DIGITAL ADOPTION

How workforce development nonprofits can accelerate employment and entrepreneurship outcomes at scale
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DIGITAL ADOPTION

How workforce development nonprofits can accelerate employment and entrepreneurship outcomes at scale

The technology revolution is transforming our world and is occurring at an unprecedented speed. According to our research, nonprofits that have embraced digital are experiencing tremendous gains in their effectiveness and societal impact; nonprofit workers reported efficiency gains of up to 91 percent through the adoption of relevant digital accelerators.

However, despite near consensus that technology will positively impact both beneficiaries and service delivery, many nonprofits are slipping behind on digital adoption. Nonprofits have a responsibility to use digital tools to improve employment and entrepreneurship opportunities but also to mitigate any friction that technology advances may present to job seekers and entrepreneurs.

Our research has unearthed key opportunities, common challenges for digital adoption and four accelerators that have the potential to support workforce development nonprofits in attaining operational excellence and driving greater impact for beneficiaries. We hope that this report will serve as a roadmap for launching and accelerating a digital journey, and will help to guide informed decisions on digital tools and opportunities that are best suited to the different aspects of nonprofit organizations. In addition to recommendations about how workforce development nonprofits can leverage digital to create meaningful, lasting change, we have provided case studies and proven Hacks from industry leaders.

Our human-centered approach involved more than 45 interviews with technology organizations, nonprofits and Accenture experts, a survey of over 265 nonprofit leaders, workers and beneficiaries from the nonprofit sector and a series of prototyping sessions and design thinking workshops. Our research was conducted on a global scale, with input from over ten countries.

We want to thank the Skills to Succeed practitioners from Accenture, as well as each of the representatives from nonprofits and other technology organizations who participated in this research and helped us identify a pathway for nonprofits to start their digital journey. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the members of our Learning Circle.

As emphasized in our Accenture Technology Vision 2017, we are committed to exploring how to use technology to improve our world. The process of conducting this research and listening to multiple stakeholder perspectives has strengthened our conviction that digital adoption is a key component of workforce development nonprofits enabling beneficiary success, one that will drive economic growth for millions of people worldwide.

Warm regards,
Lisa Neuberger and Svenja Falk
The digital revolution is transforming every facet of our society, creating new opportunities and challenges while fundamentally altering the way we work, live and interact.

Whether on an individual, community or organizational level, emerging technologies are disrupting the status quo, ushering in an unprecedented era of innovation.

For individuals

- Digital tools have empowered people to embrace new ways of managing transactions, completing daily tasks, creating online identities and connecting with new opportunities. Nearly 75 percent of individuals now search for jobs online.

For communities

- Digital tools have helped enable people to engage globally, transforming how they network, build relationships and stay informed. Approximately 87 percent of the US population use the internet daily.

For organizations

- Digital technologies provide connectedness and efficiency, and empower employees and organizations to thrive in a world where technology is increasingly prevalent. Of those surveyed by Accenture, 82 percent of executives believe digital is erasing industry limitations and allowing paradigms to emerge.

Over the past decade, the global digital revolution has yielded numerous advancements including wireless internet, smartphones, e-commerce and wearable technology. These innovations have become commonplace throughout the developed world and are increasingly visible in emerging markets. Digital transformation is happening at a rapid pace, and sooner than we might think, many of the technologies that we currently consider to be emerging, such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, will be pervasive.

Nowhere is the impact of digital more apparent than in the labor market, where the demand for technologically skilled workers is growing exponentially. By 2022, digital roles are expected to grow by 22 percent globally, with the internet creating an estimated 2.6 jobs for each job lost to technological advancement. In fact, some analysts believe these changes will result in a net gain of 2.1 million jobs by 2025. Research conducted by economists Lawrence Katz of Harvard University and Alan Krueger at Princeton University suggests that 94 percent of new jobs will likely be alternative work, moving away from traditional nine to five employment.

New technologies will inevitably lead to the transformation of the talent landscape. We will see the automation of more jobs, including customer service, data entry and other middle-income, administrative positions. At the same time, automation will increase demand for workers who possess a new blend of skills, many of which are in short supply in today's labor market. Preparing to meet the future needs of workers and employers is not simply a question of addressing these skills gaps. With only 40 percent of the world's population connected to the Internet, and nearly 20 percent unable to read or write, there are additional barriers and a responsibility to ensure that disadvantaged individuals and communities are not left behind.

“Digital is more than a set of technologies you buy. It is the abilities those technologies create...Digital is the application of information and technology to raise human performance.”

Digital Talk: What is digital business strategy, Accenture Strategy Blog
On the road to digital transformation, keeping pace leads to greater social impact.

