

BECAUSE...BUSINESS IS DIGITAL

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# B2B DIGITAL LITERACY REPORT

PREPARED BY  
THE ONLINE DIGITAL ACADEMY



JULY 2020

# ABOUT

In this B2B Digital Literacy Report - we're bringing together some of the latest thinking, research and best practice focused on raising the digital literacy and digital skill base across B2B organisations.

Throughout the past decade, digital technologies, led by mobile technology, have totally pervaded our everyday lives - fundamentally changing the way we consume - both products and news, and the way we connect, with friends, family, clients and the wider world.

At the ODA we believe that business is digital - and that digital has become an absolute essential of not only marketing strategy, but also organisational strategy.

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# WHERE WE'RE AT TODAY

There's no doubt about it. We live in a highly connected digital world.

Digital around the world continues to grow.

Data from the annual We Are Social and Hootsuite 'Digital 2020' report showcases that 59% of the world's population is now connected to the internet.

Mobile technology is helping to fuel this continued growth - with two thirds of the world's population already using mobile.

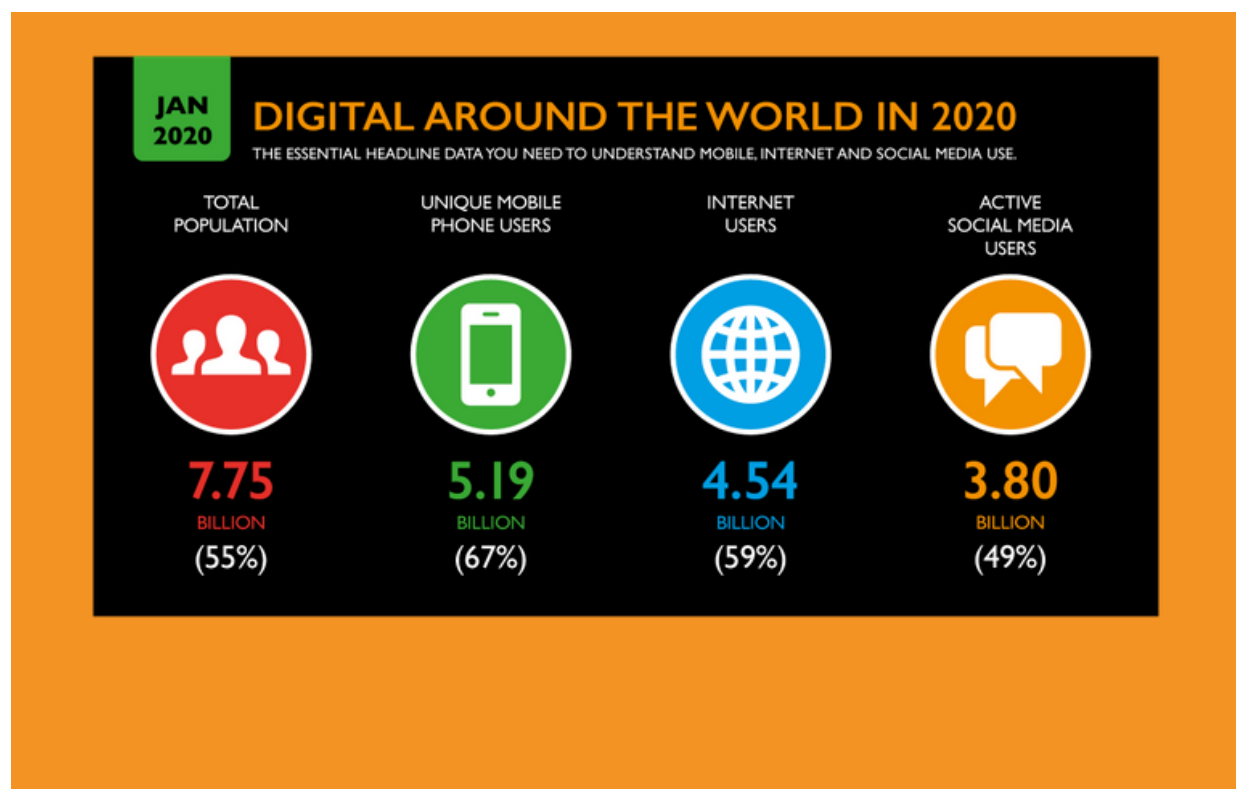
**63%** of global internet users say that they are constantly connected online, up from 56% in 2015.

**97%** of digital consumers have used a social media network in the past month; being an internet user means being a social media user..

**90%** of customer buying decisions start online.

**75%** of B2B buyers use social media to research vendors.

As a result, sales teams and B2B organisations need to think and act differently and more 'digitally focused' to engage with and influence prospects.



# SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE



We're spending more time on the internet - with average users spending more than **6.5** hours each day.

Social media accounts for the greatest share of that time - with an average **2.20 hours** generally and in some demographics almost 4 hours a day.

The ability to be continuously connected - is fuelling changes in our behaviour.

Just think about your own activity. How connected you are. How you buy. How you converse. How you connect.

Your mobile strategy and social media strategy is likely to play a much bigger part than ever before.

Given this report is being formulated in July 2020, we find ourselves in the midst of a global pandemic.

It's been interesting to see how organisations have accelerated their digital transformation programs - pivoting to ensure that teams are connected 'digitally' to both each other and to customers.

The Global Web Index research in May 2020 reported that social media usage spiked - with **42%** of consumers globally saying they're now spending longer on social media because of the outbreak, rising to 54% among Gen Z.

# MOBILE

**MOBILE DRIVES OR INFLUENCES AN AVERAGE OF OVER 40% OF REVENUE IN LEADING B2B ORGANISATIONS.**

Mobile Marketing and the B2B Buyer, BCG in Partnership with Google, 2017

**MOBILE CONTINUES TO FUEL THE STRONG COMMERCIAL GROWTH ALIGNED WITH DIGITAL.**

## RESEARCH

People not only do their research via their mobile phones but increasingly will actively buy. Think about your own behaviour. Have you bought via your mobile?

## WEBSITE TRAFFIC

People more likely to visit your website from a smartphone or tablet than a desktop. The ratio is visible via your website analytics.

## MOBILE MATTERS IN B2B

Google partnered with Millwood Brown Digital running a B2B survey over two year period to understand research and purchasing habits and use of digital. **42%** used a mobile device during the B2B purchase process. As importantly, they saw a **91%** increase in growth of mobile usage across the B2B purchase path.



# B2B SOCIAL SELLING

The internet and social networks have changed the sales process. Buyers now have access to more information at their fingertips, and they can quickly validate their research by searching reviews and social media to see what others think.

75% of B2B buyers use social media to research vendors.

As a result, sales teams need to think and act differently to engage with and influence prospects.

A huge part of this is through providing helpful online content and information, to build trust and credibility and identify and engage with potential customers through social networks in an approach often referred to as 'social selling'.

## **How does content fit into the social selling process?**

Your first impression is likely to be a digital one. Your branded content has therefore become a critical component in any sales professional's arsenal when it comes to selling online.

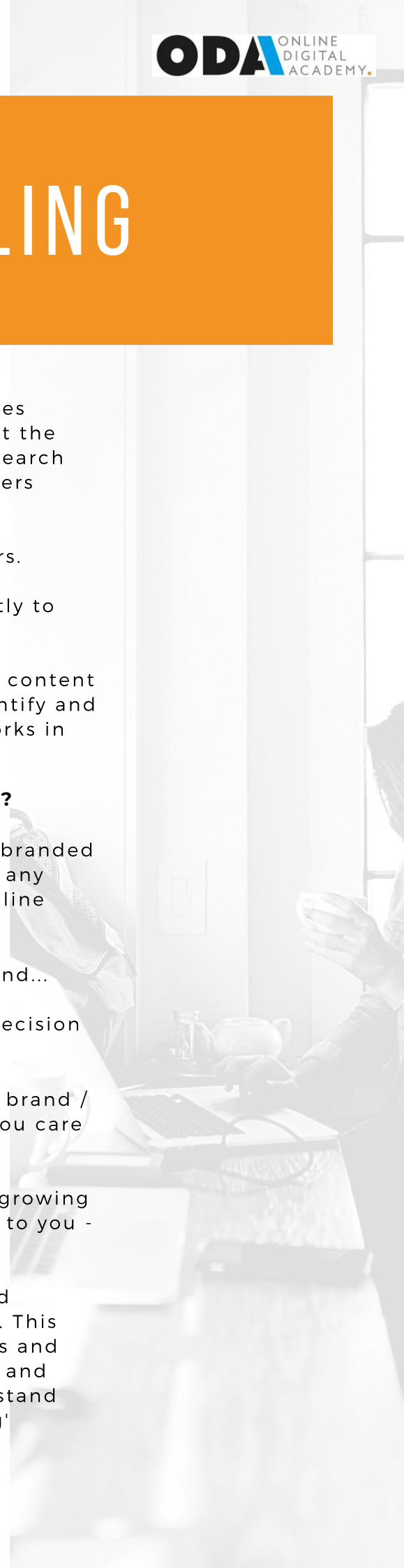
**67%** of top-performing sales organisations support their sales process with influential content - and...

**65%** of B2B buyers claim it has influenced their final decision to purchase.

We like to think of content as constantly keeping your brand / service 'front of mind' - showing your audiences that you care and that you know what you're talking about.

