



PRINT 2025

Spotlight Report

Millennials Matter

Print and digital convergence
in the future workplace

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Millennials matter

A market report on how millennials and Generation Z will shape the future of print in the workplace

By 2025, one of the largest generations in history will leave the workforce as the last baby boomers reach retirement. They'll be replaced by Generation X, millennials and those just entering the workforce, Generation Z. Already the largest generation at work, millennials are expected to account for approximately 75% of the workforce by 2025¹. Comprising those born between 1980 and the mid-1990s, millennials are not only the largest demographic in the multi-generational workforce, they are also the first to grow up surrounded by digital technology—smartphones, broadband services and social media.

While millennials are shaping the digital workplace today and moving into leadership roles, Generation Z, born between the late-1990s and early 2000s, will play an increasingly influential role in shaping the future workplace. Together, millennials and Generation Z are demanding workplace technology that mirrors the mobility, simplicity and convenience of their personal lives. This digital native generation values the opportunity to collaborate securely from anywhere, anytime and on any device.

So, what does this mean for the role of traditional office printing in the workplace? This Global Print 2025 Spotlight report reveals that, contrary to popular perception, millennial decision-makers will continue to place significant value on paper documents between now and 2025. At the same time they'll demand major improvements in cloud and mobile printing solutions and services. However, this generation also

recognises the importance of paper digitisation in their organisation's digital transformation initiatives. While print is not disappearing, the role it plays in the digital workplace will undoubtedly change.

This Global Print 2025 Spotlight report highlights the changing expectations of print in the workplace amongst the millennial generation and discusses the opportunity this presents for print manufacturers and their channel partners as they look to build their relevance in the rapidly changing technology landscape.

Research Note:

The findings in this report are the result of 200 online interviews with IT managers or business decision-makers aged 18-34, referred to as millennials. Please note that in this research, the millennials category may contain some Generation Z respondents. 83% of respondents were aged 25-34 at the time of the research; they had to be decision-makers or influencers to qualify, which resulted in the majority falling into the upper end of the age range.

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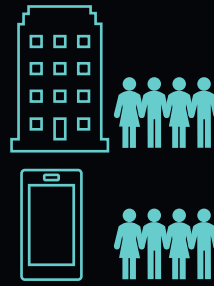
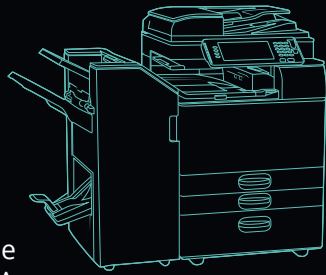
Key findings

200 online interviews

IT managers & business decision-makers

Aged 18-34

UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the USA



61%

of workforce expected to be mobile in 2025

Millennial decision-makers' key priorities 2017-2025

Business priorities to 2025

1. Improve revenue
2. Improve business efficiency
3. Improve employee productivity

Investment areas to 2025

1. IT security
2. Managed print services
3. Cloud computing

Print vendors need to adapt to meet customers' changing needs

To increase relevance in a digital workplace print vendors must invest in...



Cloud printing



Mobile printing



Paper to digital workflow

These are the highest ranked features required for MFPs between 2017 & 2025



Built-in security



Wireless connectivity



Usage analytics



Integrated mobile printing

The growing influence of millennials in the workplace

Although broad generalisations should not be applied to an entire generation, millennials are unquestionably revolutionising the workplace. Today's workforce is unique in that four generations – baby boomers, Generation X, millennials and Generation Z – are now working together. The challenge for businesses is to create a digital workplace that enables all generations to be more productive. This means providing flexible collaboration and mobility tools that allow employees to work from anywhere, anytime, on any device.

As millennials move into leadership roles and gain more influence over technology decisions, it will become imperative that print suppliers and their partners build their relevance with this diverse and demanding audience. The top three business priorities in this demographic category are to improve business efficiency, improve revenue and improve employee productivity. Notably, reducing cost is not a top priority in the same way it is amongst other age groups (Figure 1). This reflects a different set of business values and priorities amongst millennial

decision-makers that is focused on business and employee performance.

This is driving a rapid evolution of automation in the workplace as this promises to deliver increased efficiency, productivity and collaboration. While the older generations may resist change such as automation in existing processes, the millennial generation is more likely to be receptive to automation as an opportunity to optimise work efficiencies.

	All (575)	18 to 34 years old (200)	35 to 44 years old (213)	45 to 54 years old (121)	55+ years old (41)	TOP 3 RANKED PRIORITIES
Improve business efficiency	3.99	3.93	3.97	4.07	4.10	LOWEST 3 RANKED PRIORITIES
Improve revenue	3.98	3.94	3.99	3.98	4.17	
Improve employee productivity	3.97	3.92	4.00	3.96	4.12	
Reduce costs / expenses	3.96	3.85	4.05	3.98	3.93	
Improve customer retention	3.95	3.90	3.91	4.03	4.20	
Acquire new customers	3.92	3.86	3.94	3.91	4.10	
Become more innovative	3.85	3.86	3.81	3.83	4.05	
Improve employee engagement	3.83	3.84	3.78	3.83	4.00	
Reduce risk	3.82	3.86	3.76	3.82	3.95	
Increase speed and confidence in decision-making	3.77	3.86	3.74	3.64	3.90	
Increase profit	3.77	3.74	3.80	3.71	3.90	
Improve staff retention	3.74	3.82	3.63	3.70	3.98	

Figure 1. Most critical priorities to organisations

Question: To what extent do you think the following will be a business priority for your organisation from now to 2025?

