

Canva

IN CAMBODIA



*A rapid assessment to understand the
effect of technology in Cambodia's
work environment*



Context



With the rise of Industry 4.0, Cambodia's digital transformation has been a hot topic to lift communities out of poverty and drive economic growth for the Kingdom. This correlates with studies reporting a positive correlation between the use of digital technologies and national economic growth in low and middle income countries.

In Cambodia, the adoption of these technologies has significantly advanced in the last decade. This change has occurred so rapidly that unforeseen effects have not been adequately documented or analyzed.



This research seeks to understand unintended workforce gaps as a result of technological advancements.

The rapid assessment was prompted by the findings of a digital skills programme which revealed the short term nature of digital curricula as a result of rapid technological advancement and other market changes.

To validate this finding, the assessment considers the effect of technology on employment of digital-skilled workers such as graphic designers.

Methodology and limitations

The Idea Consultancy conducted a digital survey on 64 professionals who hire designers in Cambodia.

The surveys were conducted via digital forms communicated through social media, email newsletters, and instant-messaging platforms.

The Stronger with Digital Coalition consisting of the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunication, National Employment Agency, Cambodia's Women Entrepreneurship Association and private sector organizations supported with outreach activities for viable respondents.

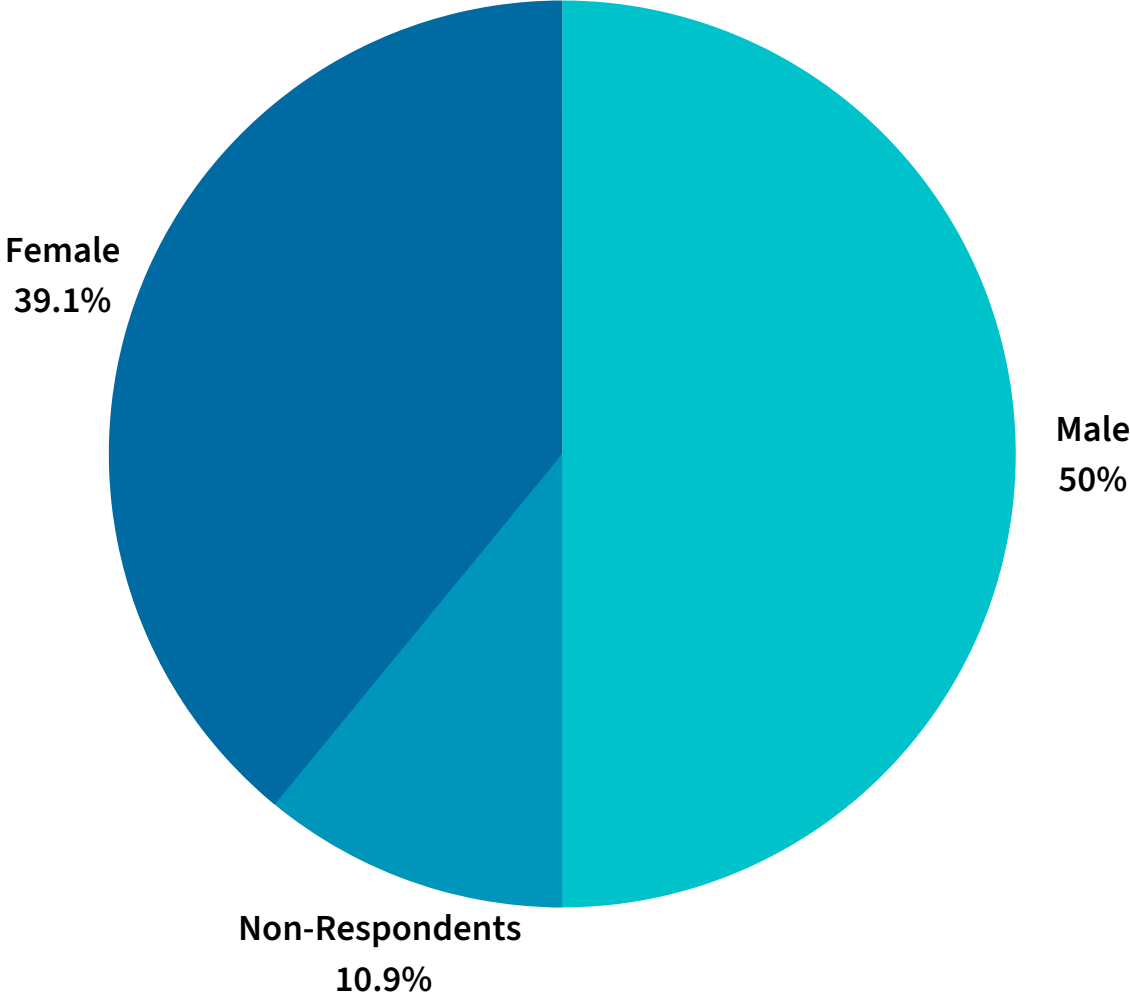
Limitations of the rapid study:

