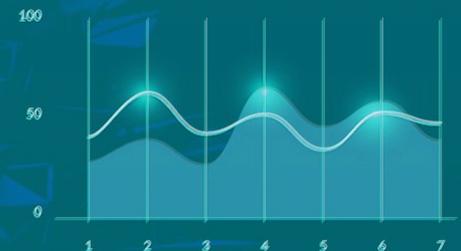
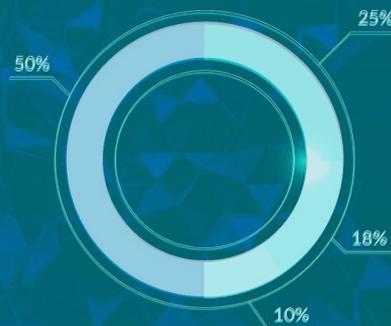
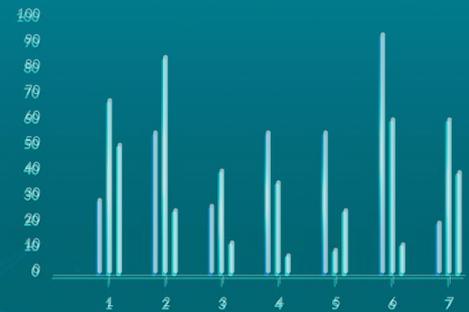


# COVID-19

## Digital Business Impact Survey by Unicsoft



- 75 %
- 65 %
- 50 %
- 25 %



# Introduction

The economic crisis caused by global lockdown has influenced the majority of businesses worldwide. More and more companies are changing their strategies to support the financial health of their businesses, as well as the psychological health of their employees. With many teams now working remotely, these companies must quickly create or adopt the digital analogs of their existing workflows and processes. But how well are they coping and what are their plans post-lockdown?

We surveyed more than 30 of our partners and network connections to see how they are handling the COVID-19 crisis and what adjustments they have had to make to their usual operations. The responders were from various:

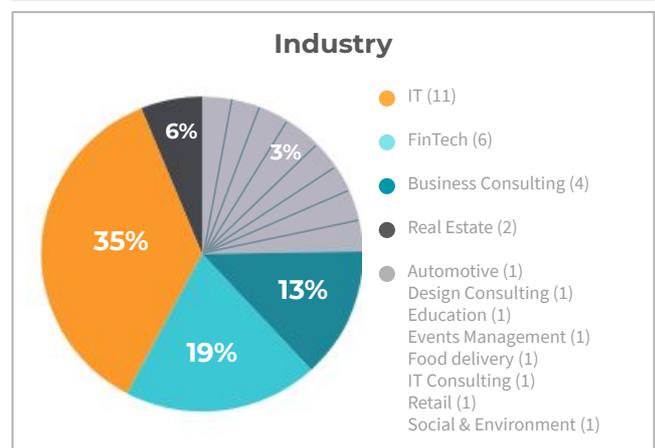
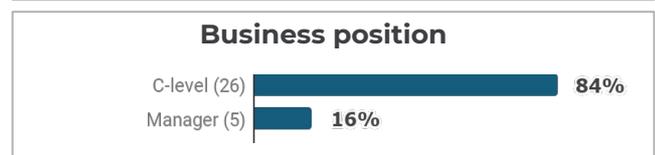
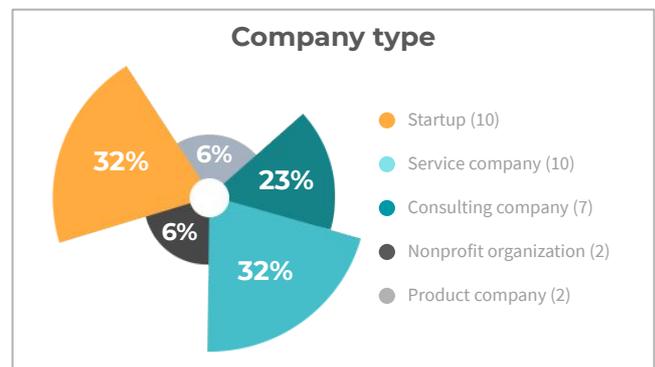
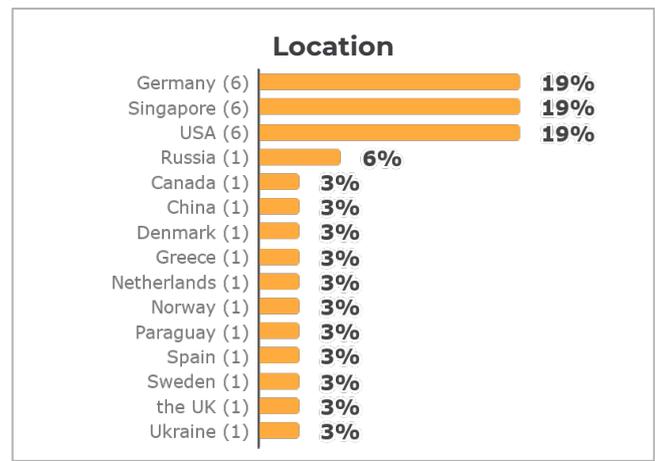
- ✓ **Locations:** worldwide; USA - 19%, Germany - 19%, Singapore - 19%, others - 43%.
- ✓ **Positions:** C-level positions - 84%, Managers - 16%.
- ✓ **Companies:** startups - 32%, service companies - 32%, others - 36%.
- ✓ **Industries:** Tech - 35%, FinTech - 19%, Business Consulting - 13%, others - 33%.

Based on the feedback, the responders currently share similar values and objectives. These include making great plans for the future, satisfying market needs, and innovation. They also share a strong will to succeed and belief in their idea. Our participants see business as a lifestyle and some deem entrepreneurship as a great adventure.