1 – not a business priority, 5 – critical business priority

Millennial facts

As millennials move up the ranks and gain more influence over technology budgets, print industry players must address their differing needs. While such a large group is inevitably diverse and complex, millennials do share some overarching characteristics:

- **Digital natives.** Most millennials have never known life without digital technology. This makes them critical of technology that doesn't meet their expectations. They are adept at using technology, and highly active on social media.
- **Brand loyalty varies.** They want to buy from brands with a strong reputation. 73% of millennial buyers say a strong brand reputation is important or critical when they are evaluating technology vendors, and almost 5% say it is important for brands to be market leaders. However only 23% believe it is important or critical for companies to have been established for at least 10 years, compared to 31% of Generation X and 32% of baby boomers².
- **Sustainability-conscious.** They tend to be more socially conscious than older age groups, and are attracted to product offerings marketed as ethical, sustainable or environmentally friendly. 75% of millennials would take a pay cut to work for a responsible company, compared with a 55% average across all ages; almost two-thirds would not accept a job from a company without strong CSR practices³.
- **A preference for access over ownership.** Due to relative economic insecurity, some millennials are shifting toward renting over owning belongings, from cars to clothes⁴.
- **Expect flexible work and effective workplace technology.** Over 80% of millennials say workplace technology would have an influence when taking a job. Millennials consistently rank the importance of flexible work arrangements in the top three factors when evaluating a job⁵.

Talking a different language















	Maturists (pre 1945) Wartime rationing Rock'n'roll Nuclear families Defined gender roles particularly for women	Baby boomers (1945-1960) Cold War Swinging Sixties Moon landings Youth culture Woodstock Family-orientated	Generation X (1961-1980) Fall of Berlin Reagan/Gorbachev/Thatcherism Live Aid Early mobile technology Divorce rate rises	Millennial (1981-1995) 9/11 terrorist attacks Social media Invasion of Iraq Reality TV Google Earth	Generation Z (Born after 1995) Economic downturn Global warming Mobile devices Cloud computing Wiki-leaks
Formative experiences					
Attitude toward career	Jobs for life 	Organisational careers are defined by employees	'Portfolio' careers – loyal to profession but not to employer	Digital entrepreneurs – work 'with' organisations	Multitaskers – will move seamlessly between organisations and 'pop-up' businesses
Signature product	Automobile 	Television 	Personal computer 	Tablet, smartphone 	Google glass, 3D Printing
Communication media	Formal letter 	Telephone 	Email and text message 	Text or social media 	Hand-held communication devices

Figure 2. The generations in the workplace

Source: Adapted from *Talking about my generation: Exploring the benefits engagement challenge*, Barclays Corporate and Employer Solutions, September 2013

Millennial optimism for paper in the workplace

Despite the general assumption that millennials favour digital content over printed content, Quocirca’s Print 2025 study reveals that millennial decision-makers expect print to remain prevalent in their businesses in 2025.

Overall 77% think paper/physical documents will be important or very important in 2025, compared to 74% who believe they are important now (Figure 3). Although this may seem counter-intuitive, it indicates that millennials are not as dismissive of paper as would be believed. This perhaps reflects a renewed affinity with traditional media in their consumer lives – for instance preferring print books to e-books⁶.

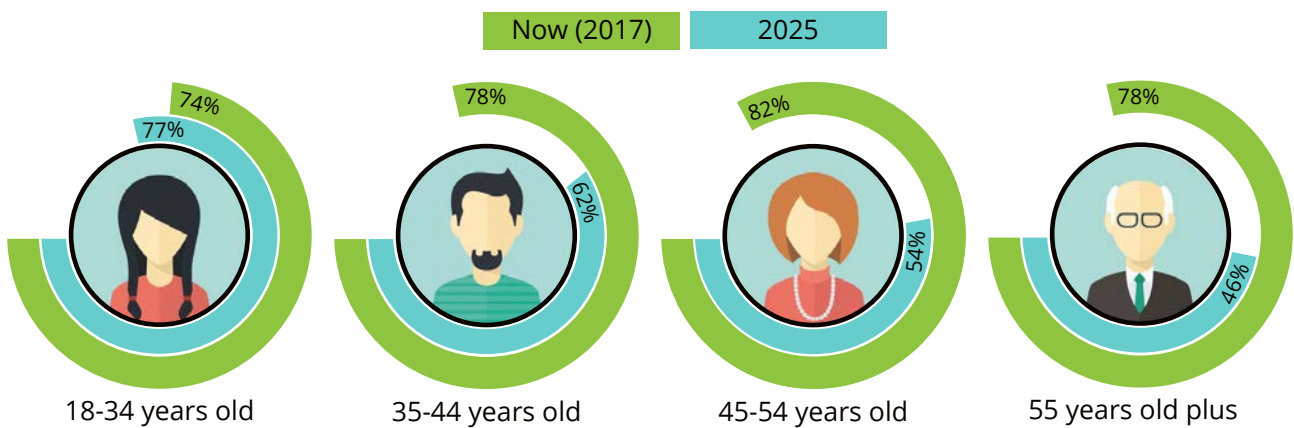


Figure 3. Importance of paper documents

Question. How important do you think paper documents are to the daily business of your organisation (Important and very important responses)