- Narrow pool of respondents,
- Respondents were in Phnom Penh only - although majority of business and creative hires occur in the capital

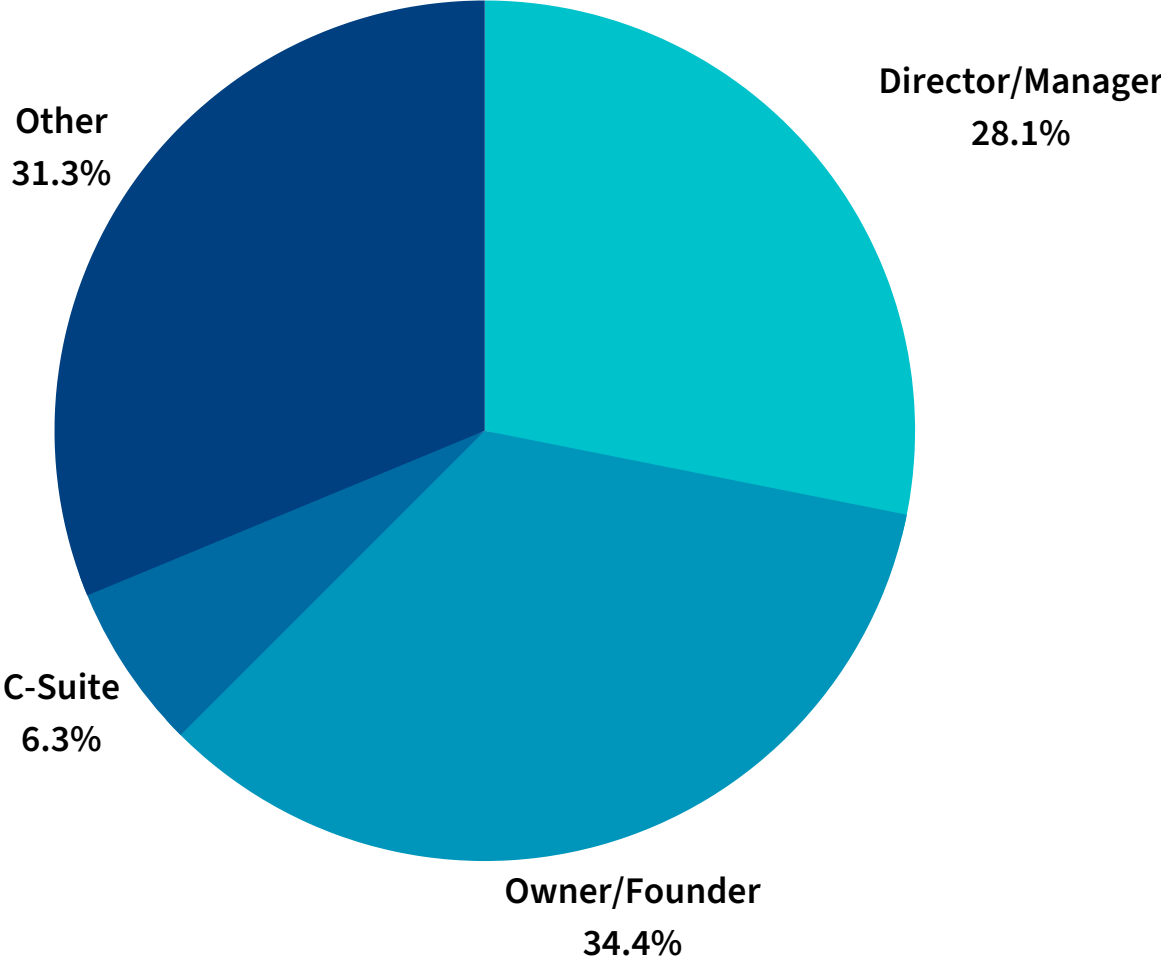
Respondent profile

Respondent profile

Gender



Role*



Other includes:

