

Can Human Experience (HX) design diminish digital fatigue?

Exploring changing attitudes to tech in 2022





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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Before the pandemic, ‘accelerating digital adoption’ was the term on every business’s lips. Companies in all industries were exploring new ways to advance their online offerings and soon enough, mobile technologies, AI and cloud-based software became the most critical catalysts for business performance.

Two years of pandemic-induced reliance on technology to work and connect has seen the ‘digital ceiling’ become a ‘digital floor.’ In other words, what was once seen as advanced is now the minimum threshold for businesses wanting to meet consumer and employee needs, drive engagement and increase profitability.

Our experience with digital technologies has shifted, and expectations are high. Simply having digital properties no longer serves as a brand, operational or financial differentiator. And with our digital quota dramatically increasing, fatigue is also on the rise. Today the primary concern is, how can brands and employers optimise engagement and experiences while avoiding tech burnout?

In late 2020, Infosys reached out to 1,000 Australians and 200 New Zealanders asking them about their interactions with and attitudes towards digital tech for work and leisure. The majority were optimistic about the new digital era, especially when it came to better flexibility and access to services. But follow-up research in Dec 2021 suggests that Australians and New Zealanders are experiencing something of a ‘digital come-down’ one year later in terms of how much time they want to spend online.

Key findings:

- Positivity towards using tech for work has halved after year two of the pandemic
- Video conferencing is a leading cause of digital fatigue, as well as the expectation that employees are always available for virtual meetings
- People's need to 'digitally disconnect' is increasing
- Tech-enabled flexible working remains popular
- People are still enjoying the connection and entertainment offered by tech for leisure
- Digital accessibility is now front and centre
- Making digital experiences more human through empathy and personalisation is vital
- And it might be time to upgrade our old friend, the chatbot

Leveraging the WONGDOODY Sounding Board to explore current use of digital technology for work and leisure, Infosys has pulled together this report on changing attitudes to technology in 2022. We hope it helps inspire and inform with recommendations as to how we can improve the human experience of a digital world, and navigate our way up from the digital floor.

“Two years into the pandemic it's clear our relationship with technology is beginning to strain.”

– Matt Kain, WONGDOODY President APAC



The sounding board

This research was conducted using The Sounding Board, a research and insights tool that enables the rapid creation of custom communities, engaging with real people to inform human experience design. The Sounding Board is a key tool of Infosys' global human experience design agency, WONGDOODY.

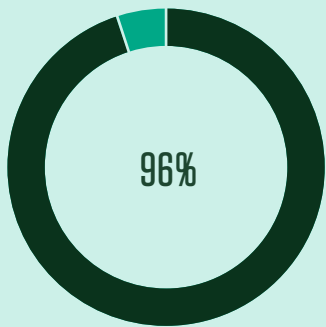
We spoke to:

- **1,000 Australians**
- **200 New Zealanders**
- **Aged from 20-65**
- **In market during Dec 2021**

To focus our findings for this HX report, we asked The Sounding Board community specifically about digital technologies used for work and leisure - as opposed to healthcare or education. That includes apps, video conferencing services, subscriptions, and any other platforms you might have or use to get through your day.

WHAT IS HX?

Before the pandemic, 96% of customers said customer experience (CX) was important to brand loyalty, and brands getting it right brought in 5.7 times more revenue than their peers. This focus on CX remains crucial, as well as user experience (UX) - especially with customers having to navigate an increasing number of services online, on their own. The WFH era has also seen employee experience (EX) skyrocket in importance. But with our digital diet increasing, all three, plus a bit of human creativity, are imperative to creating better digital world experiences.



Customers who said CX is important to brand loyalty



CX as a multiplier of revenue

(CX)

Customer Experience

+

(UX)

User Experience

+

(EX)

Employee Experience

Experience is now the top differentiator. Is yours keeping up? We design and build personal, human experiences that elevate your brand, retail and digital ecosystems.

Our UX practice aligns business strategy with human insights and creativity to craft relevant, intuitive digital experiences that drive revenue and loyalty.

Your employees are your most valuable asset. We reimagine processes, platforms and purpose at work to create digital experiences that improve retention, save time, and increase efficiency.

