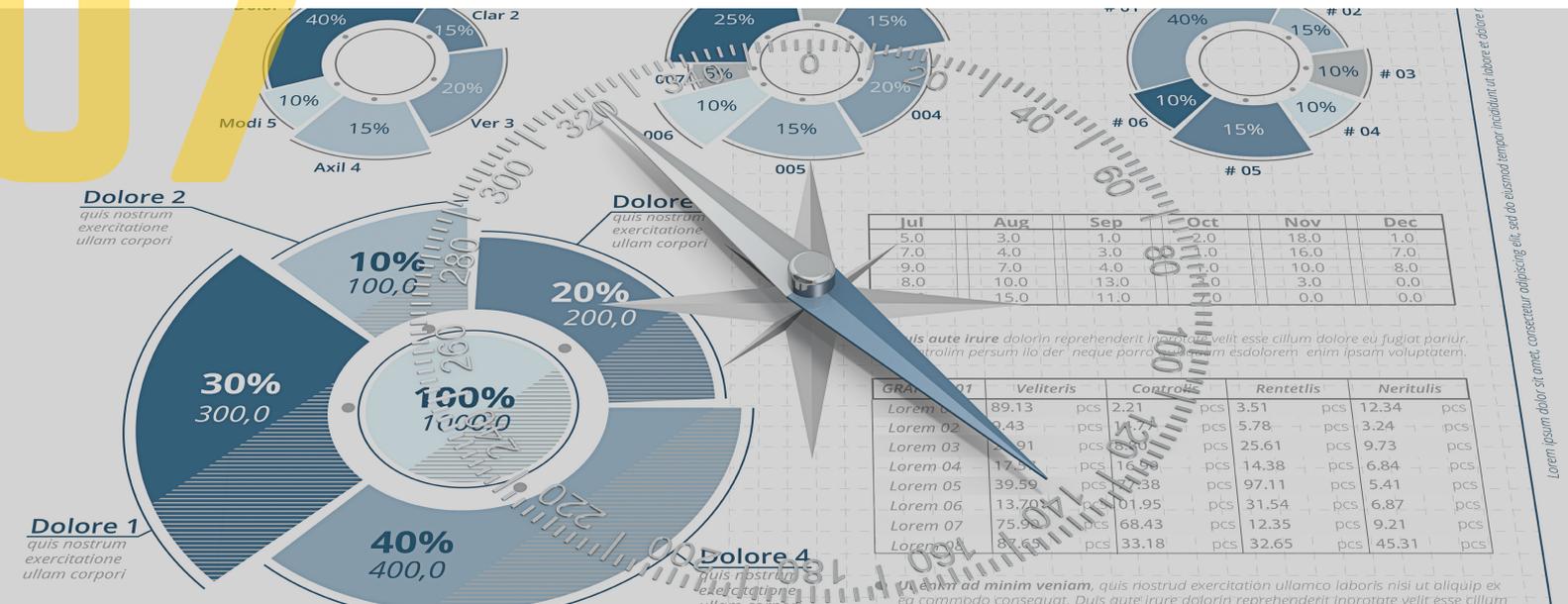
... There are popular expressions like "data integration" and "industry 4.0 communication", which are important parts of the Digital Workforce vocabulary ...

But it goes beyond that.

Above all, it regards good and effective communication with management, staff, customers and suppliers. It also holds as a priority to stay lean and flexible, always focusing on needed functions and frowning upon unused ones taking up "space" and resources.

# 07

## Forecasts and future modelling are tiresomely manual or hardly exist



Company leaders would love to see the future - if only to make the best decisions for the business. The Digital Workforce has no clairvoyant abilities, of course - but with ample data and assumptions, it can work out many future scenarios well.

A properly incorporated Digital Workforce has access to volumes of data available inside the company. Also a Digital Workforce fits the company following, emulating, cloning its operations closely. This is done through reproducing the company in its data and operational structure. Accompanied by the power of modern computers, these data provide fertile ground for forecasting and modelling.

True, humans are more intelligent, and it is possible to do some of this better manually. However, it often takes up too much time for the best brains inside the company. To make matters worse, when they finally have it available for decisions, the process can be started all over again to prepare each subsequent forecast.

It not only ties down valuable resources of the company, but its monotonous nature makes it prone to mistakes and burnout - from both of which the Digital Workforce is totally immune.

## ***Hard for management to access crucial or valuable information***

08



The Digital Workforce does have access to data at all levels inside a company. Also, while it serves everybody, its loyalty is only to the leaders of the company, and it has indisputable discretion.

It is happy to provide daily, impartial insights into what's happening inside the company keeping management up to date - including with alerts if appropriate. Thanks to the Internet, this information is accessible virtually anywhere, anytime, allowing the leaders to choose a less constrained lifestyle.

The Digital Workforce is not creative, but offers its huge database to humans, including for new types of report, or statistics to be experimented with. Time then shows which managerial innovations prove most useful, and these then can be built into the software for seamless use in the future.

# 09

## *Digital Workforce will not leave the company*



It is more and more an employee market for many jobs and companies. The story is all too familiar. You spend a lot of money finding and recruiting good people. You then spend even more training them and including them into the company culture. And just when they start earning you some money, just when you start sitting back watching with joy your accomplishment, they can then depart to find work somewhere else.

While the problem of losing key well-trained staff is not habitually so very bad, still many company leaders are familiar with the sinking feeling of the heart caused by this effect.

The story starts the same for the Digital Workforce with "recruitment" and "training" costs. However, the Digital Workforce never leaves the company. It will not take customers, inside knowledge, and expertise to the competition.

# Wasted resources

# 10



Finally, successful company leaders generally dread wasteful uses of resources as they can needlessly eat into the bottom line. This is nothing new. From historical times, mid-level management have been put in place, approval systems have been checking decisions before spending, and some form of "lean" quality control has been trying to find faults early in processes to reduce waste.

Software has been helping with this ever since the dawn of computers. The acronym ERP (as is in ERP systems), stands for nothing less than Enterprise Resource Planning, and it has been widely used for almost 30 years now.

No surprise then that this still plays a central role for the Digital Workforce. Management expects help with the reliable and sustainable planning of capacity and resources. The Digital Workforce may not take this to totally another level, but it can add subtle improvements, which can result in considerable savings.

The better fitting nature of the Digital Workforce in itself means less resource redundancy and higher performance. Its integrated interconnectedness shortens data pathways, resulting in more rapid and more apt responses.

Last but not least, the Digital Workforce is intentionally trying to create a happier working environment for humans. And more contented companies are not just more fun to be around(!), they are generally acknowledged to be more efficient and less wasteful.