

Connecting *with* Digital Natives

Young people empowered by ICT will reshape the world.
But how will they shape it, and how do we connect with them?



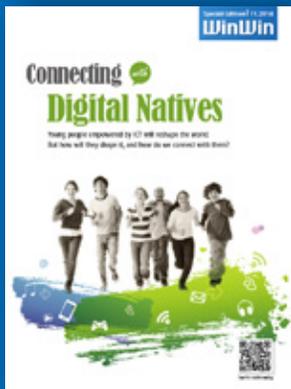
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GENERATION ME

The consumer information platform is shifting from PC to mobile, and initiating a new "Generation Me" epoch that demands personalization. Mobile intelligence, business cloud computing applications, and high-speed broadband services are gaining ground, redirecting the focus of ICT from networking to more user-centric applications. Today, the smartphone industry is growing rapidly. Extensive support from service providers will make mobile devices the universal standard, driving sustainable growth for the mobile broadband industry.

Building A Better Connected World





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Connecting Youth



Over the past two decades, rapidly advancing ICT has transformed all levels of society across the connected world. Digital natives were born surrounded by the Internet and related devices; broadband and ubiquitous connectivity are elements of their natural habitat.

Effortlessly shuffling between the real and the virtual, digital natives will create a borderless world of knowledge – accessible to all. In the future, over 100 billion connections will allow everyone to roam a flat world, foster endless opportunities along with general prosperity, and inspire a sense of global community.

Enthusiastic and full of dreams, digital natives habitually create new worlds. Young people between the ages of 15 and 24 make up 17% of the world's population while another 26% are younger than that. As populations continue to grow and as connectivity spreads to every corner of the world, we will soon find that digital natives have become the majority.

Nicolas Negroponte, the author of *Being Digital*, predicted that the new generation will leverage digitization and Internetization to de-centralize society. He was right. Digital natives dismiss traditional concepts of social hierarchy and division of labor. They place more faith in dreams and clearly see a world of possibilities.

They also develop and share their worldviews without boundaries, and they are eager to spread innovative new ideas. This habit might make them appear arrogant to their predecessors. However, traditional labels cannot sufficiently describe or define digital natives who persistently pursue dreams and invite the arrival of a new world. In the next decade or so, they are going to dominate the global workforce that drives all social and economic development.

As tech-savvy hordes swarm into the work force, they will greatly accelerate ICT development. The old model of reformative and progressive social and industrial development will be replaced by giant leaps forward as digital natives reshape the world in ways we cannot even anticipate.

Some wonder whether digital natives will be able to adapt to the various settings and entrenched conventions of society, businesses, and industries. The real question is whether existing establishments can appeal to digital natives. It is imperative that we open our minds and welcome them to contribute in ways that only they can as we join forces to build a better "all-connected" future together with them.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Xu'.

William Xu
Chief Strategy Marketing Officer
Huawei Technologies

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Connecting *with* Digital Natives

Young people have always invented the new and disrupted the old. Their willingness to challenge tradition, coupled with their longing for and exploration of new frontiers, is the very engine of progress. However, many of today's young people have grown up native users of computers, other electronics, and most importantly, the Internet. They represent not just one generation among many, but a new kind of human being, who will reshape the world through ICT. But how will they shape it, and how do we connect with them?

 By Sally Gao & Jason Patterson



A revolution in progress

Digital natives (Digitals) share their lives with others, boldly pursue their dreams, innovate relentlessly, and come and go as they please. They are hard for conventional minds to predict, or even describe, but it's a safe bet that Digitals will move to the forefront of global socioeconomic development over the next ten years, and the movement has already begun. Digitals are already revolutionizing cyberspace, and the parts of the real world that intersect with it. When both ubiquitize, their reach will be everywhere, as will the revolution. Barriers will break down, openness will reign, experiences will inspire, and progress will accelerate in this Better Connected World.

Reality & cyberspace intertwined

For Digitals, the Internet has always been a resource – a world of ideas and information at their fingertips. For a child growing up, the virtual realm can offer more autonomy and consequence than the real, and this has given Digitals a perspective that their elders cannot grasp. For Digitals, the virtual carries the same weight as the real, and no amount of disapproval can change this.

Agility is now a virtue

Digitals are not just a generation – they are the future. When sociologists look back at this first wave of Digitals, they will be seen as reshapers and betterers of our world, reformers who never had to sell out, thanks to their empowerment by ubiquitous broadband and the greater digitization of our lives.

On the business front, Digitals will leverage these trends to turn the prevalent mindset outwards, towards the customer, by letting the Internet in (and

the ICT that leverages it), so that all operations and processes are reformed digitally.

Innovation and collaboration are instinctual with the Digitals, as evinced by their willingness to embrace openness, engineer solutions, crowdsource, and share as a business model. Having grown up in an ever-changing world, Digitals live and tread lightly. This makes agility, once a simple adjective used to describe athletes, cars and four-legged animals, now a virtue, both in the business world and our daily lives.

Can you describe them?

Digitals are hard to profile, and tend to resist description, but *WinWin* has done its homework. We have carried out two lines of research on the Digitals in the past few months. The first has involved interviews with authors, academics and Digitals themselves, while the second has involved a survey (carried out by Huawei) of thousands of Digitals. Many of our findings seemed contradictory on the surface, but deeper thinking has revealed five qualities that seem broadly applicable to Digitals – headstrong, eager, egalitarian, enterprising, and responsible.

Headstrong

Digitals don't wait for permission. They follow their hearts, change their minds in an instant, and are not easily swayed. The former two qualities make Digitals difficult employees, especially if your company is a command-and-control widgetmaker. The latter two qualities beg the question, "How can people not easily swayed change their mind in an instant?" The answer is, "They see something better, and click on it."

Eager

This decisiveness reflects the enthusiasm with which Digitals live their lives. Digitals are quick to join,



contribute and make a difference. They are also quick to share and eager to learn. They do what they love (or like at the very least), nothing half-assed. And if they don't like what they're doing anymore, they'll join something new, but only if the terms are fair.

Egalitarian

The Internet is a realm of users and contributors, not leaders and followers, and this makes hierarchy anathema to the Digital worldview, as are rules and boundaries that seem arbitrary. Consent and justification are musts. Digitals demand equality, or at least partnership – they won't help you just because it's an honor to. Reciprocity, cooperation, and collaboration are what they expect, and if they don't find it in your

The Internet is a realm of users and contributors, not leaders and followers, and this makes hierarchy anathema to the Digital worldview, as are rules and boundaries that seem arbitrary.

organization, they might start their own.

Enterprising

Digitals now comprise the age group most likely to start a business, and thanks to the growth and proliferation of ICT, the barriers to starting a business have never been lower. Digitals are also quick to leverage ICT to change things and solve problems. They have already leveraged it to achieve far more power and influence than their predecessors ever had at the

same age, and as our world grows ever more dependent on ICT, their ambition and reach will only grow.

Responsible

Elders often view the Digitals as children who refuse to grow up, but their habits and behavior speak otherwise. In China, the number one online activity of Digitals (age 15 to 25) is e-learning,

Franz, Age 23, Outreach Manager, the Philippines

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An expat employed as an outreach manager, Franz loves his position because it gives him the opportunity to help people who can benefit from a little support. He's always been active in the community and considers that the main reason he ended up in his current position. "I majored in computer science, but my work isn't related to that, so in my free time I study code – I read some code, write some code." In his work supporting mentoring programs in eight SE Asia countries, Franz has come to the conclusion that in the last several years, a significant gap has formed that favors the digital natives who are younger than himself. "Many of them who are only 15 or 16 years old are extremely capable. I couldn't do what they can do when I was their age. It's very encouraging."

Franz thinks that different age groups have different things to offer and that community is a naturally symbiotic environment. He's sure that digital natives will make huge contributions, but they should receive some support before they really get started. "In the past, I benefitted a lot from mentoring. I know firsthand how helpful it can be. So I've done a lot of volunteering and I support mentoring and other outreach programs because I know they work and I think it's a good way of giving something back to the community."



Digitals are individuals who seek connection, agile innovators who seek inspiration, problem-solvers who seek enablement, all through ICT. As connectivity integrates into all elements of life, our world will be in their hands.

with gaming not even making the top three. Is this the pattern of a child? These same Digitals spend a mere one to three hours online per day on average, hardly the behavior of a kid who can't put his toy down. In fact, Digitals use ICT for a lot of the things that mature, responsible adults are expected to do, such as personal branding, expanding your skills set, and community engagement.

Combine this sense of responsibility with the traits mentioned before, and the "children who refuse to grow up" label just doesn't work. We find "individuals who refuse to sell out" much more applicable.

As a whole, Digitals are often described as adrift or directionless, but we find this true only in a very general sense. As a community without leaders or followers, Digitals are comprised of individuals, all on their own paths (with each path composed of attempts at different paths), leading to no discernible path thus far in the aggregate. The only certain thing is that Digitals will try and try again to find a place in this world, and if they can't find it, they'll change the world to their liking, probably through ICT.

How do we reach them?

Digitals don't want to be reached, they want to join you. They want partnership, influence and real-time engagement. Whether you are an employer,

a brand, or any other organization looking to increase its subscriber base, the Digitals will want a say. You have to talk to them, not at them, and give due attention to their responses. Digitals want consideration and reciprocity; "because we say so" won't cut it anymore.

What else do they want?

As customers, Digitals want choice and flexibility, not fixed terms and set meals. They want to pick and choose as they need. Customer service must be responsive, and delivered on their wavelength (via whatever medium desired). If it isn't, churn may prove a real issue.

As telcos increasingly become media companies, they need to become authorities in the content they provide, and give users chances to leverage that authority, preferably in real time. If you have the rights to a certain movie, you need to arrange live tweeting by its director during the premier. If you stream music from a certain band, you need to be the one offering the backstage passes. This creates a sense of membership and belonging, and Digitals want both.

But what they want most of all is connection, access, by any and all means necessary. Digitals never want to feel like they're missing out, in life or online. They are not addicted to online access, anymore than you are addicted to your eyes or your hands. You simply need them to live a normal life; Digitals feel the same about broadband. Without it, they've lost something.

The take-home message

Digitals are individuals who seek connection, agile innovators who seek inspiration, problem-solvers who seek enablement, all through ICT. As connectivity is increasingly integrated into all elements of life and work, whether through the Internet of things, 5G, big data analytics, or ultra-broadband, our world will be increasingly in their hands. Huawei considers this a good thing, as a future determined by eager, egalitarian, enterprising, and responsible people sounds like a good one, even if they're headstrong.

A world where every child grows up Digital will be a better world, a Better Connected World. Help us build it. [www](#)



DIGITAL NATIVES

HEADSTRONG

Follow their hearts, change their minds quickly, and don't ask for permission.

HEADSTRONG

Not swayed by advertising or popular opinion. Interaction must be two-way.

EAGER

Quick to try, contribute, improve, resolve, give feedback and make a difference.

EAGER

Enthusiastic about sharing, studies, selfies, social causes and the sharing economy.

EGALITARIAN

Challenge hierarchies, demand fairness, resist inequality and seek partnership.

EGALITARIAN

Neither leaders nor followers. cooperation & collaboration are the norm.

RESPONSIBLE

ICT not used as an escape, but as a means of advancement and improvement.

RESPONSIBLE

Internet usage a mere one to three hours per day. Study is the top online activity.

ENTERPRISING

Not afraid of success. Most likely group to start their own business.

ENTERPRISING

Quick to improvise solutions. Crowdsourcing & open innovation are preferred.

HOW TO ENGAGE THEM

Digitals want to partner with preferred brands. Influence, participation and real-time engagement are a must. They want a say, not a sales pitch. They want choice & flexibility, not bundles & contracts.



02 Digital Natives: Engaged, Not Distracted

Most of you reading this grew up in the age of television, and whether you choose to acknowledge it or not, this experience made you a little passive. Digital natives grew up on the Internet, a two-way medium, and this has made them fundamentally different. Don Tapscott, author of *Growing Up Digital* and *Grown Up Digital*, is an evangelizer on their behalf, and he has a few things to share.

✍ By Jason Patterson



Don Tapscott has devoted his career to understanding the impact of technology on society. His literary works include 15 books as author or co-author. In 2013, Thinkers50 ranked him the fourth-most influential management thinker. He is also CEO of The Tapscott Group, a member of the World Economic Forum, Chancellor of Trent University, Adjunct Professor of the Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto, and Martin Prosperity Institute Fellow.

Many digital immigrants feel a pang of pity or disgust when we see a child or young person dividing attention between a real-world task and their smartphone. Why? Maybe it's because we think their real-world task is suffering for it. Maybe it's because we think they're learning to be ill-mannered and unemployable. Maybe we don't want our children becoming screen zombies who fail to appreciate what's happening in the real world. It's probably a mix.

But if you follow the logic of Don Tapscott, management consultant, TED-talk regular, and author, these points of view are far from the truth, because today's digital natives (which overlap with what he has coined The Net Generation) aren't ignoring the real world the way that previous generations did with television. They aren't just passively watching, their screens or the real world – they are engaging, interacting, and organizing, with one foot planted firmly in both places. What's more, since digital

natives (Digitals) start young, Tapscott thinks that their brains actually adapt to having one eye on Earth and one eye on cyberspace, without the feeling of being distracted or inattentive that a digital immigrant might have. In other words, Digitals really can be in two places at once.

Natural multitaskers

WinWin: What made you take up the subject of Digitals?

