

NYT tech workers form biggest tech union in US

Article

The news: About **80%** of **New York Times** tech workers voted to certify union representation, making it the biggest tech union in the country with collective bargaining rights, [per](#) The New York Times.

The Times Tech Guild is certified with the National Labor Relations Board, [per](#) Reuters, and represents about **600 software engineers, product managers, designers, data analysts**, and other workers.

The bigger picture: Although the overall share of union membership in the US has fallen in the past several decades, the labor movement is gaining steam in the tech industry with workers at companies like **Apple, Amazon, and Tesla** seeking membership, and workers at **Google, Raven Software, and Activision Blizzard** unionizing.

- The **226** Google employees who initially made up the **Alphabet Workers Union** swelled to **800** this year, but that's a small proportion of Google's over **150,000** workers. It remains a minority union without collective bargaining rights and isn't recognized by the company, per Insider.
- Tesla CEO **Elon Musk**, who has been a vocal critic of unions, challenged the United Auto Workers to organize a vote, suggesting he's confident that workers will vote against unionizing.

What this means: The fact that the largest tech-worker union is made up of workers not employed by Big Tech signals that **tech employees are standing in solidarity even when they're a minority in their workplace**.

- This move creates an identity based on job function instead of where they're employed and suggests we're going to be seeing similar efforts in other tech fields.
- Greater public awareness about labor issues in the tech industry, such as long hours, pay equity, and ethics concerns, will give workers who want to unionize more leverage.

How we got here: Overarching economic trends like the Great Resignation, soaring inflation, stagnant wages, and heightened awareness about pay inequity and discrimination in workplaces is fueling a resurgence of interest in union membership.

- A 2021 survey showed that **50%** of tech workers were very or somewhat interested in joining a union, a rate that jumped to **60%** for millennials, per a study conducted by Protocol and Morning Consult.

Analyst Take: "Driven by stagnating wages and soaring inflation, and feeling empowered by a tight labor market, workers are organizing to push their employers to boost pay, expand benefits, and improve working conditions," says **Zak Stambor, Retail and Ecommerce senior analyst at Insider Intelligence**. "Pressure is mounting on employers to ensure that they're providing benefits and working environments that meet employee expectations."

Key Actions to Achieve Corporate Social Responsibility Objectives According to Business Decision-Makers* Worldwide, Aug 2021

% of respondents

Increase participation in CSR practices in local/regional company locations

45%

Audit current business partners to ensure they meet our sustainability and social responsibility practices

40%

Increase transparency of sustainability efforts

39%

Distance ourselves from business partners that do not meet our sustainability and social responsibility practices

37%

Integrate a defined corporate value into the organization's brand and strategy

37%

Reduce our organization's carbon footprint and/or e-waste

37%

Screen potential partners for conflicting sustainability and social responsibility practices

37%

Create a dedicated sustainability function with the organization

36%

Create a workplace health and safety program

36%

Redesign products to reduce carbon footprint (e.g., increased recycling)

36%

Note: n=467; *finance/procurement/supply chain

Source: Forrester Consulting "Seize the CSR Opportunity: The State of Corporate CSR and How to Propel it Forward" commissioned by Ivalua, Sep 1, 2021

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