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Latest Telecommuting Statistics

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Reporters: We are constantly updating our database of over 4,000 documents on telework/telecommuting, alternative workplace strategies, workplace flexibility, and employee wellness/and well-being ROI. Please call or email kate-at-globalworkplaceanalytics.com, 760-703-0377 (Pacific Time) for the latest data or for additional information (such as regional data, demographic breakdowns, breakdowns by class of worker).

Updated January, 2016

Below are the latest statistics on the work-at-home/telework population in the U.S. based on an analysis of 2005-2014 American Community Survey (US Census Bureau) data conducted by GlobalWorkplaceAnalytics.com. Similar state and county data is available through 2014.

The American Community Survey (ACS) derives its data on work-at-home from the question: What was your primary means of transportation to work during the survey week? “Worked at home” is one of the choices. Therefore, all we know about this population is that they worked primarily at home, which we assume means at least half-time.

Though often used interchangeably, ‘telework’ is defined as the substitution of technology for travel, while telecommuting is more narrowly defined as the substitution of technology for commuter travel. Thus if someone takes work home after being at the office it is considered telework but not telecommuting, and if someone works at home instead of driving to an office they are telecommuting. Both terms were coined by Jack Nilles in the 1970s. Note: many people and organizations are moving away from both terms in favor of distributed work, mobile work, remote work, smart working (UK), and workshifting (Canada).

Overview

While there is no Census Bureau or government produced data provides additional granularity on the frequency of telework, Global Workplace Analytics’ research finds that:

- 50% of the US workforce holds a job that is compatible with at least partial telework and approximately 20-25% of the workforce teleworks at some frequency
- 80% to 90% of the US workforce says they would like to telework at least part time. Two to three days a week seems to be the sweet spot that allows for a balance of concentrative work (at home) and collaborative work (at the office).
- Fortune 1000 companies around the globe are entirely revamping their space around the fact that employees are already mobile. Studies repeatedly show they are not at their desk 50-60% of the time.
- On average, a telecommuter is college-educated, 49 years old, and earns an annual salary of \$58,000 while working for a company with more than 100 employees. 75% of employees who work from home earn over \$65,000 per year, putting them in the upper 80th percentile of all employees, home or office-based.

Summary of trends:

- Regular work-at-home, *among the non-self-employed population*, has grown by 103% since 2005.
- 3.7 million employees (2.8% of the workforce) now work from home at least half the time.
- The employee population as a whole grew by 1.9% from 2013 to 2014, while employees who telecommuter population grew 5.6%.

Note: It is critical to separate the self-employed from the employee telework and telecommuter population for the purpose of understanding trends as they are moving in opposite directions. About 22% of the self-employed population work primarily from home. That population (self-employed and home-based) declined by 3.4% since between 2005 and 2014. The loss was entirely attributable to non-incorporated home-based businesses (which declined by 9.8%). The self-employed incorporated home-based business population grew by 18.7%.

Teleworkers by Type of Employer	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	%
For Profit Employer	1,468,084	1,712,562	1,877,271	2,159,915	2,225,497	2,284,006	2,387,745	2,501,855	2,696,963	2,860,517	2.9%
Non Profit Employer	173,271	238,554	247,952	273,620	298,436	306,598	320,494	324,984	355,327	355,327	3.1%
Local Government Employer	73,714	81,171	88,302	103,740	113,007	114,150	123,001	119,622	122,530	131,597	1.4%
State Government Employer	74,018	102,457	115,299	131,245	138,801	151,244	158,362	164,382	160,661	170,932	2.6%
Fed Government Employer	30,268	161,521	147,213	157,858	153,492	167,030	158,711	157,682	144,966	158,688	3.4%
Total Employee Teleworkers	1,819,355	2,296,265	2,476,037	2,826,378	2,929,233	3,023,028	3,148,313	3,268,525	3,480,447	3,677,061	2.8%

Table 2: Telework Growth Multi-Year		2005 to 2014
For Profit Companies		94.8%
Non Profit Organizations		105.1%
Local Government		78.5%
State Government		130.9%
Fed Government		424.3%
Total Telework Growth		102.1%