By allowing workforce development nonprofits to increase the speed and scale of their operations, digital solutions can support progress towards each of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including Quality Education and Decent Work and Economic Growth. An example of digital as an accelerator of progress can be seen in the comparison of sub-Saharan access to electricity grids and digital mobile networks. Invented over 130 years ago, electricity grids are still only accessible to 17 percent of sub-Sahara’s rural population. In contrast, 70 percent of this population has access to a digital mobile network, just 23 years after the first digital networks became available.¹¹

The changing nature of the global economy means that adopting digital tools is increasingly important for workforce development nonprofits looking to drive meaningful employment and entrepreneurship outcomes and stay relevant in the modern era. In fact, all organizations should embrace the opportunities offered by digital tools, while doing their part to mitigate any friction caused by these shifts. At the moment, some nonprofits may feel they can defer digital transformation without any significant impact to their programs and beneficiaries. As time goes by, however, the consequences of inaction will become more apparent. At best, other organizations will move in to fill the holes left by their less digital peers. At worst, lack of action can allow domestic and international skills gaps to widen, leaving thousands, if not millions, of individuals without the skills and resources they need to secure meaningful employment.

Workforce development nonprofits are uniquely positioned to help close the digital divide and support beneficiaries to thrive in the workforce of the future. By using digital channels for service delivery, these organizations will become more effective in reaching job-seekers and aspiring entrepreneurs, while improving their digital fluency and skills. Additionally, digital resources will help workforce development nonprofits to connect with the wider ecosystem of volunteers and partners in academia, government and the commercial sector.

**Girl Scouts of USA’s** Digital Cookie is a notable example of a nonprofit accelerating impact through innovation. In 2014, the organization saw an opportunity to revolutionize the largest girl-run business in the world while building digital skills for the next generation. The result is “Digital Cookie,” an expansion of the Girl Scout Cookie Program that teaches scouts to apply e-commerce and SMS capabilities to their cookie sales. In addition to expanding the size and scope of each girl’s cookie business, Digital Cookie gives a generation of female entrepreneurs the skills they need to succeed in a digital world.¹²

While many nonprofit organizations recognize the transformative potential of digital technologies, their understanding of how technology can help them succeed varies significantly. Our research shows that 95 percent of nonprofit workers believe that digital represents an important opportunity for the sector.¹³ Two-thirds of nonprofit leadership are encouraging their organizations to adopt digital tools, believing that it has strategic importance in achieving their mission and objectives.¹⁴ Yet less than a quarter of nonprofit leaders think that their organizations are doing everything that needs to be done to prepare their workforce for digital transformation.¹⁵

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### The speed and scale of digital is accelerating progress like never before

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<td>Digital technologies</td>
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*data for sub-Saharan Africa*
“Digital is a big driver of productivity...the same sort of efficiency and effectiveness improvements that happened in the private sector over the last ten to twenty years have only just started taking effect in the international non-governmental organization sector, particularly in developing countries.”

Greg Snow
Save The Children

The majority of nonprofits that have embraced digital accelerators such as digital assessments, digital collaboration, digital learning and data and analytics tools report a substantial increase in organizational capacity and efficiency [See Figure 1].

Despite clear benefits, however, adoption rates across the board are still below 50 percent. This suggests a lack of awareness around digital tools and their potential impact for workforce development nonprofits. An analysis of 15 nonprofits by Accenture Corporate Citizenship’s Nordic team found that nonprofits need to catch up on digital adoption, as those who are able to will gain an advantage and those who don’t may fall behind.

Even where support for digital adoption exists, many nonprofit organizations struggle to keep up with the pace of change. Of those surveyed, 75 percent wish they invested more in digital skills and tools, yet fewer than 40% of workers have access to digital technology tools on average. Lack of digital fluency, the aptitude needed to utilize digital technology to its full potential, is also an issue. Without digital fluency, organizations are unable to realize the full impact of innovative technologies.

Those nonprofit workers who use digital accelerators see increased efficiency

**Figure 1:** Take-up of digital accelerators is low despite efficacy benefits

- Digital accelerator adoption rate
- Nonprofit survey respondents who see efficiency gains from digital

Source: Accenture Corporate Citizenship Digital Adoption Survey Results 2016
Definitions and further information on each accelerator can be found on pages 14-20
The digital landscape is evolving rapidly, with countless innovations emerging every day. Our research in the nonprofit and commercial sectors points to three key opportunities to drive meaningful impact: liquid workforce, mobility and the power of data.

Enable a liquid workforce and engage the workforce marketplace.

The term “liquid workforce” refers to a fluid organizational structure that leverages digital to transform organizations into more agile, change-ready enterprises. This paradigm would empower workforce development nonprofits to identify and recruit additional talent with specialized skills on a short-term or as-needed basis, allowing them to respond more effectively to the shifting needs of beneficiaries and overcome any limitations of organizational capability and capacity. For many workforce development nonprofits, enabling a liquid workforce and drawing upon the workforce marketplace will involve partnering with existing volunteer support ecosystems or forming new relationships with organizations like Applause and Samasource. Applause provides organizations with on-demand, crowdsourced software testing, while Samasource lifts people out of poverty by teaching them crucial job skills and connecting them with digital opportunities.

Samasource has established itself as a leader in the business process outsourcing industry, helping large Silicon Valley companies meet their data processing needs. They work closely with these companies to determine their digital deficiencies and connect them with highly-skilled workers. Samasource trains and hires these workers at centers across East Africa, India and Haiti, and pays them a living wage; a significant shift away from chronic unemployment or underemployment.