Don Tapscott: I have devoted my career to understanding the impact of digital technologies on society. The inspiration for writing a book about young people came from watching my two children use complex technologies like computers, video games, and VCRs with seemingly no effort. By 1993, my son Alex, then seven, played sophisticated games, typed class assignments on a Mac, and sent an e-mail to Santa Claus at Christmas. That same year, my ten-year-old daughter Nicole figured out how to communicate with friends on





computer chat lines. She was always pushing the envelope in technology in our home. I knew that being immersed in this technology from a very young age would have to have had an impact.

WinWin: Your 2008 book *Grown Up Digital* is based on a survey of 11,000 young people that led you to characterize new ways of thinking, interacting, working, and socializing. Prior to *Grown Up Digital*, you wrote *Growing Up Digital*, published in 1997. Had things changed so much that you found an update necessary, and what has changed since then?

Tapscott: The difference between now and 2008 is the explosion of smartphones and mobile technologies. Young people carry these small, extremely powerful computers with them constantly and they have integrated them into almost every aspect of their lives. Two developments compelled me to write the sequel to *Growing Up Digital*. The Net Generation had grown older and was entering the workforce, marketplace and

society as adult citizens. So in the second book I devoted more space to analyzing the Net Generation as employees, for example. And the Internet had penetrated even further into every facet of life.

WinWin: What misperceptions about Digitals would you clear up if you had the power to?

Tapscott: There are many misconceptions. *Grown Up Digital* is an entire book dealing with these. For example, the assertion that this generation cannot focus on a task and that they have a short attention span. Parents look at their kids doing homework on the computer while simultaneously texting with friends, posting Facebook updates, listening to music and glancing at the TV and conclude that this can't be good.

But it's not necessarily bad. Scientists are now coming to realize that a third of a brain's development occurs during extended adolescence, ages eight to eighteen, and the types of stimuli the

brain receives during this time dictates the manner in which it is wired.

Baby Boomers grew up in a slower, simpler and more passive media environment—and this shaped how their brains matured. All information was absorbed in a broadcast model of distribution. Families gathered around the television in the living room and passively took in entertainment. In schools, students sat quietly in classrooms as teachers told them what they needed to know.

By contrast, today's youth are growing up in a much more energized and interactive world, and this means their brains are maturing differently. Evidence is mounting that kids juggle multiple sensory inputs more easily than older adults. Rather than our children having dysfunctional brains that can't focus, they have better switching abilities and better active working memory, which is why they can text while doing homework.

WinWin: In your opinion, what truly separates Digitals from previous





Kait, Age 24, Festival of Code Lead, United States

Full of energy and always smiling, Kait leverages connectivity constantly throughout her day. She's used to getting most everything taken care of online, from scheduling time at the gym and summoning a taxi to get her there, to conducting almost every aspect of her job. Her life is truly full of communication technology touch points, as she points out, "I met my boyfriend through online dating!" She recommends LoveStruck (a dating service) because it's effective and they have a good app.

While she thinks growing pains are to be expected as society adapts to today's technology and future developments, as she put it, "Implementing new technologies is a bit like when individuals learn new ways of doing things – keeping it the same would be easier, but it's not always better. For example, one morning, none of us could get into the building because our security cards weren't working. It might be simpler to use a physical key because those rarely fail. Digital technology can make things easier for us, but until something new has all the kinks worked out it might be better to use a human or mechanical solution."

"Ultimately, technology is clearly a good thing. But you have to keep your perspective. Don't be too busy trying to record a video of a concert or a beautiful day, just sit back and enjoy it with your own senses." She thinks that sometimes taking a mental snapshot is the best way to record a special experience, and telling the story as you remember it is the sometimes the best way to share.

generations; especially the differences that you think are not getting enough attention in the global conversation?

Tapscott: Today's kids have been bathed in bits; computers and interactive technologies are fundamental to the experience of youth. To them, technology is like the air. When I was growing up I was the passive recipient of broadcast television. When young people today are online, they are interacting, searching, authenticating, remembering, collaborating, composing their thoughts, and organizing information. They interact with the media and know how to inform themselves and use technology to get things done.



A new way of life

Very soon, the vast majority of children born on this planet will be Digitals. This means that they represent not just one generation amongst many but a new phase of the human condition that relates to technology in quite a different way than those who came before.

WinWin: As technology becomes ubiquitous, and the speed of its evolution accelerates, will the gap between successive generations increase or decrease, and why?

Tapscott: I believe the gap will decrease. Young people are called *digital natives* because they grew up surrounded by digital technologies – interacting and collaborating. People of my generation are called *digital immigrants* as we grew up being the passive recipients of television. Today's youth think, learn and interact with media in a much different way than their elders. So there will always be a

Today's kids have been bathed in bits; computers and interactive technologies are fundamental to the experience of youth. To them, technology is like the air.

difference in the way the two generations relate to information technology because their brains are different. But all future generations will be digital natives, so I believe they will relate to technology in much the same way.

WinWin: As broadband connectivity becomes ubiquitous and technology prices come down, the number of Digitals who come from developing markets and less affluent circumstances will increase. Do you see this as having a major impact on what the term implies?

Tapscott: Life in many impoverished countries focuses on basic survival and access to necessities such as potable water. This is obviously not the case in the developed world. With such dissimilar lives, the use and impact of technology will be different. I think the term *digital native* will mean the same, but the technology will become



affordable to impoverished people and this will give them a greater understanding of the world and just how inequitable the global wealth distribution really is. Access to (online) education will have a huge impact on their ability to contribute to society and what they expect from society.

Talent 2.0

Digitals (often under the overlapping terms of *Millennials* or *Generation Z*) have become their own news category on Internet employment hubs, with as many bits devoted to them as to resume tips or leadership principles. We all know the usual complaints – entitled, adrift, lazy, distracted, unemployable, no respect, slaves to technology. As a Gen X'er myself (born 1960-1980), I find these criticisms comical, as my generation was hearing most of the same stuff from our Boomer parents, who heard a lot of the same stuff from their Greatest Generation parents (and still do if they're lucky). Well, guess what? The Gen X'ers run the tech world now, and the White House too, but we won't be for long. The digital natives are already seizing power, thanks to their assertive, connected nature. The fathers of Silicon Valley are already being displaced, and conventional office politics is being rendered increasingly irrelevant.

WinWin: How are businesses and governments serving (or failing to serve) Digitals as users or customers? What needs to change?

Tapscott: Many companies and governments have failed to realize the full opportunities that the many-to-many interactions of the Internet make possible. Companies should reach out more and tap into the desires and insights of consumers. Governments should do the same with their citizens. Ubiquitous broadband makes possible a much more participatory system.

WinWin: How are Digitals as employees?

Tapscott: Net Generation-employees are savvy, confident, upbeat, open-minded, creative and independent, which makes them a challenge to manage.

To meet their demands for more learning opportunities and responsibility ownership, instant feedback, greater work/life balance and stronger workplace relationships, companies must alter their culture and management approaches, while continuing to respect the needs of older employees. Properly cultivated, this generation's attributes will be a critical source of innovation and competitive advantage to the organization.

Young people are natural team members who expect back-and-forth interaction rather than command-and-control disciplines. The baby boomers were satisfied with knowing what decision was made, but today's young employees want to know why.

They're not insubordinate—they just recognize that understanding the reasons behind the decision can make the difference between success and failure in implementation. I see a rise in the desire of young people to reach a consensus on political issues rather than the hyper-partisan behavior we can often see in the U.S., for example.

WinWin: Do employers really understand what is causing their rift with Digitals? What should companies be doing to better attract and engage with them?

Tapscott: I think the old human resources model of recruit, train, supervise and retain should be shelved. Instead, companies should adopt a new model – initiate, engage, collaborate and evolve. Companies have many ways to make themselves more attractive to a potential N-Gen employee: they can customize job descriptions, as Deloitte does; use game-based training to train employees for short-term projects; and

keep in touch with former employees to find new people and get new ideas. Old-style job interviews are out. Two-way dialogs are the way to hire, and the first three months is a time when the employee and the company are evaluating each other.

I call it *Talent 2.0*. Rethink recruitment; initiate relationships. Don't waste money on advertising for talent. Use social networks based on trust to influence young people about your company.

I often describe a military band marching in lockstep to tightly arranged military music as being a metaphor for yesterday's workplace. But the workplace of the future will be more like a jazz ensemble—where musicians improvise creatively around an agreed key, melody, and tempo. Employees are developing their own self-organized interconnections and forming cross-functional teams capable of interacting as a global, real-time workforce.

Loosening organizational hierarchies and giving more power to employees can lead to faster innovation, lower cost structures, greater agility, improved responsiveness to customers, and more authenticity and respect in the market.

WinWin: What kind of world will we live in once the Digitals start taking the reins of power? Paint us a picture.

Tapscott: I imagine a better world. Already, these kids are learning, playing, communicating, working and creating communities very differently than their parents. They are a force for social transformation. The main interest of the Net Generation is not technology, but what can be done with that technology.

I think they are smart, they have great values, they know how to use collaborative tools, and that they are well equipped to address many of the big challenges and problems that my generation is leaving to them. Overall, their brains are more appropriate for the complex demands of the 21st century. 





Change is coming

Can you hack it?

03

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Everyone is eager for a Better Connected World and we're all happy to see that industry and governments have queued up to build it. The question now is, who's going to code it?

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 By Morgan Hatrick

A world of code

There's one digital native that stands out from the others – that's the software developer. While most digital natives have an affinity for using apps, it's the software developer who actually creates them. It stands to reason that the digital natives who happen to be software developers are uniquely suited to code the apps their peers crave

– and of all young software developers, hackers are the most interesting.

The hackers I refer to are upstanding technologists with a knack for creatively solving problems with broad strokes – often by adapting something that already exists. According to Wikipedia, they comprise a subculture of creative technologists that sprouted up in the 1960's around the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Tech Model Railroad Club (TMRC) and

MIT Artificial Intelligence Laboratory. As this culture flourished, many studies have examined the hacker ethos; the main findings are that hackers are highly social, collaborative, community spirited, and passionate about coding.

These days, as machines are increasingly programmable and the Internet of Things gains ground, software developers are in greater demand than ever before. To acquire or retain a competitive edge in this environment,



governments and enterprises need to rapidly develop an endless procession of innovative solutions. So it's no wonder that hackers, potentially the most impactful of software developers, are highly sought after by recruiters.

Since most hackers officially employed as software engineers do not hold a degree in software development, one might wonder where they come from and how they have learned to code. Many have studied technical fields in formal settings but learned coding through self-study. Some hackers network with and learn from others who share their interest. Determined talent recruiters learn that hackers have their own culture, subcultures, and virtual workshops.

Most hackers officially employed as software engineers do not hold a degree in software development. Many have studied technical fields in formal settings but learned coding through self-study.

For instance, thousands of hackers collaborate with other coders at places like Sourceforge.net and Github.com where they socialize and volunteer their time developing free open-source software that has been downloaded billions of times. They also meet in the physical world at hackathons.

Hack and snack

Hackathons, sometimes called codefests or hack days, are where hackers develop



Robin, Age 11, Student, the Netherlands

A really bright kid with varied interests, Robin divides his time between school, playing with his friends, the Internet, and playing with (and creating) apps. Although he's already eleven, he's still not sure what he wants to do when he grows up. He explained, "I don't know what I'll do, but I like to be creative, it's going to be something that lets me do that."

Robin finds a lot of productive ways to use the Internet. Although his life is mostly fun and games, he's constantly learning from educational games and fun homework – for him, learning and pleasure go hand in hand. Most of his homework is Internet-based and he also seeks out instructional videos on his own. "I like to make apps because it's fun and you can earn money that way. There are videos online that walk you through how to make games using Construct 2. I learn a lot on YouTube. Some YouTubers are really inspirational. I want to be like them."

Robin thinks that digital natives and older people relate to each very well. He takes his relationship with his father as an example. "My dad set up a trampoline that I play on with my friends. We use nerf guns while we're jumping on that and my dad also connected a water hose to it so it's really a lot of fun. He's involved in almost everything I do.

We also work together to create apps." In Robin's view, the gap between digital natives and digital immigrants isn't a deal breaker.

prototype apps by the bunches over the course of one or two days. They usually have a theme or fixed challenges and usually offer high-value prizes or even job opportunities. A growing number of hackathons are held all over the world, and they're usually free to enter or very modestly priced.

As hackathons sprout up all over, one might wonder who pays for them and why. Governments and corporations that know which way the wind blows are the usual sponsors, because hackathons attract great talents who might otherwise be hard to find. Devotees of hacking culture swarm

these marathon coding events to share a positive vibe and free snacks with like-minded attendees.

To find out more about how young hackers are being nurtured by forward-thinking institutions, *WinWin* went to Singapore to cover a hackathon for kids.

YRS Singapore

In June of this year, Singapore and Google jointly welcomed very young app developers to attend YRS Singapore, a hackathon. The event was organized by Young Rewired State (YRS), a non-profit organization that enables young coders under the age



of 18 to connect with like-minded peers. They also advocate the use of open government data for the good of society, and they provide a bit of coaching to get the kids focused and going in a productive direction. At this particular event, about sixty young coders spent two days developing whatever apps they could imagine. The attendees were given one rule – they had to put open government data to good use.

YRS has organized similar events in NYC and Berlin, as well as London and many other cities in the U.K. where they are based. Being the typical hackathon, the goal of YRS Singapore was to produce working apps within two days. Sponsors also offered special prizes for apps that addressed particular problems they were facing.

During the event, fast-paced music was often pumping at considerable volume and delicious snacks were constantly available. The kids were excited and extremely focused on their projects. The venue, Google's Singapore office, was full of energy and inspiration. For the entire weekend, the organizers, the mentors, and the kids in attendance were hard at work. Although most of them were coders, a few specialized in supporting roles, with some providing graphics or preparing presentations, for instance.

