

## Want to attract millennials? deploy appealing technology



According to the U.S. Census Bureau, by 2029, when all of the baby boomers will be 65 years and over, more than 20% of the total U.S. population will also be this age. And with the baby boom generation now beginning to leave the workforce in substantial numbers, the race to find their replacements—so-called millennials aged 21 to 35—is heating up.

This new generation of millennial workers essentially ushered in the age of IT consumerization. They have grown up with the Internet and are accustomed to highly user-friendly interfaces, universal data access, modern designs in applications, and total mobile compatibility. And they expect their workplace to follow suit.

A recent Quick Poll from IDG Research shows that many companies need to improve in their ability to attract younger workers, and that cloud applications play a critical role in drawing these workers to their companies. This white paper details how companies such as Infor are developing next-generation business applications aimed at appealing to workers who expect user-friendly interfaces.

“CIOs have to create an environment that millennials feel is current, up-to-date, more open, and ‘cool,’ not only to attract and keep these employees, but also to attract and keep millennial customers,” says Barr Snyderwine, CIO at Hargrove Inc., a general contractor for trade shows, events, and exhibits.



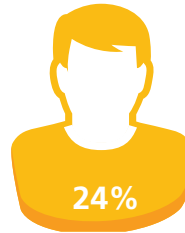
## HOW WELL DO YOU STACK UP VS. THE COMPETITION IN ATTRACTING MILLENNIALS?



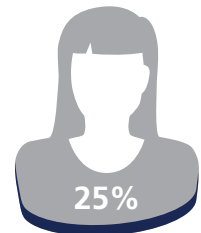
13%  
More successful  
than competitors



37%  
Equally successful  
as competitors



24%  
Not as successful  
as competitors



25%  
Not measured/  
Don't Know

Source: IDG Enterprise Research: Cloud Enterprise Business Applications

### The challenge of attracting millennials

When it comes to attracting millennial workers, there's clearly a need for improvement among companies. A mere 13% of the IT and business professionals surveyed by IDG Research in August 2014 think they are more successful than their competitors at attracting millennial employees. One-quarter of the organizations are not able to quantify their level of success with attracting such employees.

"We have seen that as younger people enter the workforce, they're looking for a work environment that has particular characteristics, such as the use of mobile, social, and collaborative technology," says Daniel Sholler, Vice President, Platform and Technology, at Infor. "And it's clear that the experiences millennials expect are not the norm at most organizations; there's always a gap between the strategic intent and what's actually on the ground."

### Cloud as the antidote

The cloud will play a huge role in luring these workers. Just under half of the survey respondents (48%) say cloud adoption is part of their organization's strategy to attract millennial employees, and 9% say it's a large part of their recruiting strategy.

When asked how cloud technology is enabling an attractive work environment for younger workers, the most common response was to create a more flexible, mobile work culture (72%). Other ways include offering employees the opportunity to learn and use the latest technologies (53%); building a sense of community at work with cloud-based collaboration and social media tools (53%); and improving the user interface for core systems (50%).

The cloud can help organizations deliver enterprise mobile applications that match the functionality of traditional enterprise applications to the expectations of mobile users, including millennials, who demand collaboration, context with full functionality, and flexible access to critical business processes.

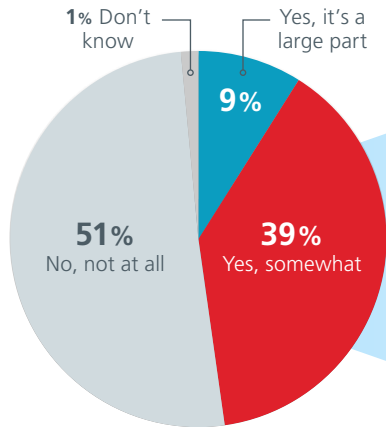
"To a large extent, the cloud is an enabler for a lot of these popular technologies, because it changes the economics of IT infrastructure," Sholler says. "It allows organizations to move to this new IT environment that is more attractive."

In evaluating their organizations' core systems, respondents grade themselves highly for reliability, with 78% saying reliability is excellent or very good.

That might be good news, in terms of attracting and retaining millennials.