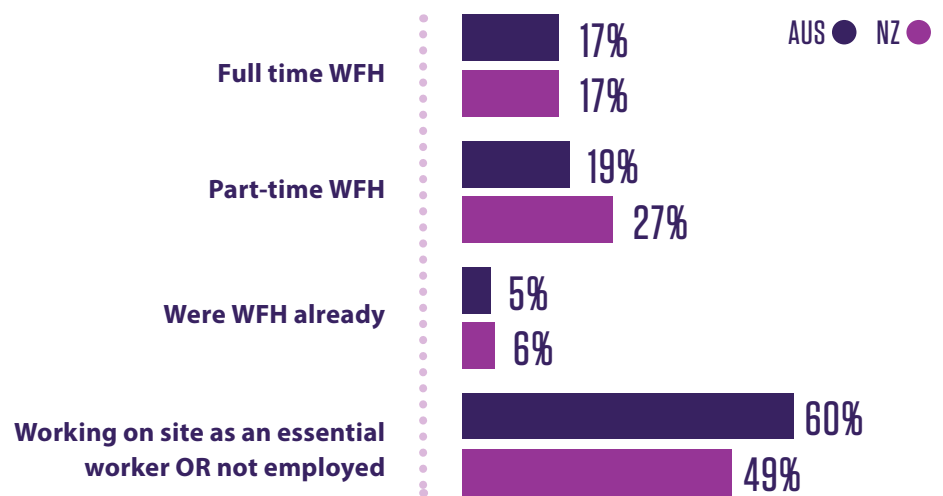
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Human Experience

Driven by empathy and insight, HX uses creativity scaled by technology to capture the imagination, invite action, and create unshakeable loyalty.

DIGITAL UPTAKE IS HERE TO STAY

During the early stages of the pandemic, around half of workers in Australia and NZ shifted to a WFH model. Despite lockdowns lifting in all parts of the region, these numbers have shown little change – indicating a level of digital dependency is very much here to stay. With more flexible work options, many employees are opting to work full time or part-time from home, meaning that meetings now often have a physical and virtual component.



But the rate of change has slowed

The pace at which we're adopting new tech and increasing its usage seems to have slowed, in particular digital work tools, indicating that there is an opportunity to optimise digital work tools and closely examine where they are falling short.

Rate of change in use of work technology in Australia	Dec '20	Dec '21
Increased	77%	49%
Stayed the same	20%	40%
Decreased	3%	8%

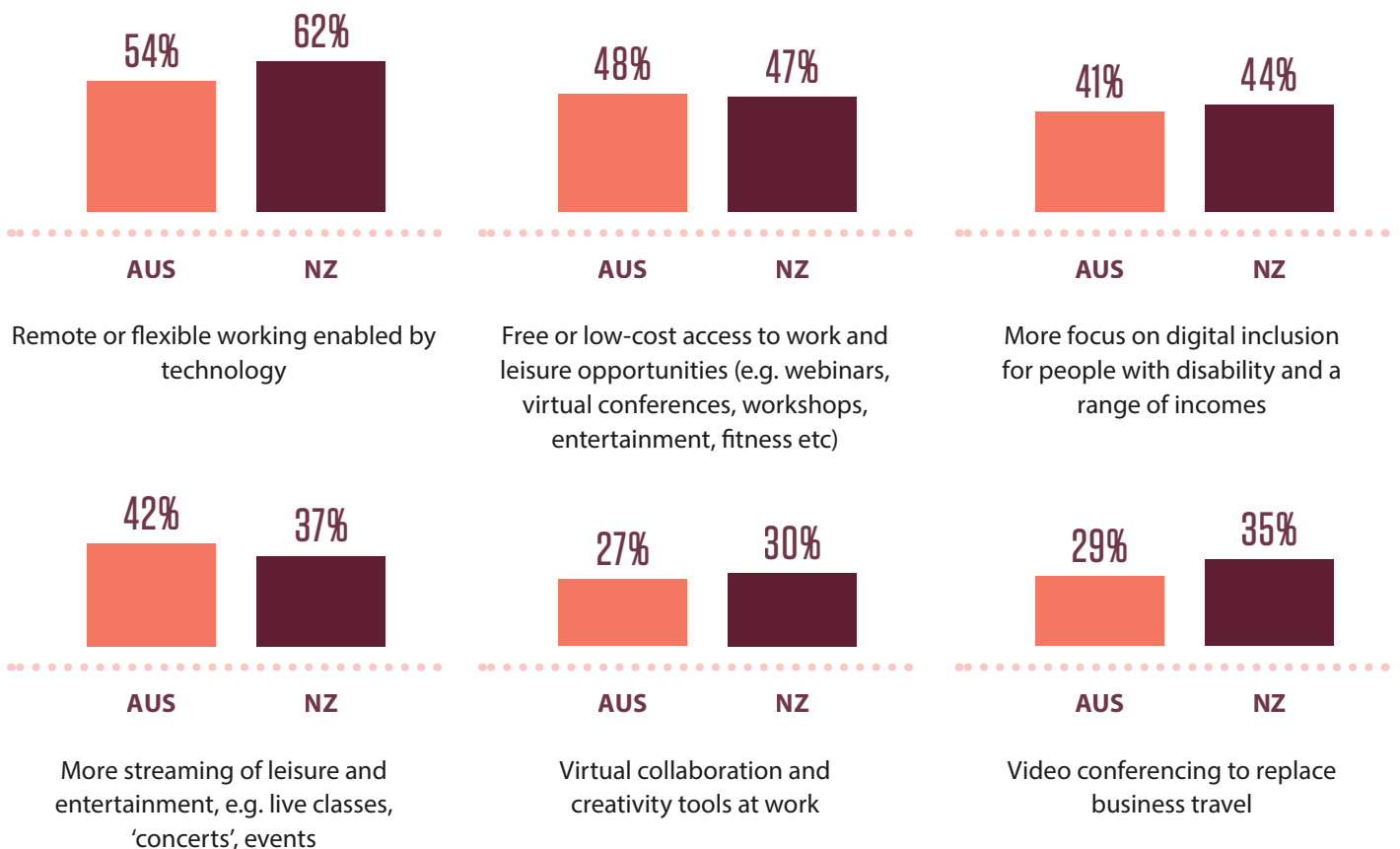
Rate of change in use of work technology in New Zealand	Dec '20	Dec '21
Increased	64%	41%
Stayed the same	30%	48%
Decreased	6%	6%