Wandering around the event, it became really obvious that kids who spend a lot of time learning about and using apps have substantial advantages over those who don't, but kids who spend their weekends making apps are in another league altogether. I asked Galen, a 12-year-old coder, what kind of work he would like to do, and where would he like to do it. He told me, "I want to develop apps. It doesn't matter if I work for a company or for myself, but if a company has an office that is as nice as [Google's Singapore office], that would be good. I will just see what arrangements I can make. If I can work at home, I will work at home because home is one of the best places to be after all." Galen seems very well-nurtured; he's positive, smart, well adjusted, and industrious. I believe he'll find his way into a situation of his choosing.

YRS Singapore was fundamentally a contest, with the judges tasked with weighing not only the effective functioning of the newly built apps, but also their usefulness and appeal. Certain prizes required not only a good app, but also a strong presentation with some attention to marketing.

In the spirit of the event and coding culture, the teams vied to do the best within categories such as best in show, best use of code, and code a better

country. In addition, one sponsor offered a special award for apps that leveraged their services. All the winning teams earned valuable prizes such as trips to the U.K., tablet computers, or cash. These awards and prizes seemed in tune with the motivations that drove the attendees. Some coded for pleasure, while others were in it for the money; there were also those who saw coding as a way to better the world. James, 16 years old, was one of those who wanted to code a better country. When I asked him what he did for fun (besides coding), he replied, "I spend most of my free time doing volunteer work; I really enjoy it"

Although their prototypes were rough around the edges, every team produced working apps that were useful, fun, or useful and fun at the same time. The apps did things like provide weather reports, help groups of friends to find logical meeting points, inform green-minded users about recycling points, and so on. Most of the apps were localized for Singapore in style or function, giving them a differentiated advantage over globally popular apps. Naturally, kid-coders are apt to localize.

I was truly amazed to see young people achieve something in two days that a typical team of software engineers might need two weeks just to plan. But then, performing miracles in minimal time



is standard procedure at a hackathon; actually, that's one of the few things that hackers do with some regularity.

When talking with YRS staff, I learned that when these kids go back to classrooms, families, and friends, they'll enthusiastically share their experiences. Festival of Code Lead Kait Dunning said, "When we tried advertising on the walls of some schools, we had only about two kids sign up. It's the kids that are already in our program who spread the word best." When it comes to introducing kids to coding, a young hacker is a better evangelist than a computer science professor. No doubt that's why governments and enterprises provide support and guidance via hackathons. Most of the attendees will become trendsetters and eventually be influential in the ICT industry, and they're great role models for other kids.

A message to Garcia

Many innovative companies have a strong need for perspectives and skill-sets that only digital natives can offer – and hackers are often considered the cream of the crop. Online jobsites host an increasingly long list of "hacker" jobs each year. Some of these are related to security and require a CEH (certified ethical hacker) certificate, which is proof of security-related skills and an

indication of good intentions.

Today, many of the future's trendsetters are headhunted at hackathons, where they go to hone their skills, network with peers, and find themselves.

Tomorrow, these hackers will be in key positions to shape the world we live in. Some of them will run ICT manufacturers, service providers, and government ICT authorities; others will sit on the boards of standards organizations or be tech-savvy entrepreneurs. They will earn those positions by developing a skill-set and personal character that is up to the task of determining how the rapid advances of ICT will be introduced to the world.

The main sponsors of hackathons are typically top nations and corporations seeking to build rapport with the coding community. In return, they gain gifted recruits who were born in a world where new technologies constantly spin, bend, or rewrite the rules. Hackers are in high demand because they not only tolerate rapid change, they deliver it. 

Galen, Age 12, Student, Singapore

The first thing you notice about Galen is how mature and well spoken he is. Coding is his primary hobby and he plans to make a career of it. He's also very social and good at figuring out what he likes to do. "Online, I play multiplayer games. Offline, I play soccer with my friends. I don't like playing alone, I like playing with other people because it's more interactive and more fun that way. I also spend time playing around with device settings. I have a lot that I can play around with because I'm using a rooted device – a rooted device is actually very fun." He enjoys hackathons because they're both social and technology based.

Galen uses apps that make himself more productive. His tablet contains apps that help him code, do his homework, self-study, play, and socialize. He has a habit of examining new tools as soon as he discovers them, to see if can find a use for them. "Google Drive is very useful, so I don't have to carry a thumb drive everywhere I go." Galen has a huge collection of apps, but where he installs them reveals his feelings about the distinction between work and play, "I use my pad for a lot of my schoolwork, and I have gaming apps, messaging apps, apps of all kinds, but on my phone, I don't have any apps to do work."



Connected young, social for life

Digital natives have always relied heavily on network connections and social media to remain in near-constant contact with family and friends. Naturally, they bring this habit to school, life, and business. More socially-conscious than their predecessors, they tend to support enterprises that demonstrate social responsibility, and will even take matters into their own hands if they see a need. That's what Aaron Jones did when he founded a social enterprise.

 By Morgan Hatrick

Explore the world, find yourself

Traveling internationally for the first time is an eye-opening experience. Our perspectives permanently expand from the moment our first adventure abroad begins. In 2011, Aaron Jones couldn't find a good job, so he started a business. His photography company eventually secured a deal with P&O Cruises where he became an official photographer aboard a luxury cruise liner. As you can imagine, he felt like he was king of the world. In his words, "I traveled all around the world, and had a great time earning while surrounded by lovely people in a bubble of luxury."

Despite having what some might consider the perfect gig, Aaron decided to abandon his golden cocoon and go to India to join an aid project funded by the U.K. Department for International Development. This was the first time he witnessed extreme poverty and absolute

hopelessness; the experience changed him. He had always been community-minded. As a kid, he tried to get his school, and then his entire town, fair-trade certified. But he was a young adult now, and seeing with his own eyes squalor he could not have imagined. He concluded that fair trade was just a starting point. He began thinking about how to change things, immediately and directly.

When you're 20 years old, changing the world isn't easy. A year passed. By this time, Aaron had drifted to Cambodia where he became a volunteer English teacher. He joined Anjali House, a school expressly for extremely vulnerable street children – truly a frontline position in the fight against poverty.

After another year, Aaron returned home to complete his education. Deeply affected by his experiences abroad, he found himself constantly wondering how opportunity could ever find its way into the extremely disadvantaged places he had been. Eventually, he devised a business plan for a social enterprise

that would move kids out of jobs and into schools, and bring training and empowerment to their parents and other less fortunate people who could be more productive if given a chance.

A lot of people witness abject poverty while vacationing in undeveloped regions, and while most of them feel pity, few of them do anything to help. In Aaron's words, "You can block out what you see on a two-week holiday, but when you go deeper, you can't help but act. For me, Fikay was my response."

Fikay, you say?

Fikay Fashion is a social enterprise; that means it's a business built from the ground up as a wholesome engine of community progress. Instead of pursuing profit at the expense of all else, a social enterprise takes an approach that's good for people, planet, and profit.

In Cambodia, Fikay supports local industries, specifically those that upcycle local materials. They are partnered



“I thought doing good would hold me back. But it’s done the opposite; it’s propelled me forward more than I could have ever imagined.”

– Aaron Jones



with Khmer Life, an organization that provides jobs to widowed and disabled parents, so that their children can quit their jobs and start going to school. Fikay also funds existing education in the country, and the construction of new schools.

At home in the U.K., Fikay supports the training of learning-disabled adults with the help of their partner Mail Out, a social enterprise founded by the Camden Society. Globally, Fikay spreads social responsibility awareness, enabling others to join the cause. And finally, their product line includes 160 fashion accessories, such as bags, wallets, guitar cases, etc., all made from upcycled material.

While Aaron wants to increase revenue, he doesn’t like how traditional ways of doing business tend to prioritize profit over humanity. He’s happy to see that things are changing, as social awareness spreads organically, and with the help of dedicated websites and apps. An increasing number of community-minded entrepreneurs, makers, and

consumers are working together for a common good. In fact, his enterprise is founded on this principle. Putting all specifics aside, Aaron narrowed it down to, “Fikay is successful living without screwing everyone over.”

When he was asked about the personal costs of being socially responsible, Aaron said there hasn’t been any. “I thought doing good would hold me back and I was willing to accept that. But it’s done the opposite; it’s propelled me forward more than I could have ever imagined.”

Impossible without ICT

Digital natives feel free to explore the world, online and on foot. From a young age they learn about faraway places and make friends with faraway people. Naturally, digital natives develop an expanded worldview at an early age. ICT has enabled a culture of sharing and exploring, which has led to an increasing sense of worldwide community.

If Aaron had been born in an earlier time, he might not have had the broad perspective he has now, and he certainly couldn’t have done what’s he’s done. He probably would have stuck with his first dream – to get rich enough to enjoy endless travel. Fortunately, the Internet opened his eyes, enabling him to learn and do more.

When he was a kid, Aaron’s worldview was more narrow and critical. “When I was very young, I used to think the poor people in the world were lazy and that poverty was their reward. With the Internet, books, and jobs, they must not be trying hard enough.” Later, his mother became unemployed and had great difficulty finding another job because she lacked computer skills. Aaron began to realize the importance of access, and that it isn’t always easy, with some people needing a little help to understand and leverage it.

Today, his worldview is different. “How can villagers in the middle of Cambodia access farming knowledge they need to better their future? They can’t; they





Ruth, Age 23, Student and Sponsor Coordinator, U.K.

Ruth is a law student who doubles as a jet-set mobile worker employed by an event organizer. She spends a whopping 70 hours per week online mainly sending emails, networking for work and social reasons, and listening to music. She keeps a work-life balance and says that connectivity helps her to constantly get a lot of personal and professional things accomplished wherever she may be. "A lot of dead-time that used to be wasted can now be used more productively."

She thinks that technology changing everything in every sector, especially in the technology sector. She explained how her world works. "You don't put on your suit and grind from 9-5. Instead we think about what's the work to be done, what the opportunities are, where it is most convenient to do your work, and how we optimize efficiency." She says that companies offering this kind of flexibility attract some of the best talent. "This style has made working life fun and social. Tech companies are leading the way, but other companies are beginning to realize they have to adapt or they won't be able to attract young talent.

These days, most young people don't want to put on a suit every day, they want to be able to tweet as a process of their work, without a boss frowning over their shoulder."

don't have the tools and they are priced out of using the infrastructure." Aaron has learned firsthand that in developing countries, access beyond the cities isn't achieved by coverage alone; connecting the unconnected is complicated, and merits attention.

Aaron is far more empowered than those he helps. Coming from a modest background, he not only credits Internet technology with helping him prosper and find his purpose in life, but also for giving him the tools he needs to make a difference. "We always consider potential updates to our processes and gear because we've already seen how technology has increased our effectiveness and efficiency everywhere we've applied it. In the U.K. we have an amazing team of designers, sales reps

and brand ambassadors and we need to keep them in the loop. Social media and instant messengers have created a way to do this; I regularly Skype with Cambodian suppliers and when I met one of the disabled men who I worked with across the net, I felt like I had known him for years. Technology builds trust. In-house we use Expensify to manage everyone's expenses, Quickbooks Online for accounts, and a very powerful online order management multichannel software called Veego. This gives everyone more time to focus on sales and fill up our Google Drive and Dropbox with orders. I am also a GoogleKeep user; it's wonderful for storing notes that appear on all my devices."

 **Connection is empowerment**

Digital natives develop an expanded worldview at an early age. ICT has enabled a culture of sharing and exploring, which has led to an increasing sense of worldwide community.

Aaron's story doesn't end with him; he's just a starting point. He sees education, access, and sharing as strong enablers, "We have been empowering youth overseas and now we want to bring our mission to fruition at home. Young people should not feel hopeless no matter where they are in the world. We want to help undiscovered creative and unpaid talent to become more entrepreneurial and help them get ahead in fashion using our firm's contacts and channels."

When asked about how the connected world has shaped his life, Aaron said, "I use technology for learning, contacting friends, and business. I am incredibly fortunate to be born into technology. I can surf the net like a pro and even write code, but my mum is only using a computers now after ten years of seeing how they've helped me."

Fikay Fashion supports education and opportunity both in Cambodia and the U.K. Many of the people thus empowered will go on to share the benefits they receive with their family and friends; if they're inspired by Aaron's example, they might even found their own social enterprise. [www](#)



Digitals as customers: Get 'em Involved

05

According to digital marketing guru Tom Goodwin, digital native customers are fickle, demanding, suspicious, self-sufficient, and otherwise challenging. In fact, since they expect things for free, he doesn't see them as customers at all. How do businesses sell to people who won't think to buy? How do telcos make subscribers out of those who prefer to be users? Read on.

✍ By Jason Patterson

A new age

WinWin: What's your elevator pitch to CEOs as to how they need to transform their businesses for the digital age?

Tom Goodwin: It's not so much about transforming for digital natives as it is about transforming for the digital age. The digital age isn't about technology as an additive force; it's about a lubricant that makes things easier. Digital forces are the most disruptive, destructive and creative forces we've ever seen in business. But not everything is different. We are still human beings, making rational decisions based on fundamental human hardwiring. Ironically, for someone who loves new technology and the future, I often think we love things that are new too much and we've forgotten centuries of learning in marketing. Changes are often more predictable than people think; the cone of plausibility for the future is relatively easy to define. Let's take the time to plot a path into the future and be in control, not be forced to respond.

WinWin: You are the author of blog posts with titles like *Why Content Marketing Probably Won't Work For You*, and this makes you stand out a

bit from the true believers that seem to dominate your profession. What makes you different?

Goodwin: While we acknowledge as an industry that media and creative agencies unbundled in the 1970s, we don't realize the same happened with digital and traditional agencies in the 2000's.