- Analyst
- Student
- Designer
- Lecturer
- Undisclosed

**34% of C-Suite, Owners/Founder, Director/Manager are designers, yet of these 14% are so by trade but are not actively practicing*

The power of visual design

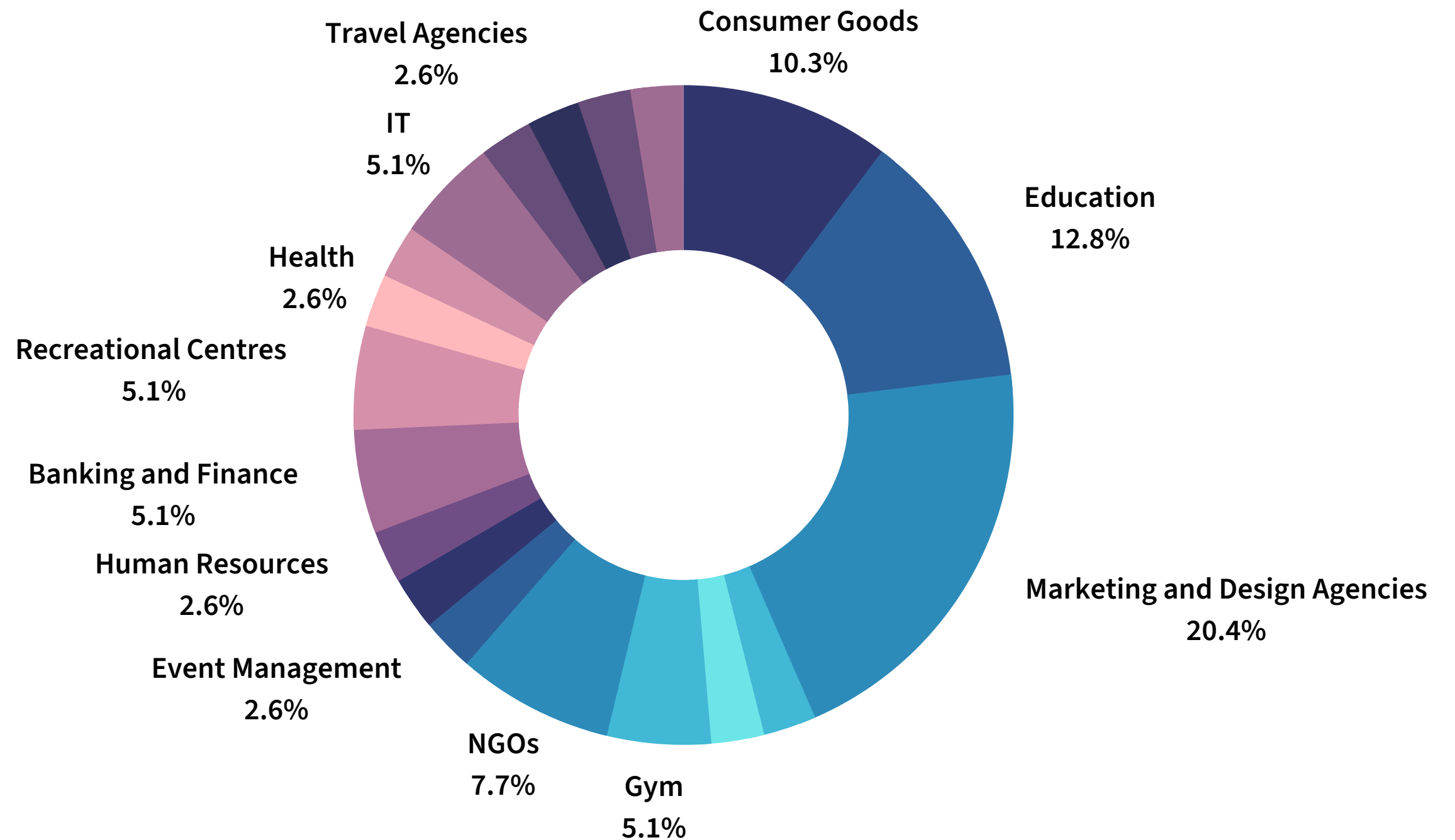
In Cambodia, Canva is used across many different sectors.