The concept of the “less-paper” office is proving to be more realistic than the “paperless office”. Not only do millennial decision-makers believe that paper documents will remain important by 2025, over half expect office print volumes to increase between now and 2025. Much of this growth is expected to be driven by mobile printing, with 55% indicating that they expect mobile print volumes to increase over the same period (Figure 4)

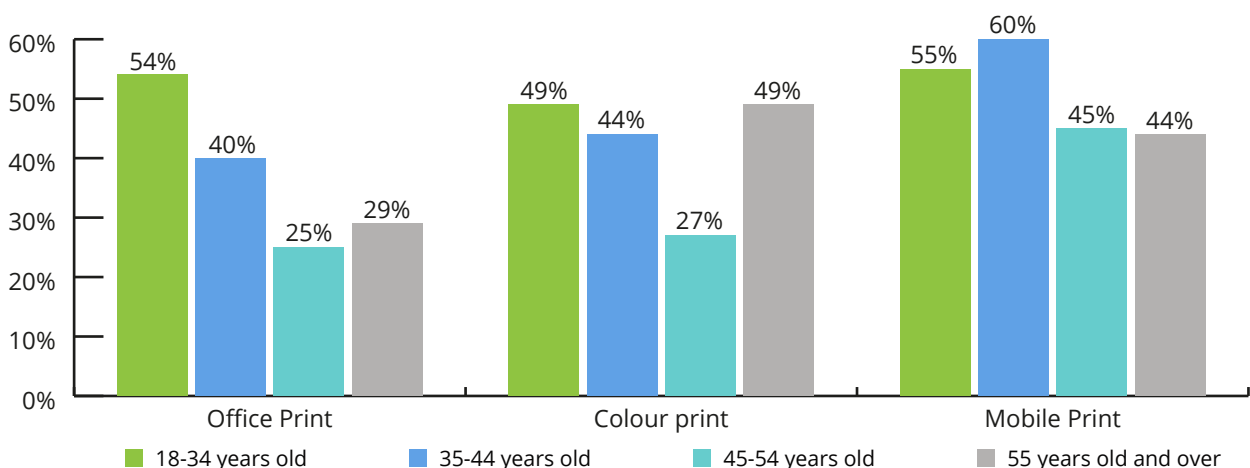


Figure 4. Proportion of respondents indicating an expected increase in print volume

Question. How do you think your organisation’s use of print will change in volumes between now and 2025? (Increased volumes shown)

Millennials are more likely to agree that important documents should be printed (Figure 5), while 63% agree that print is more durable/reliable than digital content. This view differs dramatically from the older generation of respondents (Figure 6).

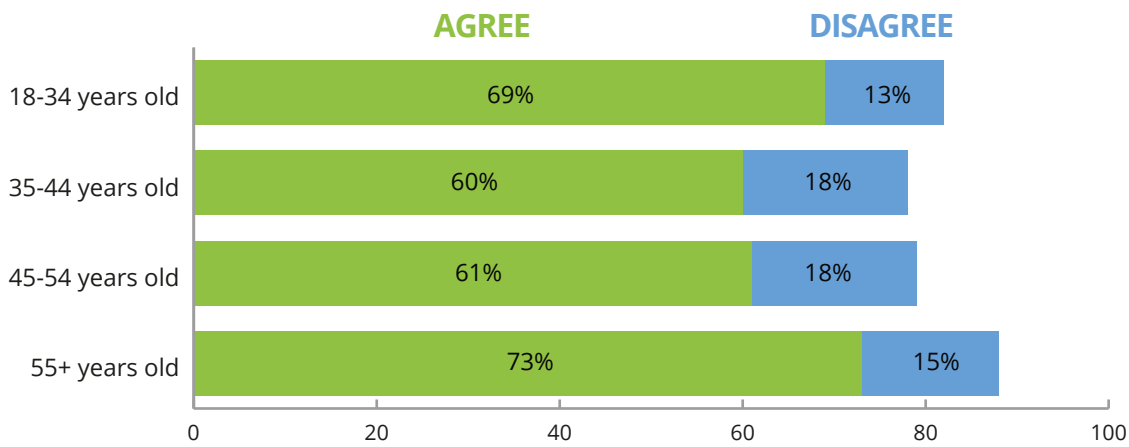


Figure 5. Generational views on the importance of printing important documents

Question. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?: Important documents should be printed.

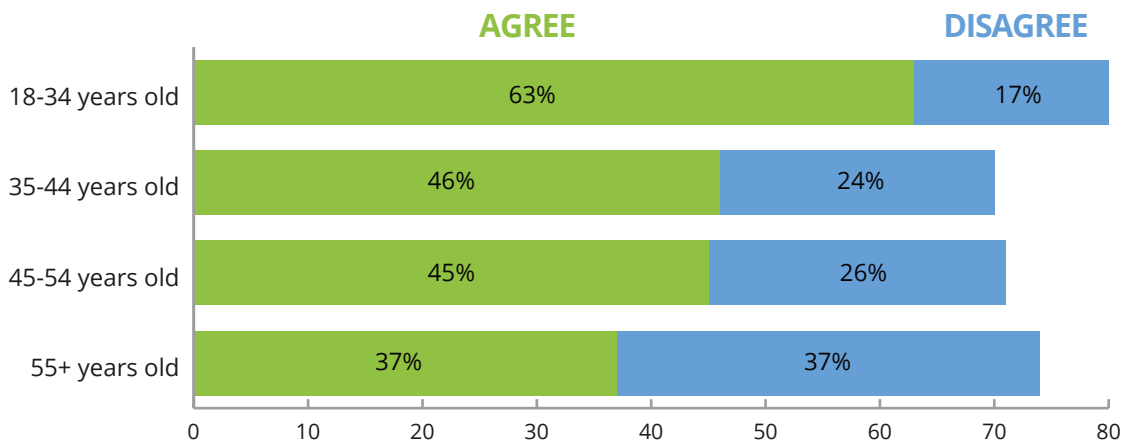


Figure 6. Generational views on the reliability / durable of paper versus digital content

Question. To what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statement?: Printed documents are more reliable than digital content.