The need to grow, the desire to achieve the product/market fit, and a push to optimize financial resources and business processes were also among the shared traits of the responders. Finally, all of them faced their fear of failing to grow and meet the market need, and spend their investments without any results during the time of crisis.

By analyzing their answers, we wanted to see the actual impact of COVID-19 on businesses and provide the readers of this whitepaper with insights on anti-crisis strategies and new opportunities that have surfaced today.

Below is a breakdown of the survey respondent pool according to the following criteria:



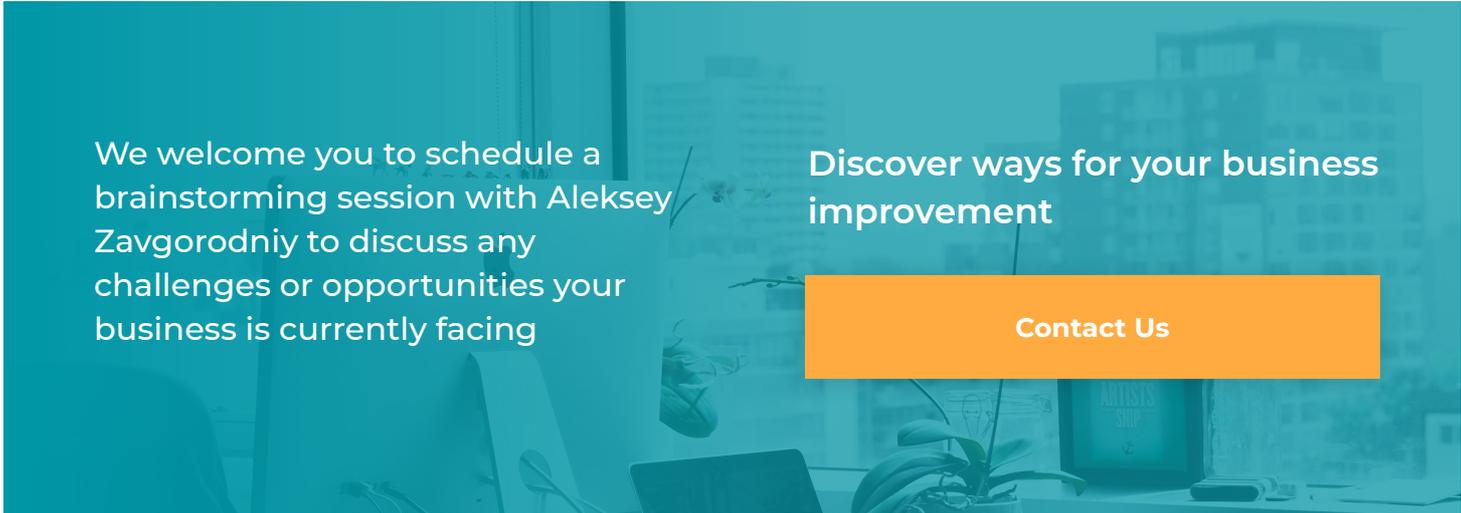
# Introduction

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We asked the survey respondents to answer five questions:

1. How has COVID-19 affected you and your business?
2. What opportunities and risks do you see in your business industry?
3. What are the main measures you are taking due to the quarantine and COVID-19?
4. Do you plan to develop new digital software products or extend the functionality of existing ones in 2020? If yes, would you prefer an external vendor or hiring in-house?
5. What software solutions or features do you think your customers and business will benefit from in 2021?

We hope this information, coupled with comments from Unicsoft's CEO Aleksey Zavgorodniy, will help you align your ideas and thoughts with business owners like you across the globe. Perhaps, it will bring new business insights for your processes, helping you stimulate business growth in new areas.



We welcome you to schedule a brainstorming session with Aleksey Zavgorodniy to discuss any challenges or opportunities your business is currently facing

Discover ways for your business improvement

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# Executive summary

Based on survey results, we conclude that:

**97%** of Unisoft’s partners and network contacts were **affected by the quarantine**, to different extents

**94%** had no challenges switching to **remote work**



**52%** of respondents still see an **opportunity to grow or evolve their business**, especially in:

- ✓ Changing their business model, innovating and accelerating out-of-the-box ideas
- ✓ Automating and going digital to provide remote work opportunities
- ✓ Helping small businesses address the current cash flow crunch via blockchain adoption
- ✓ Developing online education and digital engagement, FinTech and delivery services, which are growing due to COVID-19

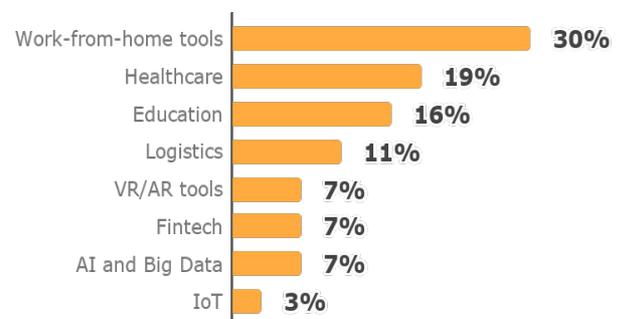
**48%** face **multiple business threats** as they depend on their customers to stay afloat



**16%** of our partners are having to put new product development **on hold**

**84%** **will continue delivering** new features and products internally or with the help of an outsourcing vendor

There are definitely industries seeing an **increased demand** due to the coronavirus lockdown, resulting in rapid growth. The survey highlighted the following industries of increase:



Adjusting to the new reality of remote work is crucial for lasting success. But we shouldn't think of it as a temporary measure that will soon be overcome, allowing everything to return to normal. This is the new normal. Working remotely — along with talents from other countries — **will be the best long-term strategy for many businesses.**

## How has COVID-19 affected you and your business?

COVID-19 has brought uncertainty, instability, and unpredictability to the market.

