

# NEW PERSPECTIVES ON SALESFORCE TRAILHEAD

A VALOIR INSIGHT BRIEF

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Salesforce Trailhead is the company's free gamified online learning platform with self-paced education, livestreamed classes, a mobile app, and the ability to connect with other Trailhead users. It includes a library of more than 800 badges of marketable skills and 48 role-based credentials. Since its inception in 2014, Trailhead has grown to more than 2.4 million learners, providing self-paced education for many looking to transform or grow their careers or reskill for new job opportunities. In June, Valoir surveyed Trailhead users and found they were using Trailhead not just to learn new skills but to stay connected and more productive. Beyond just a Salesforce training platform, Trailhead presents an opportunity to support broad reskilling and retraining efforts and a powerful network.

In June, Valoir surveyed more than 200 Salesforce Trailhead users. Key findings included:

- Trailhead is a global and diverse community. Respondents to our survey represented 20 countries, ranging in age from 18 to over 55. Women made up 43 percent of respondents, and more than 50 percent self-identified as non-white.
- Trailhead has a clear economic impact for learners. Fifty percent of Trailhead users gained skills resulting in a promotion or raise, with one in five reporting a salary increase of more than 20 percent because of Trailhead. Trailhead supported a career change for one-third of learners.
- Trailhead is playing a critical role in a time of underemployment. Nearly 20 percent of Trailhead users were job seekers using Trailhead to develop new skills and network with other Trailhead users.

- Trailhead is not just about Salesforce. More than 70 percent of learners have used it to learn other technologies, and more than 50 percent have used it to learn non-technical skills, such as personal development or management.
- Trailhead is uniquely collaborative. Two-thirds of developers on Trailhead have shared code or advice with others.

## Trailhead drives work-from-home productivity

Trailhead is a key part of many learners' work-from-home strategies, with two-thirds of learners finding Trailhead has made them more productive during the pandemic. Trailhead users reported increasing their productivity by an average of 8 percent since the move to work from home, compared with a 1 percent average productivity decrease for non-users (*Valoir View #2027*). Users pointed to non-Salesforce content on topics such as time management and working at home as important for keeping them motivated, as well as the community itself:

*“Learning new skills has provided me with something that I can control in a time when so much is uncertain. Trailhead helps to keep me anchored.”*

*“The trails related to being more productive and focused during work from home on Trailhead helped me a lot.”*

*“It has helped me keep my motivation up at work. It helps me feel connected to the Salesforce community.”*

Beyond productivity, Trailhead and the Trailblazer Community have been a source of emotional support for many learners. It has been an important means to connect for many since moving to remote work. Our survey found that 54 percent of Trailhead users connected with other Trailblazers one on one, and 50 percent participated in Trailhead LIVE sessions.

## Trailhead is uniquely collaborative

The collaborative nature of Trailhead extends beyond simply social. Software development is typically a highly competitive and meritocratic field, and the Salesforce developer community is no exception: Fifty-nine percent of developers surveyed believe Salesforce developers are more competitive than other groups of developers. However, Salesforce developers – largely through Trailhead – help each other.:

- Eighty percent of developers agree (and 55 percent strongly agree) that the Trailblazer Community is more collaborative than other developer communities.
- Seventy-seven percent of developers agree (and 52 percent strongly agree) that Salesforce developers are more likely to share advice,

feedback, or other help with each other than other groups of developers.

- Seventy-one percent of developers agree that Salesforce developers are more likely to help developers they don't know than other groups of developers.
- Two-thirds of developers on Trailhead have shared code or advice with others, and 91 percent of developers said they would be willing to share code or advice with another Trailhead user outside their organization to help them be more successful.

Valoir found that developers on Trailhead are more collaborative and willing to help others partly because the Trailhead platform encourages it, and also because they've learned from others on Trailhead and want to give back:

*"I feel motivated when I teach new skills I have learned to others. Also, teaching others helps me gain more expertise on that topic. And Trailhead has helped me so much, I also want to give to ohana."*

*"I think, it's our OHANA and the best thing about our Trailblazer Community is #giveback and help each other to succeed."*

*"Others have helped me, and I think it's the right thing to do."*

So, in addition to a learning and collaboration platform Trailhead has been an influential vehicle for Salesforce's culture. Although the Salesforce developer community is competitive, it is also uniquely collaborative because developers want to – and believe they should – give back.

## Trailhead is for more than Salesforce

While the predominant usage of Trailhead is to learn Salesforce skills, the learning opportunities on Trailhead continue to expand far beyond Salesforce training. More than 70 percent of Trailhead users have used Trailhead to learn other technologies, and more than 50 percent have used it to learn non-technical skills, such as personal development or management.

Trailhead is also an important resource for job seekers. In fact, nearly 20 percent of Trailhead users surveyed were currently out of work and seeking a new job (some because of the pandemic). Many others reported they had gotten jobs or changed careers thanks to what they learned on Trailhead:

*"I'm at the cusp of changing my career and Trailhead has been The Bible for me. Thank you, Trailhead."*

*"If it wasn't for Trailhead, I wouldn't have learned Salesforce. And if I hadn't learned Salesforce, I wouldn't have had my last three jobs."*

*“The ability to learn a completely new tech platform without ‘working’ in the space has been invaluable. I don’t know how else I could have initiated my career change last year.”*

*“With COVID I lost my first Salesforce ecosystem job, but I gained one which will increase my real-life experience with Salesforce. My Trailhead Bootcamp Admin certification and knowledge has contributed to finding and winning that job from 400 applicants! Thank you, Trailhead, and all you amazing people behind it. Life changing.”*

As companies and individuals look to reskill for jobs in an increasingly digital economy, Trailhead’s ability to support learning, job and skills classifications, and referral networks has significant potential to expand beyond the Salesforce ecosystem.

## Looking ahead

Trailhead is an important extension of Salesforce’s culture and values and has been a key resource for many since March. The ability of Trailhead to support many types of learning on many subjects – as well as the capabilities of myTrailhead to support companies’ own internal training initiatives – extends its applicability far beyond Salesforce or even technology training.

As companies and individuals look to reskill for jobs in an uncertain and increasingly virtual economy, Trailhead’s ability to support job seekers, employees, employers, and the Salesforce ecosystem will make it even more valuable.

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