

2023 WORKFORCE SURVEY RELEASE
Virtual Media Event Talking Points
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Ken Simonson Remarks

Hello and thank you for joining us today. My name is Ken Simonson and I am the chief economist for the Associated General Contractors of America. With me today are Allison Scott, Autodesk's Director of Customer Experience and Industry Advocacy, Bill Ryan, the Workforce Development and Education Coordinator for Dick Anderson Construction out of Butte, Montana, and Brad Fuglevand, the vice president of

projects due to increasing costs, while 22 percent of firms report projects were impacted due to lengthening or uncertain completion times.

Many construction firms are taking steps to cope with and try to overcome workforce shortages. Eighty-one percent of firms have raised base pay rates for their workers during the past year. In addition to raising pay, 44 percent are providing incentives and bonuses and 26 percent have also improved their benefits packages.

Firms are also getting more creative when it comes to recruiting workers. Sixty percent of survey respondents up from 39 percent in the 2022 survey report they added new strategies, like using social media or targeted digital advertising, to connect better with younger applicants.

Contractors are also increasing investments in their internal training programs in an effort to address the fact many candidates lack the basic hard and soft skills needed to be successful. Forty percent of firms are boosting spending on training and professional development programs, 25 percent are enhancing their online and video training capabilities and 14 percent are using augmented and virtual reality technology to better train workers.

When it comes to the impact of two broad categories of technology—artificial intelligence, or AI, and robotics—on construction jobs in the next five years, almost half of respondents expect AI to have a significant impact on construction jobs, while 35 percent expect robotics to have a significant impact.

similar growth in digital learning. For example, Autodesk Construction Cloud Learning Center offers free courses and learning materials translated into different languages on how to use Autodesk Construction Cloud products. Since its launch in 2021, there have been more than 135,000 course enrollments across over 70 courses, with Learning Center visitors from over 170 countries. Learners can now earn Credits of Completion and add them to their LinkedIn profiles. Over 48,000 certificates have been issued through the Learning Center.

- We've also seen increased demand for our technology from universities, unions and other industry training centers, with more industry training centers than ever before, across carpentry, sheet metal work, pipefitters, both union and non-union, using Autodesk Construction Cloud technology. These educators are responding to the industry's growing appetite for talent with technical skills. This trend is reflected in the survey as well with about half (49 percent) of firms reporting they are engaged with a training program, at high schools, colleges, or career and technical education programs.
- The survey also reflects how essential construction technology is to modern construction operations. Ninety-one percent of firms agree that their employees need to possess digital technology skills to be successful as firms adopt new building technologies. And while few candidates possess all the skills firms want, nearly three-quarters of responding firms say at least half of the people they are hiring possess the technology skills they need, and a similar share agrees that diversifying the current workforce is critical to strengthening their future business. This is what's so interesting and exciting about the opportunities a career in construction can provide. On a personal note, most of the jobs that I have had in this industry did not previously exist when I first arrived. And in twenty more years, we're going to have even MORE roles that embrace and intertwine technology in ways we cannot even fathom right now. This data is a strong indicator of the larger digitization trend taking hold in construction and shows that firms should continue to upskill digital nomads – those who came up in the industry without these tools – while also attracting digital natives, those who have been using connected technology since its inception. It's a top priority that the industry creates programs and opportunities that attract this group and tap into talent with diverse backgrounds, because people from different backgrounds willing to explore technology is what drives cultural change.
- This year, the survey includes firms' attitudes toward the use of AI and robotics in construction as interest in these technologies continues to heat up. Interestingly, almost half of respondents (44 percent) believe that AI and robotics will positively impact construction costs by automating manual, repetitive tasks, and 41 percent say AI and robotics will improve the quality of construction jobs and make workers safer and more productive so they can focus less on redundant work and more on meaningful work. To this end, Autodesk is consistently working to augment technology with assistive workflows across preconstruction, construction project management, and operations – making the opportunity for impactful and meaningful work even more accessible. A recent example—earlier this year, we released AutoSpecScan, which allows users to generate submittal logs within minutes a task that used to take weeks or sometimes