OVERUSE CAUSING FATIGUE

Our 2020 report [CX to HX: How creative technology can improve the human experience](#) showed low levels of digital fatigue. But respondents are now citing a “love-hate relationship” with their technological interactions – particularly when it comes to work tech. Appetite for all digital services has dropped, with virtual collaboration and video conferencing tools seeing the biggest falls of 14% and 10%, respectively. This correlates with the [global narrative](#) of WFH blurring the lines between office and home, leading to digital burnout.

Key stat: The digital services recognised as most improved over the past year were **banking, retail** and **groceries** - with **healthcare** services also ranking highly in Australia, but viewed as one of the least improved services in New Zealand.

“What would you like to see continue as restrictions ease?”



“It’s enabled me to entertain the kids during times when it hasn’t been safe to take them out to the places they enjoy.”

– Respondent’s quote

Is tech empowering or fatiguing?

Just a third of workers found **tech for work** empowering at the end of 2021 compared to almost two-thirds in 2020. With WFH extending the workday and reducing breaks, the shine has clearly worn off, and more than a third of respondents now find digital work tools fatiguing and oppressing.

	Australia	New Zealand
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60% find work tech empowering and enabling 25% find it fatiguing or oppressing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 57% find work tech empowering and enabling 23% find it fatiguing or oppressing
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 33% find work tech empowering and enabling 44% find it fatiguing or oppressing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 41% find work tech empowering and enabling 33% find it fatiguing or oppressing

Interestingly, people are generally more neutral about the impact of **technology for leisure**, potentially because they feel more confident or in control of moderating usage, or because they now have access to entertainment that was restricted by lockdowns or previously only available in-person.

	Australia	New Zealand
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60% find leisure tech empowering and enabling 24% find it fatiguing or oppressing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 64% find leisure tech empowering and enabling 15% find it fatiguing or oppressing
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 55% find leisure tech empowering and enabling 14% find it fatiguing or oppressing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 58% find leisure tech empowering and enabling 13% find it fatiguing or oppressing

A life-line for many

Older generations, parents and immunocompromised respondents called out digital tools as a “life-line” and “empowering”.

“Being immunocompromised I’m stuck at home a lot so I absolutely rely on these technologies from everything from work, study, shopping for groceries and chemist needs, food deliveries, entertainment and connecting to others.”

“I find utilising the capabilities of new technology at the age of 74 in itself these days is empowering.”