This ongoing dependence on paper in the workplace comes at a cost – not just financial but also environmental. Over half (53%) of millennial respondents cite their top print management challenges as reducing paper usage and ensuring document security, closely followed by reducing consumables costs (52%). Notably, a higher proportion (50%) of millennial respondents indicate that reducing environmental impact is a key concern, compared to 38% in the 45-54 age category.

Millennial decision-makers are also more likely to cite the need for improved usage analytics (49%) compared to 40% in other age categories (Figure 7).

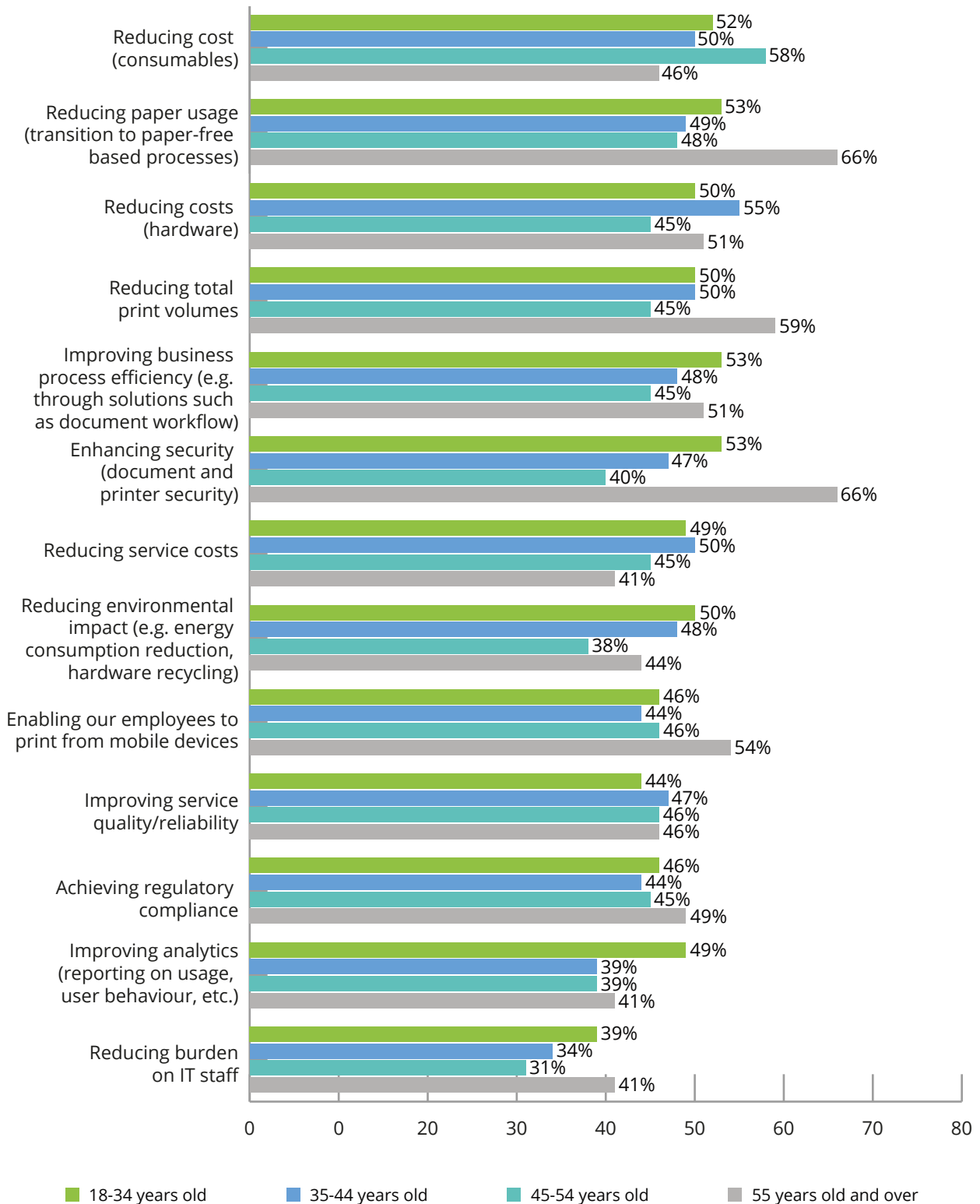


Figure 7. Print management challenges

Question. To what extent are the following a challenge in managing your print infrastructure (High or critical challenge)

The ongoing relevance of print in the digital workplace is clearly tempered with a need to reduce cost, lower risk and improve efficiency. This creates a need for solutions and services which can address these needs, without hindering employee productivity.