In the United States alone, it’s predicted that 43 percent of the workforce will be freelance by 2020. In start-up tech communities, companies use online courses to develop internal team skills and obtain additional expertise through on-demand labor platforms such as crowdsourcing or online freelance networks. By leveraging this approach, workforce development nonprofits can improve training and hiring practices, scale their workforce and transform to truly digital organizations. In addition, adopting liquid models and engaging the workforce marketplace could also help these organizations adapt to new digital demands while addressing beneficiary and stakeholder needs across many geographies and functions.

76% of nonprofit workers see digital as a key differentiator in their service offerings.
Using mobility can make life easier.

Throughout the world, smartphones have become the go-to tool for communication, content sharing and other personal activities.

In emerging markets, Internet access, primarily enabled by mobile, is so important that the United Nations considers it a fundamental right. While early model mobile devices were limited in functionality, today’s smartphones allow users to share a range of information, from basic text messages to interactive, multimedia content. Modern mobile technology offers workforce development nonprofits new opportunities to work, collaborate and communicate more effectively, while expanding the variety and quality of digital services available to beneficiaries. Although some solutions are only mobile-to-mobile, many computer-based options offer mobile interfaces to help organizations reach the estimated 5.5 billion mobile users worldwide by 2020.

Mobile solutions are primarily designed to provide access. They are affordable, user-friendly, require less infrastructure, provide data evaluation and are compatible with most mobile device types. They also allow mission-based organizations to significantly scale and increase their impact in a cost-effective way.

For example the Cherrie Blair Foundation for Women developed the Business Women mobile application, which delivers business training specifically tailored for women entrepreneurs via SMS, on simple feature phones. Since its launch, the service has reached over 100,000 women in Indonesia, Nigeria and Tanzania. In a survey of subscribers, 90 percent said that the app offered them an inexpensive way to become better-informed business women. The Foundation is currently developing a second generation application that will also have smartphone capabilities.

Rede Cidadã is a Brazilian nonprofit that uses social networking to bring together businesses, government and social organizations to help generate jobs in low-income areas. It connects with beneficiaries through WhatsApp, a web-based messaging service that allows users to send texts, images and videos between phones. Using this platform, Rede Cidadã has engagement with more than 1,000 youth within Brazil. Similarly, Acción Emprendedora (Youth Business International Chile) has responded to beneficiary demands by designing an entrepreneur web application that is accessible via mobile devices, helping the organization to overcome geographical and connectivity barriers and increase their impact.

“The ‘Business Women’ App addresses accessibility and mobility challenges plus time constraints, giving a flexible way to access the training.”

Lowri Gilbert, Cherrie Blair Foundation for Women
Volunteers and donors can also benefit from data analytics initiatives. **NPower Inc.**, a nonprofit dedicated to technology education and skill development, is experimenting with analytics to improve its volunteering program, which has more than 10,000 technology professional volunteers. The organization wants to identify where volunteers can have the greatest impact on students, while also boosting engagement. This initiative will allow NPower Inc. to more effectively manage volunteer time and donations.

**Plan Finland**, an international development organization promoting children’s rights, partnered with the startup Pajat Solutions to develop a mobile application called Poimapper. Plan Finland uses this mobile app to monitor the success of their intervention programs by collecting assessment responses, birth registrations or images associated with survey data through smartphones or tablets. The tool is used across 20 countries where Plan Finland operates.28

With more data comes more responsibility. Proper management of information is an increasingly important element of any analytics program. Workforce development nonprofits must consider the ethics of data collection, use and manipulation, and ensure confidentiality of any sensitive data.

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**Unlocking the power of data can help workforce development nonprofits boost the impact of their programs.**

According to our research, approximately one-third of workforce development nonprofits currently use analytics.26 In these organizations, 82 percent of leaders in these organizations say analytics have increased capacity by more than 10 percent, and 83 percent of nonprofit workers believe it has made them more efficient.27

Rather than relying on intuition or perception, workforce development nonprofits can apply data-driven decision making to almost any area of their operations. Predictive analytics allow organizations to segment and profile beneficiaries, detect and predict skills gaps, develop effective programs and interventions and upskill staff in line with forecasted demand.

“**Lots and lots of data: that’s what [digital] gives me that I didn’t have before. With more data I can do lots of different things, and run lots of different types of analysis.**”

Ghanim Ghneim,  
Education for Employment

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**Girl Power (GPower)**, an innovative digital solution jointly developed by Accenture Labs and the Child in Need Institute (CINI), uses data to inform its intervention design. The organization’s mission is to connect vulnerable adolescent girls with government services in education, protection, health and nutrition. The solution leverages mobile, analytics and cloud technologies to track changes in circumstances, provide real-time insights, alert CINI and trigger interventions. Through the power of analytics, GPower has so far been able to save more than 200 girls from trafficking and child marriage in a single year.
The most critical changes are often the most challenging, and digital transformation is no exception. According to the findings from our combined survey and interview research, nonprofit leaders cite having low digital maturity, limited understanding of the needs and wants of beneficiaries and scarce resources as the main barriers to the adoption of digital technologies.

Enabling digital maturity requires a rotation of mindset, understanding, skills, and business practices.