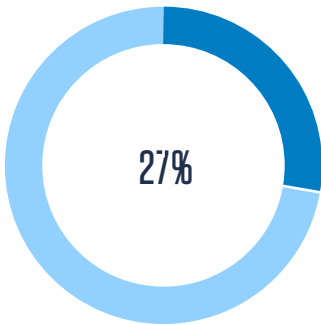
– Respondent’s quotes

TIME TO SWITCH OFF

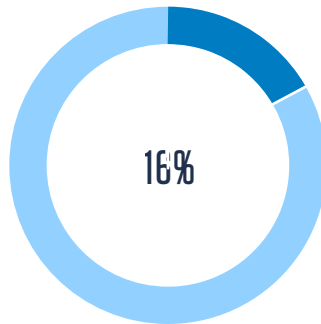
When asked what they'd like to see the back of, this year's respondents said they were tired of "Zoom video calls" and "being contactable 24/7". Employees feel like they've lost their work-life balance since WFH, a global issue that is often reported on, with people feeling like they need to be 'on' all the time due to lack of physical boundaries between home and office or leisure spaces. This would explain respondents calling for tech upgrades that limit or monitor your digital time and help you 'switch off'.

NZ spirits are higher

While the two countries expressed mostly similar trends throughout this report, New Zealanders experienced a much smaller drop in positive sentiment towards tech for work - positive sentiment dropped by 27% in Australia vs. 16% in New Zealand - suggesting that Australia's extended lockdowns in Melbourne and Sydney may have greatly impacted local sentiment.



AUS drop in positive sentiment towards tech for work



NZ drop in positive sentiment towards tech for work

"Fatigue is not universal, a fact that will challenge global businesses that are designing with employee welfare in mind – underscoring the need for personalisation."

– Matt Kain, WONGDOODY President APAC

"As employers continue to evolve and advocate for digital tools, they need to keep in mind the mental strain people are experiencing with uncapped screen time. Digital fatigue means less clarity and creativity, resulting in a reduced capability to innovate and explore new ideas. Adding more empathy and personalisation to work experiences is vital to improving engagement and wellbeing"

– Andrew Groth, Executive Vice President Region Head – Australia & New Zealand

A BESPOKE DESIGN SYSTEM FOR PACIFIC BRANDS INC

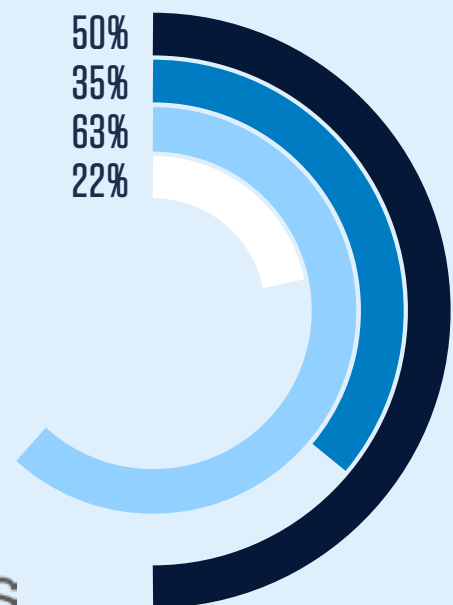
The journey from landing page to checkout in today's online shopping world can be rife with distractions. To help the PacBrands group increase cart sizes and speed up purchases across its suite of products, WONGDOODY, an Infosys company created a bespoke HX design system for some of Australia's most popular brands.

The mobile-first approach to UX improved customer journeys and pathways by focusing heavily on testing the path to purchase, ensuring that all users and audiences could find their desired products quickly and easily, and flow through to cart checkout with minimal distraction.

As a result, Berlei has seen an over **50% increase**, Bonds a **35% increase**, and Sheridan a **63% increase in conversion rates** on mobile while reducing bounce rates by an average 22% across all platforms. The HX strategy also increased online sales by more than \$7.2Million in the first quarter, most notably enabling an acquisition by Pacific Brands Inc, setting the brand family up for future success in the digital realm. in a project, than to fix things after the website or tool has been created.

Impact of HX strategy across Pacific Brands Inc.

- 50% Berlei conversion rates increase
- 35% Bonds conversion rates increase
- 63% Sheridan conversion rates increase
- 22% average bounce rates reduction across all platforms

