



Business Survey 2

August 2009

Managed, Compiled and Completed by SSEP Partner



SSEP Business Survey - Round 2 - August 2009

Responses to Survey: 44 (33 complete, 11 incomplete)

Trend Responses (plus variation from last Quarter - up↑ down↓ unchanged↔)

Change in Domestic Sales in last 3 months:

Fallen	29	66%	↑
Risen	11	25%	↑
Unchanged	2	5%	↓
Not applicable	2	4%	↓

Change in Export Sales in last 3 months:

Fallen	2	5%	↓
Risen	0	0%	↓
Unchanged	6	14%	↓
Not applicable	36	82%	↑

Change in General Business expected in next 3 months:

Fall	8	20%	↔
Rise	17	38%	↑
Unchanged	17	37%	↓
Don't Know	2	5%	↓

Change in Turnover expected in next 3 months:

Fall	8	18%	↓
Rise	17	38%	↓
Unchanged	19	43%	↑
Don't Know	0	0%	↔

Change in Employment expected in next 3 months:

Fall	6	14%	↔
Rise	4	9%	↓
Unchanged	29	66%	↓
Don't Know	5	11%	↑

Greatest Current Business Concerns:

Cashflow	12	27%	↓
Sales volume/Value	8	18%	↓
Customer retention	8	18%	↑
Staffing levels/costs	3	7%	↔
Debtors	2	4%	↔
Funding/Loans	7	16%	↑
Premises Costs	2	4%	↔
Supply Chain Issues	1	2%	↓

Industry Response Numbers by Sector:

- 7 - Construction
- 6 - Wholesale/Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Transport, Personal and Household Goods
- 5 - Financial Intermediation
- 4 - Real Estate, Renting And Business Activities
- 3 - Education
- 2 - Other Community, Social & Personal Service Activities
- 2 - Transport, Storage And Communication
- 2 - Hotels And Restaurants
- 1 - Private Households With Employed Persons
- 1 - Extra - Territorial Organisations And Bodies
- 11 - Not Specified

Breakdown of Business Ownership:

39 - British	89%
1 - USA	2%
1 - European	2%
3 - Other	7%

Context of Company's Swindon Operating Site:

- 37 - single Swindon site (84%)
- 7 - Other sites elsewhere (16%)

Comments:

- Local government legislation concerning day to day running and cashflow
- Banks no help (HSBC) Rates disproportionate cost (approx £8000pa per member of staff).
- Concerned about new parking tax for business's with over 10 parking spaces, I think Nottingham first to pilot scheme starting 2012, other cities/towns to follow.
- Big companies taking longer to pay invoices.
- Banks are not lending to SMEs.
- Decreasing LGA funding.
- Market has become extremely competitive.
- My main business concern is overheads particularly the terrible price of diesel fuel.
- Our Lloyds bank is decreasing our overdraft facility each month and our customers are increasing the time they take to pay us we get squeezed at both ends.
- Parking charges, closing down of Swindon market, has proved to be approx. 20% down.
- Playing catch up from the poor first half of the year.
- Regulation in all of its insidious forms is by far the biggest obstacle to my doing business. Gold-plating, regulatory creep, a refusal to set sunset-clauses are just the main issues. Yes there are lots of government initiatives to reduce regulation, but that often creates more bureaucracy as it creates yet more change, in areas that have nothing to do with producing a profit.
- Rising business taxes.
- The biggest problem is the price of the euro as this has increased the cost of many of my products .So although my turnover has increased this could be attributed to price increases.
- There are a few signs that things are now on the bottom of the cycle and are likely to slowly improve over the next 18 months. Cash flow and bad debts remain very serious issues for smaller companies. The practice within many construction companies is to pay their consultancies last and make them wait way beyond their agreed terms.
- Customer retention is always our biggest business concern.