Table 3: Total vs Work at Home Population Growth				% Change	% Change
2012 to 2013		2013	2014	Total	Work at Home
				Workforce	
For Profit Employer		94,501,760	96,604,512	2.2%	6.1%
Non Profit Employer		11,065,263	11,292,048	2.0%	8.3%
Local Government		9,455,871	9,569,355	1.2%	7.4%
State Government		6,466,069	6,439,315	-0.4%	6.4%
Federal Government		4,564,120	4,447,097	-2.6%	9.5%
	Total	126,053,083	128,352,327	1.8%	6.5%

Self Employed	2014	2005 to 2014
Self Employed All	13,608,913	-3.4%
Self-Employed Incorporated	5,006,855	0.6%
Self Employed non -inc	8,602,058	-5.6%
Self Employed Home	2,817,099	-2.6%
Self-Employed Incorporated home	865,147	18.7%
Self Employed non -inc home	1,951,952	-9.8%

Reporters: Call or Email Kate Lister for Additional Information About:

- State and local telecommuting numbers
- Telecommuter demographics (gender, age, education, private/public sector, industry, income, etc.)

- Global and U.S. drivers of telework
- Obstacles to telework
- Advantages and disadvantages for employers/employees
- Industry contacts/potential interviewees
- Global and regional trends
- Workplace flexibility and its impact on employee well-being
- Who wants to telework, who can, who offers it, where teleworkers work
- Other agile and distributed workplace trends

About Global Workplace Analytics:

Kate Lister, president of San Diego-based Global Workplace Analytics is one of the foremost authorities on how, when, and where people are working. In addition to her work helping large employers deploy telework, activity-based work, hoteling, well-being and other agile workplace strategies, she has compiled a database of over 3,000 case studies, academic papers, and the documents on the topic. Global Workplace Analytics also offers free calculators for estimating the employer, employee, and environmental impact of various workplace strategies including telework. Thanks to their research sponsors, they also make available free white papers on various topics related to agile work.

Kate is available for interviews and to help reporters identify additional resources. She can be reached at 760-703-0377 (Pacific Time) or Kate@GlobalWorkplaceAnalytics.com.

Additional (free) Resources That May be of Interest:

1. **An answer to the question**, “Why there are so many wide-ranging estimates of the size of the teleworker population?”
2. **Our Workplace Savings Calculator™** that allows employers and others estimate the employer, employee, and environmental impact of various workplace strategies including telework
3. **Our sister site with resources for individual looking for home-based work**
4. *Our 27-page white paper, [The State of Telework in the U.S. and other white papers offer in depth analyses of the data below and more. Note: some of our reports include data that is older than the data here; please refer to this page for the most recent information. News reporters may call or email for the very latest numbers.](#)*
5. **Estimate your employee, employer and environmental mobile work savings potential:** You can estimate your own potential savings from mobile work with our free Workplace Savings Calculator™.

Who Telecommutes? Telecommuter Demographics (updated 3-15-2016):

- A typical telecommuter is older (50+), college educated, salaried, non-union employee.
- Relative to the total population, a disproportionate share of employees in the following occupations telecommute (in order of largest disproportion to smallest):
 - Military

- Computer and Mathematical
 - Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations
 - Farming, Fishing, and Forestry
 - Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations
 - Legal Occupations
 - Community and Social Service Occupations
 - Architecture and Engineering Occupations
 - Business and Financial
- Using home as a 'reasonable accommodation' per the Americans with Disabilities Act, 463,000 disabled employees regularly work from home (7.1% of the disabled).
 - Non-exempt employees are far less likely to work at home on a regular or ad hoc basis than salaried employees.
 - Larger companies are more likely to allow telecommuting than smaller ones.
 - Non-union organizations are more likely to offer telecommuting those with unions.