It is no surprise that the biggest adoption is in marketing and design agencies.

It is important to note that the survey was disseminated across business platforms, associations and Government agency platforms to widen outreach of survey participants.

Finding

Who uses Canva?



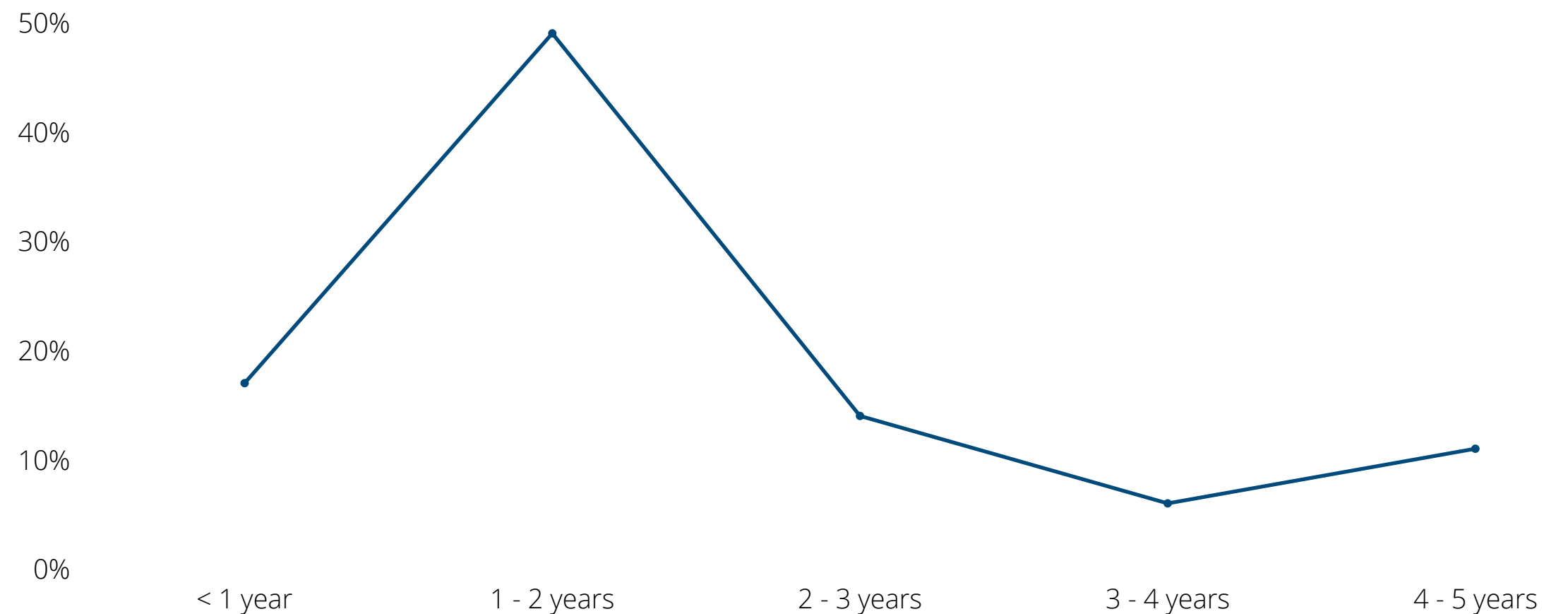
Findings

Technological Adoption

Adoption of Canva

It would appear that there is a rising trend of organizational adoption of Canva in the Cambodian market.

Over 80% of the market adoption occurred in the past 3 years during the COVID-19 pandemic, in line with digitalization trends in other sectors. However, it is unclear if this trend will continue as we experience less lock-downs and other events related to COVID-19.