I entered the profession as the split occurred, worked hard to get exposure to both sides, and experimented with new technology early on. In 2006, I was using QR codes in traditional media, and in 2007, worked on a cross-IPG (Interpublic Group of Companies: a big-four global ad house) team to bring digital and traditional agencies together for Nokia. I then ensured that I got exposure within the IPG to digital, PR, media and innovation agencies. I feel like the whole agency world is trying to get to grips with the new stuff. How do we make digital ads work? Is the solution native ads? What does content marketing mean? I feel that everyone is so wrapped up in their respective worlds that nobody can see things neutrally. Neither side is right, but you can learn from both.



Tom Goodwin is the director of Tomorrow, an agency that provides innovative advertising and marketing solutions for the post-digital age. A futurist and trend forecaster, Tom created the Western world's first QR code-based campaign, developed the first interactive outdoor ad, and created the first click-to-install mobile ad. His is a belief that the role of technology is to solve problems, address consumer needs, and support business goals.





Alaina, Age 19, Teaching Assistant, United States

Alaina's many hobbies and constantly changing hair-color are indications of her vivid personality. Her pursuits include jigsaw puzzles, hiking, gymnastics, training her pets, online gaming, among others. She's not a "brand-fan." Her consumption is largely based on convenience and budget, while her impressions of brand image are based on corporate conduct, not advertisements.

Alaina has mixed feelings about certain brands, declaring, "I don't need to like a company to like their product." For instance, although she disapproves of a certain fast food chain's treatment of employees, she often eats there because she strongly approves of their price, familiarity, and menu.

In contrast, her relationship with Blizzard Entertainment (an online game publisher) is a case of mutual love. "I'm loyal to Blizzard. I read their website, I am subscribed to their newsletter. I get updates when available and always try to get their newest games. I do this because I know that when I play, I can have fun and if there's a problem, they fix it. Blizzard has phenomenal customer service. They are quick, polite, and always make sure to investigate any problem fully. Reliability is hugely important to me."

As a registered member of Blizzard's online community, Alaina contributes to their forum and participates in beta testing. She believes engagement is a two-way street. "I think that relationship building with customers is great. Communication with your target audience is important and makes consumers feel more in control of the product they are receiving."

We are in a time of some big changes (while many other things notably stay the same) and it's impossible to be certain you are right. So I'm trying to start a debate, ask the right and awkward questions to get our industry to avoid buzzwords and define new terminology like *content marketing* so as an industry we can start being taken more seriously and become what we should be – not suppliers who make ads, but trusted partners who help steer our clients into an uncertain, digital future.

WinWin: Marketing has traditionally been thought of as an art, but a more scientific point of view has arisen in recent years. Which do you see as more relevant today?

Goodwin: Modern marketing is in a state of chaos and we've lost confidence. We've sort of split into two camps and that's not helping. We have agencies talking about people wanting conversations with brands. We see a lot of people talking about the need for storytelling. We have people talking about marketing with people, not to people. In short, this is marketing as a creative endeavor and about emotional connections and seduction.

Equally, and on the opposite end of the spectrum, we see a group of people talking about programmatic advertising – automated creative, A-B optimization, mobile coupons, clickable ads that put items in shopping carts; this is a movement solely about performance marketing. Even further to the extreme is a culture of sales that's focused solely on

Digital forces are the most disruptive, destructive and creative we've ever seen in business. But not everything is different. We're still human beings, making rational decisions based on fundamental human hardwiring.

results and short-term performance. These are practitioners of advertising more as a science, with logic, right and wrong. The good news is that everyone is right. We need artists to forge connections, build brand awareness and likeability, and create a meaning and role for brands. We need performance marketers to tap into that brand equity and move sales needles. It's a symbiotic relationship. We need to accept this. It's not a zero-sum game; it's a game to optimize the balance, but doing that is hard within the existing structure. I'd like to see the way structures that we work in change to reflect this. Splitting into silos of fake channels that don't exist isn't the answer; perhaps something like aligning by long-term marketing and short-term marketing would.

How do we transform?

WinWin: Much is said about what Digitals expect as customers. What's missing from the conversation?

Goodwin: What is missing from the conversation is how different they are from each other and how prevalent they are. Digital natives are a huge group of people, who represent an attitude more than a demographic. It's more nuanced



than some may think. The term *digital native* has an implication that those born before 1980 magically have a totally different relationship with technology and are thus non-native. People's relationship with technology is more a function of intellectual curiosity than age.

Digital natives are a mixed blessing; they are demanding, energetic and change their habits quickly, but their passion, the degree to which they share with their peer group and embrace change, can also be to a brand's advantage, so long as they understand a few things about them.

Digital natives are fickle, because switching is easy in the digital world; it's done via an address book on the phone. They are users, not customers. They expect things for free. They expect to pay with their attention span and eyeballs, but it needs to be a value exchange. You may think it's a relationship, but it's one-sided and on their terms. They're demanding. They tend to look at the things that don't work, and not the things that do. They have no patience at all. They embrace change and challenge authority. They grew up being told that anything is possible, and were encouraged to follow their dreams.

These qualities make it challenging to advertise to digital natives, but by forging connections, by adding value, by having an honest and authentic relationship, success can come very quickly. These people will try new things, tell friends, and take risks, but try not to nudge them to commit. Digital natives, more than any other group, need a strong sense of identity by being a part of something to believe in, to feel represented by; if you do this, commitment will come. Digital natives love to participate. Give them something to join. Doritos' "Crash the Super Bowl" contest for homemade commercials is a good example.

WinWin: If you could change any misperception of Digitals in the business community, what would it be?

Goodwin: I think the industry

misjudges the value of digital natives. It's easily assumed that digital natives are the best demographic to focus on initially, and that trends start with them and reach the mainstream, but to the best of my knowledge that's not demonstrably true. As to what else I would change, we definitely need to be mindful that digital natives don't have large disposable incomes. They are valuable, but not necessarily lucrative.

Don't confuse their fickleness with an innate need for change. What makes digital natives shift brands or try new things is the fact that they embrace new things, love flexibility and find it easy to deal with change. But there is nothing to suggest natives can't be loyal; you just have to give them a reason to be – a sense of belonging. They are also not inherently suspicious of marketing, just being marketed to. We've seen a lot of incredible success stories with brands like GoPro (a maker of mountable cameras) who make great content and that get their audience involved in making that content. A key thing seems to be finding a way to involve them.

How do you know?

WinWin: Today's marketers often seem more interested in justifying their existence than in telling it like

it is. How can businesses avoid being taken for a ride when it comes to Digitals?

Goodwin: Ask for results. Many such experts operate in the world of smoke and mirrors. Where there is mystery, there is margin. One of the weird things about marketing is that we all get it. It's not like brain surgery or fluid dynamics. By simply being a human and having empathy you can be a decent marketer. So let's trust our gut more. Today, especially in digital marketing, results should be easy to measure, but again trust your gut. One million views of a Facebook video can be bought for USD400.

Experts need you to politely challenge them; they may understand their technology brilliantly, but they likely won't understand your brand. Solutions from such experts are never good or bad. They are either an appropriate solution to your problem or inappropriate, so be sure technology is presented as a solution, not a tool.

Don't be afraid to say no to opportunities. We talk about media fragmentation from the view of the customer but it's the same for the marketer. Do you need to be the first on Vine, to have a social media newsroom, to work with startups, to excel at social



media, to have an app, to use hashtags all the time; modern marketing should be about saying no and focusing.

WinWin: In your opinion, how well do retweets, likes, comments, etc., correlate with sales?

Goodwin: I have an open mind, but despite spending four years asking for case studies, I've never seen a single good one. In short, my gut is telling me that these metrics are meaningless, and more and more reports seem to confirm this.

We see a lot of convenient assumptions from people who sell such strategies, claiming that people who have liked Coke's Facebook page are more likely to buy Coke than those who have not. Do people really think the act of liking the page means they then consumed more Coke? I think we've merely measured those from a place that big Coke drinkers are likely to be.

We all thought in 2004 that the arrival of the digital world would make everything measurable and meaningful, but instead we now realize just how complex things can be. So it's hard to say no with total confidence, but my gut says these metrics are a total waste of time and damaging to pursue.

WinWin: What KPIs do you see as most meaningful with Digitals?

Goodwin: The danger of KPIs is that they can become the goal, not the measurement of progress towards the goal. What gets measured gets done. It's great to get likes, but likes should be the reward that having a great brand and great content provides, not the goal. The moment likes become the goal, we see brands posting material with that aim only, and before long every brand is showing pictures of babies and cats and asking, "How is your Friday going?" This looks great by all metrics, but at best, it's accomplishing nothing. The only good metric I know is the Net Promoter Score, in addition to brand metrics like awareness and likeability.

Telco: Interesting & scary

WinWin: Ask Digitals about their favorite web hangouts and almost all point to an OTT. How can a telco that "has been faithfully serving customers since 1893" cope with that?

Goodwin: The problem with digital natives is they have only ever known a world where things have been amazing and getting better, and they have no patience or tolerance for old-school ways. They feel the world owes them things they only knew existed a few seconds ago. For everything that a telco or a handset maker does that's amazing, the customer's expectations immediately increase proportionally to that. LTE was superfast in the rare moments we accessed it in 2013, but by now, if we're in a rural area and only get 3G, we look to our phones in disgust. Think of video-on-demand libraries from cable companies – increasing the selection only makes people expect more, and want it all in HD, and to play with no buffering; customers are relentless.

The solution is clearly not the incredible cost of rolling out LTE everywhere, or entering endless negotiations for more content, but to put as much effort into the pain points as the moments of delight.

WinWin: If you were a telco CEO, what sort of strategy would you follow and what measures would you take to remain profitable and relevant as Digitals start acquiring greater purchasing power?

Goodwin: Telcos are at the most interesting and scary place in the world right now. On the one hand, they own the biggest relationship with the most important devices the world has ever seen, and potentially an array of devices for the future. In theory, telcos could own the connected home, omnichannel retail, the world of mobile payments,

and more. The ARPU from telcos puts every other company in the space to shame. You lie at the intersection of the Internet and people, entertainment and commerce. The importance of what you do and the role you play are things that other sectors would kill for. As the world becomes more connected, as so many things in life are about the interconnectivity between the Internet and reality, you're impeccably placed, be it through mobile or fixed media.

However, I bet not many people see it that way in the industry, because at the same time you face being undermined, made irrelevant and meaningless – the dumb pipe trap. The phone ownership experience used to be "handset + operator + services = experience." The biggest elements were the operator and the handset maker. Now, other than the platform battles of iOS and Android, it's hard to see much differentiation in products at comparable price points.

The challenge becomes how you maintain a relationship with people, to what extent do you force a role in people's experiences versus sitting back. Clearly the power telcos had ten years ago with walled gardens is not going to come back, so the issue becomes how you add value via this role.

Wonderfully, a lot of the tactics that appeal to digital natives also appeal to the rest of the target audience. What do airlines do to keep people happy with loyalty points, airline lounges, special access? What do credit card companies or banks do to create a membership vibe? Is it through special offers, through exclusive access, through financial products like insurance and advice?

What else could be done? Could operators try to become the next round of VC incubators. Why didn't an operator beat WhatsApp, or SnapChat, or Vine to the punch? Perhaps it's not their place to, but it's an interesting thought. Every operator needs to find their place in the competitor set and use these value additions as a way to define



When you represent the single most important device we own and you bridge that with people's passions, an abundance of opportunities arise. These passions can then start to fill social media and ad campaigns.

themselves and their brand. Everything they offer should stem from this, and this is where all marketing channels are used to leverage these properties.

You want to be the operator for high net-worth people, create super high-end tariffs, provide global access with a 24/7 concierge, have more approachable tariffs for business, do deals with temporary workspaces to get special offers, put on ideation events, provide help for new businesses, help negotiate better financial terms for loans, and set up a competition for the best business ideas. Lots of these value adds can act as revenue generators and not costs.

You want to stand for music. Don't just take out big ads and give away VIP tickets – create (or take over) an app that helps fans connect, create a new better mobile ticketing solution, get fans to be able to crowdrequest gigs, and so on. When you represent the most important single device we own and you bridge that with people's passions, an abundance of opportunities arise. It's these passions and content that can then start to fill social media and ad campaigns.

Finally, don't forget you have the richest relationships on the planet with customers. Perhaps it could be mobile operators that figure out how media

**Yang Yiting, Age 21,
College Student, China**



Yang is a 21 year-old music lover who also likes cycling and basketball. She majors in vocal music, but she dreams of becoming a sales manager after graduation. When she has earned enough money as a sales manager, she plans to establish her own early childhood education institute.

Yang frequents websites such as Douban, Zhihu, and Sina Microblog. She also watches American TV programs online. She feels irritated by online commercials, especially if they can't be stopped or they pop out, but she does see a few of them as creative and interesting. Some commercials have even inspired her to search for the advertised products.

She thinks that two-way communication is the key to connecting with customers. "Enterprises should communicate more actively with consumers to gain useful ideas and suggestions in product or advertisement design. They should involve customers in the whole design process. This will give customers a sense of pride and loyalty to the brand."

Yang loves to participate in the arts scene, taking part in various literary or artistic activities with friends. She feels a sense of belonging when she attends them. She also invites her friends to enjoy online events together with her.

owners can make money from their content online? Perhaps mobile operators can be the people to take a massive chunk of the USD3 trillion coupon market, who find a way to be the service client that allows iBeacons to work on a device.

WinWin: Are there any telcos out there that are doing a good job when it comes to serving the digital native? If yes, who are they and what are they doing?

Goodwin: I've been impressed with a few companies for different reasons.