What Is the Potential Bottom Line Impact or Return on Investment of the Widespread Adoption of Telework in the U.S.? (updated March, 2016)

- If those with compatible jobs and a desire to work from home did so just half the time (roughly the national average for those who do so regularly) the national savings would total over \$700 Billion a year including:
 - A typical business would save \$11,000 per person per year
 - The telecommuters would save between \$2,000 and \$7,000 a year
 - The greenhouse gas reduction would be the equivalent of taking the entire New York State workforce permanently off the road.
- The Congressional Budget Office's estimate of the entire five-year cost of implementing telework throughout government (\$30 million) is less than a third of the cost of lost productivity from a single day shut down of federal offices in Washington DC due to snow (\$100 million).

The **latest telework savings numbers are summarized here** (these may not match those in the white papers as they have been updated with recent data).

For details about how these telework savings were calculated, and for similar information regarding telework in the Federal Government, U.K. and Canada, download our free white papers.

Additional Information on Telework / Telecommuting Trends / Statistics / Costs &

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About: Kate Lister is president of Global Workplace Analytics, a consulting and research firm that focuses on the business case for emerging workplace strategies. Global Workplace Analytics is based in San Diego, California.



Federal Telework – Return on Taxpayer Investment

The financial and non-financial impact of telework should and can be measured. One methodology, explained in this paper, estimates that federal telework, effectively implemented, could save taxpayers almost \$14 billion a year. That figure was calculated based on a cautious set of assumptions about the impact of telework on real estate, absenteeism, turnover, productivity, transit subsidies, continuity of operations, and healthcare.

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Federal Telework – Return on Taxpayer Investment (redacted)

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Federal Telework: Obstacles and Opportunities

This report examines how experts in government view the obstacles to telework. Based on their insights, those of industry experts, and our own observations, this paper suggests solutions for overcoming those obstacles.

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Federal Telework: Obstacles and Opportunities (redacted)

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Results-Based Management-The Key to Unlocking Talent, Increasing Productivity

Recent research shows than 70% of the workforce is not engaged. They're either wandering around in a fog, or



Results-Based Management-The Key to Unlocking Talent, Increasing Productivity (redacted)

No footnotes

actively undermining their co-workers' success. They're burned out, disenfranchised, and over 80% are ready to jump ship. Eyeing the end of the recession, employees are no longer happy just to have a job. Boomers who haven't already made their exit are anticipating it. Gen X-ers watched their workaholic parents, and aren't about to make the same mistakes. Gen...

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Telecommuting Benefits: The Bottom Line

Telecommuting Benefits: The Bottom Line

The purpose of this paper is to quantify the benefits of telecommuting for employers, employees, and the community. Three decades have passed since the concept of telecommuting— the substitution of technology for commuter travel—was conceived. A broad body of evidence now corroborates the many economic, environmental, and societal benefits that researchers predicted. Occasional telecommuting (one day a month) has grown significantly in recent years—increasing 74% from 2005 to



Telecommuting Benefits: The Bottom Line

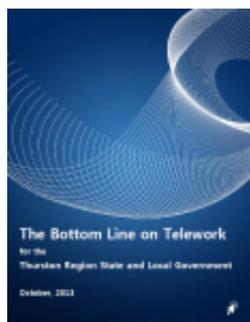
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2008, though few companies...

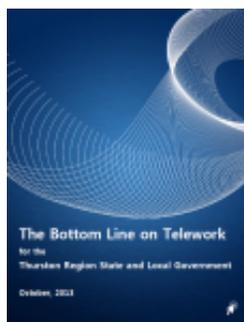
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The Bottom Line on Telework for the Thurston Region State and Local Governments

This report offers a data-driven analysis of the potential for telework to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of Thurston WA region state and local government. Based on a conservative set of assumptions drawn from a synthesis of over 4,000 data sources, we calculate that the impact of twice weekly telework by 30% of the region’s public sector workforce could: Save approximately \$58 million per...