97%

of our survey respondents have pointed out how they had to begin working remotely, put their business activities on hold, and search for ways to reduce their expenses. Currently, only the delivery niche is on the rise.



**Aleksey Zavgorodniy,**  
CEO at Unicsoft

Unicsoft has continued working as usual. Because we were remote-friendly from the beginning, switching to fully remote work was not an issue for us. 14 years of expertise in managing remote teams paid off, and our clients did not experience any disruptions in the services Unicsoft provides.

We hold daily video calls (formal and informal) to replace face-to-face communication with colleagues, and email regular news bulletins to keep all our team members informed on key developments of the situation. Unicsoft's HR managers work to help our teams maintain a positive attitude, and we reassure our clients that the COVID-19 lockdown will not affect the delivery of their projects. Our team works with the same quality and delivers the tasks on time.

Finally, we strive to assist our partners in getting the most out of the crisis by suggesting ways to reshape their operations and seize opportunities provided by the outbreak. The Unicsoft team is known for going the extra mile for our clients, which is even more important during a time of crisis. Here are some examples of how Unicsoft is helping our partners:

- ✓ The team that was previously developing a product for one client is now helping him with sales by conducting demo calls, telling the prospects about the product features,

highlighting the possibilities for integration and presenting product adaptation to the unique needs of every user.

- ✓ The Unicsoft team members install and use client apps to help them collect data. This allows the products to work and evolve despite the crisis.
- ✓ We continue providing support to the businesses of our clients, regardless of their temporary financial difficulties.
- ✓ We reach out to past clients whose projects we previously delivered and offer additional improvement and monetization for their products; those who have experienced a slowdown in their business activities due to COVID-19.
- ✓ We look for new ways to improve our customers' products — anything that can help people worldwide deal with the coronavirus situation. One of our ideas included the ability to track users' movements and warn them of high-risk infection zones.

“ Unicsoft has continued working as usual. Because we were remote-friendly from the beginning, switching to fully remote work was not an issue for us. ”

*Aleksey Zavgorodniy, CEO at Unicsoft*

# How has COVID-19 affected you and your business?

## Comments from Unisoft's partners

“Remote work redefined our meetings, forums, panels. It affected 100% of the sales cycle.”

*Digital Department Director at a Smart Data Ecosystem for DApps, Russia*

“We have experienced increased vulnerability among clients with no clear economic consequences just yet.”

*Project Manager at a Nonprofit Social Enterprise, Paraguay*

“My business is growing. I help IT and finance companies implement lead generation and appointment-scheduling best practices within their sales teams. I work with several software development companies to help them secure qualified leads and new projects.”

*Ariel Wolfe, Principal at Brebenéskul Consulting, USA*

“Our customers are affected by the crisis and are reducing their subscription levels.”

*Founder, Chief Science and Technology Officer at a Company Specializing in Computational Modeling of Financial Markets, USA*

“The pandemic has created uncertainty, instability and a lack of predictability in the marketplace. Entire industries and systems are evolving in unknown directions.”

*Startup Founder, USA*

“Real estate sales have essentially stopped, which lowers our clients' revenue to near zero while the lockdown continues (most of our clients are large, multi-national realtor organizations and brands). The outlook for their future revenues is uncertain, but real estate obviously has a very high delta to the general economy, so any broad slowdown is highly negative for the industry as a whole.”

*Theo O'Donnell, Chief Commercial Officer at Immobel, Spain*

“I see a slower business pace, some closed businesses of my clients, stopped projects.”

*Christian Dominique, President at Dominique Strategic Consulting, Canada*

“All offline programs are canceled.”

*Co-Founder at a Tech Education Company, Singapore*

“We've seen limited impact when it comes to existing clients, noting that we all have to work from home (it was voluntary before COVID-19).”

*Thomas Greysson, Executive Vice President at Omnistream, Singapore*

“Being in the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions) industry, we organize events that are closely linked to tourism and events involving foreign visitors. Due to COVID-19, we have been seeing minimum activities happening since 16th January this year. Subsequently, social distancing practices, as well as the limitation of not having more than ten persons at any event, have not given us the capacity and opportunity to run any events for the past three months.”

*Chief Executive Officer at an Events Management Company, Singapore*

“A big plus is the increased activity in funded fintech startups within the community.”

*Matt Argent, Founder at Open Banking Working Group - SE Asia, Singapore*

“Not at this point. Fortunately, I am in the midst of bringing new development to the market, which has an MVP projection for Q3-Q4 earliest of this year.”

*Founder at IoT and Machine Learning Startup, the Netherlands*

“It has impacted one of our niche markets: providing tickets on blockchain for events like UEFA and EdCon.”

*Director - Engagement, Delivery & Partnerships at the “HTML” for Tokens Company, Singapore*

“So far, it hasn't affected our business much. We still have the same clients as before. But we have introduced cost cuts in terms of salaries, and we have been pegging the salaries for a temporary period to Norwegian NOK instead of USD. We have also introduced work from home, and renegotiated rent terms.”

*Thomas Vervik, Partner at SeniorDev, Norway*

“Many potential projects have stopped and the uncertainty is still ongoing.”

*Veronika Ovsienko, Marketing and Partnerships Manager at Neusinger GmbH, Germany*

“Yes, because we needed to close most of our physical touchpoints.”

*Co-Founder at an Automotive Marketplace, Singapore*

## How has COVID-19 affected you and your business?

“Being under COVID-19 circumstances, the biggest change is working remotely from our homes.”