Cloud and mobile printing top the millennial agenda

The increasing mobile and digital nature of the workplace means it is hardly surprising that millennials see cloud printing, mobile printing and paper-to-digital workflow integration as the technologies print vendors most need to invest in to ensure they remain relevant in 2025. (Figure 8)

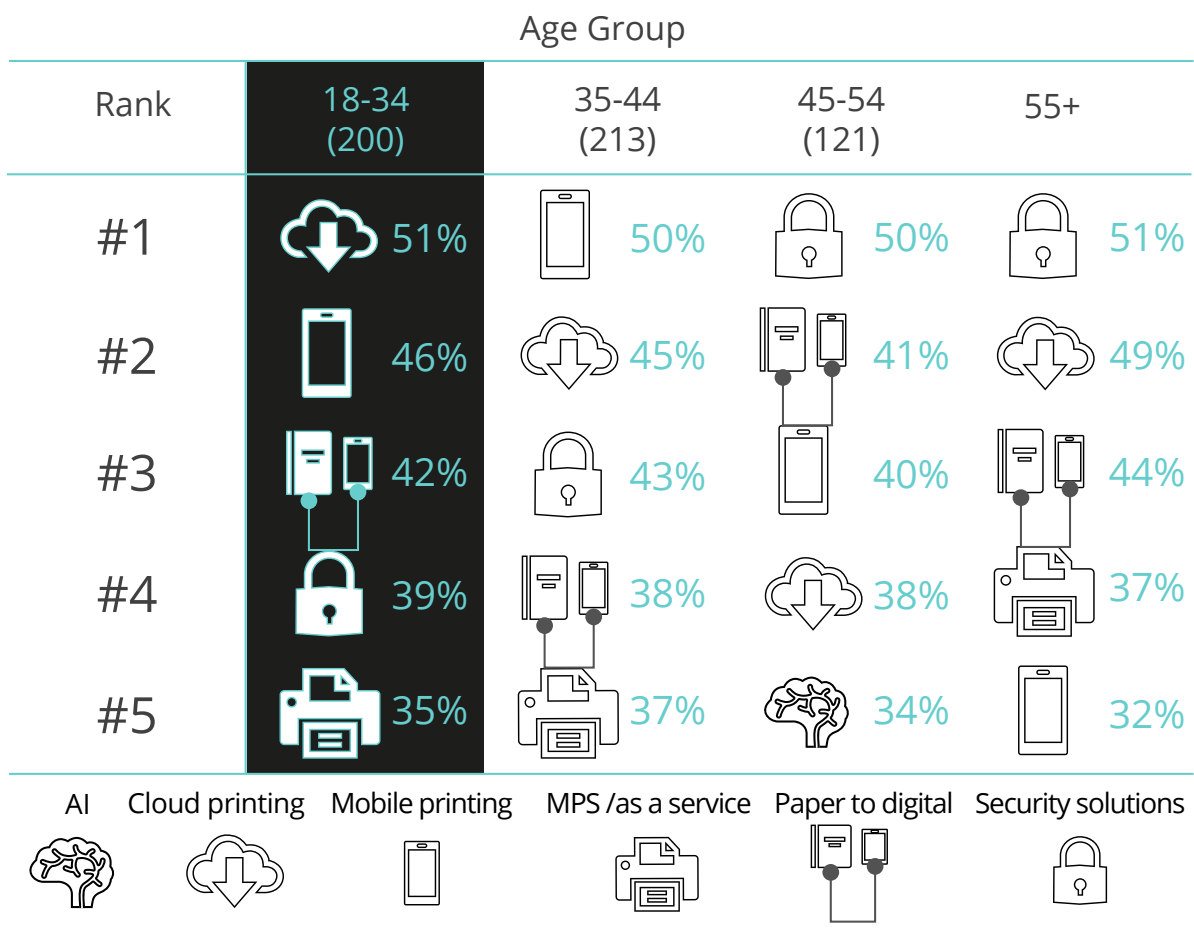


Figure 8. Key investment priorities for print vendors

Question: Which of the following do you think print vendors should be investing more in to increase their relevance in the digital workplace by 2025?

Millennials see the relationship between their organisation and print manufacturers changing significantly between now and 2025. Although 24% believe they currently have the deepest relationship with print manufacturers, only half of those expect this to remain the case in 2025. Service providers – such as MPS providers and, in particular, IT service providers – are expected to have a far closer relationship with this generation of decision-makers (Figure 9)