O2 has always done an incredible job of promoting the idea of being a member of a club through sports and music sponsorship, but I've loved what they now do with O2 Priority (an app) for perks, offers and exclusive access. I've loved what EE has done in the U.K. with a very optimistic attitude towards all aspects of

the future. Everything from their small sections in-store to introduce connected home devices, to their innovation hubs in flagships. And I love their smart partnership with Tech City in London. I also love the Hutchison 3 program in Denmark and Sweden called "My 3" which offers real-time information on phone usage and spending habits.

WinWin: What's your take-home message for our readers as to what they should be doing to attract Digitals?

Goodwin: Digital natives want to feel like they are part of something. They want to feel included. They want to participate, to feel special. Most tactics to do this do everything to elevate the role of the brand in people's lives, which is exactly what is required. 



CHINA'S DIGITALS CONNECTED INDIVIDUALS



Digital natives are in the process of turning China upside-down. According to Professor Li Xiao, a social anthropologist at Peking University, "The transformation has been unprecedented. It has taken place before any theories were established. Many famous theorists and master scholars have predicted social development and proposed forward-looking theories, but in a totally digital society, there may be no more great thinkers." In other words, no one really knows what's next for the Middle Kingdom, but *WinWin* has a little perspective on what's happening now and what led up to this.

 By Cao Zhihui & Xue Hua

A new sense of identity

An interesting contradiction is emerging among China's digital natives (Digitals), and it revolves around the concept of identity. But to better understand this contradiction, a little history is in order.

In Chinese tradition, you are not just your name, your age, your hobbies and your accomplishments. You are also your position in the family, your profession, your social class, etc. In other words, your identity is inseparable from your relationships, personal network, obligations, and place in life. You are part of the world around you, and those

around you are a part of you; you are never just you.

This broad yet diffuse sense of personal identity endured for thousands of years, right up until it didn't. The 20th Century saw China reshaped by wars, revolutions, famines, and industrialization, but it was the Internet, which arrived right as that century ended, that proved the most disruptive. Digital natives in China are growing up more connected with the rest of the world and with each other, but paradoxically, they are actually moving away from a broader sense of identity and towards a more atomized sense of self.

History is history

From 1985 to 2005, China went

through the same amount of social progress that the West went through from about 1945 to 2005. This makes the parents of Digitals rather difficult to categorize, at least from a Western point of view. In terms of their notable qualities, the ones over 40 come across as a mix of Greatest Generation and Baby Boomer, while those in their thirties tend to be more Gen X in their temperament. But one thing that they do have in common is that they can all at least remember a time when China was still relatively closed.

Back in those days, China may have been a large country with a billion people, but it was also rather like a small town, even in its tier-one cities. Not much came in, not much went out. Few people traveled, and options were few.





Life was predictable, and employment was for life (an arrangement known as the iron ricebowl). This gave the parents and grandparents a down-to-earth quality. They are diligent and practical; they're not big dreamers.

Digitals don't remember that China. They grew up in an age of relative choice and plenty. They're dreamers by nature, and diligent when they choose. China will never be the same again.

Dreams come first, whatever they might be

On June 9, 2014, the 12th Vision Youth Beijing International Photography and Video Exhibition for College Students officially concluded. Nearly a thousand

original photos and video clips were in competition from around the world. Wang Ning was one of the winners. As a digital native, his life could not be led without the Internet, nor could he have won his award.

“The video clips were all shot and collected digitally. The project operation and team coordination were also conducted online. I didn't even meet my two partners until the prize ceremony.”

When asked what kind of job he wants, Wang, a college senior, said he had not yet attended any recruitment job fairs, nor did he want to work for others upon graduation. “I am going to pursue my dreams, though I am not quite sure exactly what dreams I am going to pursue.”



Dedicated learners

Don't let this dreamer mentality fool you. Digitals in China value education as much as their parents, if not more (though not necessarily the classroom variety). According to Ci Lili, Deputy IT Editing Director at the People's Education Press (China's primary



Digitals in China: By the Numbers

The survey indicates that Digitals' attitudes toward the Internet is fundamentally different from the previous generation. They view the Internet as part of life and work other than something special for entertainment.



20 hours

62% of Digitals spend 20 hrs or less online weekly, with less than 20% spending 40 hrs or more, indicating moderate and not excessive online consumption.



71.7%

Digitals who use smartphones to access the Internet account for 71.7%, surpassing all other devices. This reflects a boom in China's mobile Internet industry.



2/3

Digitals have a strong desire to learn. Study has become a major online activity, surpassing other activities such as video watching, web browsing and online gaming.

publisher of textbooks), "Today's young people, have a strong urge to learn, especially professional-grade training, to either enhance their competitiveness or enrich their lives. We have a group of clearly motivated youth eager to learn."

Huawei data supports Ci's assertions. Our Market Insight Department, in cooperation with CCW Research, jointly conducted a survey of some 6,000 Digitals aged 15 to 25 and found their number one online activity to be e-learning (more from this survey in the next section).

Why would an age group composed of students and former students spend so much of their discretionary time online? Zhang Lu, a recent graduate of the Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, provides a good reason. "What I learnt at school is very different from what is required at work, Sometimes I have to work or take business trips on weekends,

leaving even less time for study. Work shattered time into pieces. I can hardly take any time to enroll in a class or go to open classes. For the first time, I really feel the importance of study, more so than before. E-learning enables people to fully use their piecemeal and fragmented moments to study. If you don't forge ahead, you'll be left behind."

College students show similar attitudes and patterns of study; high-school students less so, as they have all-important college entrance exams to prepare for. For college-age Digitals, the Internet provides a better understanding of what to expect after graduation than their parents had, and this seems to be spurring them to take pre-emptive action, and influencing their opinions of their classroom studies.

According to one particular student, "It is no exaggeration to say that some courses are a total waste of time."

Independence through connection

The values of Digitals are still taking shape, but the stereotypes regarding digital youth (as they are called in China) are already set. One of them involves gaming, a pastime with troubled perceptions in East Asia. But the average Digital hardly meets the profile of a gaming-addled youngster, or even someone who can't put the phone down. According to our aforementioned survey, the average Digital in China spends only one to three hours online per day, with general web browsing, video watching, and the aforementioned e-learning as the top three activities. Online gaming failed to make the cut in any age group (though *Win Win* met some gaming enthusiasts amongst our interviewees). Combine this with those relatively modest online numbers, and Digitals, as a whole, clearly do not fit the profile of online-dependency.





57.6%

57.6% of the newly employed view the Internet as their primary channel for job seeking, with 44.1% also valuing personal connections as a path to obtaining a job.



300CNY

Online consumption behavior indicates a scarcity of disposable income, with only one-third of Digitals spending spend over CNY300 (USD50) each month.



4/5

Digitals welcome online payment; 80% of those surveyed use it, a sign that there is trust in the security of online finance and payment, both of which are now quite mature.



30%

Roughly 30% of Digitals do not play online games at all, with less than 7% playing games every day. This indicates that most Digitals are not addicted to gaming.

In fact, Digitals attach great importance to self-worth and independence, at least in terms of worldview. You might think that every new generation values these things, but to understand what makes China's digital natives different, think about its non-Digitals for a moment.

When they entered the real world, they had that more diffuse sense of traditional Chinese identity that was mentioned earlier, and it was not as strong on the whole. Why? Because it takes two things to form a strong personal identity – you must know both what you are and what you are not. This requires sampling, comparing and contrasting different things, ideas, and groups. But closed China was a world of sameness, especially in the schools. Growing up, difference was discouraged. You were just one of many, and you learned what you were taught, by school or family.

Not so for the Digitals. In an interview

**Yue Liang, Age 24,
Finance Worker, China**



Yue has been working for about a year. He spends 30 hours surfing the Internet each week, including three hours each workday. Though no longer in college, Yue retains a passion for learning. "I often take finance and economics classes from famous universities through Netease Open Course and watch TED lectures. I recently started an open class from Duke University in finance."

As ICT has developed, the boundaries between work and life have blurred; Yue accepts this. "Every coin has two sides. On the one hand, information technology (IT) makes our work more convenient as it can now be done at home, but this can interrupt our personal lives. I think the initiative is in our own hands. Balance is needed, and the negative impacts of IT are felt when this balance is lost."

This idea of balance extends to his own body. "Technology is used to help people experience and enjoy more. Currently, what we know about the human body is limited. Its structure is the result of natural evolutionary processes. If a chip were to be implanted in the human brain, nature's most beautiful creation, the human brain would be compromised. I revere nature, so I would not accept this."



with *WinWin*, Dr. Li Qiang, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, stated, “Digital youth unshackle themselves from their parents at a young age. They communicate with classmates on hot topics online. They basically build their own worldview and values, while digital immigrants’ values and worldviews were formed by their family and education.”

In other words, Digitals are independent, their identities formed through a diverse support system online. Wang Yuquan, Chief Consultant at Frost & Sullivan’s China office and founder of Haiyin Fund, told *WinWin*, “Digital youth are born into a world of countless connections. As a result, they are accustomed to a lonely environment, but they are also more closely connected in a sense. So they are more powerful and resilient while resisting a callous society.”

This greater resistance to life’s pressures has personal utility, but it also makes Digitals rather difficult for Chinese employers to handle. Employers expect soft clay that can be shaped and hardened at will, not a finished vase that has its own notions about how to carry water.



**Huang Shixiao, Age 15,
High-school Student, China**

Huang has many hobbies, including reading, drawing, movies, volleyball, badminton, and the piano. She attends a boarding school where she is only allowed to surf the Internet on weekends. On weekdays, she surfs in secret on her handset.

She studies online because it saves time. “It is a total waste to spend two hours on the road just for one or two hours of training at a cram school. If I study online at home, these hours can be saved for things that I like.” However, she does not believe that the Internet will make schools unimportant. “I’d rather study in a classroom. The environment is better and I can communicate with others.”

As a student, Huang would welcome any future technology that would facilitate study. “If a chip could be implanted in my brain to help me study, without side effects, I’d like to try it. There are so many things that must be learned for life, but our memory is so short-lived. If we could have a chip or Doraemon’s ‘Memory Bread,’ all we would have to do is to implant it or eat it to acquire knowledge. That’d be so cool.”

According to Dr. Li, “Ubiquitous connection encourages digital youth to be more pioneering and creative, which means they will be bolder in challenging the authorities in the future. This may cause problems for digital youth; they may face a more unpredictable and uncontrolled future and the gap between them and other generations may widen.”

Sparks may fly

This sounds like a recipe for friction, a fairly big deal in China, where the word *harmonious* seems to enjoy *most preferred adjective* status. The state of connection, even the relatively weak connection that Digitals often have with each other today, establishes a strong group identity. They can feel the power of each other. This is collective power, but of a different kind than the “straws bound together to form a stick” power that groups of the past often held. Through the Internet, digital natives can share their ideas and values with little risk to themselves. They can also resist and strike in an orchestrated and, at times, overwhelming fashion. Their strength, despite being a group of individuals, is the strength of the swarm – speed, coordination, agility, elusiveness, and resilience. It is very hard to hit a swarm of bees, or buy off its leadership, and this may give Digital causes more legs than those of rebels past, especially as more and more Digitals join the community.

At an event in Beijing this past June, Nicholas Negroponte pointed out that, “We have over seven billion people on the planet. In the near future, they will all become Internet users. It’s only a matter of time.”

In their dreams

Not only are China’s Digitals independent and self-aware, they have developed a strong sense of “us” with each other; this high level of peer support will make it easier for them to be independent, and thus follow their dreams. In fact, the aforementioned Huawei study shows that most digital natives don’t think their dreams contradict their success in real life.

But Chinese experts and scholars interviewed by *WinWin* beg to differ. They are pessimistic about digital natives. They maintain that the utopian ideals of cyberspace are creating unrealistic



**Many
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and their own abilities
to master it.**

expectations, encouraging Digitals to challenge existing hierarchies.

These same experts also think the older generations in China still hold all the cards, and that the mass emergence of Digitals and their sass will actually lead to a slower transfer of power in China. This is an interesting point of view because it is pretty much the opposite of what many other experts around the world are expecting. But, it may have some validity. Many of China's Digitals, who the experts consider naive, say that they do not worry so much about these things because time is on their side.

Many have indicated that dreams come first in their job selection, with only a small fraction saying they would let higher pay outweigh this; this has made Digitals more prone to job hopping. But in China, changing jobs is not considered the way to move up. And yet, most Digitals interviewed by *WinWin* seemed willing to pay this price.

Power: Not given, but taken

Plenty of China's Digitals are certain the

**Ren Bingxin, Age 24,
Marketing Associate, China**

Ren is two years out of college. She likes web surfing and dancing. Unlike some of her contemporaries, she has a clear division of labor for her Internet devices – laptops for work, tablets at home, and handsets for games, news and social media.

She considers herself an online shopping enthusiast. "I like to purchase everything online – snacks, hair accessories, clothes, cosmetics, even small appliances. I wish the Internet were faster, so all product images could load in a second. I also wish that shopping websites could be used to pay other bills like traffic fees. It would also be nice if these websites could filter what they sell so that only authentic goods are presented. It would also help if big data analytics could enable real-time assessment, ranking, and price display for different websites. The logistics could also be faster."

Ren would prefer to work at home, with everyone communicating with colleagues and superiors over the Internet. She thinks that work efficiency wouldn't suffer, even in a comfortable environment like home. But despite this point of view, she rejects the notion of integrating work into her personal life. She would rather bring her personal life into her work, as long as efficiency for the latter can be guaranteed.



experts are wrong, or at least making the wrong assumptions, because they don't see power being handed over by older generations as much as they see it being usurped through the proliferation of ICT, and their own abilities to master it.