*Financial Analyst at an Investment Company, Greece*

“My company was impacted heavily.”

*Director at a Strategic Consulting Company, the United Kingdom*

“As we are a purely digital business, we do not see a direct impact on our operations.”

*CTO at a Digital Currency Company, Denmark*

“Some of our clients experience a shortage of income because their business model is aimed at people physically attending places like malls.”

*CEO at an IT Company, Ukraine*

“As an upcoming FinTech startup, it has generally not affected any of our core service offerings, our team communication or working routine as most of our activities were digital and online anyways. Though, it has affected the dynamics and relationships we've had with clients as we've lost that human element.”

*Darren Chow, Founder at Javia, China*

“We have many troubles with our coworkers and key clients. Now, we only have two open locations; the other four are closed according to the government orders.”

*Manager at a Coworking Company, Russia*

“Now, it's much more difficult to make new sales due to travel limitations. We were lucky to close the deal with LIDL before the outbreak, and now we have this "secure" project for at least two to three months.”

*Director of IT Solutions at an International Design Consulting Company, Germany*

“Our business is at a very active stage right now due to the fact that all the restaurants are closed, and many chefs are left without a job.”

*Co-Founder of a Food Marketplace Startup, Sweden*

“We can't afford to keep a “bench” of specialists anymore, so we had to decrease their hours and mostly concentrate on in-house developers.”

*CEO at a Software Consulting Company, USA*

“All our plans for the Spring of 2020 were put on hold because e-bike shops aren't allowed to operate during the quarantine. In the first month, we have greatly suffered from cash flow and, thus, were cautious with paying debts. It's difficult for us to plan ahead, so we're only planning for "the next day".”

*COO at an LPWAN Technology Products Development Company, Germany*

“Some projects were put on hold. The clients are more precautious now towards budget allocation for new/additional development. All internal processes have slowed down a lot, and it may take a while for decisions to be made.”

*Manager of Digital Sourcing at a Technology Services Provider, Germany*

“It has significantly affected our business as well as the business of our customers (financial institutions). In addition to this, we have around 200K Euros of accounts receivable which are more than three months overdue/delayed. This has also caused cash flow problems and increased our overall debts on different fronts.”

*Managing Director and Co-Founder at a FinTech Company, Germany*

“So far, it hasn't affected our business much. Moreover, sales activities are now in place, and we have lots of potential prospects.”

*CEO at a Web and Mobile App Development Company, USA*

“It has affected my business a lot. Some projects are frozen. We see payment delays.”

*Co-Founder at a Software Development Company, USA*

“With the COVID-19 outbreak, uncertainty reigns.”

*Ashley Barratt, Director at ATS, Germany*

# What opportunities and risks do you see in your business industry?

After summarizing the responders' answers concerning the opportunities and risks they are seeing in their business industry, we concluded the following:

52%

still see opportunities to help their business evolve and grow, especially by:

- Changing their business model, innovating and accelerating out-of-the-box ideas
- Automating and going digital to provide remote work opportunities
- Helping small businesses address the current cash flow crunch via blockchain adoption
- Developing online education and digital engagement, FinTech and Delivery directions, which are growing now due to COVID-19

48%

face multiple business threats, especially tech service companies, as they depend on their customers to stay afloat. Their customers reduce software development expenses or put all development projects on hold until the situation stabilizes. Startups have also noted a shortage of investments.



**Aleksey Zavgorodniy,**  
CEO at Unicsoft

Few people understand the positive opportunities that can emerge during and after an economic recession; the majority focus on the risks. But I would like to highlight two positive directions businesses can work towards during a crisis: seizing external opportunities and empowering your internal company strengths. Let's look at the external opportunities this crisis presents for various industries.

## Internal strengths



### Retail

The first field I would like to point out is retail. With much retail already done online, as a result of the lockdown, retail market players started improving their customer experience and heavily investing in their online presence.



### Logistics and delivery

Logistics and courier services are in demand and grow along with online retail and grocery delivery. With people globally restricted from roaming the streets and eating at restaurants, food delivery is soaring. But the latest hot trend is, of course, contactless delivery.



### Healthcare

Healthcare is experiencing certain ups and downs at the moment. Everything related to emergency healthcare is definitely in high demand, but other non-critical healthcare products, especially those not ready to be consumed online, are in decline. Therefore, many healthcare providers are working around the clock to create online versions of their products and services to retain their customer base.

I think there will be a great demand for remote diagnostics services for various diseases, including COVID-19, as well as for services providing remote care. The market already has solutions for intensive care and remote monitoring of vital signs to offer.

# What opportunities and risks do you see in your business industry?

There are also portable devices that can be used to provide the care needed at home. This leads me to believe that telemedicine can be on the rise soon, as well.

For instance, Unicsoft helped develop Wanda, a cloud-based platform for monitoring a patient's health using AI models that alert healthcare professionals of potential dangerous conditions. We also developed Octagon, a primary care service app that helps more than 100,000 users in the UK treat their illnesses themselves if their physician is not currently available, following detailed video-instructions.

“ Few people understand the positive opportunities that can emerge during and after an economic recession; the majority focus on the risks. ”

*Aleksey Zavgorodniy, CEO at Unicsoft*

## Internal strengths

It might sound like a counterintuitive piece of advice, but **don't cut your marketing and sales budget**. You will be able to receive more leads for the same or lower price due to the reduced competition. In addition, the markets are being reformatted and revised, shaken from top to bottom, allowing new marketing approaches to emerge which can be extremely productive.

**Improving your cash flow monitoring and financial control** is another field you need to strengthen. It will bring dividends long after the crisis is over, financial control being one of the most important aspects of any business.