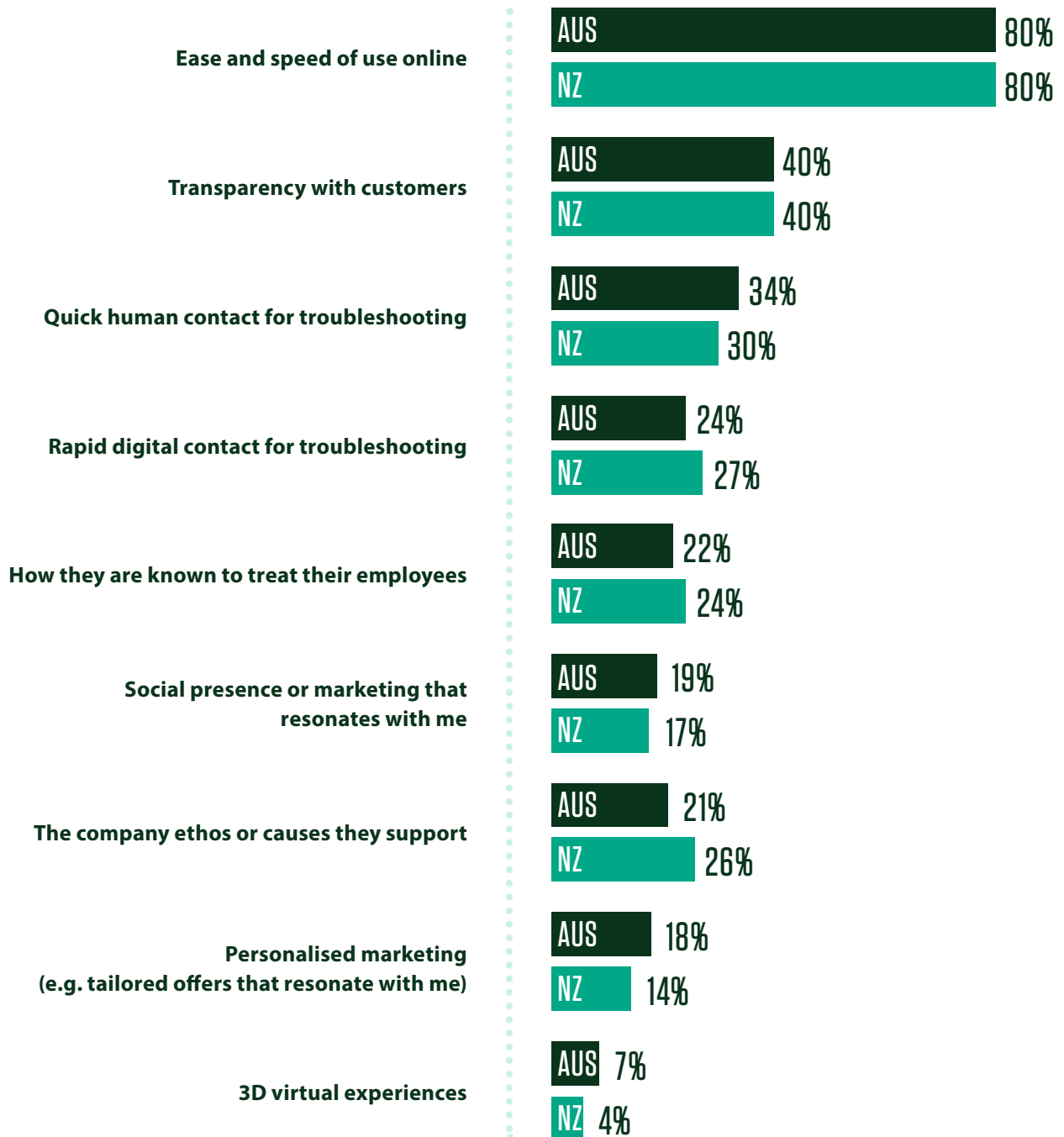


PACIFIC BRANDS

BRAND EXPECTATIONS ARE CHANGING

Almost all factors that usually impact a customer's loyalty were deemed less important this year, apart from **speed and ease of use**, which 80% of respondents called out as the leading drivers of brand loyalty. The general decline indicates that fatigue is setting in and that brands need to find new ways to engage their customers digitally – without letting them burn out.

Loyalty is now affected by:



While preference for 3D and virtual experiences was notably low, our qualitative research was flooded with requests for holograms and immersive 3D experience. This reflects a current state of play where metaverse experiences are still few and far between.

Once immersive experiences are rolled out globally, customers will likely raise the pressure on brands to provide this new level of advanced tech. Will Metaverse experiences add that human touch missing from many digital properties? Is this an opportunity for brands to alter how they engage their customers and staff? We do know that if the system is already faulty, the metaverse may not fix it. However, the one size fits all digital experience no longer meets customer needs.

How do we improve HX?

With basic digital services now on offer from all organisations, how can they differentiate their digital experiences and surprise and delight our customers beyond the norm?

Exploring and understanding the needs of different user personas and experimenting, testing and building new experiences is crucial. This could involve immersive 3D or game-ified experiences that take end users into the metaverse. In fact, we're already seeing diverse sectors harnessing technologies like AR, VR, Blockchain, NFTs, IoT, AI, and 5G to build 3D experiences such as virtual retail stores, healthcare digital twins, and virtual equipment maintenance.