Digital natives think that current business managers are only in charge of a company's financial and business operations. As ICT becomes increasingly integral to both, power over them will also be handed over to Digitals.

"Many business leaders rely on technical experts' explanation and help in business management. After business processes are restructured and the old-guard technical experts retire, my generation will be the one to administer businesses," says a

young employee of Huawei's Market Insight Department.

According to Duan Minghao, e-commerce director at a mobile phone manufacturer, "Digital natives are more adept at using IT to boost efficiency, but the hesitation of leadership is obstructing progress. For example, although the procurement process is now digitized, many businesses fail to engage directly with upstream suppliers on production capacity, which is easily achievable."

However, Duan also indicated that maybe businesses have actually already made their plans; they are just waiting for the right time. 



Digital Natives: Plug & Play Employees

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Digital natives are now joining the workforce, but who they are and what they want, and the great power that they wield in terms of technology, is shifting the burden of adaptation from employee to employer.

.....

✍ By Julia Yao & Pan Tao



In China, small employers have great difficulty competing with large ones, as the latter have a lot of clout and often establish pipelines directly into the colleges, a process more akin to harvesting than recruitment. But digital natives (Digitals) represent a new kind of employee. They are no longer employers' produce, they are consumers of employment, and with all the information now available online, they can be fickle ones at that.

Who are they?

It is hard for employers to label digital natives, especially since they tend to oppose being labeled, defined, or represented. Digitals try to define themselves through their actions, not words (their own or someone else's). A phrase that might best describe their attitude is "I'm the One."

Internet-dependent is probably the only confirmed characteristic that all Digitals have in common. Statistics show that over 70% of China's urban digital youth

have access to the Internet in elementary or middle school, and more than 60% of all college students surf the Internet every day.

Huawei recently conducted a survey of Digitals, and Wang Ting, a journalism student at Renmin University, is fairly typical. In her view, the Internet provides all the information she is interested in, and is a medium for her to understand the world. She says almost all of her activities are Internet-based.

When asked how she would distinguish her generation from previous ones, Wang said, "Post-70's (those born in the 1970's) think big, post-80's voice their opinions bravely, and post-90's (digital natives) think and act boldly."

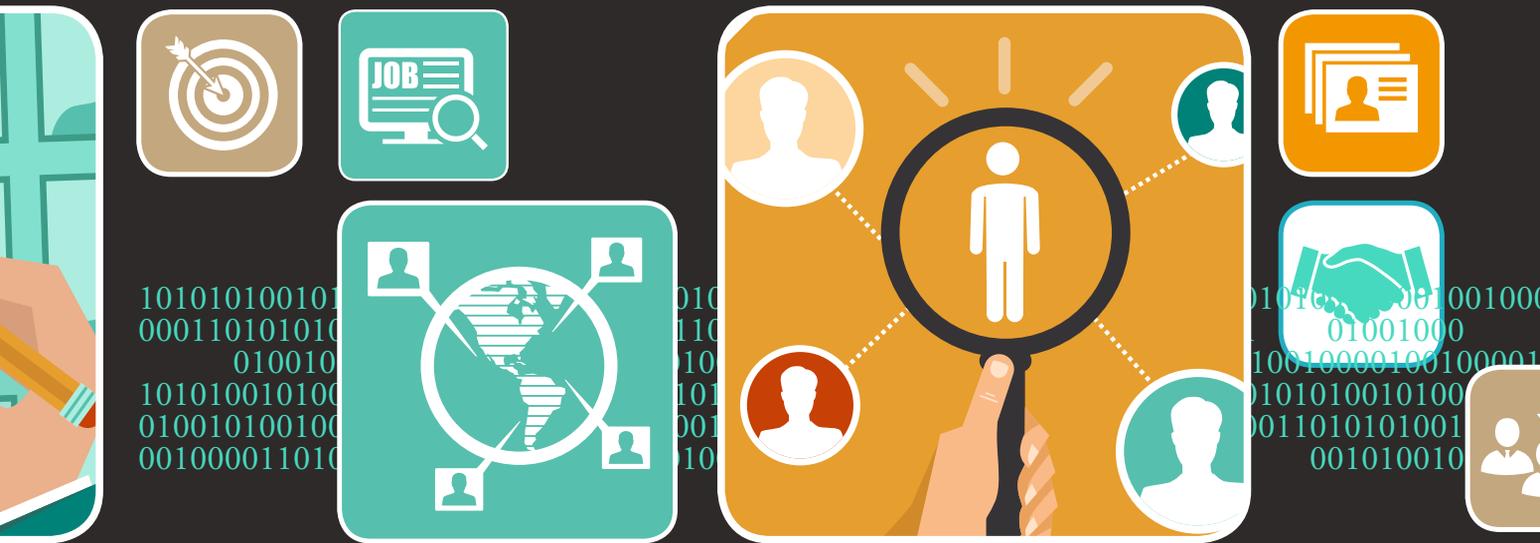
We'll get back to the "act boldly" part in a minute. For now, notice how Wang distinguishes generations by ten-year increments instead of the usual twenty, an indicator of how quickly China is changing. Another indicator of this change is the way digital natives "think boldly" when it comes to business.

A dongle culture

In China, traditional business leaders espouse what is referred to as the "engine culture," where the highest level of management is the primary engine that propels the company, and the next level down of management is a group of secondary engines that support the primary engine, with the next level down supporting them, and so on. In this school of thought, management is the propelling force, while labor's purpose is to keep those engines of management running smoothly and efficiently.

But Digitals don't buy this sort of analog metaphor. They espouse what might be called a "dongle culture." They don't see themselves as disposable grease monkeys; they see themselves as "skill-set delivery units" that can be plugged and played in any system to add real value. They see a business not as some tall moving structure full of engines, but as a flat collaborative network of necessary skill-sets, with the nodes that provide the vital links and vital skills providing the real value in the organization.





Fulfillment more than employment

China is awash in college graduates; 21 million, many of whom are Digitals, have been churned out over the past three years. China's employers, like a lot of their global contemporaries, consider this latest crop to be unemployable. And perhaps they are, in the sense that they just won't go along with a company's program if it doesn't suit them.

China's Digitals have access to more information and therefore more choice than ever before. This has made them more fickle and less willing to adapt to an employer's culture and values. They are no longer happy just to get the job; now the job must give them a path to fully realizing their own value – what psychologist Abraham Maslow would call “self-actualization.”

Huawei's survey of digital natives revealed that “self-identification” is carefully considered when they look for a job; it might even be regarded as more important than a high salary. This makes

the recruitment and job application process a lot more complicated.

Process over result

Finding a job that gives full play to personal abilities and facilitates personal fulfillment is now digital natives' top priority on the employment front. The *2014 College Graduates Employment Situation Report*, issued by a third-party Chinese research institution, reveals that for 2014 graduates, the ideal job is one that fully leverages their personal abilities. The second-most ideal job is one that facilitates skills improvement, while the third is one that comes with a comprehensive benefits package.

This seems to indicate that Digitals put more emphasis on how to leverage ICT to achieve personal fulfillment than on salary or business requirements. It also indicates that they value process more than result. In other words, the means matter more than the ends.

Liu Zhixi is a graduate of the Harbin University of Technology. He took a

position as a software engineer in Beijing upon graduation. It was a job that fit his major and paid well, but Liu quit after just a year and a half. Why? “Doing the same monotonous and repetitious work every day wasn't going to fulfill my value at all.” Through the Internet, Liu met several other like-minded people to start their own business developing mobile apps. “I feel enthusiastic and amazing when exchanging ideas with my partners and doing something interesting and meaningful.” For Liu, the result, be it success or failure, is less important. The process is what makes the whole thing worthwhile.

This emphasis on process over result, common among Digitals, is strongly dismissed by Chinese HR managers. They maintain that if the result is ignored, the process brings doom, however enjoyable it may be along the way. This perceived glibness amongst Digitals is what established enterprises fear most, but they do accept that some tolerance is needed. “Never try to brainwash digital youth,” says one HR manager. “Attempts at brainwashing digital youth employees are very



likely to be counterproductive and make them quit. Even if you manage to keep them with higher pay, you have deprived them of creativity and diversity.”

They are not cogs

Many Digitals are not content to be cogs in the big machine. Why? One big reason is that China has witnessed young people getting rich quick through the Internet. In fact, they are now the most likely group to start their own business online.

"We are keen to detect business opportunities on the Internet," says Zhao Yongjun, a 24-year-old who started his third online business in April 2014, selling fruit straight from the farm, and he made USD150,000 in less than two months, more than most guys twice his age see in a year.

How can large employers compete with that? They'd better start loosening up. Jia Penglei, Editor-in-Chief at *ebrun* (an ecommerce trade publication), thinks that command and control management is ill-suited to digital natives. In fact, traditional management methods may incur their antipathy. Persuasion is needed more than command, but that persuasion needs to come from both sides. Employers need to be persuaded that Digitals aren't as "impatient and irresponsible" on the job as they have seemed.

But Digitals actually have the opposite point of view. They consider themselves more responsible than the average cog, and that the fault lies with HR managers, who "misunderstand" them.

According to Wang Ting, Digitals job hop precisely because they are brave enough to take on responsibilities. He thinks they act swiftly and decisively, without clinging to short-term interests. In other words, Digitals try to be heroes (in the Hollywood sense of the word) – they'll take action without being asked, or asking.

Self-appointed saviors

So what makes Digitals think that they need to save the day? The primary reason is because they don't recognize their betters as better, because the Internet has no betters. According to Li Qiang, researcher at the Chinese Academy of Sciences, "The elite will need to adjust themselves to accept the reality that they can only be recognized by one part of society. Universal acceptance and recognition will be rare in the future." So if there are no true elites, then what?

Nicholas Negroponte, MIT professor and author of *Digital Survival*, once predicted that digitization and Internetization will endow young people with power and cause a decentralization of society.

Wang Yuquan, Chief Consultant at Frost & Sullivan's China office, more recently stated, "Every industry will be reshaped. The reshaping of all industries will lead to social reconstruction."

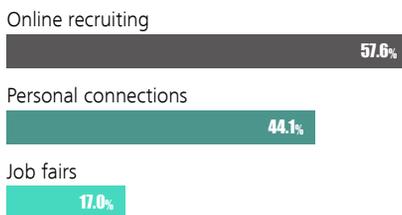
According to Li Qiong, "The old way of management adopted by schools, businesses, and governments will be questioned, updated, and eventually abandoned."

While these three experts don't seem to entirely agree on what will cause what exactly or where we will end up, they do seem to agree that Digitals will turn the world upside-down. Are employers ready? Wang thinks businesses and industries can never be prepared. "You can't prepare for the unpredictable." Wang also suggests that businesses, industries, and society in general should be open-minded and embrace this transformation.

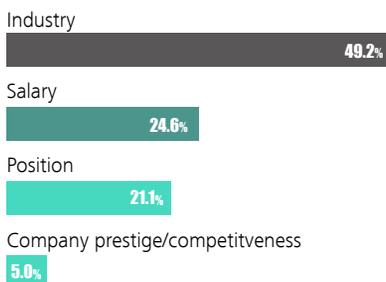
According to Dr. Li, "The current management mechanism is problematic. In consideration of management cost, business managers and social administrators prefer to cover up problems rather than resolve them. Technophobia and refusal of the



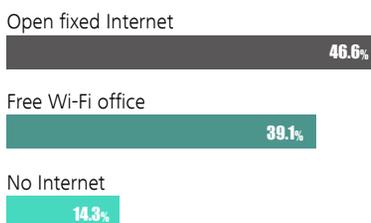
Preferred job search method



Top job selection priority



Preferred work environment



Source: Huawei digital native survey



Digitals think themselves brave enough to take on responsibilities, and act swiftly and decisively, without clinging to short-term interests. They'll take action without being asked, or asking.

Internet have crippled managers and administrators. In the long run, the management costs will go up."

This technophobia is a big problem, because Digitals can understand technology in a way most of their supervisors can't, and use it to solve problems or improve efficiencies. Their ability to comprehend it has exceeded scholars' expectations. Digitals believe that as they move into the future, not only must they learn how to use the Internet to inform and communicate, but also enhance their own competitiveness. This requires them to develop insights into connected devices, and even the latest ICT developments like cloud computing.

How do we reach them?

Digitals are applying ICT with unprecedented enthusiasm. Consequently, they show more frustration and dissatisfaction when faced with obstacles. To address incompatibilities between traditional companies and Digital employees, businesses should utilize more integrated ICT technologies to find

the right talent. Thanks to ICT development and the proliferation of social networking, traditional online recruitment hubs are now losing their edge. New online recruitment channels are being created, enabling more precise targeting of talent. According to several HR managers that *WinWin* conversed with, the recruitment channels are diversifying, if not transforming.

Social networks are proving natural employment hubs, having already emerged as major channels for information acquisition across the globe. In the United States, 30% of adults get at least some of their news from social media. Sina Weibo (*weibo* literally means *microblog* in Chinese) boasts 536 million registered users, while WeChat (one of China's most popular OTT messaging app) has over 600 million.

"Using WeChat for talent hunting is more effective and cheaper than using traditional recruitment sites," said one Chinese HR manager, who also

Deng Li, Age 24, IT Engineer, China

Deng Li just started his job in 2014. "My life and work are completely Internetized," he said. "The Internet is even more important to me than daily meals. I cannot sustain a single day without it."

He relied on the power of the Internet to find suitable employment. "I browsed job information on all sorts of websites and submitted many resumes. Many companies release recruitment information on social media, so I also followed the official social media accounts of my favorite employers. It didn't take long for me to find a job."

He thinks that the Internet is an absolute necessity. "I use the Internet in all my work. Without it, no work tasks can be completed."