The digital maturity of a nonprofit shapes its attitude toward technology adoption. Understandably, those with lower levels of digital maturity may not fully grasp the potential opportunities and impact. Less than a quarter of workers not currently using analytics (22 percent) believe adoption could improve outcomes for beneficiaries. More advanced organizations are more likely to collaborate with digital partners to develop tailored, human-centric solutions that meet the needs of job-seekers and aspiring entrepreneurs. Of the 40 percent of organizations we surveyed that are using digital collaboration platforms, over 90 percent felt these platforms had made them more efficient.

Building a culture of understanding and combating mistrust of technology is key. Nonprofit leaders need to establish a digitally mature culture within their organization by building digital understanding, boosting skills and refining business practice.

Figure 2: Two biggest barriers to digital adoption cited by nonprofit leaders
Digital understanding refers to a broad knowledge across all team members and awareness of the range of digital solutions and opportunities and their applicability to the nonprofit sector.

Digital is everyone’s business – and not just the responsibility of the technology team.

Having a siloed approach with separate digital and programmatic teams creates the perception that digital is unimportant to other parts of the business. As a result, program teams may miss opportunities to drive employment and entrepreneurship outcomes for their beneficiaries.

Refining business practice means aligning strategy, technology and processes to deliver meaningful results. Before a nonprofit can embark on business practice transformation, decision-makers must understand the spectrum of digital tools at their disposal and how they can be applied to meet specific organizational challenges.

One way for nonprofits to kick-start the process of understanding and acting on the opportunities and challenges brought about by digital technologies is to assess their digital maturity and identify areas for development. Once an organization’s digital maturity is assessed, they are then in a better position to establish an effective change management function to support the journey to digital maturity through training, coaching and provision of resources. Additionally, the path to digital maturity encourages organizations to collaborate with internal digital experts and external partners to find solutions. This approach can help nonprofits to learn fast from small failures by taking small risks and implementing digital solutions on a small scale.

As digital skills development is an equally important step on the road to digital maturity, investing in new technologies is not enough. Real transformation requires that people understand technology, know how to use it and actively incorporate it into their daily activities. According to GO UK Digital Skills Report and findings from Accenture Corporate Citizenship’s research, there are certain basic digital skills that can support the development of a more mature digital culture within an organization:

- Digital content creation: using digital tools to create documents, social media posts, presentations and surveys.
- Online transactions: purchasing goods or services online, installing applications, subscribing to events and logging IT tickets.
- Information management: using online search engines and cloud file storage.
- Problem-solving: troubleshooting issues and finding solutions via web searches.
- Adaptability: evolving with the ever-changing circumstances and environment of digital.

58% of nonprofit workers take a proactive approach to learning new digital skills.
Understanding the needs and wants of beneficiaries leads to more effective interventions.

For nonprofit organizations, digital success means putting beneficiaries and employees at the heart of program design and delivery. However, according to our research, only 23 percent of nonprofit leaders believe that collaboration with beneficiaries is important for successful adoption of a digital tool.

Digital transformation is changing beneficiary expectations and a key step in empowering them is to deliver services via technologies that work with them. In a survey of beneficiaries, 80 percent cite the Internet as an important resource for their education. Meanwhile, almost 60 percent would rather give feedback online or via mobile, compared to 36 percent who cite phone or paper. To help ensure continued success and relevance, workforce development nonprofits should seize this opportunity to reach stakeholders through their preferred channels. Even small changes to program design and delivery can ensure that the beneficiary voice is heard in decision making.

IDEO.org’s story of Shanti and the Naandi Treatment Centre perfectly illustrates the importance of involving beneficiaries in program design. Shanti lives in an area outside of Hyderabad, India, and fetches water every day from a borehole that often makes her family sick. While the Naandi Treatment Centre provides clean water to Shanti’s community, it is located half a kilometer from her home and the water bottles they provide are difficult for her to carry. As a result, she still must collect water from the borehole. Had the Naandi Treatment Centre consulted its beneficiaries during the design process, their intervention may have been more effective for individuals like Shanti. In the same way, by bringing the beneficiary into the design process, workforce development nonprofits can create more targeted solutions and unlock more meaningful employment and entrepreneurship outcomes.
Overcome resource barriers such as funding and connectivity.

Resource barriers, such as a lack of funding, can inhibit a nonprofit’s ability to embrace digital transformation. While these challenges are sometimes outside an organization’s control, workforce development nonprofits can take steps to address them. Of nonprofit leaders surveyed, 48 percent say funding for digital has fallen or stayed the same over the past 12 months.\textsuperscript{40}

Funding shortages have caused some workforce development nonprofits to shy away from digital solutions. Many are constrained by the fact that their backers are focused on program delivery rather than internal capability building. Others assume that technology is very expensive, which is not always the case.

Examples of cost-effective digital solutions include Google for Nonprofits’ collaboration, knowledge management and analytics offerings, and Atlassian’s team management tool, Confluence. There are thousands of other online solutions that are either open source or free for nonprofits, many of which offer complimentary online training and implementation guidance.

