



3 Gig Economy Predictions For 2021

Insights

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It's typical as the year winds down to turn our attention to the upcoming new year to try to figure out what's in store for us. And like no other time in most of our lives, we're looking forward to putting the past year in the rearview mirror and flipping our calendars to start anew. As we begin to ponder what 2021 might look like for us, we're particularly interested on this blog to forecast what the new year will bring for the gig economy industry. Here are our top three predictions for the new year:

The Gig Economy Will Play A Key Role In COVID-19 Vaccinations

It's a well-established fact that the effort to control the pandemic through vaccinations will only work if a substantial percentage of the population gets inoculated. However, some communities may not have ready access to receiving the vaccine and may have difficulty reaching vaccination sites. That's where the gig economy comes in. **In 2021, you will see ride-sharing and delivery platforms offer their services to ensure millions of people receive the COVID-19 vaccine.**

Lyft has already announced that it will provide free or discounted rides to vaccination sites for those in at-risk populations, subsidized by corporate and nonprofit partners and facilitated through the company's social impact initiative. It has a lofty goal of providing 60 million rides. Even if Lyft can only fulfill a portion of this goal, that would go a long way to assisting in this massive effort – and we can expect other services to offer similar initiatives in the coming weeks and months. In fact, Uber has already offered its technology, logistical expertise, and other resources to help ensure that the vaccine is brought to the general public as quickly and efficiently as possible, including offering its app to be used to deliver vaccination information to Americans.

Gig Economy Nurses Will Be A Major Force In The New Year

Speaking of COVID-19, the pandemic has changed and will continue to change the way that white-collar professionals find work. And no work has proved to be more vital in 2020 than healthcare work. This will no doubt continue for the entirety of 2021, which leads to our second prediction: **Temporary nursing positions will be among the most popular gig economy jobs in the country in 2021.**

A recent report from NPR's All Things Considered noted that the pandemic has intensified the country's nursing shortage but "created opportunities for nurses willing to take on the riskiest work. The booming gig economy has given some a chance to double their pay." One service matching

professionals with willing hiring entities noted a 24% uptick in available work since mid-2020, owing a great deal of this increase to nursing work. IntelyCare, a service that provides gig economy nurses for long-term care facilities, has grown by 7,000% percent in the past three years and added 3,000 more nurses to its pool of gig workers in 2020 alone. The report noted that demand for skilled nursing work is “almost limitless” at the present moment and will continue for the foreseeable future. One nurse interviewed for the report says she works 60 hours per week but could work far more if she wanted to – and her pay has more than doubled this past year. She went from earning \$27,000 per year to \$65,000 in the course of 2020.

While the pandemic has shined a light on our country’s nursing shortage, the gig economy has proven to be an efficient way to match nurses willing to travel to COVID-19 hotspots and otherwise bear the riskiest work with healthcare services in desperate need of the skilled labor. This will continue in 2021 as the need to administer vaccines will grow exponentially and create plentiful opportunities for those willing to do the work.

The Gig Economy Will Grow Bigger Than Ever In 2021

Finally, some commenters lamented a year ago that the gig economy may have peaked and was on its way to losing its appeal in 2020. We’ll never know whether that would have occurred if the pandemic didn’t strike, but what’s for certain is that COVID-19 changed everything. And one big result that will have ripple effects into the new year? **The gig economy will enjoy its biggest year yet in 2021.**

From a regulatory standpoint, it’s hard to overstate the importance that California’s Prop 22 victory will have on the gig economy at large. When an overwhelming majority of voters agreed that typical gig workers should be treated like independent contractors and not employees, it not only cemented the business model in California but provided a vision for what other states might seek to accomplish in 2021 and beyond. By laying the groundwork for a new way of looking at things, this vote will vault the industry to new-found heights in the coming year – and beyond.

There is already solid evidence that this transformation will continue in 2021. According to a study conducted this month by Monster, 57% of workers see gig work as a great solution to stay afloat between jobs given the economic uncertainty many still face – which means you will continue to see the ranks of skilled workers jumping into the gig pool swell even greater in the new year. Moreover, according to a recent survey by Constellation Research, companies see the benefit of increasing their gig economy profile, as they report that gig economy projects have been 30% more efficient, reduced customer complaints, and were rated higher in satisfaction for gig workers themselves in 2020 – which means you will see companies either continue to implement gig labor in the new year or consider joining the sector in some capacity if they haven’t already.

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