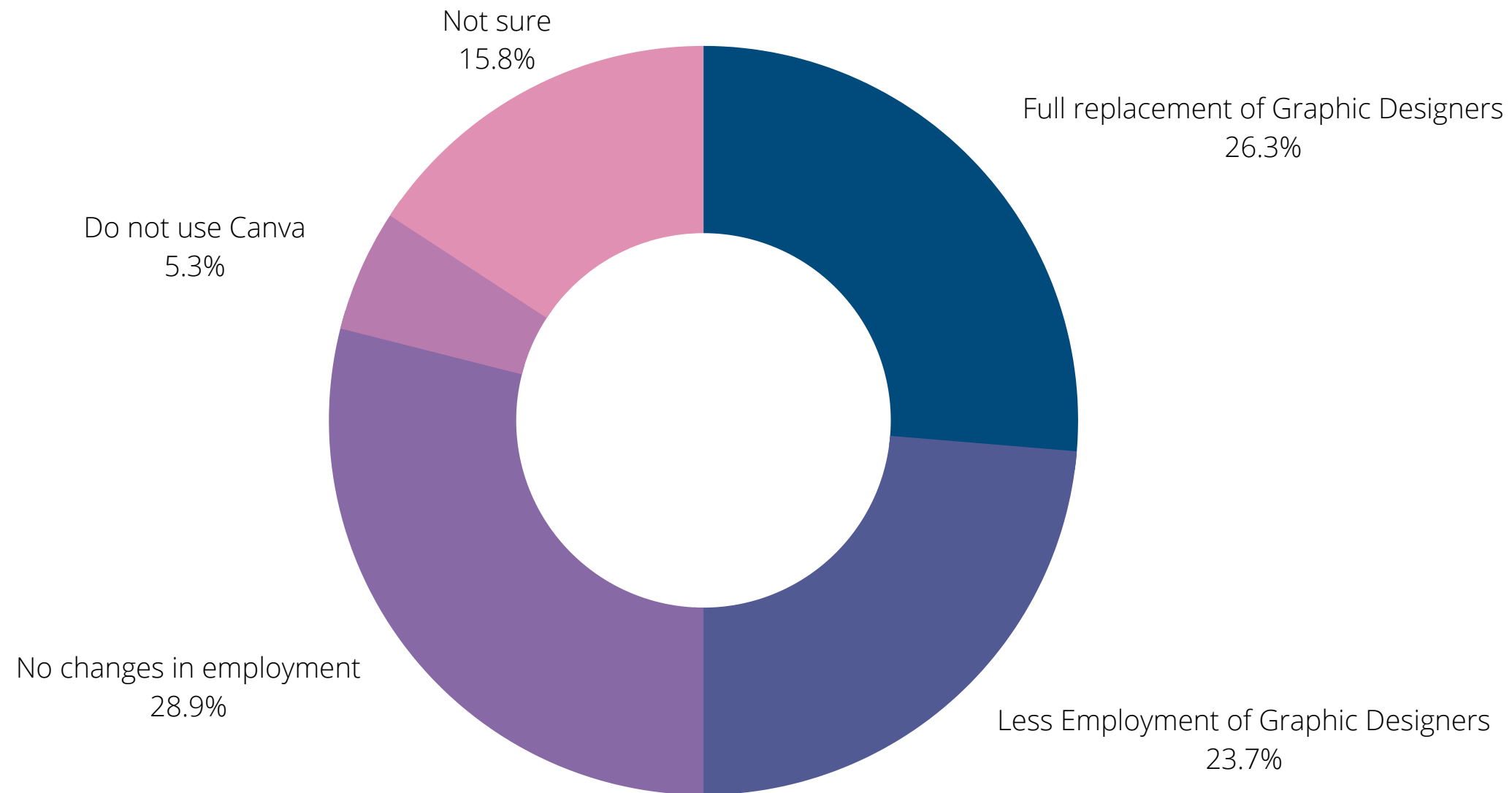
Employment of Graphic Designers

Half of the survey participants responded that they are hiring less or not hiring graphic designers due to the adoption of Canva.

The other half either do not use Canva, have no changes or are unsure about the replacement of graphic designers in their organization due to Canva.

There is no documented baseline study in Cambodia of graphic designer employment to refer. A rough estimate of full-time hiring capacity of respondents in this survey totals to at least 200 jobs.