“The metaverse concept represents a nascent potential for brands and users to connect in completely new ways and truly transform the digital era. What we’re seeing is the rise of a parallel online reality, where people can work, shop, and connect digitally with good design making it feel more human.”

– Andrew Groth, Senior VP and Region Head at Infosys Australia and New Zealand.



Time to reboot the bot?

Chatbots came through strongly in this research as especially unhelpful and undesirable. In fact, phone contact with a human is now seen as a premium interaction, followed by live chat or email. With chat bots only as strong as the datasets we feed them, it may be time to reboot our idea of how a smart, intelligent and self-learning virtual assistant works and what it needs to provide useful support.

“Every time I’ve had the misfortune to use one, I seem to go around in circles and disconnect.”

“Get rid of chatbots and only use Livechat functions.”

– Respondent’s quotes

The most successful current solutions combine chatbots with human interaction. The chatbot increases the capacity and reduces the cost of the call-centre by handling simple enquiries before triaging and routing the customer to the right human specialist. But this handover generally needs improvement. There’s also room for greater understanding about the role of the chatbot, especially those in their infancy, and what they need to mature and improve – we’ve included some tips on that later.

GOING “PHYGITAL” AT THE AUSTRALIAN OPEN

As brands re-evaluate their approach to online experiences, ‘phygital’ event models are set to become the norm. In other words, immersive 3D worlds that feel more like the real deal.

Which is exactly what Infosys created for the Australian Open, in partnership with Tennis Australia. As digital innovation partner of the AO since 2019, Infosys has been creating a host of AI and 3D experiences for fans, such as the AO Fan App. For the pandemic-impacted tournament in 2021, we extended this to create an immersive online environment for clients and partners of the AO.

The 3D AO Virtual Hub delivered an immersive online environment for B2B attendees, where they could explore always-on content and interact through chat rooms, branded suites and networking spaces. A digital concierge desk led into a range of virtual ‘zones’ – from the AO Live Stage where you could watch music performances, to the AO Shop where you could browse merchandise, and on to the Rod Laver zone which hosted audio and highlights from the games.

“We didn’t want a regular events platform,” said Infosys’ VP of Global Marketing, Navin Rammohan, “This is the start of true phygital: Tennis is happening on court plus there’s other types of interaction on-screen. While everyone wants the physical connection, what we’re hearing from all clients and events partners is they will always have a virtual component now.”



THE CALL FOR CONNECTIVITY

Slow internet connectivity and outages at home were the major gripes amongst all respondents. Internet stability and speed were called out as the biggest hurdles back in our 2020 report as well, suggesting that this foundation needs urgent attention. If we're going to continue digitising essential services like banking, groceries, healthcare and government services, ensuring that everyone has equitable access to digital tools is all the more important.

Other points of friction include:

- Too many platforms
- Lack of digital accessibility
- Scamming
- Tech addiction
- Lack of IT support
- Screen fatigue

Digital Accessibility is paramount

According to the UN, digital accessibility for work and leisure tools is a human right. We would like to see all organisations build accessible digital properties from the beginning, not just add capabilities as an afterthought. Respondents in this report noted this goes beyond improving access for people with disability - it's also about ensuring that everyone can access the digital era regardless of linguistic or digital literacy differences. Ultimately, improving digital accessibility benefits all users, with one respondent noting "I have noticed technology becoming easier to use, probably due to the increasing amount of people of all ages and technical skills using websites and services."

In 2021 Infosys asked large organisations in Australia and New Zealand where digital accessibility was in their priorities and investments. The resulting report *The Digital Accessibility Journey: Exploring Priorities and Investments in Aus and NZ organisations* indicated that most are on the journey, however only 3% are trailblazers, indicating that there is a lot more we can all do.

- **Banking, healthcare and grocery** services were recognised as the most accessible sectors for people with disability.
- Respondents called specifically for more inclusive design that's **tested by the end user**: "hire people with disability to test and give feedback because if you don't have the disability, you can't give accurate feedback like we can."
- Addressing **foundational internet speeds** and stability is a core part of accessibility. We can't aim for widespread, immersive metaverse experiences if a vast number of people with older tech or patchy connections are struggling to access even basic services.

"Digital accessibility is everybody's responsibility and impacts an entire organisation; the employee, client and customer experience. Employers need to ensure that digital accessibility is not left out of the digital transformation conversation, but in fact, leading the discussion."