Social selling is really about a series of touch points - growing continuous share of mind, moving the audience closer to you - by being helpful, useful, informative and creative.

B2B organisations need to provide timely, targeted and relevant content, consistently to buyers and prospects. This content can include blogs, guides/eBooks, infographics and video to share across social networks, capture interest and data and of course, measure response rates - to understand how content is performing as part of the 'social selling' process.



# EFFECTIVE CONTENT

## WHICH CONTENT IS MOST EFFECTIVE?

**"YOU ARE WHAT YOU SHARE - ALL CONTENT THAT YOU SHARE IS A BRAND TOUCH POINT."**

A study by the Content Marketing Institute looked at content at different stages of the buyer journey. Considering early stage (awareness/interest), middle stage (consideration/interest), late stage (evaluation/purchase).

They found the following:

### Stages of Buyers Journey - Content Type which is Most Effective When Used for Demand Generation

	Early Stage (Awareness/Interest)	Middle Stages (Consideration/Interest)	Late Stage (Evaluation/Purchase)
Blog post/articles	73%	21%	6%
Case studies	18%	42%	40%
Ebooks	56%	39%	6%
In person events	35%	33%	32%
Interactive content	46%	46%	8%
Podcasts	57%	35%	7%
Videos	54%	40%	6%
Webinars	36%	47%	17%
White papers	34%	53%	14%
Other types of content	36%	37%	27%

Source: Content Marketing Institute: Using Content Marketing for Demand Generation, 2018.

# CONSUMER EXPECTATION

## IT'S ALL ABOUT TRUST...



When it comes to consumer expectation - there's been a significant shift. Just think about your own consumer expectations and how they've changed.

There's a new level of immediacy - which is speeding up business and service delivery processes. We expect brands and organisations to get back to us quickly - and in meaningful ways-not cookie cutter responses.

Consumers are also looking for trust signals - such as referrals and recommendations - they trust what their peers say and even what complete strangers say online.

It's never been easier for consumers to easily make comparisons. No longer trudging around from supplier to supplier - they can simply check out websites and social media channels and online reviews to build their own picture about your product or service. And of course, this can all happen via a smartphone, within minutes - even seconds.

These same expectations are transferring to business buyers too.

Salesforce Research surveyed 7,037 global consumers and business buyers. They too - discovered that business buyers expect a personalised experience -and why wouldn't they.

- **72%** expect vendors to personalise engagement to needs.
- **69%** expect amazon-like buying experiences - simple, easy and efficient.
- **67%** think vendors in the B2B space are providing more 'retail like' experiences
- **67%** state that they switched vendors for a more consumer like experience.



# BUSINESS IS DIGITAL

It's time for organisations to review their digital competence and embrace the digital landscape and optimise new technologies.

The technology is now readily available to personalise engagement, retarget, remarket, target and nurture relevant audiences with compelling and engaging content, often directly into the palms of their hands.

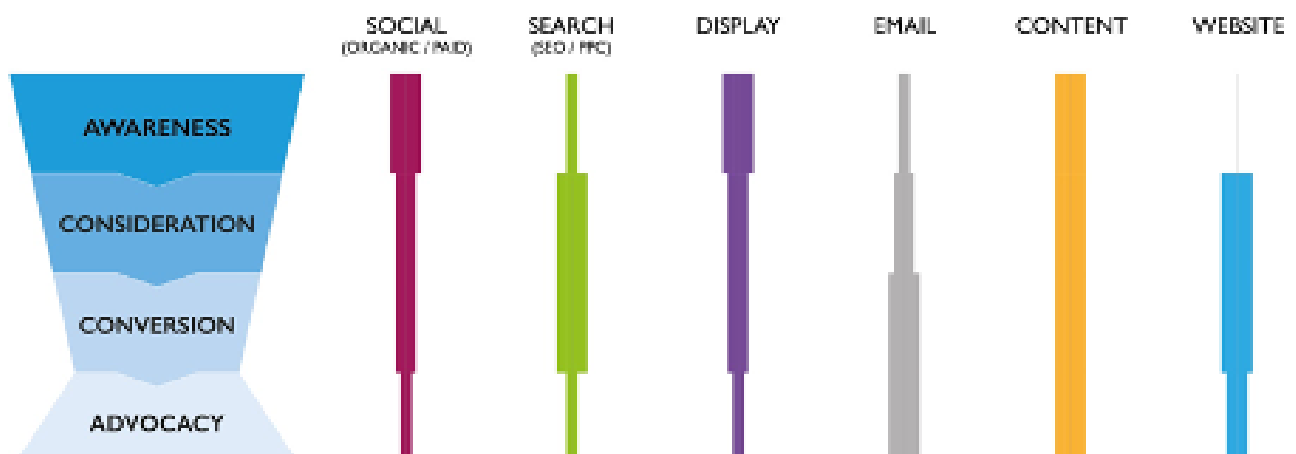
The recent global 'pandemic' has brought to light the impact of connection through digital and had resulted in more eyeballs and activity on social media than ever before.

