



Business Survey 1

May 2009

Managed, Compiled and Completed by SSEP Partner



SSEP Business Survey - Round 1 - May 2009

Responses to Survey: 78 (58 complete, 20 incomplete)

Trend Responses

Change in Domestic Sales in last 3 months:

Fallen	45	58%	
Risen	10	13%	
Unchanged	18	23%	
Not applicable	4	5%	

Change in Export Sales in last 3 months:

Fallen	15	25%	
Risen	1	2%	
Unchanged	9	15%	
Not applicable	36	59%	

Change in General Business expected in next 3 months:

Fall	15	20%	
Rise	19	26%	
Unchanged	35	47%	
Don't Know	5	7%	

Change in Turnover expected in next 3 months:

Fall	18	24%	
Rise	33	45%	
Unchanged	23	31%	
Don't Know	0	0%	

Change in Employment expected in next 3 months:

Fall	10	14%	
Rise	9	12%	
Unchanged	50	68%	
Don't Know	4	5%	

Greatest Current Business Concerns:

Cashflow	27	38%	
Sales volume/Value	25	35%	
Customer retention	6	8%	
Staffing levels/costs	5	7%	
Debtors	3	4%	
Funding/Loans	2	3%	
Premises Costs	2	3%	
Supply Chain Issues	2	3%	

Industry Response Numbers by Sector:

- 11 - Other Community, Social & Personal Service Activities
- 9 - Transport, Storage And Communication
- 9 - Real Estate, Renting And Business Activities
- 6 - Wholesale/Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Transport, Personal and Household Goods
- 6 - Construction
- 5 - Financial Intermediation
- 4 - Hotels And Restaurants
- 3 - Manufacturing
- 2 - Health And Social Work
- 1 - Public Administration And Defence; Compulsory Social Security
- 1 - Private Households With Employed Persons
- 1 - Extra - Territorial Organisations And Bodies
- 1 - Education

Breakdown of Business Ownership:

71 - British	89%
3 - USA	4%
2 - European	3%
2 - Japanese	3%
1 - Indian	1%

Context of Company's Swindon Operating Site:

- 63 - single Swindon site (80%)
- 16 - Other sites elsewhere (20%)

Comments:

- We could employ someone, but there is too much involved, high costs and finding the right person is difficult.
- There is nothing here to tick for reducing the huge volume of red tape that all businesses have to endure; getting rid of this would help everyone by allowing them to concentrate on the things that matter rather than feeding the data consumption so beloved by our government.
- We are a charity. We are dependent on gifts and times are hard. Despite this, we are receiving more calls due to the recession and redundancies. Both employers and employees are seeking advice from The National Bullying Helpline. A lot of people are anxious at the moment and we see/hear this on a daily basis.
- Government regulation.
- Our Business is Market Research & Training - we didn't seem to fit any of the categories in Q1.
- As we supply a recruitment service, competition is fierce and the margins are reducing, although our overheads remain the same.
- Obviously sales affects cashflow.
- Donations have all but dried up in Swindon for us. We are now looking for extra government funding to fill the gap.
- Lenders still have a strangle hold on the property market and that is not likely to change in the short to medium term.
- Selling going well. But difficult to get money out of customers and payments getting later and later and more bad debts than ever.
- Plus difficulty in finding people with the right skills sets at the RIGHT salary.
- All employees are currently on 75% salary and we are stopping all shifts from 1st June (-16%).
- In the Hotel our Overnight Accommodation Occupancy Rate has fallen by 30% since October 2008.
- Our trade is dependent on commercial customers so will reflect economic activity in Swindon. Competition will increase due to rise in supply of hotel beds and will adversely affect our trade in an already weak market.
- Clients not paying on time and bank being very strict with over draft and bouncing cheques.
- Uncertain effects of Summer holidays in July and August.
- We are an internet sales company so our market is UK wide and not limited to local business.
- Funding under the Enterprise Guarantee Scheme is restricted by some banks (e.g. HSBC will not lend under £30k). We don't all want or require £30k.
- Financial market is very difficult with loss of jobs in the area and also corporate clients are just not spending.
- Looking to the banks to support smaller businesses which are trying to continue to grow.