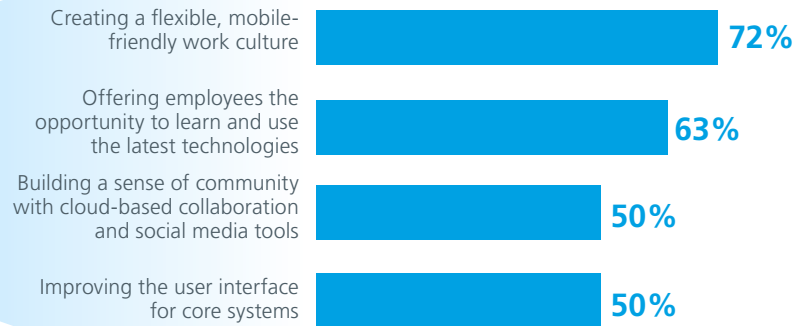
## USING CLOUD TECHNOLOGY TO ATTRACT MILLENNIAL EMPLOYEES

### Is this part of company's strategy?



### How is cloud technology creating an attractive work environment for millennial employees?

Of those that report yes, it is part of their strategy



Source: IDG Enterprise Research: Cloud Enterprise Business Applications

"There's an expectation [among younger workers] that technology should just work," says R. "Ray" Wang, Principal Analyst at Constellation Research. "[Such workers] are used to having continuous access and collaboration."

Other areas evaluated in the study, including those features most desired by users, don't fare as well. For example, fewer respondents grade their organizations excellent or very good for compatibility across multiple platforms (43%), consumer-style user interface (42%), modern design (40%), and mobile-friendly (37%).

However, a majority of the organizations have upgraded or plan to upgrade their core systems, with 18% saying they have gone through an upgrade, 33% expecting to complete one in the next 12 months and 16% expecting to do an upgrade in more than 12 months.

Among the benefits they expect to see from a such an upgrade are improved productivity (84%); creation and adoption of a more collaborative work environment (67%); highly available, reliable service (62%); improved employee morale (51%); the ability to gain business insights on demand (49%); and better attraction and retention of millennial employees (33%).

Although cloud-based applications with exceptional user interfaces are a key part of the strategy to attract millennials, companies can also deploy modern interfaces within their on-premise systems. The main point to understand is that these workers want to be able to use attractive, mobile-friendly apps to access data, get their work done, collaborate with colleagues, and so on. In other words, they'd like to work with technology the same way they live with it.

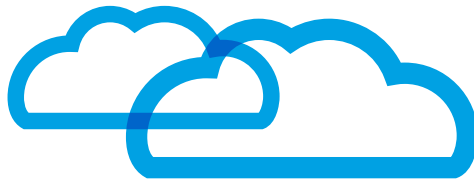
### Building an alluring IT environment

Solutions are available to help companies attract and retain millennial workers. For example, Infor offers cloud-based applications suites for health-care, manufacturing, government, and other industries, and is focusing heavily on designing and building the simplest, most elegant and intuitive user interfaces—ideal for attracting the younger generation of workers.

The company's applications are available in both cloud and on-premise versions, and provide an additional rationale for a move to the cloud. Infor has selectively built an in-house, top-notch design team, Hook & Loop, with Pulitzer Prize- and

Emmy Award-winning designers, to help with its software design efforts.

Hook & Loop's goal is to develop interfaces that simplify the way people work and create experiences that users enjoy. This appeals to millennials who are accustomed to the kind of interfaces they look for in their mobile, consumer-driven environment.



To attract younger workers, companies need to leverage the latest cloud applications offering user-friendly interfaces supporting the mobile devices and applications to which so many millennial workers have been long accustomed.

Infor sees the cloud as a way to leverage mobility, which is a major part of attracting and retaining millennials. Its technologies are designed to help companies become mobile enterprises. And its standards-based Infor ION technology plays a crucial role, offering content and process frameworks designed to speed and simplify the task of integrating mobile apps.

"There has been a big change in workers' expectations around technology, and Infor is moving to meet those expectations in terms of social, collaboration, and mobile technology," Sholler says. "All of that is being built into the user experience that we provide in our products."

## Conclusion

With a large and growing number of baby boomers starting to retire, companies increasingly are turning to the millennial generation of workers to fill those roles. But those organizations that expect to attract and retain these workers with an out-of-date IT environment are in for a rude awakening.

To attract younger workers, companies need to leverage the latest cloud applications offering user-friendly interfaces supporting the mobile devices and applications to which so many millennial workers have been long accustomed. Those companies that fail to deliver a modern work environment might find themselves losing out to the competition and missing out on opportunities to grow the business with the help of this emerging workforce.

