

Village of Westport

Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

2022 Business Survey: Report



November 30, 2022

Survey Timeframe: October 4 – October 30, 2022

Prepared by:

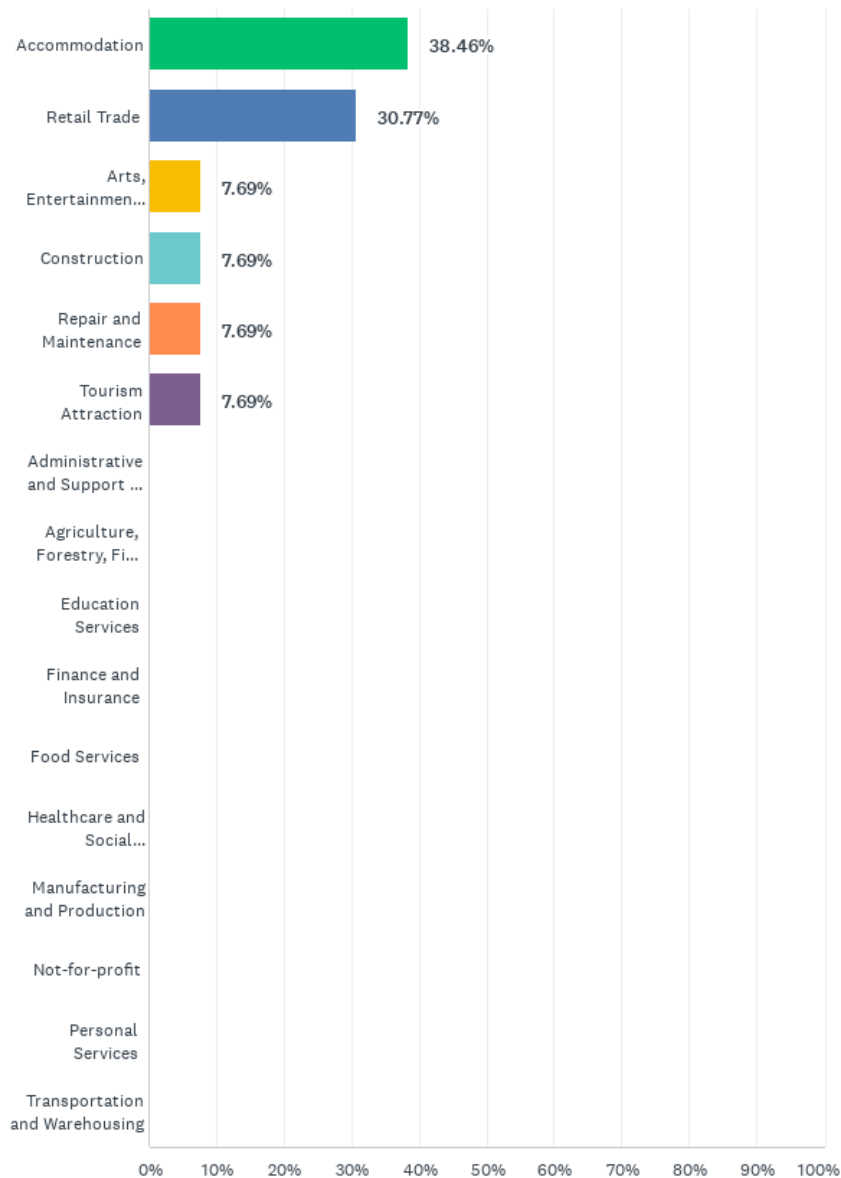
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
Economic Development Office
32 Wall Street, Suite 300, Brockville, ON



invest.leedsgrenville.com/reportsandplans

#2 What sector is your business primarily operating in?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