Has Canva replaced graphic designers in your organization?



Insights



This rapid assessment has shown that Canva is disrupting visual communication in Cambodia and even employment of graphic designers.

The following pages explore respondent opinions and insights.

What did people say?

Keyword Mindmap

easy

a great tool

too many templates → less creativity

simple

cost-effective

game-changer

time-efficient

user-friendly

the best

Homogenisation

fills gap of design skills

great results

for personal use



Sofia Perez
Managing Principal at The Idea Consultancy

Canva's power in today's digital age, lies in its ability to enable creativity within reach of the everyday employee - even to those who may not think of themselves as creative.

It invites play, experimentation and structure, which are at the core of a good creative foundation.

At The Idea, Canva has offloaded high volume creative work and improved our turnaround time so our design teams can freely invest more effort into concepts and experimentation.



Natalia Rodionova
Managing Director at IT Academy STEP Cambodia

As an educator, working in the field of digital skills development, I am glad to see how fast companies and individuals are embracing technological solutions. Canva is one of those who made a fast entry and is growing naturally.

At IT Academy STEP Cambodia we still observe an increasing demand for professional designers and our graduates are fast to find employment in Cambodia, I see that Canva is a great possibility for small business, for students and teachers to make their communication more efficient and comprehensive. I am a big fan of Canva myself!

Risk of brand indistinction

Although most respondents gave great praise for the software, many did offer caution to over-reliance on predesigned Canva templates leading to the loss of an organization's brand identity.

Brand indistinction in this case refers to the risk of a brand being unable to stand-out against other brands.

One respondent mentioned that Facebook's Ad Manager tool offered a suggestion to vary a submitted artwork for boosting as it was quite similar to other ads.



Sanghamitra Mandal
Principal Consultant at The Idea Consultancy

How can organizations mitigate this risk?

"The role of design agencies and designers remains critical. First and foremost businesses must develop a unique brand identity, story line and colour schemes: this is the backbone of how the business is perceived and the impression it makes on others."

Canva can then be used as a tool for easy and efficient implementation of the aforementioned, reducing finances and allowing faster scale-up."

The role of educational institutions

This rapid assessment used Canva's emergence in Cambodia as an indicator to understand the nature of disruption due to technology. The software was chosen because the company has no presence, office nor officer in the country as of this time of writing, and yet, produced a market changing result in the absence of sales and marketing. Revealing an organic and rapid disruption to a sector impacting potentially thousands of jobs and companies due to technological advancements. The surprising factor is the rate of change, putting into question the efficacy and capacity of educational institutions as well as capacity building programmes from public, development and private sectors. They must now account for the short term nature of digital skills as technology replaces current skill functions and even the nature of work and organizational function. Future studies should reconsider the role of educational institutions and social influences as workers find their heralded and costly technical skills becoming obsolete from both software and hardware.

The effect of technology on employment in other sectors

Canva has shown how the presence of even one technology can greatly impact many sectors. Given that this change is inevitable, it's imperative to understand the ripple effect across each sector and ensure the benefits are shared widely whilst supporting those who stand to lose. The approach from the 'just transition' serves as a helpful guide in this regard.

Future sectoral studies could explore the mid to long term value of lifelong learning, 21st century skills and succession planning for organizations and their workforce.

Attitudes and beliefs surrounding digitalization and design

There is a clear resiliency gap between workers who possess 21st century skills in comparison to those who don't. The same could be said of organizations who fall behind the bell-curve in terms of digitalization and good design (not only graphic design). This rapid assessment ignited more curiosity into the area of equality as organizations and individuals who can adapt and harness the power of digitalization and design will pull further ahead in terms of brand positioning, cost savings and operational efficiency from using software like Canva.

Future studies should consider how to bridge this gap and understand the underlying beliefs which hinder organizations and individuals from utilizing technology and design to empower themselves and build resiliency.

Made possible by



Acknowledgements:

Vittoria Ubaldi

Sanghamitra Mandal

Sofia Perez

Mr. G - Galeno Chua

Venus Hoy

Sonyta Pul



Thank you

Get in touch with us on workforce skills gaps, design
and research:

Email: hello@theideaconsultants.com

www.peptalkscambodia.org

www.theideaconsultants.com