The third potential strength lies within **learning new skills and growing as a professional for you and your team**. Without the daily commute, you now have more time and energy to invest in developing your hard and soft skills. It's important to follow the work-rest balance approach and spend these few extra hours on self-education, studying new tools and techniques.

Try to assess the skills your team is lacking and put extra effort into mastering them.

All your managers, HRs and customer-facing employees can take courses in negotiations, as it's an essential skill for building a successful business culture, quarantine or not. Due to the new conditions and the changing world, your team will need to renegotiate current deals or negotiate new ones, both externally and internally.

The fourth way to improve your company is by **hiring new talents**. During a crisis, many companies must lay off or freeze projects and say goodbye to skilled professionals. But if you remain stable, you have a good chance at headhunting and adding great talents to your team, locally and remotely. While it might not bring you immediate results, as people may be reluctant to change jobs now, contacting them is still beneficial since they might change their minds in a couple of months.

“ Don't cut your marketing and sales budget. Improving your cash flow monitoring and financial control. learning new skills and growing as a professional for you and your team. Hiring new talents. ”

*Aleksey Zavgorodniy, CEO at Unicsoft*

# What opportunities and risks do you see in your business industry?

## Comments from Unisoft's partners

“Opportunities to bring in business model changes, innovation and accelerate out of the box ideas.”

*Project Manager at a Nonprofit Social Enterprise, Paraguay*

“I assist with implementing remote-work technologies like Zoho, who is one of my clients. They have a suite of remote-work tools called "Remotely," which I help promote to other businesses I consult.”

*Ariel Wolfe, Principal at Brebenéskul Consulting, USA*

“We see this as a catalyst to move toward more automation and digitalization.”

*Co-Founder at an Automotive Marketplace, Singapore*

“The major impact has been on new business development, which has slowed as retailers deal with the current spike in demand, reductions of the workforce and government mandates.”

*Thomas Greysson, Executive Vice President at Omnistream, Singapore*

“We do not have any visibility of confirmed projects for the next six months as our corporate clients are shaken and unable to do anything due to the recent restrictions further imposed by the government. While the risks are obvious, the opportunity to reinvent our services and products is there, and we are fortunate to have secured clients to continue engaging their customers during this period.”

*Chief Executive Officer at an Events Management Company, Singapore*

“Visibility is unclear. This provides opportunities to meet the needs of the new landscape as it emerges, as well as threats to old systems.”

*Startup Founder, USA*

“Business development cycles are affected due to the inability of conducting group meetings in-person.”

*Founder, Chief Science and Technology Officer at a Company Specializing in Computational Modeling of Financial Markets, USA*

“We serve large clients, and there has often been consolidation during previous recessions. A flight to quality for realtor franchisees and their agents, so they will probably survive. Independents will die or be bought out. Our revenues will take a hit and our revised growth trajectory will be lower.”

*Theo O'Donnell, Chief Commercial Officer at Immobel, Spain*

“Many of our clients have shifted focus to solve COVID-19 problems. Diggecard (gift cards) provides emergency help to businesses by helping them sell gift cards for use after the crisis. bSafe builds support for reporting on COVID-19 when triggering an alarm. Friskus provides tools for managing volunteering during the outbreak, etc.”

*Thomas Vervik, Partner at Seniordev, Norway*

“The most difficult task imposed by this change is the execution part, as for a financial asset management company fast execution is everything.”

*Financial Analyst at an Investment Company, Greece*

“Online education and digital engagement are on the rise.”

*Co-Founder at a Tech Education Company, Singapore*

“We are a startup that specializes in providing data analytics solutions to lenders, as we have built our own unique, proprietary credit scoring algorithm. We see an opportunity with lenders who will require our services. Ultimately, the financial services industry is a risk management business, whereas we can help them mitigate this risk.

Further, given the current circumstances, where more individuals and SMEs have reduced cash flow coming, borrowing will increase. There is the risk that FinTechs and other companies/startups in the industry who are unable to move 'digitally' will lose business or fail, or their client relationships will deteriorate.”

*Darren Chow, Founder at Javia, China*

“We are partnering restaurants and their chefs with Hoodifood to extend our network and be able to cover higher demand on the home food delivery.”

*Co-Founder of a Food Marketplace Startup, Sweden*

# What opportunities and risks do you see in your business industry?

“Being in software (and a bit of hardware) development as a company, we have the opportunity to ride the waves somewhat. The current health crisis will provide good and new opportunities on various levels (as we already see).

Risk-wise, my concerns are mainly economic: how long will the current strict measures that are taken worldwide to counter this crisis last and how much will it cost?

It is something that will impact the willingness and ability to invest, but it is too early to tell at this point. If these measures are short, I don't expect too much of an impact. But if they are long(er), I will need to reassess certain (marketing) strategies.”

*Founder at IoT and Machine Learning Startup, the Netherlands*

We are now aiming to work on the side projects related to COVID-19, and are actively communicating with potential investors and donor institutions.”

*Managing Director and Co-Founder at a FinTech Company, Germany*

“No ability at all to do any planning.”

*Manager of Digital Sourcing at a Technology Services Provider, Germany*

“Digital Infrastructure has proven to be the new utility. New opportunities and possibilities will open up.”

*Ashley Barratt, Director at ATS, Germany*

“ The opportunity we are seeing is to drive the adoption of blockchain by helping people, including small businesses and artists, address the current cash flow crunch through a token sale. ”

*Director - Engagement, Delivery & Partnerships at the “HTML” for Tokens Company, Singapore*

# What are the main measures you are taking due to quarantine and COVID-19?

The brief summary of our partners' responses revealed that:

97%

are now working from home; one person works from a small office

15%

had to cut salaries or lay off some employees

10%

were able to find more time for sports/ meditation

22%

are searching for new ways to promote their company and expand



**Aleksey Zavgorodniy,**  
CEO at Unicsoft

Unicsoft continues working just like before, only remotely. We are used to working as remote dedicated teams, so nothing has fundamentally changed for us. As for internal adjustments, I think it's best **not to cut expenses, especially on marketing and sales**, since they will allow you to improve your positions in a couple of months.