Crowdsourcing and stackable funding also can be used to obtain the resources needed to implement a more comprehensive digital solution. Stackable funding refers to the practice of seeking additional donations, grants or loans to supplement existing funds. While a nonprofit may have a steady stream of donations to support its operational budget, it may pursue stackable funding to finance a special project or initiative.

Crowdsourcing, on the other hand, is the practice of leveraging digital channels to obtain funding or seek advice on an idea or issue from stakeholders and the general public. For example, Techtonica, a start-up style nonprofit that offers free tech training and job placement for low-income women and non-binary adults, utilized Indiegogo’s crowdsourcing platform to secure over $40,000 for its programs.

“Crowdfunding helps Techtonica accomplish a lot in a short amount of time. It provides a deadline so you and your supporters move quickly, and encourages the involvement of the community.”

Michelle Glauser, Techtonica

Connectivity is also a challenge for nonprofit organizations. Many worry that switching to digital will keep them from reaching a large portion of beneficiaries; however, approximately 75 percent of beneficiaries we heard from have access to the Internet.\textsuperscript{41} Additionally, an investment in technology does not mean that an organization will be forced to abandon effective direct mail or grassroots initiatives. Instead, digital will supplement existing outreach and fundraising programs, while creating opportunities to broaden support and engagement.

Creative solutioning involves approaching a funding challenge with an innovative or novel approach to help identify new and inventive solutions. In the context of funding, digital creative solutioning could provide an answer to resource challenges or an unorthodox way to circumvent these barriers and achieve the desired outcome.

Lloyds Bank research reported that nonprofits that are digitally mature are 28% more likely to increase funding.\textsuperscript{41}
ADOPTING FOUR DIGITAL ACCELERATORS CAN ENHANCE EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP OUTCOMES

In today’s world, a variety of digital tools, solutions and technologies are available to workforce development nonprofits. Deciding what to pick can be overwhelming, particularly for organizations that struggle to understand their technical goals and how to reach them. Our research undertook a phased approach to determine what tools would be most valuable for nonprofits to accelerate employment and entrepreneurship outcomes and increase organizational efficiency. Firstly, we identified success factors [see Figure 3] that contribute to a tool’s effectiveness in the nonprofit sector and used those criteria to assess a wide range of digital tools. In order to further understand their specific relevance to the nonprofit sector, each of the tools was also evaluated through interviews and surveys with workforce development nonprofits.

Of the vast spectrum of digital tools available to workforce development nonprofits, our research uncovered four primary accelerators that can have an immediate impact on employment and entrepreneurship outcomes and organizational efficiency: digital collaboration platforms, digital assessments, digital learning and data and analytics. These four accelerators can drive outcomes and efficiency by increasing scale, access, effectiveness, collaboration and informed decision making.

Figure 3: Digital accelerator success factors [percentage of nonprofit workers that identified them as a factor]

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<th>Success Factor</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>Ensures organizations are demonstrating effective use of scarce resources that are not being replicated elsewhere.</td>
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<td>Human-centricity</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>Focuses on material improvement for both employees and beneficiaries.</td>
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<td>Purpose</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>Helps drive the nonprofit’s overall mission to meet the needs and wants of beneficiaries.</td>
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<td>Future-proof</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>Assesses whether a tool has a long shelf life, is adaptable to foreseeable changes and doesn’t require regular updates.</td>
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<td>Proven</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>Shows that a tool is trusted to boost organizational capacity quickly.</td>
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<td>Scalability</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>Adds value to many business functions and can be used for many activities.</td>
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ACCELERATORS

- Digital Collaboration
- Digital Assessments
- Digital Learning
- Data and Analytics
**Digital Collaboration**
Digital collaboration is the use of digital devices to share knowledge, manage information and contribute user-generated content.

**Digital Assessments**
Digital assessments collect and evaluate information about stakeholders. They provide data to inform decision making on an individual and organizational level.

**Digital Learning**
Digital learning uses technology as the means to drive learning outcomes. It requires a combination of technology, digital content and instruction.

**Data and Analytics**
Data and analytics tools use quantitative methods to derive insights from data, which can be used to shape decisions and program design.

### Value for Supporting Beneficiary Outcomes

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### Value for Operational Efficiency

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### Examples of Accelerator Tools
- G Suite
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*Note: Value was determined through a mixture of tool capability research and interview and survey findings*
Digital collaboration platforms help teams work more effectively and efficiently across geographies, both with each other and with partner organizations, volunteers and beneficiaries. They are generally cost-effective and allow for greater accuracy, innovation and accountability, while fostering deeper digital connections between teams. These platforms can help workforce development nonprofits overcome resource barriers, while creating a more digitally mature culture.

More than 90 percent of nonprofit workers believe that digital collaboration platforms have improved their efficiency. Nuru International, a social venture on a mission to end extreme poverty in rural Kenya and Ethiopia, is working to develop a more digitally mature culture by becoming more efficient in its day-to-day operations. In addition to the Google for Nonprofits collaboration offering (G Suite for Nonprofits), Nuru International used a Google Chrome Extension to reduce superfluous emails. Also, instead of attaching files for colleagues to download, employees share Google Drive links, which provide cost savings in remote regions where internet connectivity is purchased via data bundles.

