For digital builders, technology tools make or break the job

Learn why top digital talent prefer working with API-first tech and working for companies that offer it

As the Great Resignation evolves into the Great Reshuffle, companies search for ways to attract and retain the best talent. That's especially true when it comes to digital builders — the developers and digital marketers tasked with building digital experiences for customers and other end users. A recent survey by Contentful found that for digital builders the technology a company uses is essential to attracting and retaining top talent as well as enabling that talent to meet increasingly ambitious company goals. Seventy percent of digital builders said the technology a company uses is "very important" to their decision to take a job. Even more — 85% — said they would leave a job or consider doing so based on dissatisfaction with their software and tools.

When it comes to these tech savvy employees, access to the best tools not only keep builders satisfied but also demonstrate that their employers care about their happiness. Two-thirds (66%) of digital builders indicated that the software they use impacts their job satisfaction "a lot." Nearly **two-thirds (65%) also said that the software and tools their company gave them to work with was a direct reflection of how they value them as an employee**.

In the increasingly distributed workforce, it is no longer office perks like ping pong tables or free lunch that create an employee-centric culture. Employees simply want to work with the best tools to do their jobs. Those tools are what allow some companies to command the best talent and meet their most ambitious goals, while others are left to create workarounds for aging technology and navigate the ensuing employee attrition.

INNOVATION OVER BURNOUT

Rote, mundane tasks hinder creativity. They also quash innovation and fuel burnout. It's not a lack of imagination but a lack of modern technology tools that often limit a digital team's ability to focus on innovation over administration.

- **Driven by impact**: Digital builders do not want to be technical administrators. They're motivated by creating the experiences of the future. Yet 94% of digital builders said their ability to be creative and innovative in their work is sometimes or often limited by the technology they have to work with.

- **Distracted by mundane/administrative tasks**: Innovation takes time but isn't where most builders get to focus: 61% of digital builders spend more than half of theirs on administrative tasks, leaving less time for creating and innovating. Over a third (38%) of builders say the software and tools they have to work with frequently limit their ability to deliver their full potential and collaborate effectively. Another 54% are sometimes limited.

- **Delayed by maintenance**: A quarter of digital marketers (24%), in particular, say that the majority of their work time is spent on content maintenance. An additional 39% said they spend as much time on content maintenance as content creation. Over 40% of digital marketers still require technical support to manage content.

- **Empowered by performant software**: If given the chance to choose their own software to get their jobs done and remove technology imposed limitations, digital builders would prioritize speed (1) functionality (2) and flexibility (3) as the top three most important factors in deciding what software to use.

TECHNOLOGY ENABLES TALENT

Technology can determine whether digital builders are excited by ambitious goals or demotivated. Given the ability to work with their preferred tools, developers and digital marketers innovate more freely and quickly.

- **Technology turns challenges into innovation**: Faced with growing demand for omnichannel content, 60% of digital marketers are excited rather than intimidated by the challenge. Of those digital marketers, 60% are also "very satisfied" with the technology they have to do their job.

- **Software choice impacts jobs satisfaction**: The freedom to choose makes a huge impact on how digital builders feel about the work they do. Sixty-eight percent of all digital builders say the ability to decide which software they use impacts their job satisfaction "a lot."

- **Ambitious goals require technology investment**: Over three-quarters (78%) of digital builders believe their company needs to adopt new technology to enable employees to deliver against the company's ambitious goals. Employee skill sets need to be augmented by technological capabilities to keep pace with growth expectations.

- **Developers prefer API-first software**: API-first technologies hit the mark for developer satisfaction: 91% of developers who use service-oriented API software (as opposed to monolithic software suites) are "very satisfied" with their tech stack.

- **API-first software drives speed to market**: Developers' top three priorities for software — speed, functionality, and flexibility — align with their preference for API-first tools. Of developers who primarily work with API-first services, 81% say their companies release new products "fast" or "super fast." Alternatively, 39% of developers who work with few API-first services say their companies' release of new products is "slow" or "super slow."

ATTRACTING DIGITAL BUILDERS

Best-in-class software is becoming synonymous with best-in-class talent. Companies that want to succeed in the digital-first era must provide digital talent the opportunity to work with a modern tech stack that is flexible, functionality-rich and allows them to hone their skills while they build the next big thing.

