

Service Business Owner Survey Results - Fall 2005

1. Customers

Please rate each of the following hurdles, as they pertain to your business, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is "least difficult" and 5 is "most difficult".

	1	2	3	4	5
Improving customer retention	4%	31%	31%	31%	4%
Finding new customers	8%	8%	15%	38%	31%
Losing customers to the competition	36%	36%	16%	12%	0%
Satisfying customers	28%	24%	24%	16%	8%
Late payments from customers	23%	35%	23%	15%	4%
Forecasting future demand	4%	19%	35%	31%	12%
Understanding what the customer wants	24%	36%	32%	8%	0%

Do you regularly measure customer satisfaction?

	Response Percent
Yes	73.1%
No	26.9%

In general, how loyal would you say your customers are?

	Response Percent
Not at all Loyal	0%
Not very Loyal	0%
Somewhat Loyal	38.5%
Very Loyal	50%
As Loyal as they come	11.5%

Do you regularly measure customer loyalty?

	Response Percent
Yes	19.2%
No	80.8%

How often do you get ideas for new products/services from your customers?

		Response Percent
Never		0%
Almost Never		26.9%
Sometimes		61.5%
Frequently		11.5%
All the time		0%

2. Growth

Please rate each of the following hurdles, as they pertain to your business, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is "least difficult" and 5 is "most difficult".

	1	2	3	4	5
Finding working capital	9%	18%	9%	36%	27%
Cutting through the advertising chaos	4%	0%	35%	39%	22%
Keeping up with tax and other government regulations	9%	17%	39%	13%	22%
Rapid growth	17%	26%	26%	22%	9%
Not enough growth	4%	0%	26%	48%	22%
Lack of time to pursue new opportunities	0%	26%	30%	22%	22%
Rising cost of supplies	17%	4%	43%	22%	13%

How would you classify your growth pattern:

		Response Percent
Too slow		60.9%
Just about right		30.4%
Too fast		8.7%

Please estimate the percentage of your growth that comes from each of the following (responses should sum to 100%):

		Response Total
Traditional Advertising (print, radio, TV)		748
Online Advertising		103
Referrals		650
Repeat Business		444
Other		355

Which two areas would you like to see improve the most? (mark two)

		Response Percent
Traditional advertising		39.1%
Online advertising		26.1%
Referrals		69.6%
Repeat Business		21.7%
Other		17.4%

3. Technology

Please rate the following hurdle, as it pertains to your business, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is "least difficult" and 5 is "most difficult".

	1	2	3	4	5
Keeping up with new technology	46%	29%	12%	8%	4%

How has your web presence lived up to your expectations?

		Response Percent
Below expectations		33.3%
Meets expectations		37.5%
Above expectations		8.3%
I don't have one		20.8%

What keeps you from implementing new technologies that could help you be more profitable? (mark all that apply)

		Response Percent
Knowledge		8.3%
Time		16.7%
Cost		45.8%
I don't think technologies will make me more profitable		20.8%
Other (please specify)		8.3%

How often do you communicate with your customers via email?

		Response Percent
Never		0%
Almost never		37.5%
A few times a year		20.8%
Once a month		12.5%
All the time		29.2%

4. Learning/Research

What % of your time do you spend researching and learning new things about your industry and business in general?

		Response Percent
0%		0%
1-5%		8.3%
5-10%		16.7%
10-20%		20.8%
20-30%		25%
30-40%		4.2%
40-50%		12.5%
50-60%		8.3%
60-70%		0%
70-80%		4.2%
80-90%		0%
90-100%		0%

How often do you use the following resources in your learning:

	Never	Almost Never	Sometimes	Frequently	All the time
Other business owners outside your industry	4%	21%	42%	29%	4%
Other business owners within your industry	0%	0%	8%	50%	42%
The internet	0%	21%	29%	38%	12%
Online forums/communities	8%	33%	33%	12%	12%
The library/books	4%	46%	25%	17%	8%
Formal school/seminars	21%	17%	38%	25%	0%
Consultants	30%	52%	13%	0%	4%
Magazines	17%	22%	52%	9%	0%

5. Employees

Please rate each of the following hurdles, as they pertain to your business, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is "least difficult" and 5 is "most difficult".

	1	2	3	4	5
Finding and hiring good employees	13%	4%	30%	26%	26%
Training employees	9%	35%	35%	9%	13%
Employee turnover	4%	30%	43%	22%	0%
Delivering consistent service	17%	9%	39%	30%	4%
Scheduling resources to match demand	4%	26%	26%	22%	22%
Employee theft	78%	17%	0%	0%	4%
Motivating employees	13%	35%	22%	30%	0%

Where do you typically find your employees?

		Response Percent
Employee referral		17.4%
Online posting		17.4%
Newspaper posting		21.7%
Family and Friends		17.4%
Other (please specify)		26.1%

What % of your time do you spend:

	Percent											
	0%	1-5%	5-10%	10-20%	20-30%	30-40%	40-50%	50-60%	60-70%	70-80%	80-90%	90-100%
looking for new employees	9%	39%	22%	22%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
training employees	0%	18%	41%	18%	0%	14%	5%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%