Unicsoft focuses on two things in the marketing field right now, and we advise our clients and partners to follow suit. The first one is the exploratory marketing approach. We reformatted our Biz Dev team into growth-hacking and Agile Biz Dev, where we brainstorm and ideate a lot in order to quickly develop hypotheses and test them rapidly. We expect our clients and future partners to continue or start developing their products once the quarantine is lifted, and now is the right time to start the dialogue.

The other focus of our marketing team lies in partnerships. Trust matters a lot, so we are putting extra effort into reconnecting with our former clients. However, partnerships are not limited to your clients; they can be formed with your friends and people from your network. I've found people in my network I haven't spoken to in over six months, and they are very open to communicating and brainstorming business ideas on the upcoming changes.

Today, more than ever, it is important to assemble and work together on these preparations for the new reality. You will be surprised by the level of cooperation, the readiness for new ideas, and the possible partnerships in which to implement them. Cooperation and collaboration are critical for overcoming the challenges of this crisis and forging better, stronger business operations to build a lasting success.

## Comments from Unicsoft's partners

“Distributed work remotely, laying off some employees and keeping core team members.”

*Digital Department Director at a Smart Data Ecosystem for DApps, Russia*

“WFH, daily meditation, daily exercise, total quarantine.”  
*Ariel Wolfe, Principal at Brebenéskul Consulting, USA*

“Diversifying the range of subscription services.”  
*Founder, Chief Science and Technology Officer at a Company Specializing in Computational Modeling of Financial Markets, USA*

# What opportunities and risks do you see in your business industry?

“Work from home arrangement for all employees as well as salary cuts across the board to keep costs lean.”  
*Chief Executive Officer at an Events Management Company, Singapore*

“From the personal health perspective, I follow our government’s guidelines, which mainly come to staying indoors, proper hand hygiene, avoiding people and maintaining a safe distance.

From the business perspective, it’s keeping a close watch on short- and long(er) term economic development (prognosis).”  
*Founder at IoT and Machine Learning Startup, the Netherlands*

“Bench cutting, salary decrease by 10% for now, office expenses cut, negotiated office rent 50% cut.”  
*CEO at an IT Company, Ukraine*

“Working from home, no traveling, concentrating on digital sales and marketing.”  
*CEO at a Web and Mobile App Development Company, USA*

“During quarantine, we work from home or from a small office.

From an operational point of view, we've changed the focus of sales. Now, we use the time to strategically prepare for the time after the crisis. We participate in the German government's initiative on IT solutions related to quarantine and consequences. At the moment, we are participating in a mentor role and offer resources for the implementation of solutions.”  
*Veronika Ovsienko, Marketing and Partnerships Manager at Neusinger GmbH, Germany*

“We always were a distributed team, with one office in Sydney. It was easy for us to adopt working from home for the whole team.”  
*Director - Engagement, Delivery & Partnerships at the “HTML” for Tokens Company, Singapore*

“Working remotely and health-hygiene measures.”  
*Financial Analyst at an Investment Company, Greece*

“Increased market surveillance, as well as looking at new, non-traditional market signals and indicators of trends. Historical research into the Great Depression and the dynamics of recovery. Extra efforts to communicate openly with partners and vendors and advisers, as well as setting up decision-making timelines and structures to guide decision-making.”  
*Startup Founder, USA*

“Digital transformation.”  
*Co-Founder at a Tech Education Company, Singapore*

“Self-isolation, staying in quarantine.  
 On a more personal level, having daily check-ins with the team, Scrum meetings, have everyone stick to normal working hours so nobody overworks, keeping a sense of normality as it is hard to differentiate the 'workplace' from 'home'”  
*Darren Chow, Founder at Javia, China*

“Masks, antiseptics, disinfection in our buildings, most of our clients and staff staying at home.”  
*Manager at a Coworking Company, Russia*

“Working from home. Asked all the employees to use their holidays from the previous year, no travel arrangements.”  
*Director of IT Solutions at an International Design Consulting Company, Germany*

“Work from home, shortened working days for our employees and/or paid holidays, fewer hours invested into embedded development, some slowing down of the development.”  
*COO at an LPWAN Technology Products Development Company, Germany*

“Staying at home, shortened the bench (opt for outsourcing).”  
*CEO at a Software Consulting Company, USA*

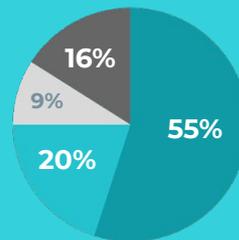
“Reduced development, froze new projects.”  
*Co-Founder at a Software Development Company, USA*

“WFH, pivoting personally around ‘being of service’ and choosing to be kind to myself and others.”  
*Ashley Barratt, Director at ATS, Germany*

# Do you plan to develop new digital software products or extend the functionality of the existing ones in 2020?

If yes, would you prefer an external vendor or hiring in-house?

We asked our partners if they plan to develop new digital software products or extend the functionality of the existing ones in 2020. If the answer was yes, we asked them if they preferred an external vendor or hiring in-house. Here are their answers:



- Will partner with a vendor
- Will do this in-house
- Will outsource some of their services to a trusted vendor while developing some products in-house
- Don't have plans to develop digital solutions and must redirect their budget to other fields.



**Aleksey Zavgorodniy,**  
CEO at Unicsoft

There were projects finished prior to the COVID-19 outbreak or put on hold that now have a new vibe to them. Some of our long-term clients see new opportunities arising, and when they have a good idea, they prefer hiring someone they've cooperated with before.