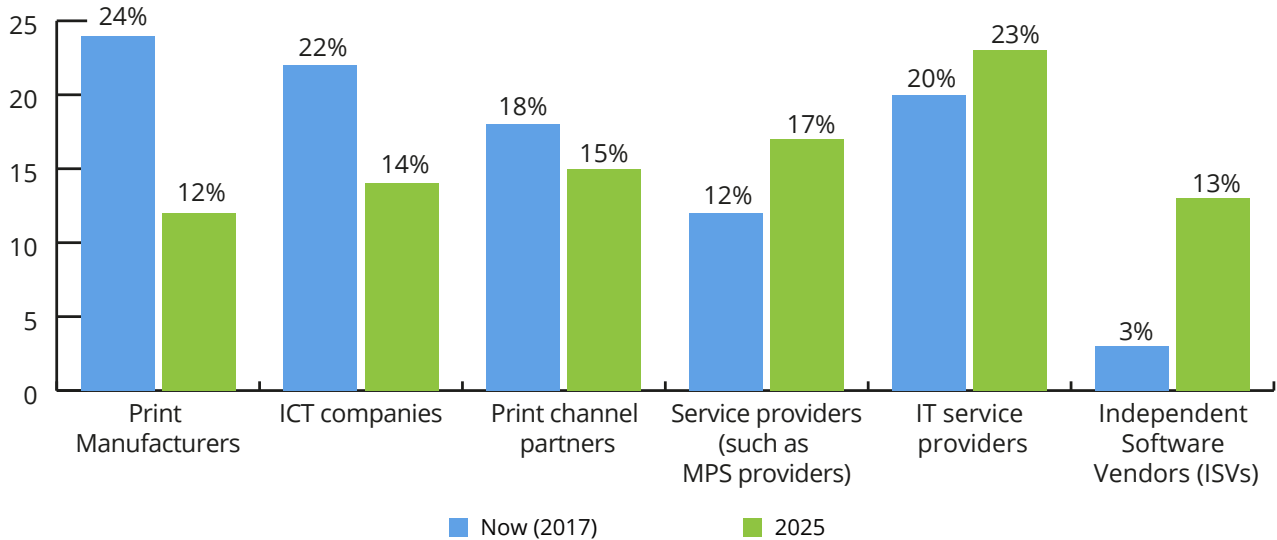


Figure 9. Changing print supplier relationships

Question: Who does your organisation have the deepest relationship with regarding print currently (2017) and who do you expect the deepest relationship to be with in 2025? (18-34 age group)

The most important supplier selection criterion amongst millennials is the ability for the supplier to act as a strategic partner for IT and LOB (Figure 10). This rises from 35% today to 58% in 2025. This highlights the changing and expanding role print vendors will need to assume, working with both IT and LOB stakeholders. Notably, security expertise is rated as a lower priority compared to other age groups. By 2025 almost six in 10 millennial decision-makers will be looking for print vendors that are 'strategic partners for IT and LOB', compared to 35% now.



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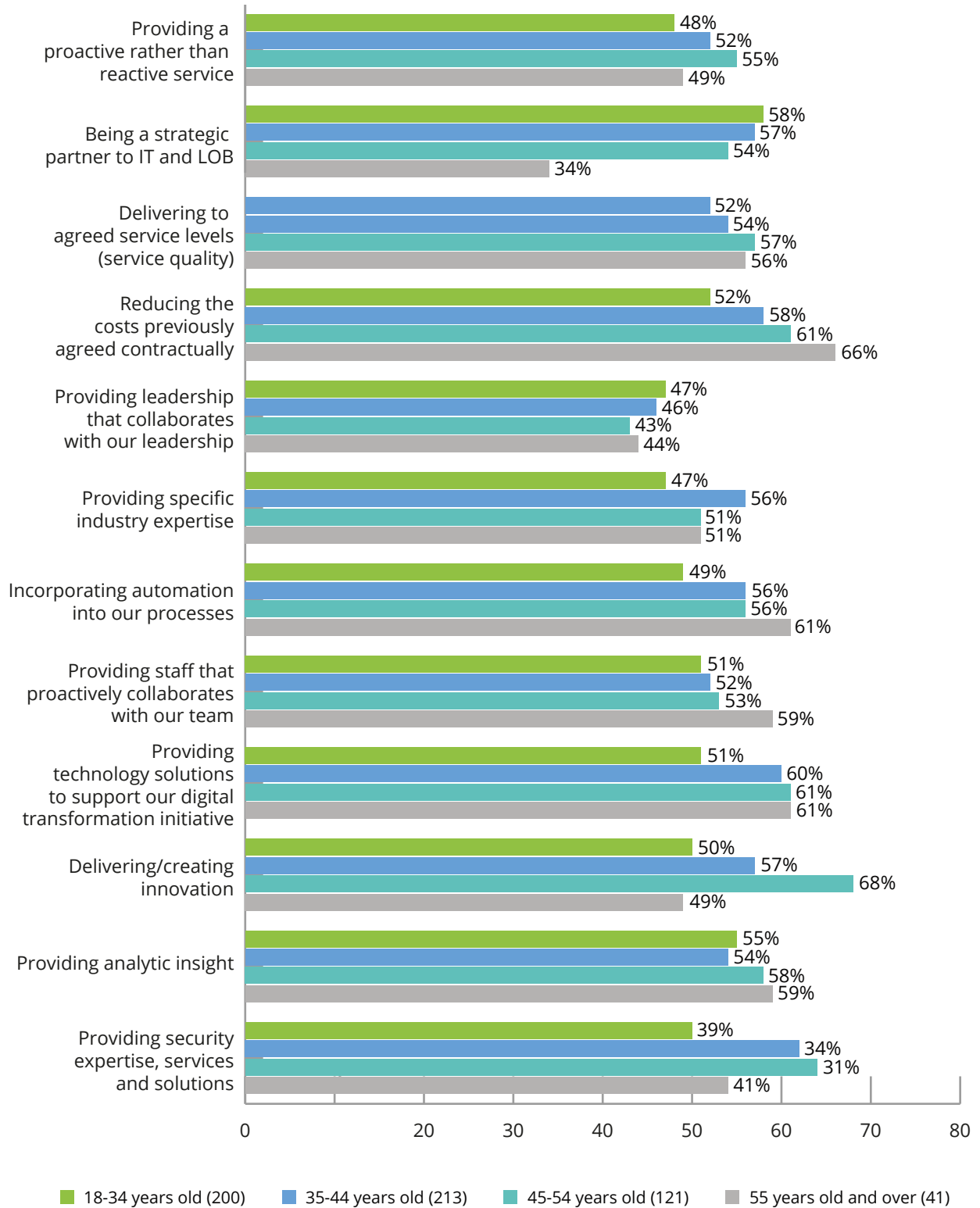


Figure 10. Supplier selection criteria

Question. When picking a print vendor, which criteria will be important by 2025?