Deng Li is quite satisfied with his current job, which suits his character and his talents. However, he said he would quit without hesitation if he decides the job no longer suits him.



believes that social media recruitment is beneficial to future HR management in areas like talent pool maintenance, cost, and efficiency. In his view, social media is trusted by Digitals and draws more targeted applicants. Social networks are like allies to today's young job seekers, so job listings that arrive through them seem vetted and trusted. Traditional recruitment sites, on the other hand, are now more likely to draw chance-takers.

As ICT grows more integrated in the future, more channels will appear for recruitment. By 2025, 100 billion devices will be connected through the Internet, while smartphone subscriptions will increase to eight billion. In this sort of always-on world, recruitment and job-seeking will be more of an ongoing process than a one-time decision. Employees will want to grow; employers will need to nurture them, thus making the latter planters in the 21st century instead of reapers. 





Entrepreneurship

The bold play

Grace Qian is a successful app developer and entrepreneur, and she is not yet 30 years old. She recently took some time from her latest venture (open-source filmmaking) to write an article for *WinWin* where she shares her thoughts on what makes for a successful app, what's hot in the Chinese business scene, and how to reach digital natives (Digitals).

✍ By Grace Qian

Your early-to-mid twenties are when your values, lifestyle and worldview crystallize. When I was 24 (three years ago), without thinking twice, I decided to boldly quit my large and stable employer and start a business with a couple of friends of mine who had more life experience. At the time, I didn't know much about the mobile Internet and had no idea how to start a business. But I was optimistic; I was young and had nothing to lose.

Unlike previous generations, we have been blessed with the Internet, and have grown up amidst the rise of digital technologies. Instead of burying my nose in a sea of books, learning what others think our generation's thoughts and demands are, I mustered the courage to learn our generation by doing.

 **Simplicity & humor work best**

When we founded iiseeuu.com (our online app store) in 2011, location-

based services (LBS's) were all the rage, so we decided that our launch product would be an LBS product called Catch, which would integrate various LBS elements like social networking and online-to-offline (O2O) functionality. But ultimately, Catch never got out of beta, a genuinely frustrating experience.

Our next attempt was an experimental app called Ohbaba – a much simpler LBS that helps you locate nearby public toilets. Ohbaba also allows for user-generated content (UGC); users can submit locations for new toilets, a greatly helpful feature in China where buildings are often put up faster than they are mapped. Ohbaba was a big hit.

Later, we launched the “Demon Mirror,” an app that caricatures your face in the style of *kuso* (a type of East Asian animation). We spent no money on its promotion and made hardly any effort to update it, but in just half a year, over four million users used it, quite an achievement by 2012 standards.

All our hits share some similarities; they are easy to use, easy to spread, and



Grace Qian left a steady job at the age of 24 to help found an app development firm. Despite her lack of previous experience, this firm has authored several successful apps for the Chinese market. At age 26, she is now taking up crowdsourced filmmaking, with her first project now underway, titled *Zodiac Stories*.



funny. With a bit of luck and proper marketing efforts, any app that meets these qualifications will probably succeed.

It takes more than a cute name

Our lives are going digital. A computer and a connection can satisfy almost all our needs. We can read and shop online, play games, and network. Before the digital age, education relied on books and classrooms. Now, the sum of human knowledge is at our fingertips. You don't have to get on a plane to join the world's leading educational institutions. All you need is network access. In China, massive open online courses (MOOC's) are hype magnets. Why? Because in China, teachers and classrooms are finite, but the hunger for knowledge and the number of learners is near infinite, as is the potential reach of MOOC's. They are just too useful to ignore.

While the Internet makes our lives a lot easier, we are also getting more demanding. Products and services today have to be both useful and catchy in some way. *Ohbaba* wasn't the first name we came up with for that particular app. Previous names included options such as *Bathroom Finder*, *Poo Helper*, etc. In the end, our product director insisted on the name *Ohbaba* (a phrase a child might use if he really needs the bathroom), and we are confident that this helped drive its success. However, *Ohbaba* is not just a cute name. When downloads took off, many copycats cropped up, but their functionality was too simple – nothing more than a search button for locating the nearest bathroom. They were pure engineering, useful but not friendly.

Ohbaba's product director racked his brain to attract young people. The app's interface shows a cute yet embarrassed animated figure, and the loading pattern of the map shows this figure wriggling his backside in a great hurry.

This mix of practicality and cuteness

works well in China. "Demon Mirror" also depends on it. However, lasting vitality for a product, preferably through customer loyalty, is of the utmost importance. The hardest thing is operating the product over the long-term without compromising user experience. Unfortunately, our early successes were fleeting.

Participation is key

Although mobile app development has exploded over the past few years in China, some bottlenecks have been met in 2014, thanks to the local hype now surrounding branding and *Internet thinking*. Customers have become the channel, thus altering the traditional sales paradigm of predator and prey, and creating an increasing need for better content and more customized services.

My firm has responded with the recent development of *iTangyuan*, a cloud-based writing, reading, and sharing app. It won't be a big hit and may face many obstacles, but we put a lot of thought into its positioning, values, and target user groups. After a month's discussion, we decided to position it as an online community for story sharing. The app aims at ordinary people who enjoy reading and writing. Everyone has their own unique, unpredictable stories, whether they be luxury car owners, hostesses, or even roadside beggars, hence the name *iTangyuan* (*tangyuan* is a warm reassuring dessert where one never knows what the next piece will contain). As *iTangyuan* is a UGC-based online community platform, it requires meticulous packaging and positioning based on its overall functionality, with its content introduction and management also meriting attention.

Internet thinking

Internet thinking (better translated as "Internet-first thinking") is the latest buzzword amongst China's business leadership (even making the rounds at *WinWin*). Nobody really knows exactly what it means yet, but a rough definition would be – the ability to think and serve

your customers in a manner that takes into account the fact that they are always-on and completely surrounded by the Internet today. Two of the best known examples in China so far are *DiaoYeNiuNan* and *HuangTaiji* (restaurant chains devoted to the sort of junk food favored by China's youth). Both restaurants are known for their aggressive online-to-offline (O2O) strategies and social networking tactics. *HuangTaiji* posts fortune cookie-type messages on its receipts and encourages its customers to post them on their microblogs, and its founder is a reliable responder to social media queries. Both restaurants are examples of developing value propositions, and attracting specific user groups based on these propositions and designing products accordingly (promoting certain products on specific holidays like Father's Day or Children's Day). I am quite convinced that this is the future.

A new type of branding

How does one brand for Digitals? Basically you don't, at least not all of them. Digitals are decentralized. They have no particular idols. They have a wide range of interests. They are easily distracted, and they refuse to be represented. Each has a unique personality. This means that today, a brand can hardly exist that meets the needs of everyone. This notion of niche marketing isn't new in the West, but it is a major reversal in China, where the past fifteen years have seen a lot of the mom-and-pop businesses and local brands that used to give each Chinese city its character replaced by bland nationwide chain stores. A move towards differentiation would (thankfully) reverse this trend.

Our *iTangyuan* app reveals a world of individuals and spreads the notion that life is full of wonder, beauty and individuality. We also want to explore literary talent, and bridge the communication gulf between authors and readers. This is certainly no easy job; it will require long-term content accumulation and brand value promotion. But when our company reaches an agreement as to exactly how to do it, all we have to do is make it happen.



Meaningful user engagement requires listening to your customers, engaging them, and seeking resonance, so that the product takes on true value for them.

Very long engagement – hopefully

The essence of Internet thinking is user engagement. From my perspective, meaningful user engagement requires listening to your customers, engaging them, and seeking resonance, so that the product takes on true value for them.

PAUSE CAFÉ is a famous Nanjing coffee house that encourages customer participation. It was founded by a Mr. Chen, who made every cup of coffee himself during the first year. PAUSE CAFÉ is now in its third year, and a lot has changed. The boundaries between owner and patron have blurred. Each day, a group of people gather around the counter, make their own coffee, help carry coffee to other customers during peak hours, clear the tables after customers leave, and are themselves served well when the baristas are available. While watching this, you can't even tell who the owner is and who the customers are, as the latter might even replace the toilet paper rolls by themselves if needed.

If you ask these helpful customers who they are, they will tell you, "We are PAUSE's buddies." They are not part-owners. They are not apprentices. They take no cut of the profits, and they don't

Sebastian, Age 25, Student and Serial Entrepreneur, Singapore



At an early age, Sebastian developed his entrepreneurial and community spirit. Throughout his high school and college education, he's launched various enterprises, worked, and volunteered. He's confident that technology can reverse some of the damage caused by heavy industry and is particularly excited about advancements like self-driving cars. As he puts it, "Private car ownership and usage is hugely redundant. Self-driving cars will reduce congestion, emissions and accidents; we should all look forward to that."

"Digital natives are very fortunate. There are brilliant minds out there that are handicapped by limited access to education and the Internet. This is especially true in developing nations where infrastructure may be lacking. I'm interested in working with others to find and enable brilliant people who have insufficient access so that such people can spread the benefits of digital technology into their own communities."

Sebastian's view of the gap between successive batches of digital natives is precise. "Even if separated by only a few years, people may have a different relationship with digital technology depending on whether they have used DOS extensively or whether they grew up with PCs or handhelds. Phases of technology development matter more than years. Depending on which phase someone started in, perspectives will differ, leading to different ideas and expectations." He doesn't think that the gap between digital natives and digital immigrants is significant, but he's concerned that some much older professionals might have a tough time keeping up with the rapid changes that are on the way.

work for free coffee and Wi-Fi; they take on these responsibilities because participation and involvement enhances their sense of belonging to the culture of coffee.

The genius of Chen's operation is that everyone feels a sense of ownership, of belonging in his coffee shop, and they share the experience with their friends, who share it with their friends. This method has enabled PAUSE CAFÉ to thrive despite fierce coffee house competition in China's hippest town.

Filmmaking in China is also becoming a collaborative and community-driven process. I am currently preparing a film together with my friends in Beijing. We plan to create a completely open-source film, and this will include the screenwriting, casting, shooting,

editing, and soundtrack creation, just for fun. The film will be named *Zodiac Stories*. We have secured cooperation with various social media and video-sharing websites. In terms of casting, we have talked with several famous entrepreneurs and business leaders. Many people have shown interest and willingness to participate after reviewing our creative ideas. This is just the beginning. The process will be riddled with uncertainties. The film may suck in the end, but that's not important. What matters is the entire production and fun-creation process.

I have always enjoyed bold moves; it's my secret ingredient for starting a business. 



Brazil: The Connected Life

Brazil punches above its weight in both Internet participation and the art of *futebol*. Millions of digital natives came of age just in time for 2014's biggest sporting event, and a closer look reveals a world being reshaped, both by digital natives and for them.

 By Roberta Prescott



Roberta Prescott, a winner of three journalism awards, has been in the business since the late 90's. She has held editor-in-chief or executive editor positions for InformationWeek Brasil, CRN Brasil, and the Latin American region for RCR Wireless News. She currently works as a freelancer.

A lot can change in 12 years

Brazil hosted the 2014 FIFA World Cup finals, making this a significant year in the history of Brazilian sport.

The last year that came close was 2002, which saw the national team hoist the cup for a record-breaking fifth and final time. To digital immigrants, 2002 might not seem so long ago, but it represents a lifetime to Brazil's digital natives (Digitals).

Any Brazilian younger than age five or six in 2002 is unlikely to have significant memories of the country's last FIFA World Cup championship, and is also unlikely to remember what life was like before iPods or Skype. Today, a Brazilian who was age six during Brazil's last FIFA World Cup victory is now age 18 – old enough to vote (which is compulsory in Brazil), and is probably a netizen of what *The Wall Street Journal* calls “the social media capital of the universe.” In fact, Nielsen found that 75% of Brazilians use their smartphones to primarily access social media, making them the most net-social of the nine

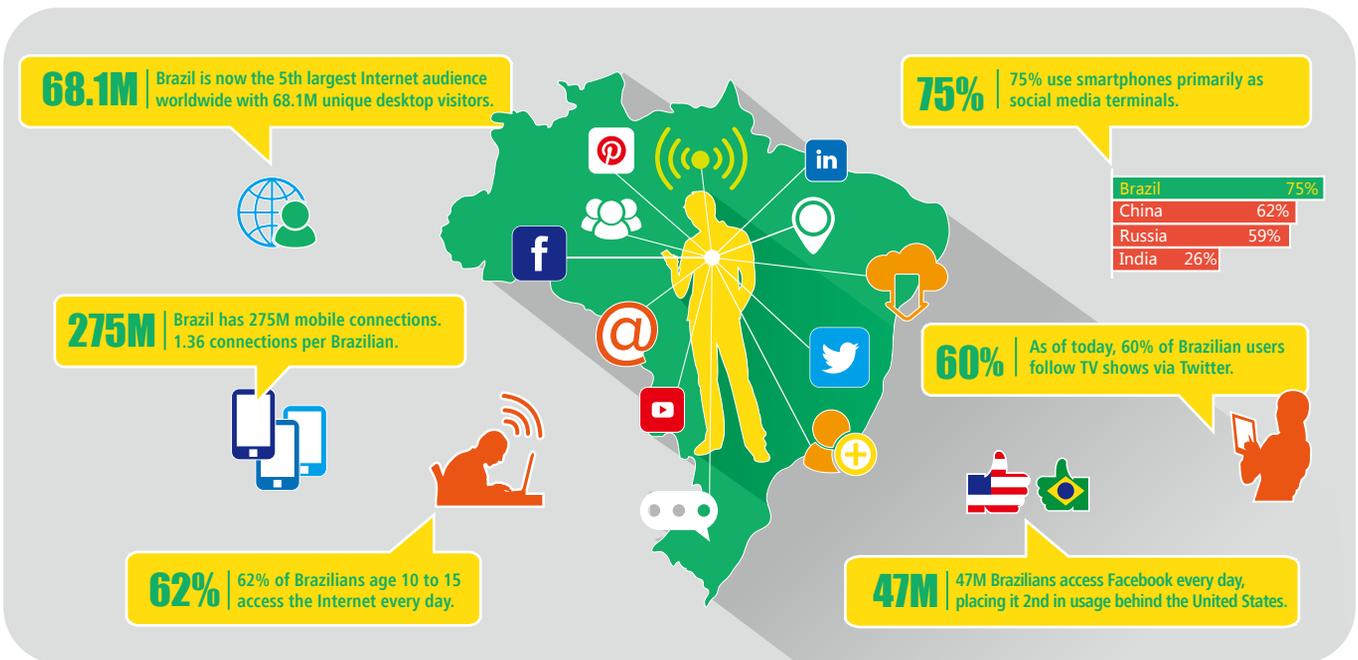
countries surveyed, and quite a bit more social than their BRIC counterparts, with China at 62%, Russia at 59%, and India at 26%.