We remained strong during the big crisis of 2008, so I keep reminding our team and clients that every crisis is a time of opportunities. The market is reformatted, which means

that flexible and agile businesses can adapt quickly and have a chance to grow. Unicsoft grew rapidly during 2009-2011, in the wake of the crisis, helping our customers find opportunities in the turbulent market as well. Today, we are doing the same.

A crisis can require you to move fast, and Unicsoft works very fast. Once we see room for growth or a solution to a problem, we ideate, prototype, and quickly build a Proof of Concept to test it in the emerging niches on the market.

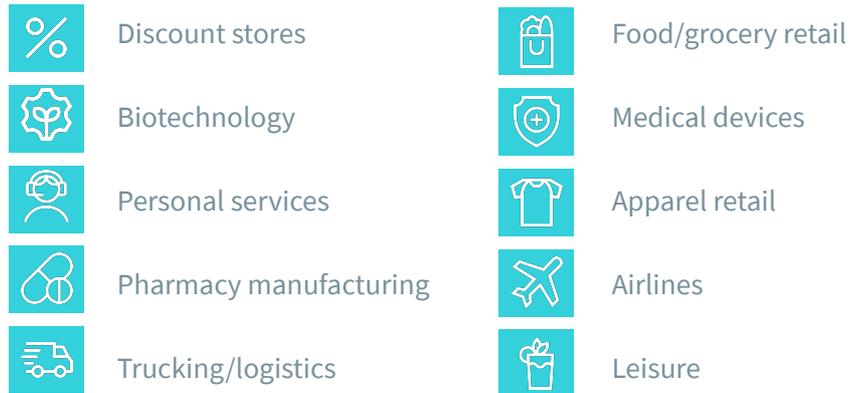
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# What software solutions or features do you think your customers and business will benefit from in 2021?

Based on a [Statista report](#), services make up the largest part of the GDP globally, and it looks like the recession will mostly impact service-oriented businesses.

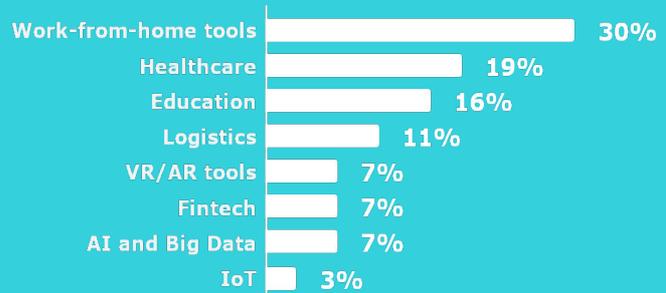
However, according to [Investopedia](#), ten industries remained stable and revealed growth during the 2008 economic crisis:



A decade later, and taking the specifics of this crisis into account (quarantine did not exist in 2008, so travel was not banned as it is now), we can still see that many industries from that list remain relevant today. People still need food and medical services, they need clothing and shoes (these are just ordered online since brick-and-mortar stores are closed), and people still want to be entertained.

While some industries stall during the pandemic, other domains are actively growing now or showing tendencies to start growing in the near future. Additionally, the evolution of technologies like the IoT, AI, eLearning, eCommerce, AR/VR, and others, offer many ways to profit from the changing nature of customer consumption. Businesses that find a way to serve the pressing needs of their target audience will be able to flourish during this turbulent time.

Now, let's compare the statistics from 2008 with the present. The respondents of our survey highlighted the following business areas as those that will have the greatest potential in post-COVID times.



As we can see, both the 2008 economic crisis and the 2020 COVID-19 crisis provided ample opportunities for businesses in healthcare/pharmacy and logistics/delivery industries to grow.

However, we can also see new industries and products that were not available in 2008, but are now present and growing: e-learning, work-from-home tools, VR/AR solutions, blockchain, and FinTech. They are succeeding due to the specifics of the current crisis (lockdown and quarantine). FinTech's driving impulse will be the need to ensure funds are easily available to help economies move away from stagnation after the crisis.

We also predict rapid growth for AI/ML, Big Data and IoT platforms, which were not as big in 2008, but are much more mature, widespread, and trending nowadays.

# What software solutions or features do you think your customers and business will benefit from in 2021?



**Aleksey Zavgorodniy,**  
CEO at Unisoft

Unisoft is an experienced software developer with expertise in building products for multiple industries. This allows us to make predictions that industries like telecom, education, and event management will have to digitize, move to working online, and automate their processes.



## Telecom

Telecom, in general, and cloud services, in particular, are on the rise. There is a rapidly increasing demand for teleconferencing tools like Zoom, Skype, GoToMeeting, and similar platforms. This leaves them with an urgent need to restructure and optimize their cloud infrastructure to make it more efficient.



## Productivity tools

There is a high demand for productivity tools to ensure efficient remote work. After quarantine, I think many companies will not return fully to office work. They will have realized the office space is not a must, and how remote work saves time and the stress of commuting. Thus said, the tools required for working efficiently from home are in high demand: document flow tools, collaboration tools, data security solutions, etc.



## VR/AR and online fitness tools

There is also a growing interest in virtual reality tools, where people communicate from their homes but feel like they are in the same room as everyone else. This can be another growth opportunity, very lucrative for businesses that can deliver it quickly. Another emphasis can be made for online wellness and fitness tools, as all gyms and sports facilities are closed.



## Education

There is a huge strain on education, which is currently solved by facilitating curriculum through Skype or Zoom meetings. However, we need more remote classrooms and homeschooling systems. Of course, to handle the current changes, we should first reform education, especially corporate education and mentorship, which is traditionally classroom-based in many companies.