– Corene Strauss, GAICD, Chief Executive Officer at Australian Network on Disability

BLUE SKY THINKING

Ideas can come from anywhere. We need to be working with customers to get this next phase of the pandemic right, not for them. Ensuring that customers feel like they're part of building the solution is essential to this 'human experience' process. Here are some big ideas straight from the respondents:

Fatigue

- **An anti-addiction filter.** A filter that makes these things less addictive and easy to switch off so I can be a productive human again.
- **Work-life controls.** Be able to set my "available times" to be open to the outside digital world. Example: 18:30 to 20:30 in the evening.
- **One login.** Allow an operating system to connect features like payments, profiles, and software so you aren't having to log into everything.

Accessibility

- **Gesture translation.** Something that could automatically detect hand gestures and facial expressions would be great. Break down accessibility barriers and translate sign language or auto-transcribe words for those who can't hear well.
- **Simplified versions.** Create different versions so people could have more explanation or simplicity if they wanted it.
- **AI parental controls.** Make TVs/iPads detect children's faces and block content based on user that way.

Metaverse

- **Anatomy overlays.** Integrate existing UI interactions with the human body, i.e. HUD overlay for eyes, RFID implants, tactile fingertips, kinetic battery from daily movement.
- **Holograms.** A vast increase in technological capabilities, such as high-definition holograms or virtual rooms without the need for your everyday 'screens'.
- **Smarter IOT.** I want my google home to be more human, interact more with us and answer questions with more knowledge than it currently has.

NAVIGATING THE NEXT PHASE

No one wants to hear the word 'variant' again, but the truth is that a digital era is here to stay, regardless of the pandemic's trajectory. So, what steps can businesses take to improve tech fatigue and increase brand engagement over the next year? Here's how we see insights and solutions being actioned across every sector and industry:

Fixing foundations:

Base-level improvements to internet stability, speed, accessibility and tutorials need to be made if we're going to make any progress in year three of the pandemic and ensure everyone is able to access new solutions. While the internet's infrastructure itself may not be in your hands, it's vital that businesses design for various tech capacities and connectivity as governments catch up to this ask.

"Consumers are calling for digital experiences that are quick and easy so getting those basics right is key, then going beyond that to create the kind of entertaining, empowering and helpful experiences people want is where a valuable point of difference exists."

– Andrew Groth, Executive Vice President Region Head – Australia & New Zealand

Designing for joy:

In 2020, our research showed that tech was bringing Australians more flexibility and empowerment than ever before. This year, that perception has definitely fallen, but respondents still called out the types of tech that bring them the most joy, and older, immunocompromised and parenting cohorts in particular are really benefiting from digital experiences. We hope businesses are inspired to find new ways to give employees and consumers a joyful digital experience this year, especially in a world where happiness can seem in short supply.

"What's promising is that respondents still see the joy in technology, with its ability to connect coming through strongly. It's this human aspect of technology that will become increasingly desirable and set businesses apart – but only if they make it accessible by design."

– Matt Kain, WONGDOODY President APAC

Fix the chatbots:

If we consider the emotional context of customers using a chatbot, it's often driven by an already negative experience with a brand – not understating something or needing an error fixed. Studies show chatbots masquerading as human can make customers even angrier so being clear from the outset a conversation is with a chatbot sets the tone and expectations early. The next step is teaching the chatbots to do a better job, by giving them better data.

"With chatbot usage increasing across all areas of industry and business, it's crucial to set conversation expectations, and be progressive about what you feed the chatbots. They are at their best when they learn constantly based on a growing pool of customer service scenarios that evolve conversation responses and improve its sophistication."

– Andrew Groth, Executive Vice President Region Head – Australia & New Zealand

“It’s exciting to see consumers readily calling for more immersive technology, looking at virtual and 3D experiences as the next chapter of our digital journeys. With the Metaverse developing this has the potential to be a reality, enabling enterprises to develop and scale digital experiences that afford a more lifelike and less transactional digital experience for all of us.”

– Andrew Groth Executive Vice President Region Head – Australia & New Zealand

Exploring the metaverse:

We see an increased obsession with holograms and virtual ‘worlds’ as the next phase of digital. In-person experiences may never go back to 100% normal, and the past two years seem to have sparked a desire for people to feel like someone is ‘in the room’ with them. There’s an opportunity to replicate humanity through VR and immersive technologies.

