

## Vital numbers Out of office

Frustrated commuters aren't alone in benefiting from a flexible working day, as these stats suggest...



The portion of companies worldwide which have adopted flexible working policies, according to Vodafone's *Flexible: Friend or foe?* survey of 8,000 employers across 10 countries.



The portion of leaders without flexible policies who admitted that employee morale would improve if they were introduced.

55%

83%



Those who reported an improvement in productivity – 61% said their profits have increased, and 58% believe flexible working had a positive impact on their organisation's profile.



The number of weeks after which every employee has the statutory right to request flexible working, as of 30 June 2014.

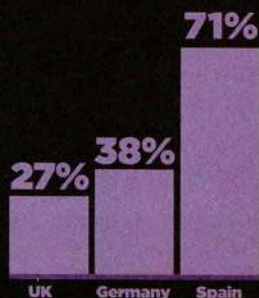


18-24

The age group with the largest number of respondents – 72 per cent – who believed that flexible working would sharpen their work quality.



Respondents who use their smartphone to work flexibly:



8%  
Portion of UK employers who would be concerned about employees slacking off due to flexible working policies, compared with 33 per cent in Hong Kong.

vodafone.com/WorkFlexi

## Cassettes and comebacks

**TECH** Later this month, the last Sony Betamax cassette will roll off the production line. The biggest surprise, perhaps, is not its demise but the fact the Betamax brand is still around after losing the videotape format wars with VHS in the 1980s. Despite selling only 3,000 players as long ago as 2002, production endured. With an increasing consumer love of all things retro, here's a look at other antiquated formats and their chances of a revival...



### SONY WALKMAN CASSETTE PLAYER

**Lifespan:** 1979-2010 The world's first low-cost portable music player, Sony sold 220 million Walkmans – consumers undeterred by the occasional need to spend hours untangling a chewed tape.

**Digital doomsday:** The launch of the Sony Discman in the 1980s, which in turn was replaced by Steve Jobs's iPod in 2001.

**Comeback chances?** 4/10 The cassette tape has enjoyed a renewed cachet with cassette-only music labels and an international Cassette Store Day.



### THE TYPEWRITER

**Lifespan:** 1868-2012 (in the UK)

**Digital doomsday:** The arrival of word processors in the 1980s spelled the end of papers being littered with Tipp-Ex splodges. The last British-made typewriter was packed into its box at the Brother factory in Wrexham.

**Comeback chances?** 9/10 In 2014, Tom Hanks's Hanx Writer app, which recreates the "sound and motion" of typewriters, topped Apple's iTunes Store Chart.



### POLAROID INSTANT CAMERA

**Lifespan:** 1947-2008 The 1960s were Polaroid's heyday, when half of all US households owned one.

**Digital doomsday:** The early 2000s when the company filed for bankruptcy due to the ascendancy of digital photography.

**Comeback chances?** 10/10 Thanks to millennials craving more tangibility, Polaroid is undergoing a renaissance. Analogue revivalists Impossible Project have saved 200 million Polaroid cameras, selling one million films in 2014.



### FAX MACHINES

**Lifespan:** 1964-present

**Digital doomsday:** The advent of email and computer scanning has seen fax machines all but vanish from the workplace, but the 1980s office mainstay is still being

manufactured today.

**Comeback chances?** N/A Fax machines are still used in the business world, and are often required for transmitting legal signatures. The official wedding notifications for William and Kate's 2011 marriage were sent using the technology while 1.2 million fax machines were sold in Japan in 2014.



### THE 3.5 INCH FLOPPY DISK

**Lifespan:** 1981-2010

**Digital doomsday:** The introduction of compact discs, followed by USB flash drives and cloud software.

**Comeback chances?** 1/10. Its once-revolutionary 1.4MB of storage is now barely enough storage to host an average-length pop song. Despite this, it was recently revealed that 8in floppy disks were still the preferred method of computer storage for a US Air Force nuclear silo.



## Comic goldmine

**EVENT** Given Scotland's role in the comic industry (Dundee-based *Beano* publisher DC Thomson has a hefty £228m turnover) it's fitting that Glasgow this month hosts an exhibition exploring the history of the 'graphic narrative'. Sales of comics hit a 20-year high in 2014 – worth \$870m (£607m) in the US and Canada alone (aided by comic book movie adaptations such as *X-Men*,

*Spider-Man* and *The Avengers*). The *Comic Invention* exhibition – at the University of Glasgow's Hunterian Art Gallery from 18 March-17 July – will examine all this, tracing the art form's roots back to ancient Greece.

gla.ac.uk/hunterian