More than 90 percent of nonprofit workers believe that digital collaboration platforms have improved their efficiency.43

The Cherie Blair Foundation for Women, which empowers women entrepreneurs in developing and emerging economies, is using technology to increase women’s access to economic opportunities. Main barriers faced by women in emerging markets include access to connectivity, training and mentoring. The Foundation has responded to this need by delivering mentoring via free, mobile-accessible video conferencing tools, such as Skype or Google Hangouts. Combining online communication tools and a bespoke digital platform, mentees work closely with their mentors on personalized business and professional development objectives over the course of a year. This program and approach has enabled the Foundation to support more than 2,000 women entrepreneurs in over 90 countries since 2010.

70% of beneficiaries are most comfortable keeping in touch via digital collaboration tools such as email, instant messaging, video calls and social tools.

79% of workers are confident that they could connect with colleagues and beneficiaries across geographies using video conferencing or file sharing.

Benefits
- Help team members to collaborate more effectively across geographies and work more closely with partner organizations, volunteers and beneficiaries
- Trigger new models of collaboration with employers, training providers and recruiters
- Help provide employment/entrepreneurship advice and mentoring at scale

Considerations
- Ensuring regularity and strength of mentoring sessions may be difficult and mentor coaching could be required
- Buy-in and adoption across the organization may be a challenge
- Outcome measurement is difficult; limited direct metrics for success
Digital Accelerator 2:

Digital assessments can provide organizations with greater insight into their stakeholders.

Digital assessments provide workforce development nonprofits with better data about their beneficiaries to support decision making. They can also improve understanding of an organization’s capabilities, digital maturity, employee skills and overall organizational engagement.

Of those surveyed for this research, 71 percent of nonprofit workers say the use of digital assessments has made them more efficient and half of leaders not currently using digital assessments believe they would improve beneficiary outcomes.44

The Institute for Veterans and Military Families (IVMF), an interdisciplinary national institute focused on issues impacting veterans and military families, utilizes digital assessments as part of its Onward to Opportunity civilian workforce training initiative. The resulting data helps them to determine program eligibility, evaluate initial skills and career interest, monitor progress and support job placement. In addition, the digital assessment helps IVMF align its services with beneficiaries’ needs and place them in a skilling program that matches their unique level and goals. Additionally, it assists IVMF in unlocking the power of data to monitor individual progress, which helps ensure that beneficiaries receive the requisite level of support and informs program design and continuous improvement.

Teach for the Philippines is leveraging digital assessment tools to improve their teacher recruitment process by collaborating with Knack, a technology start-up that combines behavioral science, mobile games, and machine-learning algorithms to unlock individuals’ talents and match them with job opportunities. Teach for the Philippines has adopted Knack’s technology to more objectively measure and identify skills and traits critical for success in a teaching role. This digital assessment tool has helped them start proactively reaching out to university students who exhibit high potential as teachers.

In a recent study conducted by Salesforce, 75 percent of volunteers said they would be willing to volunteer more hours per year if they felt their nonprofits really knew them.45

The majority of nonprofit leaders using digital strengths assessments think they have increased organizational capacity by more than 20%.

**Benefits**

- Individual assessments can help to support beneficiaries in understanding their skills and strengths and translate this into targeted job readiness activities to improve outcomes
- Volunteer and employee skill and interest assessments can allow for a better allocation of resources
- Digital maturity assessment can deliver an understanding of an organization’s current state and provide a clear roadmap and priorities for digitalization

**Considerations**

- Buy-in and adoption across the organization may be a challenge
- Some beneficiaries may lack the necessary digital literacy to use the assessment tools
- Assessments must be conducted reasonably frequently to monitor progress
Digital Accelerator 3: Digital learning can improve outcomes for everyone.

Digital learning is learning through technology; often it includes a continuum of models that leverage technology to give students increased control over learning. Today, workforce development nonprofits have access to a wide range of disruptive digital learning technologies, such as animation, assessments, gamification, learning boards, multimedia, simulation, social learning, tutorials and web-based training, which can be used in e-learning or blended learning environments. Digital learning improves access and helps beneficiaries and staff acquire market-ready technology skills.

One of the primary objectives of digital learning, particularly for workforce development nonprofits serving the millennial generation, is to meet the digital expectations of stakeholders and deliver customized content through familiar channels. To this end, Quest Alliance, an Indian nonprofit committed to addressing problems in the Indian educational system, has taken steps to incorporate digital elements into its blended learning programs. With support from Accenture, Quest designed a digital learning ecosystem of tools and resources for trainers and beneficiaries. This learning management system allows stakeholders to study at their own pace and has been used by more than 20,000 youth, 700 trainers and 50 nonprofits. They also provide access to self-learning materials for professional development, as well as a community of peers.

