



## Closing the digital divide with our Connect More Programme

It's a digital world these days, but the digital divide is wide. 2.6 million people are offline and 20.5 million people have very low levels of digital engagement.\*

At Virgin Media O2 Business, we're on a mission to help bridge this divide by building digital skills and confidence for everyday lives.

\* Lloyds Consumer Digital Index 2021

### Too many people are currently locked out of an increasingly digital world and unable to get online



of the population do not have basic digital skills to use the internet effectively, according to research from [Lloyds Bank](#).



of households earning between £6-10,000 a year have home internet access, according to [gov.uk](#).

### Now more than ever, digital skills are essential to take part in the UK workforce



**82%** of jobs in the UK now require digital skills, according to the [Digital Poverty Alliance](#).

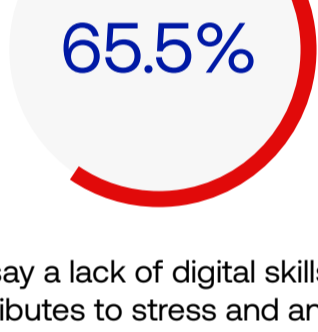


**74.9%** of our research respondents agree digital skills are a vital part of finding and keeping a job.

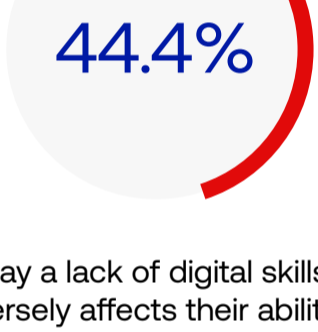
### According to Virgin Media O2's research with 3Gem, the digital divide could be placing people at a huge disadvantage in their career and earnings potential.



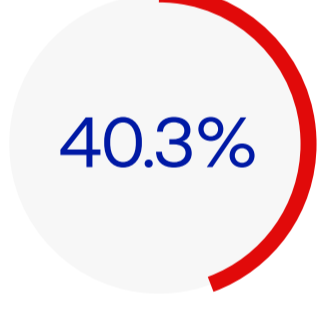
### It's not just about access to the job market. Digital exclusion could be costing people their physical, mental and financial wellbeing.



say a lack of digital skills contributes to stress and anxiety.



say a lack of digital skills adversely affects their ability to look after their mental health and personal wellbeing.



paying higher prices for bills as they can't shop around online.

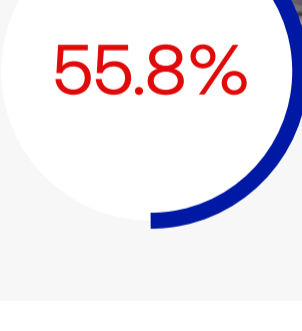


of people have been unable to book hospital or GP appointments in the last year.

### People want to learn digital skills, but time and knowing where to start is holding them back

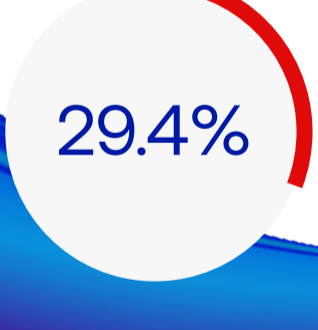


Two biggest factors holding people back from learning digital skills:



Over half of respondents want to learn new digital skills

### In the face of the cost-of-living crisis, digital skills could go some way to helping people reduce costs and manage economic challenges.



say they want to improve their digital skills so they can shop around for deals – the top reason chosen in our research.

### The potential benefits of supporting digital inclusion speak for themselves.



For every £1 invested, Good Things Foundation estimates £15 of benefit.

Which is why at Virgin Media O2 Business, we're committed to making sure everyone can participate in today's digital society. Our Connect More Programme helps equip people with the skills and confidence they need to use everyday technology and get online.

Virgin Media O2 Business' Connect More Programme is delivered by employee volunteers who share their time to help with digital skills training at local authority drop-in sessions. Every one of our employees can take 5 volunteering days a year and all our volunteers attend digital skills training to be well equipped to help.



### Already, our volunteers are reporting the successes of our Greater Manchester pilot in September 2022:

Volunteering experience average rating of



of volunteers said they would volunteer again

“The initiative is so important to spread digital inclusion and ensure nobody gets left behind in an increasingly digital world”

Louis, volunteer from Reading

To learn more about **Connect More** in action visit our [website](#) or get in touch