The way B2B organisations 'sell' is changing, with teams realising that to build relationships with prospects and nurture clients consistently, they can build engagement via social networks.

Of course, the key aspect isn't purely about using the technologies and platforms, but how you add value whilst doing so. Ensuring your content is useful, purposeful and focused on 'your audiences needs' rather than purely all about what you do - is critical.

Digital has totally disrupted the traditional funnel, and dependency levels are shifting.

## DIGITAL THROUGHOUT THE CONSIDERATION FUNNEL



# DIGITAL SKILLS TRAINING

The move towards more dependency on digital has led to a huge skills challenge for individuals and organisations.

Indeed, in the latest 2020 Edelman Trust Barometer cites that 83% employees fear losing their jobs, with lack of skills/training required for a digital world as a key factor.

The pace of change means a simple process of 'one-off' training is no longer fit for purpose. The constantly changing digital landscape, requires a commitment to continuous learning.

Skills need to be updated on an on-going basis, and a culture of continuous learning needs to be developed by organisations and adopted by individuals.

## RAISING THE DIGITAL IQ PRESENTS A SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY

A study by Oxford Economics and Virgin Media Business claimed the UK economy could receive a **£92M boost** if organisations fully developed their digital potential.

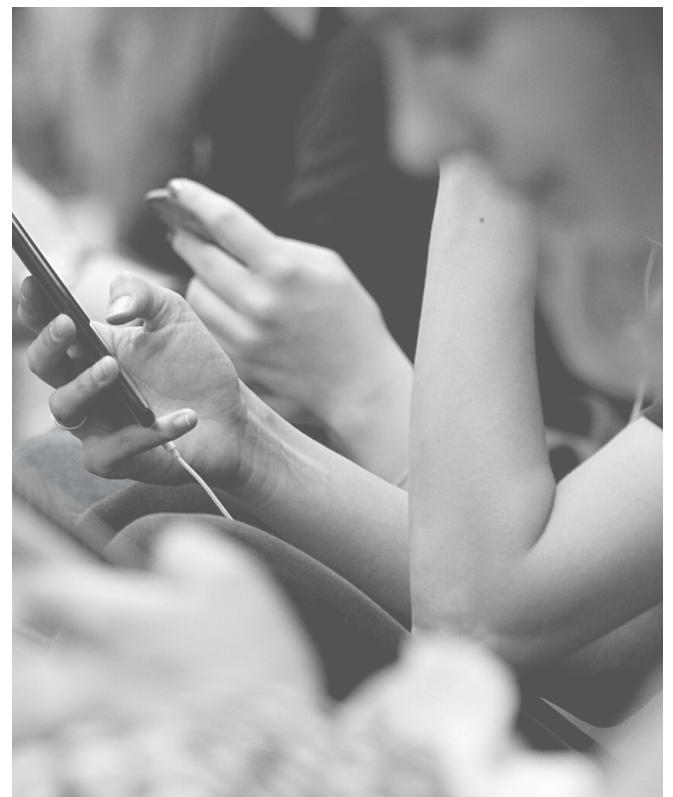
Another study showed **increased turnover x3** in organisations with digitally competent workforces.

The World Economic Forum estimates that by 2022 more than half (**54%**) of employees are going to need significant training, with more than a third, (35%), needing at least 6 months worth of effort to develop their digital skills.

And of course, as the nature of how we work changes, home-working, remote teams, hot-desking - and moving away from traditional 'office based, 9 to 5 routines, the degree of digital literacy required for many occupation needs to align.

Digital literacy is no longer a 'nice to have' across an organisation - but rather, a necessary skill across the entire employee base. Regardless of department, digital literacy is a key component of business.

Business is... digital.



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## ABOUT THE ODA

### DIGITAL SKILLS TRAINING FOR B2B ORGANISATIONS

The Online Digital Academy is committed to supporting B2B organisations, SMEs and individuals with digital skills training.

Our training is designed to work for organisations and individuals. Bite sized learning that works for you. To discuss your requirements, simply get in touch - via [www.onlinedigitalacademy.co.uk](http://www.onlinedigitalacademy.co.uk)



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# GOT ANY QUESTIONS?

GET IN TOUCH!  
[WWW.ONLINEDIGITALACADEMY.CO.UK](http://WWW.ONLINEDIGITALACADEMY.CO.UK)

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