Research:
Modeling an Inclusive Digital Future

Tae Yoo, Senior Vice President, Corporate Social Responsibility

Proprietary Research in Partnership with Gartner Explores How to Effectively Evaluate and Increase a Region's Digital Readiness

To help communities drive and thrive in an increasingly digital world, we must harness the power of digitization to create economic opportunity for all. As we continue to understand how quickly technology is changing work and our daily lives, Cisco CSR is creating and expanding initiatives that focus on how digitization and innovation can maximize inclusion.

A Holistic Model for Scoring and Supporting Digital Readiness

Increased digital readiness is good for economic growth. This research found a relationship between a region's digital readiness and a region's GDP per capita. 118 countries and 50 U.S. states were scored on digital readiness based on **seven components:**

1. **Technology Infrastructure**
   Available to enable digital activities and connected consumers (IoT, Cloud)
2. **Technology Adoption**
   Demand for digital products and services
3. **Human Capital**
   Build and maintain skilled labor force to support digital innovation
4. **Basic Human Needs**
   For a population to survive and thrive
5. **Ease of Doing Business**
   Basic infrastructure/ policies needed to support business continuity
6. **Business and Government Investment**
   Private and public investment innovation and technology
7. **Start-Up Environment**
   Environment which fosters innovation within a community

Digital readiness scores reveal which U.S. states and countries are highly digitally ready and those that are less so – revealing opportunities for local government, industry, educational institutions, and community organizations to work in parallel and collaboratively to increase digital readiness.

Three Broad Stages of Digital Readiness Make it Easier to Take Action

To help a given region progress as swiftly as possible on their digital journey, countries and U.S. states were categorized into three stages of digital readiness:

Activate

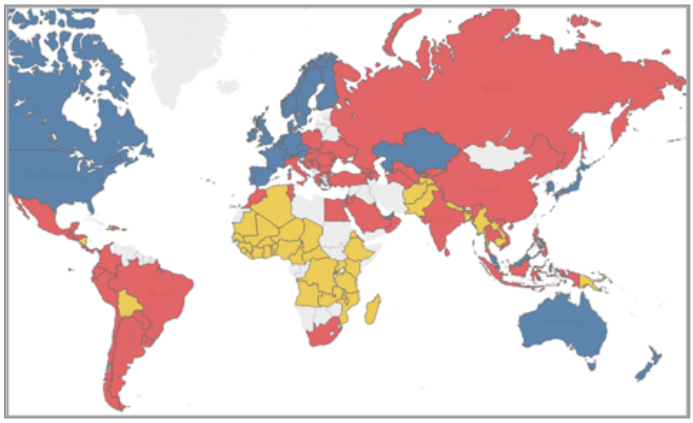
Lowest stage of digital readiness with a need for critical human needs and human capital development.

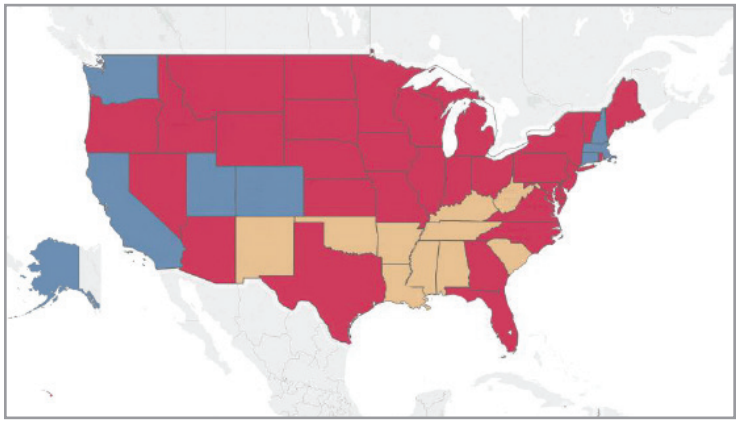
Accelerate

Moderate stage of digital readiness with a need for critical human needs, human capital development, and improvements in the ease of doing business in the region.

Amplify

Highest stage of digital readiness with a continued need for human capital development focused on higher-level training for enhanced digitization.





Through a global lens, appropriate interventions for maximum impact along this "Triple A" continuum differ although investment in human capital development and education is needed at every stage. Even within Amplify countries, there are differences in digital capabilities. Zooming in on the state level for the U.S., analysis shows a lot of variation in the Accelerate stage where more specialized interventions are required.

(Re)framing Our Existing Work and New Priorities to Broaden Impact

Cisco CSR's current and developing portfolio of grants, services, and programs can build skills, incubate innovation, and foster entrepreneurship. Research such as this enables us to consider appropriate human capital development and education investments across an ecosystem to increase digital readiness.