Infosys recently launched the **Metaverse Foundry**, which is a set of digital templates and services that businesses can leverage to explore existing ideas or envision new ones with specialist consultants to create the next generation of metaverse experiences. The templated approach

acts as an accelerator and lowers the barriers to entry, while [Infosys Living Labs](#) also give clients in [Australia](#) and New Zealand tools, accelerators and services to discover, create and test their metaverse strategy.

Build a digital accessibility roadmap:

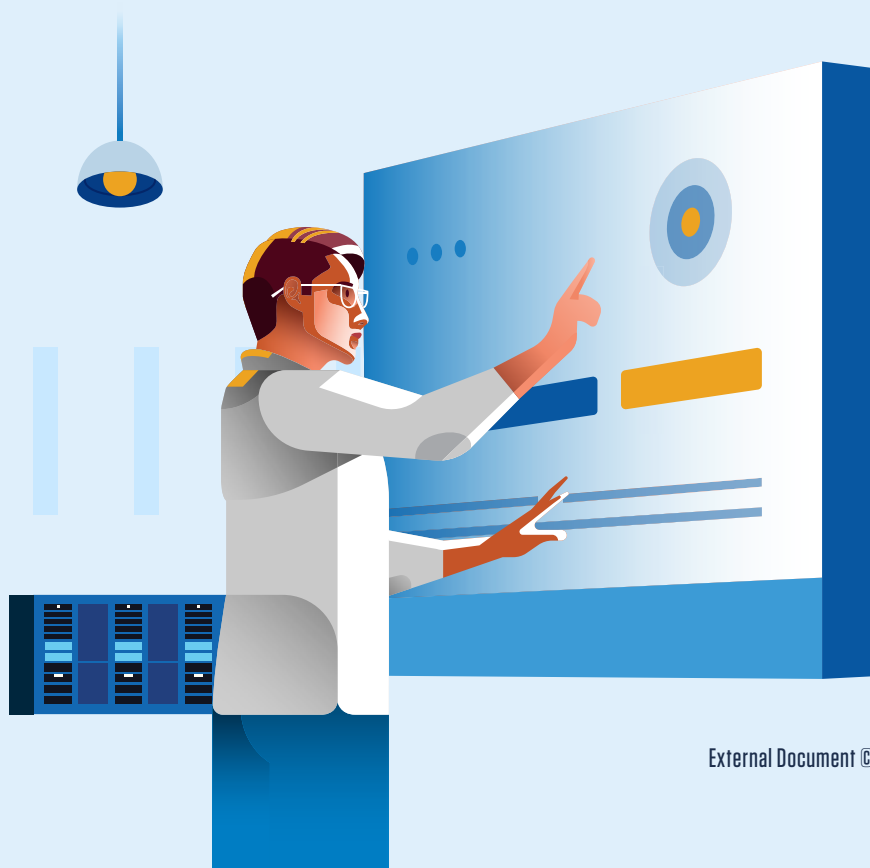
Last year, Infosys partnered with its accessibility advisors to distil information and recommendations about how to improve digital accessibility within your organisations. [The report](#) provides a detailed guide to accelerating your accessibility journey, under the following phases:

1. Assess current maturity before making a plan: This includes testing and auditing your current

platforms (involving people with disability), aligning with legislation, putting accessibility in your budget and KPIs.

2. Accelerate progress: This includes appointing an internal champion, researching guidelines and best practice, involving end-users, implementing formal training, and adjusting internal resources.

3. Create an inclusive culture: This includes garnering feedback, embracing inclusive design, becoming a Disability Confident Recruiter, and embedding accessibility into all spheres of your business.



WHO IS INFOSYS?

Infosys is a global leader in next-generation digital services and consulting. We enable clients in more than 50 countries to navigate their digital transformation. With over four decades of experience in managing the systems and workings of global enterprises, we expertly steer our clients through their digital journey. We do it by enabling the enterprise with an AI-powered core that helps prioritise the execution of change. We also empower the business with agile digital at scale to deliver unprecedented levels of performance and customer delight. Our always-on learning agenda drives their continuous improvement through building and transferring digital skills, expertise, and ideas from our innovation ecosystem.

ABOUT WONGDOODY, AN INFOSYS COMPANY

WONGDOODY is an award-winning creative agency, and the global experience and design unit for Infosys, leading digital transformation for the Fortune 2000. With 14 studios around the globe, WONGDOODY provides marketing, design, innovation, and digital product development services, bringing human experience to the forefront of emerging technologies and business models. For more information, please visit www.wongdoody.com.

Visit www.infosys.com to see how Infosys (NYSE: INFY) can help your enterprise navigate your next.

For more information, contact askus@infosys.com



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