Accenture’s Skills to Succeed Academy is a free digital, interactive program that helps disadvantaged young people to build skills and confidence to make career choices and develop employability skills. Skills to Succeed Academy opened its virtual doors in 2013 in the United Kingdom and recently launched in Ireland, South Africa and Australia. It will be available in the United States in late 2017. Since the launch of the Academy, 100,000 beneficiaries have been reached and 70 percent feel that their skills have improved. The East London Business Alliance (ELBA), uses this program to help young people identify their professional skills and interests, improve their resumes, prepare for job interviews and succeed in the workplace. By combining the Academy courses with individual advisors, ELBA has helped enable young people to pursue meaningful careers in a variety of industries.

Benefits

- Makes learning opportunities more accessible and helps beneficiaries acquire skills
- Users can personalize their own curriculum
- Allows for increased scale and geographic reach

Considerations

- Some beneficiaries are more immediately suited for digital learning while others require preparatory courses
- Some digital learning solutions require a high initial investment
- Access to infrastructure can be limited

73% of entrepreneurs and job seekers prefer to learn [at least partially] online.

Studies by both Campus Technology and McGraw-Hill Education indicate 75% of students said technology has positively impacted their grades.
Digital Accelerator 4: Harness the power of data and analytics through the right digital tools.

When it comes to data collection and analysis, workforce development nonprofits today can choose from a variety of digital tools that can capture, transform, analyze and visualize data. Data and analytics tools offer insight into beneficiaries’ progress from initial engagement and beyond. They also help establish effective data sources for monitoring and evaluation. However, digitally mature organizations can only harness the power of analytics if they identify and ask the right questions to develop clearly defined goals.

Year Up, an organization dedicated to empowering young adults in urban areas of the USA to reach their professional potential, utilizes Salesforce to manage stakeholder relationships and track beneficiary progress. The data they gather from this initiative provides them with actionable insights about specific beneficiary needs and program design as a whole.

The Wildlife Crime Technology Project, is also thriving through the use of data and analytics. This initiative links the WWF, the Namibian government with conservationists and park wardens, allowing each party to share conservation data, and facilitating rapid response to criminal activity. The project deploys surveillance drones, which provide real-time visual feedback of Namibia's national parks, keeping authorities informed, and allowing for better decision making and oversight of high-risk areas. The data integration and analysis is facilitated by the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART).

“[Digital allows us to] track our five most critical metrics: retention, admission, development and internships and outcomes.”

Matt McCann, Year Up

82% of nonprofit leaders say analytics have boosted capacity by more than 10%.

Benefits

- Has the potential to streamline operations and improve productivity, enabling organizations to crunch large datasets and deliver faster business insights
- Predictive analytics can support organizations to detect and predict skills gaps whilst providing a tool to segment and profile beneficiaries and develop responsive interventions to upskill in line with forecasted demand

Considerations

- Need to focus on the right metrics
- Sometimes requires a moderate level of digital literacy
- Data analysis usually generates many possible insights – it is challenging to validate them across functions, in order to identify the leading useful insights
STARTING YOUR DIGITAL JOURNEY

Digital tools provide new methods, approaches, channels and technologies to drive entrepreneurship and employment outcomes at scale and increase organizational efficiency. However, before workforce development nonprofits can begin their digital journey, they must consider how to unlock opportunities, overcome challenges and adopt accelerators. To assist in this process, we have provided a collection of Hacks – quick and small changes that assist workforce development nonprofits in starting their digital journey. These hacks have been compiled based on the advice of workforce development nonprofits, technology organizations and Accenture teams.

Hacks

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<tr>
<th>Hack Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Use MOOCs for workplace learning</td>
<td>Compile a list of all outsourcing and hiring efforts within your organization and pick one from the list that could be met by upskilling an employee using a massive open online course (MOOC). Poll your team members to see who would be willing to enroll. Throughout the course, check in with the employee for feedback on their experience so that you can understand the benefits.</td>
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<td>Identify mobility options for beneficiary programs</td>
<td>Ask each team in your organization to identify an existing, free mobile app that they think could be useful to interact with beneficiaries. Set up a meeting for each team to present their choice and ask participants to vote for their favorite. Once the winner is selected, set up an account, test it with a small group of beneficiaries and get ready to go mobile.</td>
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<td>Ask the right questions about data</td>
<td>Organize a meeting with your team and write these three questions on a whiteboard: 1. How can we use data to demonstrate our robust social impact? 2. How can we use data to tell a story? 3. How can we inspire donors and volunteers using data? Work together to brainstorm solutions; pick one and try to implement it.</td>
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<td>Start using design thinking</td>
<td>Next time you design an intervention or devise a new program or interaction (big or small), download IDEO.org’s DesignKit. The Field Guide to Human-Centered Design designkit.org. Identify one of the methods that could be incorporated to better understand the needs and wants of beneficiaries.</td>
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<td>Work together to find the right digital tools</td>
<td>Ask team members to find their favorite online, free for nonprofit digital tool. Organize a meeting to discuss the impact that these tools could have. Perhaps one of these could be a solution to an existing problem!</td>
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<td>Look for opportunities to become more agile</td>
<td>Tools such as Trello are a great, free alternative to more expensive, complex digital collaboration and project management tools. The benefit of Trello is that it is based on an agile methodology, so it could help create a more adaptive, agile organizational project management culture.</td>
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Discover innovative ways to use digital tools to enhance learning
Use assessment tools such as Google Forms, an app within the Google for Nonprofits G Suite offering, to deliver a flipped classroom learning experience. With the ability to add multimedia material, Google Forms can be used to gather and deliver information. Try creating an assessment within the form to understand beneficiaries’ job readiness knowledge. You can then use the responses and data to guide in-class discussion and select appropriate further learning material.