Digitisation, connectivity and a mobile workforce requires maximum security

Over half of millennials believe built-in security features will be important in smart MFPs (Figure 11). US millennial respondents place a higher importance on security than European millennials. Overall, 64% of US millennials see built-in security features as important compared to 46% in Europe (Figure 12). The same pattern emerges when examining the areas in which respondents feel vendors should be focusing investment to increase their relevance in the digital age. A third of millennial decision-makers in Europe highlighted 'security solutions and services' as important compared to just under half (49%) in the US (Figure 12).

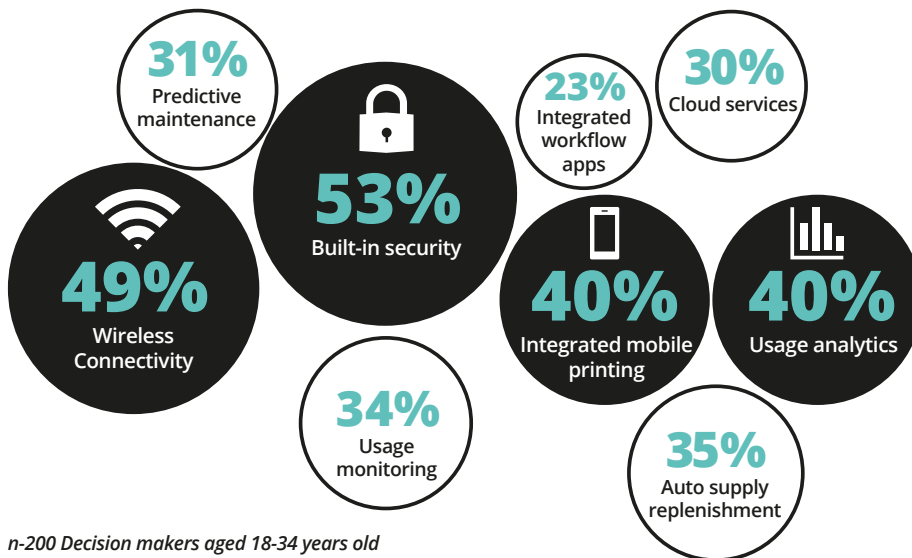


Figure 11. Most important smart MFP features for organisations

Question: Which of the following features for smart MFPS do you think will be important to your organisation from now to 2025?

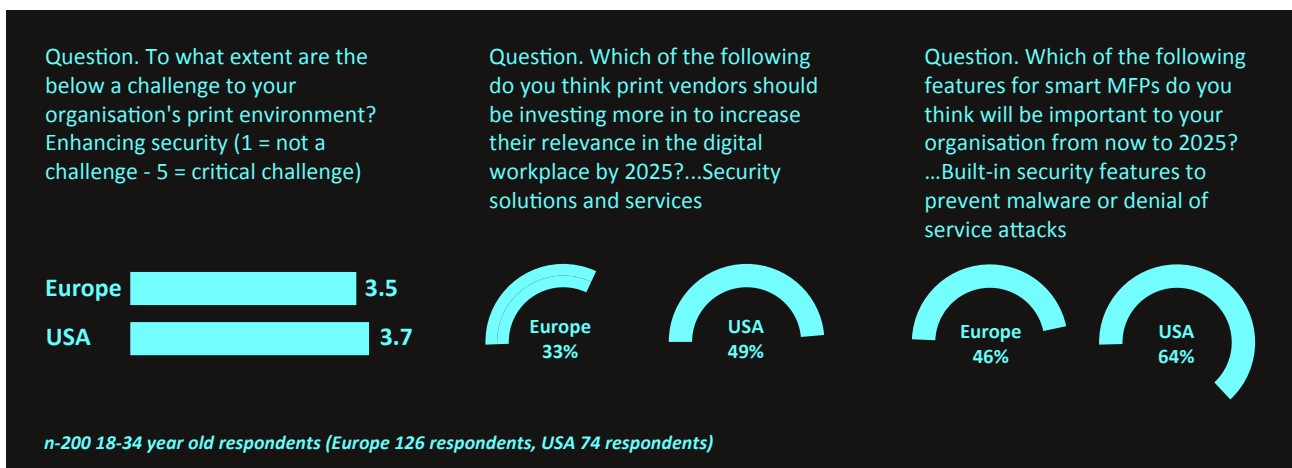


Figure 12. Difference in importance of security features amongst millennial decision-makers in Europe and the USA

Recommendations

- **Create value-add solutions that support the collaborative, multigenerational workplace.**

The workplace is rapidly changing. While millennials will become key influencers, they will be collaborating with colleagues from all generations. Print suppliers must provide the flexible cloud-based technology solutions and services that enable collaborative working in a hybrid paper and digital workplace. The multigenerational workforce requires intuitive, device-agnostic print and document management systems that support their preferred working style. Responding to this, vendors must focus on creating enhanced experiences that measure up to the consumer experiences to which users are accustomed.

