INVESTING IN DIGITAL SKILLS BENEFITS BUSINESSES, WORKERS, AND OUR ECONOMY

Powerful new research based on millions of recent "Help Wanted" ads shows overwhelming demand for digital skills in today's labor market. **Businesses of all kinds and sizes need workers with robust, flexible digital skills** – whether it's warehouse workers using inventory-control scanners, construction workers using mobile apps for work-order changes, medical staff troubleshooting tele-health services, or farmworkers using on-board tractor technology. This widespread demand underscores the urgency of public investment in digital skills as a crucial element to close the digital divide.
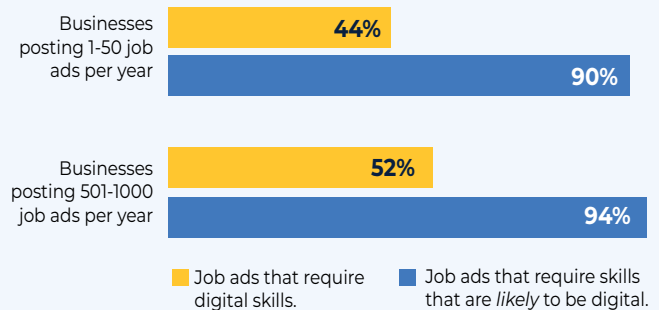
Demand is high across all industries, including those not always spotlighted in tech discussions, such as manufacturing (93% of job postings require digital skills or skills that are likely to be digital),[1] healthcare (95%), construction (91%), and agriculture (86%). This increased demand leads to higher wages. **On average, jobs that require just one digital skill pay 23% more than jobs that don't require any digital skills**.

Small businesses are almost as likely as large ones to need workers with digital skills. Unlike large companies that can run in-house training programs, many small and mid-sized enterprises depend on publicly funded education and workforce development partners to help prepare their workforce.
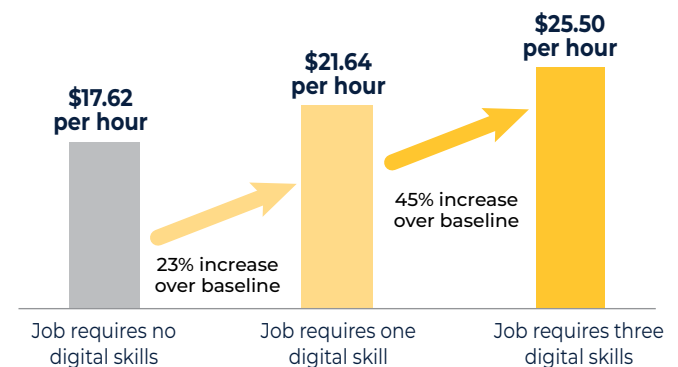
Even entry-level jobs that call for limited education or experience nevertheless require workers with technology skills. For example, 94% of jobs that seek a high school diploma require digital skills or likely require digital skills, as do 97% of jobs that call for an associate degree.

Increasing public investments in digital skill building can help individual workers advance their careers, allow businesses to thrive, and ultimately create positive economic spillover effects for local, state, and national economies.
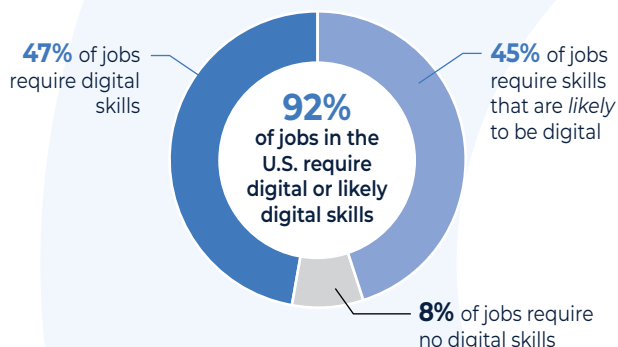
Both small and large firms are looking for workers with digital skills

Businesses posting 1-50 job ads per year: **44%** Job ads that require digital skills; **90%** Job ads that require skills that are *likely* to be digital.

Businesses posting 501-1000 job ads per year: **52%** Job ads that require digital skills; **94%** Job ads that require skills that are *likely* to be digital.

Job ads that require digital skills.
Job ads that require skills that are *likely* to be digital.

92% of jobs in the U.S. require digital or likely digital skills

47% of jobs require digital skills

45% of jobs require skills that are *likely* to be digital

8% of jobs require no digital skills

Jobs that require digital skills pay more

$17.62 per hour — Job requires no digital skills

23% increase over baseline

$21.64 per hour — Job requires one digital skill

45% increase over baseline

$25.50 per hour — Job requires three digital skills

Based on hourly median wages in 2021 job ads. Full details in *Closing the Digital Skill Divide* (National Skills Coalition, 2023).

1   Digital skills include Microsoft Excel or the Python programming language, while skills that are likely to be digital include bookkeeping.

BUSINESS LEADERS UNITED FOR WORKFORCE PARTNERSHIPS

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