Immigrants & natives

Marc Prensky, a writer and consultant in the field of education and an expert on the connection between learning and technology, coined the term *digital native* in his work *Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants*, published in 2001. He did this to, in very broad terms, differentiate people who grew up and had their values formed in the pre-digital world and those who did not. The differences between them become clear when observing a mix of generations watching a football match at home. The elders talk, curse, and cheer. Young people read, chat, and post.

This is perhaps the definitive quality of Digitals – they are always in two places at once. Their every real-world activity is accompanied by another in cyberspace. Whether it's chatting, updating, gaming or posting, Digitals only do one thing at a time when forced to, representing





a fundamental shift from all who came before.

When asked to elaborate by *WinWin*, Prensky stated, “The Internet has grown exponentially, accelerating the differences between the pre-digital and digital worlds. I now talk about *The Last Pre-Internet Generation*, and *The First Internet Generation*. Although not everybody is connected to the same degree, there will soon come a time when no one alive has lived in a world without instant, real-time electronic connection.”

Natives start young

A recent survey showed that 86% of Brazilian youth ages 10 to 24 have accessed the Internet at least once; a higher percentage than those seen for ages 25 to 34 (75%) and 35 to 44 (56%). In other words, not only are Brazil’s Digitals more digitally dexterous than its digital immigrants, they are embracing it to a greater degree, despite the fact that digital immigrants typically have more spending power and a greater “need” to use the Internet for survival tasks such as finding work, a roommate,

a date, etc., than a digital native who is more likely to be younger and still living at home

Of those Brazilians age 10 to 15, 62% access the Internet daily and 68% access it at home. Such children probably qualify as Digitals. One such native is Matheus Morais Barbosa, a 12-year old boy from São Paulo who I interviewed for this article. He also happened to be born in the same year that Brazil last took home the FIFA World Cup Trophy. I interviewed him some minutes prior to the World Cup match between the U.S. and Ghana. He was very excited. He collected FIFA World Cup album stickers, and had downloaded the application to manage which ones he had and which were missing, although he said he wasn’t a fan of this app.

Matheus was talking with me over Skype while keeping an eye on the TV. While matches are played, his eyes never waver from the television. The second the action pauses, he goes directly to the Internet to check up on what people are saying about the game and its players. Smart kid, he gathers information from different sources. “I like some soccer teams’ fan

pages on Facebook and other pages that post about the World Cup,” he told me.

Another digital native and soccer fan I interviewed was Rebeka J Figueiredo Ferreira, age 17, who has chosen to watch the games solely on TV with her friends and family, but this shared experience is largely for their benefit. When I asked if she would rather use the Internet at the same time, her answer was, “Of course. It’s impossible to be disconnected during an event of this magnitude.”

Second screen, second nature

Research firm Ovum has found that connected devices are playing a crucial role in evolving viewing habits for big-event TV, including the FIFA World Cup, where PCs, tablets, and smartphones accounted for 57% of all screens this year.

According to Ted Hall, senior analyst at the firm, “Devices capable of streaming live and on-demand video, of which there are now 4.7 billion, are providing additional viewing opportunities outside



the appointment viewing taking place in people's living rooms. With the likes of tablets providing the convenience and flexibility to consume content whenever and wherever, fans are able to watch more of the tournament than ever before."

Digitals in Brazil, as they have most places, have embraced the second screen, leading to a great struggle between Facebook and Twitter for that screen. In a recent press conference in São Paulo, Guilherme Ribenboim, Managing Director of Twitter Brazil, stated that Twitter is focused on being the leading platform for the second screen. In other words, they want users to prefer them over Facebook. As of today, 60% of Brazilian users follow TV shows via Twitter, according to Ribenboim.

During a press conference held last year, Alexandre Hohagen, Facebook's VP for Latin America, stated that, in Brazil, the number of Facebook users jumped from 12 million to 76 million within three

years, and now the country accounts for 30% of total Latin American users. Approximately 47 million Brazilians access Facebook every day, placing the country second in daily use behind the United States. Brazil is also among the five largest markets for Twitter, which saw mobile users surge from 40% to nearly 65% of its total base in the country over the past 13 months, boosted by an increase in smartphone sales. Globally, 76% of Twitter's active users are mobile.

However, the battle lines between these hubs are not merely about what digital natives post, but also what they take in, as Twitter and Facebook are shaping up to be the primary source of information for Brazil's youth, either because they trust their friends' recommendations or because they like fan pages of media companies they consider reliable. However, there are other hubs out there. When asked what he does after the bell rings and he can log onto the school Wi-Fi, Matheus

stated that he goes onto Facebook, Skype, Snapchat and YouTube. Rebeka, on the other hand, has a more complex life, and thus a more complex network of hubs. When she wants to talk with her friends, she uses WhatsApp, Snapchat or Facebook. When she's at work (an apprenticeship at Groupon), she switches to email or Skype. For amusement, she turns to Netflix and YouTube. For other purposes, Rebeka has accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Foursquare, Instagram, LinkedIn, G+, and Spotify, among other sites. When asked about them, she stated, "I like social networks because they're an easy way of communication and dissemination of information, but I do not like the way we are exposed."

Regarding what other local youth are doing on the Internet, those age 10 to 15 are probably (78%) using social media, including Facebook, Orkut and Google Plus. They are also probably (75%) using instant messaging channels



such as Skype or Facebook Messenger. E-mail is used by 49% of this age group, while OTT voice apps are used by 26%, and Twitter is only used by 17%. Those latter numbers might seem a little low to you, but they will probably go up as these young Digitals start making more long-distance acquaintances and start getting more opinionated.

Telcos are upping their game

For the first games (three hours prior to two hours post) at each of the 12 host arenas for the FIFA World Cup 2014, about one million cell phone connections and 7.6 million data communications were made, including emails, images and multimedia, according to national telecom union SindiTelebrasil, with the largest volume of data traffic concentrated in 3G technology.

In the run up to the games, five major Brazilian carriers teamed up to deploy indoor wireless coverage at all 12 stadiums to support the increased data and voice traffic during the games. The infrastructure followed the guidelines used during the London Olympics. Together, the carriers made investments totaling USD100 million to build shared fiber and antenna infrastructure.

In total, nearly 1,000 Wi-Fi antennas and 4,000 indoor cellular antennas were installed in the various stadiums, enabling 2G, 3G and LTE. Outside the stadiums, 144 base stations were deployed, while Wi-Fi offload projects were carried out to cover external areas near the stadiums in half a dozen of the host cities. That latter part is particularly important, because according to young Matheus, “The first question I ask when I enter into a public place is if there is free Wi-Fi available.” The question that follows is, “What’s the password?”

However, coverage is not enough anymore. Digitals require broadband, ubiquitous broadband, as they now

express themselves as much through photos and video as they do through words. Broadband ubiquity is required to keep Digitals in touch seamlessly, and in a large country like Brazil, market forces alone are probably not enough to ensure it.

According to Marc Prensky, “As always-on, real-time access at high speeds and bandwidth becomes a basic necessity for more and more people, much like with other telecommunication technologies, governments can play a big role in ensuring that the technology and bandwidth is rolled out fairly, and does not become something that only the wealthy can afford or something that generates outsized profits for private companies at consumers’ expense. At the same time, unexpected technological breakthroughs may be highly disruptive to the industry as it is configured today.”

All work and all play

Marc Prensky’s aforementioned breakthroughs will not merely prove disruptive to how a company interacts with its customers, but how a company interacts with its future. Digitals have lifestyles and ambitions very different than those of their parents, and they extend far beyond the limited impressions that digital immigrants tend to have.

“I think most underestimate the long-term potential of the Internet to change the world. Although things may change at different speeds in different places, we are already starting, thanks to the Internet, to have generations around the world that are more like each other than they are like their parents in each of their countries. We are all just at the beginning of learning what it means to live part of our lives as a node on the worldwide network,” Prensky explained.

From his perspective, we are currently in the middle of a huge ongoing experiment to figure out

how life is different when we are all connected, and this connection has major implications for education, work, politics, health, and just about everything else.

Filmmaker Danilo Bastos Godoy, age 24, is never offline. He worries about not being available for work assignments. This is probably part of the reason why his entertainment has migrated to the Internet as well. “I’ve changed my cable television to Netflix and I see YouTube videos or music clips that my friends share with me. So, I am very attached to the Internet.” Danilo doesn’t see a clear boundary between personal and professional life. He thinks it’s important to create certain limits or his own rules, but he also admits that in his role there are no commercial hours. “The phone can ring at any time and I must answer. At most times, I need to be on standby, whether I’m at home, traveling, or out for lunch with friends. The boundaries between work and life blend; it is a daily struggle with no division between the two.”

However, unlike many of their parents, Digitals are not too worried about mixing their business and pleasure, if they can balance them well and avoid overwork and stress. They see nothing wrong with taking emails at home and resolving certain issues before arriving at the office, but they also want flexibility from their employers in return. In Brazil, this has been slow in arriving.

“They (Digitals) don’t understand why they cannot leave the company earlier if they have already finished their work. My generation was trained to stay at work until the end of the office hours, even if we had finished our work,” says João Baptista Brandão, professor at the University of Fundação Getúlio Vargas and M.S. degree holder in Management-Organizational Behavior.

For the generation born after 1980,





Brazil: A tale of two cups

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Brazil last hosted the soccer world's greatest event in 1950, which concluded with Uruguay stunning the home team in the final match. A lot has changed since then. The capital has moved from Rio de Janeiro to Brasilia. Inhabitants have quadrupled from 51.9 to 202.8 million souls. The currency has changed from the Cruzeiro to the Real (having gone through seven major reformations along the way) and the GDP per capita has jumped from USD1,600 to USD12,000. There was no Internet back then, and few fixed telephones, but today there are 143 million Internet broadband connections, 85% of which are 3G and 4G. According to Nielsen, active Internet users in Brazil reached 60.7 million this past May. As for mobile users, there are 1.36 mobile connections per Brazilian, totaling 275 million mobile connections overall.

Brandão has great enthusiasm, but he also sees a somewhat worrying trend – self-importance, which has a tendency to slip into arrogance. He sees potential friction between Digitals from the lower and middle classes and more affluent youth. Over the last decade, about 40 million people Brazilians have joined the middle class, swelling the overall number to 108 million (54% of the country). Many middle class and newly-middle class recruits will be entering the same offices as those from more affluent backgrounds, and Brandão thinks the latter will prove less willing to pay their dues in their early work years.

“We are already observing (affluent) youth entering into the workplace and aiming at a position where they will, for instance, not fill out a spreadsheet, but build one and ask someone else to complete it,” Brandão commented. He also noted that Digitals are willing to communicate and exchange ideas with those they really trust but currently they face a lack of confidence from their potential mentors.

Similar but different

Because young people usually do so well with online tasks, some might assume that they know everything about the web, but Marc Prensky says it's not as simple as that. “No one is born knowing how to use Microsoft Word, or any other technology – everyone has to learn. It is much easier to learn when the technology surrounds you from birth. But even then, not everybody learns at the same rate, or has the same access.”

Mere access is not enough. Digitals require broadband, ubiquitous broadband, as they now express themselves as much through photos and video as they do words. Broadband ubiquity is required to keep Digitals in touch seamlessly, and in a large country like Brazil, market forces alone are probably not enough to ensure it.

Although there will always be differences between those who have less and more, many new technologies are quickly becoming accepted as basic needs for all or most, such as mobile phones and Internet access. “Most young people, I believe, are aspirational for these technologies, and many of the new technologies will soon become almost as universal as clothing,” Prensky noted.

The remaining question is whether or not globalization is putting Digitals all on the same page. When speaking about at a hackathon he attended, Prensky stated, “I found them very similar to their peers in other places around the world.” However, the hackathon crowd may be more homogeneous than the Digital community as a whole. Even Prensky himself is on the record as saying, “Digital natives do similar things in all countries. This does not mean, however, that they are all becoming the same.”

A growing gap

So, Digitals are different from each other, but they are certainly much more different from their parents, and this generation gap is larger than perhaps any in history. This is why they represent such a challenge for business and government, both of which are run by a mix of their parents and grandparents.

Attracting youth is a challenge, and this extends not only to the makers and sellers of things, but also schools, religions, and governments. All will have to transform to become attractive to young people. Bear in mind that none of the sites Rebecka Ferreira frequents is a business that your college textbooks would have recognized, and hardly any of them even existed in the 20th century. The tables have turned. For the first time ever, it's the older generation who must grow and change in response to the new one. Brazil, as a center of gravity in the digital world, is where it must begin. [www](#)





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