API-first software is foundational to the modern tech stack as well as builder satisfaction. These technologies allow builders to choose the best tools to meet business needs while also aligning with their personal preferences. Legacy monolithic software solutions offer breadth of capabilities at the expense of functionality and flexibility. By contrast, API-first tech stacks enable companies to integrate whatever tools they need — no more, no less. Builders can swap, add, and change components of the tech stack at a pace that matches their own innovation, without disrupting the whole business.

This has given rise to a new generation of technologies that are builder-centric and flexible. Contentful's content platform and its ecosystem of API-first technology partners are leading this new generation of software, putting builders at the center of development. A builder-centric approach lets developers use their preferred languages and toolkits to integrate new technologies, while offering extensive tooling to build new applications specific to their needs.

Contentful's content platform sits at the heart of the modern tech stack, offering well-defined APIs that allow digital builders to access, port, and distribute content across the various services in their stack. As one of the primary collaboration points between developers and digital marketers, a flexible content platform is essential to supporting innovation and satisfaction across all digital builders. Developers are able to work with the latest, most powerful software. Digital marketers gain a user-friendly editorial environment that allows them to complete their work independently, without relying on developer support for straightforward tasks.

The companies that outperform their competition will be the ones that attract the best digital talent and empower them to innovate. In the digital-first era, that increasingly comes down to being a company that offers access to the best, most flexible tools.

FULL SURVEY RESULTS

1. 66% of respondents say the ability to determine what software they use impacts their job satisfaction "a lot."

2. 85% of respondents said they would leave a job or consider doing so based on dissatisfaction with the software and tools they had to use (33.3% and 51.7% respectively).

3. 65.1% feel the software and tools a company provides are a direct reflection of how it values employees while 32.6% of respondents feel this to be "somewhat" true.

4. 45.2% of respondents say they're only "somewhat satisfied" with the technology they're currently using.

5. 70.2% of respondents say the software and tools a company provides are "very important" when considering a job offer. Another 26.7% say it's somewhat important.

6. 94% of respondents feel the technology they use sometimes or often limits their creativity and innovation.

7. 58.3% of workers prefer to spend their time at work finding new/better ways to do things and solving problems.

8. 40.9% of digital marketer respondents feel their ability to complete work is dependent on technical team members.

9. 61% of respondents say they spend more than half their time on administrative tasks rather than creative or innovative efforts.

10. 38% of respondents say the software and tools they work with frequently limit their ability to meet their full potential and collaborate effectively. 54.4% feel this is sometimes the case.

11. 42.9% of respondents say their company tries to adopt new approaches to developing software but is limited in their ability to do so. Another 13.4% feel their company is slow to adopt new approaches.

12. 23.6% of digital marketer respondents say they spend a majority of their work day maintaining content. 38.9% say they equally split their time between content maintenance and content creation.

13. If given the opportunity to choose their own software to work with, respondents would prioritize three factors: 1. speed, 2. functionality, and 3. flexibility.

14. 79.8% of digital marketer respondents believe that omnichannel marketing is "important" or "very important" to current and future business success.

15. 82.2% of digital marketer respondents say their company's ability to leverage content across channels with minimal manual work is "important" or "very important" for business success.

16. 60% of respondents are excited by the challenge of building omnichannel experiences. And 60% of those individuals are also "very satisfied" with the technology they have to complete the task.

17. 54.2% of respondents believe their company needs to adopt new technology to enable employees to deliver on ambitious company goals. Another 23.5% believe it would help.

18. 81% of developer respondents that work primarily with API-first services say their company's release of new products is "fast" or "super fast." 39% of respondents who work with few API-first services say their company's release of new products is "slow" or "super slow."

19. 91% of developer respondents who use service-oriented API software are "very satisfied" with their tech stack.

20. 32% of developer respondents would rather build their software than buy it while 22.9% of survey respondents would rather buy it. 45% of respondents say they prefer a balance of buying and building their software.

21. 89.4% of respondents say their efforts are visible to end users of their company's digital experience.

METHODOLOGY