- **Focus on digital workflow integration.** While millennials show a continued affinity for paper documents, the drive for digital transformation will continue and vendors cannot be complacent. They must focus on bridging the paper to digital gap by pursuing innovation in digital workflow integration and exploiting growing digitisation trends – both mobile and office solutions – to build seamless document environments and intuitive user experiences.

- **Build strategically valuable partnerships with customers and third-party specialists.** Print suppliers must offer greater strategic customer value to retain relevance with millennial decision-makers, who expect key suppliers to become strategic partners for IT and line of business stakeholders. In a disruptive environment, vendors must show in-depth understanding of customer business and IT priorities and deliver solutions that closely align. Post-deployment evaluation, reporting and continuous improvement is crucial so that suppliers can respond dynamically as the customer environment evolves and demonstrate ongoing strategic value.

To meet customers' diverse requirements, vendors need to build strong partnerships with specialist solution providers and/or consider acquisitions to bolster expertise outside their core provision.

- **Provide authoritative cybersecurity and compliance consultancy.**

Cybersecurity and compliance are critical challenges for businesses of all sizes but many organisations can struggle to fully understand the risks associated with the print network and document lifecycle. Vendors must offer advanced security products and services in combination with comprehensive expertise that helps customers address the security challenge.

Additionally, the increasingly complex compliance landscape will create demand for advanced real-time security reporting, analytics and audit provision. Vendors should explore opportunities to deliver value-added services around compliance and reporting.

- **Deliver real-time, comprehensive analytics to meet millennial expectations.** Data is definitive for millennial decision-makers, who are accustomed to accessing real-time performance information at the tap of a mobile device. As a minimum they expect fast, easy access to meaningful data from any device. Vendors must enhance existing tools to provide deeper insight into the performance of the print environment. The ability to provide detailed usage, user behaviour and productivity statistics, combined with actionable intelligence and recommendations for real-time improvement, will be essential. Vendors should explore the innovative use of mobile, cloud and data analytics to create differentiated user experiences and deliver strategic long-term customer value.

- **Provide strong environmental credentials.**

Millennials are more socially and environmentally conscious than their predecessors and see reducing environmental impact as a key concern. Ethical business values and product sustainability have become key buyer considerations as businesses are increasingly being evaluated on the ethical credentials of their supply chain. Vendors should ensure that they are transparent and robust in communicating corporate social responsibility. They must be able to demonstrate how their solutions help customers meet sustainability targets for reducing resource consumption and environmental impact.

- **Investigate the opportunities to include AI and machine learning in service propositions.**
Improving productivity and efficiency and reducing the burden on IT departments are key priorities for millennial decision-makers. Vendors should investigate how incorporating advances in machine learning and AI into service propositions can meet these demands, creating an intelligent, dynamic user experience that evolves with the customer's environment.
- **Monitor consumer trends to inform future business technology expectations.**
As the distinction between business and personal technology becomes increasingly blurred, suppliers

should anticipate an increasing consumerisation of business tech. As millennials grow more influential in the workplace they will expect their working lives to be facilitated by the same technology they use at home. For example, the increasing prevalence of smart speakers in the consumer market and familiarity with Siri, Alexa and Google Assistant is expected to drive a growth in virtual assistants and voice control in the business environment. Vendors should monitor trends and look for innovative ways to incorporate them into the print landscape.

Conclusion

Millennials have brought new perspectives into the workplace and anticipate different priorities when it comes to the challenges businesses will face over the next few years. By 2025 millennials will be key stakeholders within their organisations, with more influence on technology purchasing decisions. Print vendors must work now to establish trust and credibility with this diverse group.

Millennials will be at the forefront of technology progression. They will expect the same level of connectivity and mobility at work that they enjoy in their personal lives. Traditional industry players will need to rethink their approach to communicating with this digital native audience, showcasing their credibility in the digital era rather than their legacy.

By articulating a strong and cohesive proposition that appeals to the next generation workforce, print suppliers can increase their relevance in the digital workplace and tap into new opportunities.

Those that are best positioned to succeed will deliver innovative and flexible solutions and services that enable millennial workers to improve productivity and enhance collaboration. This will ultimately drive competitive advantage for print vendors and their partners in the workplace of 2025.

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About the research

To determine the print industry's needs and responses to the changing print landscape, Quocirca conducted interviews with 55 senior executives in the US, Europe and Japan from a broad representation of print manufacturers, channel partners and ISVs. OEMs accounted for 45% of the interviews and channel/ISV organisations 55%. This telephone research was complemented by in-depth analyst-led interviews with OEM leaders.

To gain further insight from an end-user perspective, Quocirca conducted 575 online interviews with SMBs and enterprises in the UK, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the US. Respondents were IT managers or business decision-makers with a responsibility for print within their organisation. Both surveys were conducted in October and November 2017.

For further information on the full Print 2025: Evolution or revolution? report, please contact Louella.Fernandes@quocirca.com



This report has been written independently by Quocirca. During the preparation of this report, Quocirca has spoken to a number of suppliers involved in the areas covered. We are grateful for their time and insights.

Quocirca has obtained information from multiple sources in putting together this analysis. These sources include, but are not limited to, the vendors themselves. Although Quocirca has attempted wherever possible to validate the information received from each vendor, Quocirca cannot be held responsible for any errors in any information supplied.

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