Reach more beneficiaries through digital tools
Use unconventional learning tools like Snapchat to provide daily micro-learning. For example, send a daily study tip to beneficiaries – small, but constant reminders are quick and easy, so millennial beneficiaries are more likely to engage with them.

Discover more about the Pathways to Employment
Email the Insight to Action: Paving the Pathways to Employment report to your team. Ask each team member to review the report, focusing on the framework that highlights the key success factors associated with each phase of the program lifecycle, and provides a tool to help nonprofits assess their current capabilities. Using this framework, come together as a group and identify opportunities to incorporate digital technologies into sustainable long-term strategies for cost savings, service improvements, and growth for your organization. Consider how best to align your digital strategy with your mission and technological capabilities.

Learn from other nonprofits
Ask a team to write down their understanding of digital. Then visit the Accenture Nordic Team’s interactive Digital Performance Index (DPI), which is a tool that provides insight to 60 Nordic nonprofits and their use of digital. Afterward, spark a conversation comparing each team member’s thoughts on digital before and after exploring the DPI, and how digital is or is not being used in your organization.

Understand the common myths associated with digital learning programs
Explore your options in the digital learning environment and debunk common myths with your team. Ask for volunteers to explore digital learning and ask each volunteer to read the Accenture Corporate Citizenship’s report How to Design and Scale Digital and Blended Learning Programs to Improve Employment and Entrepreneurship Outcomes. Once everyone has read the report, meet to review the information, identify which elements are applicable and feasible for your organization and utilize the step-by-step guide and Excel-based resources to develop your digital learning capabilities.

Start exploring the different assets offered by Accenture Corporate Citizenship
Ask the Accenture Corporate Citizenship team about Skills to Succeed. This free, digital, interactive program helps disadvantaged young people build skills and confidence to make career choices and develop employability skills. Skills to Succeed Academy opened its virtual doors in 2013 in the United Kingdom and recently launched in Ireland, South Africa and Australia. It will be available in the United States in late 2017. 180,000 beneficiaries are expected to be reached globally during the next four years.

Keep ahead of technology trends
Invite one of your colleagues for a series of five innovation chats; in each chat discuss one of the five tech trends highlighted in the Technology Vision 2017. Each week review the trend in advance of your innovation chat and think about how this trend might apply to your organization. Walk through your thinking with one another.
Technology is developing at an unprecedented rate and to keep up with the pace of change, workforce development nonprofits are encouraged to embark on a journey toward digital adoption. As with any journey, workforce development nonprofits that move too quickly can overreach, and those that go too slowly run the risk of becoming ineffective. Digital innovations present a unique opportunity for mission-driven organizations to increase operational efficiencies, improve service delivery and amplify their impact on a scale never before imagined. Starting your digital journey means adopting only those innovations that unlock value for your mission. Therefore, a workforce development nonprofit’s digital journey is less about pursuing every available opportunity, but rather focusing on the right areas that will ultimately deliver impact for employment and entrepreneurship outcomes. By following the strategies outlined in this report, workforce development nonprofits will be taking steps to pursue their unique path to a digital future.

WHO WILL ANSWER THE CALL TO ACTION?
METHODOLOGY

When embarking on this research, we had a key question in mind: How can workforce development nonprofits identify and adopt digital accelerators that will help drive improved employment and entrepreneurship outcomes for beneficiaries at scale?

To answer this question, we applied a design thinking approach which involved four key elements:

1. We explored a wide range of published works and thought leadership on relevant and analogous topics.
2. We conducted more than 45 interviews with leading technology organizations, nonprofits and Accenture experts that spanned across all five continents.
3. We conducted three surveys and received over 265 responses from nonprofit leaders, employees and beneficiaries based in more than ten countries including Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Cambodia, China, Germany, India, the Netherlands, Philippines, Spain and the United States of America.
4. We coordinated five site visits and prototyping sessions, and a design thinking workshop that involved nonprofit leaders, employees and beneficiaries.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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About Corporate Citizenship

At Accenture, we are leading with digital innovation to address complex, global issues and fulfill our vision to improve the way the world works and lives. Corporate citizenship is central to this vision — from closing employment gaps to advancing client sustainability to accelerating gender equality in the workforce. By convening innovative partnerships and leveraging the power of technology, we are working to create long-term value for our communities, strengthen our business and enhance our contribution to society.

About Accenture Research

Accenture Research uncovers disruptors, shapes trends and creates data-driven insights about the most pressing issues organizations face. Combining the power of innovative research techniques with a deep understanding of our clients’ industries, our team of 250 researchers and Thought Leaders spans 23 countries and publishes hundreds of reports, articles, and points of views every year. Our thought-provoking research is supported by proprietary data that guides our innovations and allows us to transform theories into real, practical solutions.

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