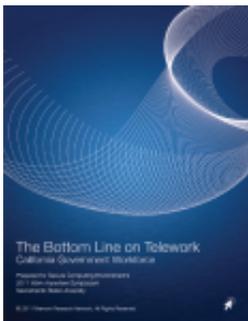
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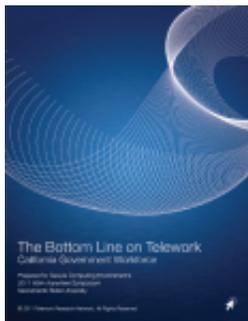
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The Bottom Line on Telework-California Government Workforce

State and local government employees are bummed out, burned out, and stressed out from the endless struggle of trying to do more with less. To make matters worse, more than half the state’s most experienced people are moving toward the door to retirement. If California expects to attract a new generation of talented government leaders and staff workers it needs to find a new way of working, both figuratively and literally. This report...

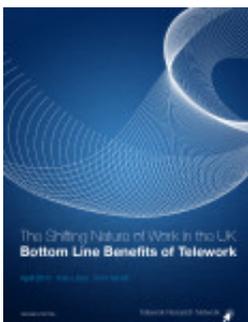
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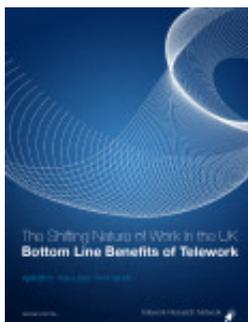
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The Shifting nature of Work in the UK –



The Shifting nature of Work in the UK –

Bottom Line Benefits of Telework

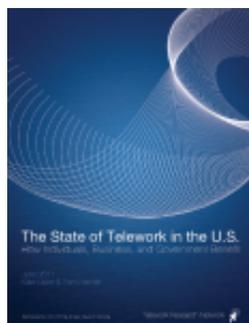
Thanks to advances in technology, work no longer needs to be tethered by time or place. Citrix calls this shift from work as a noun to work as a verb, 'work shifting'. The purpose of this paper is to quantify the financial and environmental benefits of the growing trend. It will show how twice weekly home working, by those with compatible jobs and a desire to do so, could save UK companies,...

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Bottom Line Benefits of Telework (redacted)

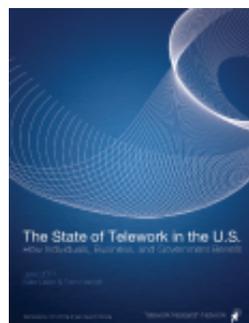
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The State of Telework in the U.S. – How Individuals, Business, and Government Benefit

No one would disagree that the U.S. workforce is increasingly mobile. But, beyond that broad statement, we know little about the rate of increase in mobility—how often people are out of the office,



The State of Telework in the U.S. – How Individuals, Business, and Government Benefit (redacted)

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where they are, and what they're doing. For that matter, there's no agreed-upon method of defining who they are. Using public and private sector sources, the purpose of this paper is to...

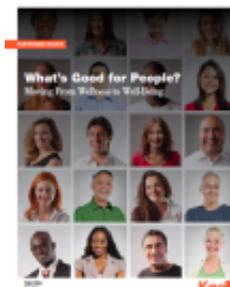
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What's Good For People

The bottom line impact of wellness is clear, it needs to be a strategic priority. Stockholders would demand it, if they understood that increases in productivity brought about by improved wellness outstrip even real estate costs. Most organizations invest in wellness, but few address the broader topic of well-being. The indirect costs of poor health and poor well-being trump direct costs by a wide margin. There is a direct relationship...

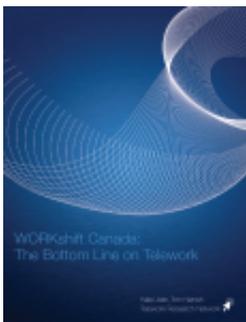
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What's Good For People (redacted)

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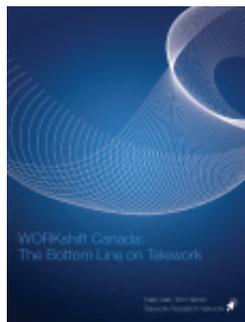
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WORKshift Canada: The Bottom Line On Telework

This report shows how part-time telecommuting by the 4.3 million Canadians with compatible jobs and a desire to work from home could have a bottom line impact of over \$53 billion per year. An employer with 250 telecommuters, for example, would save over \$3 million per year

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WORKshift Canada: The Bottom Line On Telework (redacted)

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