## Event management

One would expect the event management industry to be in decline, but it has actually adapted very quickly. I am already seeing many event management platforms that are allowing events to be attended remotely and are benefiting from online communication and collaboration. By video streaming event speakers, with moderators handling the flow of questions, you can enable smooth business interactions from any location. I believe this kind of service will be in high demand even after the lockdown.



## Micro-financing

I would also like to mention the opportunities for the micro-financing industry. While it is currently on lockdown, there are indicators it can unthaw much faster than traditional financial instruments. First of all, this industry sees a need for rapid digitalization, as banks and financial institutions are largely digitized already, while micro-financing companies did not have such an incentive previously. However, with the need to cater to customer requests online while complying with various data protection regulations, microfinance companies are apt to start rapidly digitizing, which opens yet another opportunity for digital businesses.

# What software solutions or features do you think your customers and business will benefit from in 2021?

## Comments from Unisoft's partners

“Education, pharmacy, logistics.”

*Digital Department Director at a Smart Data Ecosystem for DApps, Russia*

“e-Learning, e-Commerce, smart contracts traceability.”

*Project Manager at a Nonprofit Social Enterprise, Paraguay*

“Banking-as-a-Service platforms, innovative payment solutions, credit platforms and new InsurTech.”

*Matt Argent, Founder at Open Banking Working Group - SE Asia, Singapore*

“Business Information and Intelligence solutions aiding situational awareness of indoor environments by deploying a modular ML-based tag, sensor and camera infrastructure and providing insights regarding flows and (ambient) states of people, goods and situations. The focus varies. Initially, it's retail, but depending on the situation, a shift toward healthcare is considered.”

*Founder at IoT and Machine Learning Startup, the Netherlands*

“Digital health. Telemedicine.”

*Christian Dominique, President at Dominique Strategic Consulting, Canada*

“Developer tools for easier adoption of TokenScript - the technology that enables developers to create simple and secure UX for tokens.”

*Director - Engagement, Delivery & Partnerships at the “HTML” for Tokens Company, Singapore*

“Big Data.”

*Director at a Strategic Consulting Company, the United Kingdom*

“Remote work tools like Remotely. Companies do not want to change CRMs these days but they will consider "lightweight" tools. Anything revenue-generating. Think less innovation and long-term strategy and more secure revenue, low-hanging fruit and direct impact on ROI.”

*Ariel Wolfe, Principal at Brebenéskul Consulting, USA*

“Current situation limits the ability of any outsourced development of new solutions. In-house consolidation of any in-progress components becomes the key.”

*Founder, Chief Science and Technology Officer at a Company Specializing in Computational Modeling of Financial Markets, USA*

“This isn't exactly new... but... across industries, there will be even more demand for remote, highly available, multi-tenant solutions that sync across devices.”

*Theo O'Donnell, Chief Commercial Officer at Immobel, Spain*

“Shopper-centric, space-aware, store-level assortment solutions.”

*Thomas Greysson, Executive Vice President at Omnistream, Singapore*

“Digital document signing, remote Know Your Customer, VR/AR tools.”

*Co-Founder at an Automotive Marketplace, Singapore*

“Virtual event experiences and online customer engagement.”

*Chief Executive Officer at an Events Management Company, Singapore*

“Since one of our tricks is AI and Big Data, we believe that after the most difficult phase of the crisis, firms will start preparing for such cases and will be ready to implement AI. That is, functions related to the automation of processes should be useful.”

*Veronika Ovsiienko, Marketing and Partnerships Manager at Neusinger GmbH, Germany*

“In my country, home delivery is gaining more and more popularity.”

*Co-Founder of a Food Marketplace Startup, Sweden*

# What opportunities and risks do you see in your business industry?

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“There is a lot of confusion and time-consuming actions that we have to do before the process execution part begins. Thus, software bringing closer the compliance, back office and the market would be very beneficial.”

*Financial Analyst at an Investment Company, Greece*

“Online communication tools. Work-from-home tools.”

*Darren Chow, Founder at Javia, China*

“IT infrastructure without people.”

*Manager at a Coworking Company, Russia*

“E-learning, digital healthcare.”

*CEO at a Web and Mobile App Development Company, USA*

“e-Learning and healthcare industries will surely go on another level of service.”

*CEO at a Software Consulting Company, USA*

“Community, connection, certainty.”

*Ashley Barratt, Director at ATS, Germany*

“The Internet of Things is already bringing about profound changes to the way that we live and work. Analysts expect that over 20 billion devices will be networked soon. So we are actively working in this direction.”

*COO at an LPWAN Technology Products Development Company, Germany*

“Increased sales conversion.”

*Co-Founder at a Tech Education Company, Singapore*

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# About Unicsoft



Unicsoft is a recognized expert in the world of digital transformation, empowering business to innovate. We provide professional software development services for sustainable growth of SME and startups worldwide.

With our help and the client-centered mindset we cultivate, many of our clients were able to get back on track and grow in 2008-2011. An excellent client experience is our priority. We achieve this through clear and timely communication, delivering on promises, and our “going the extra mile” attitude.

Now, we want to do the same for your business. This is a great time to help your company get ready for the oncoming economic recession and provide tools and services that will help you succeed long-term while conquering new markets.

We currently hold numerous brainstorming sessions with our team members and clients to find the best approaches to keeping their businesses afloat or even prospering in the current situation.

If you would like to hold a similar session for your business, don't hesitate to contact us anytime and our experts will gladly examine your specific case.

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## Thank you

We would like to thank you for the time you invested in reading through our analysis. We hope you found the information useful. Also, we are grateful to all the respondents for taking part in this survey. Your answers helped us understand the reality of the situation for various businesses worldwide.



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