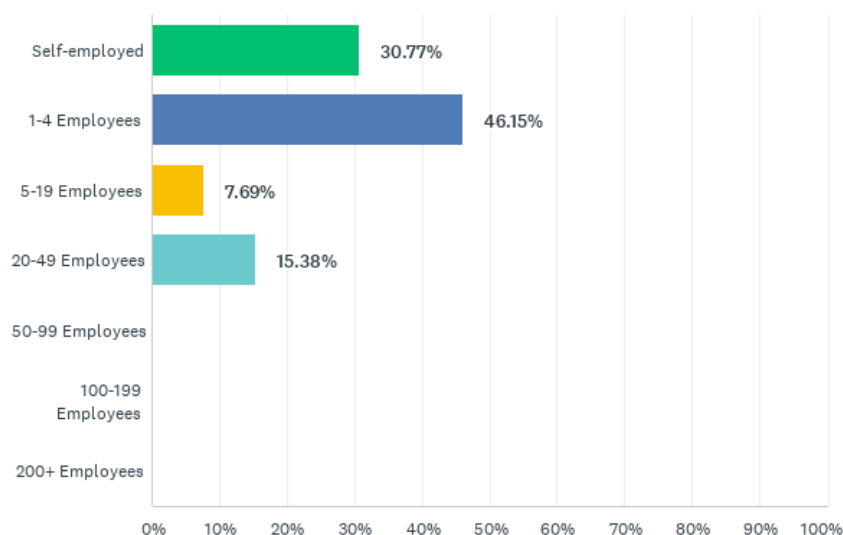
#2 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Accommodation	38.46%	5
Retail Trade	30.77%	4
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	7.69%	1
Construction	7.69%	1
Repair and Maintenance	7.69%	1
Tourism Attraction	7.69%	1
Administrative and Support - Business Services	0.00%	0
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish and Hunting	0.00%	0
Education Services	0.00%	0
Finance and Insurance	0.00%	0
Food Services	0.00%	0
Healthcare and Social Assistance	0.00%	0
Manufacturing and Production	0.00%	0
Not-for-profit	0.00%	0
Personal Services	0.00%	0
Transportation and Warehousing	0.00%	0
TOTAL		13

#3 Typically, how many full-time equivalent employees does your company have?

Answered: 13

Skipped: 0



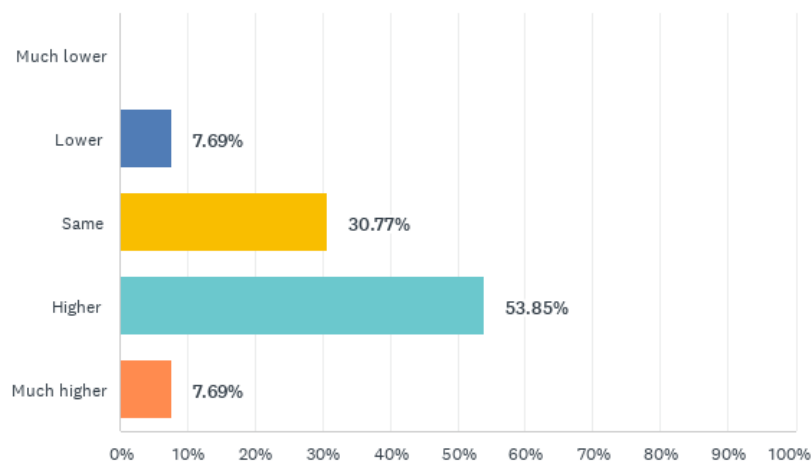
#3 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Self-employed	30.77%	4
1-4 Employees	46.15%	6
5-19 Employees	7.69%	1
20-49 Employees	15.38%	2
50-99 Employees	0.00%	0
100-199 Employees	0.00%	0
200+ Employees	0.00%	0
TOTAL		13

#4 Where is your business activity level today, compared with pre-COVID levels?

Answered: 13

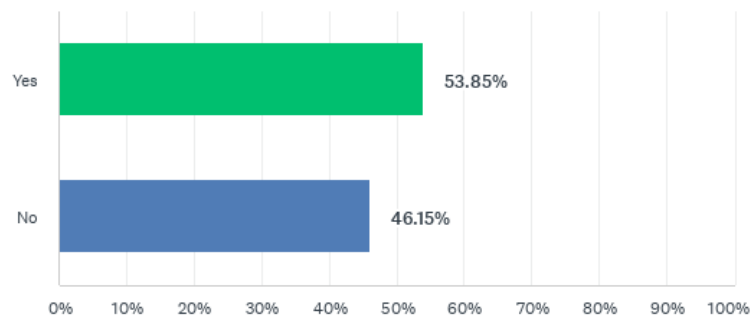
Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Much lower	0.00%	0
Lower	7.69%	1
Same	30.77%	4
Higher	53.85%	7
Much higher	7.69%	1
TOTAL		13

#5 If your business is growing, are you confident your demand levels will continue?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0

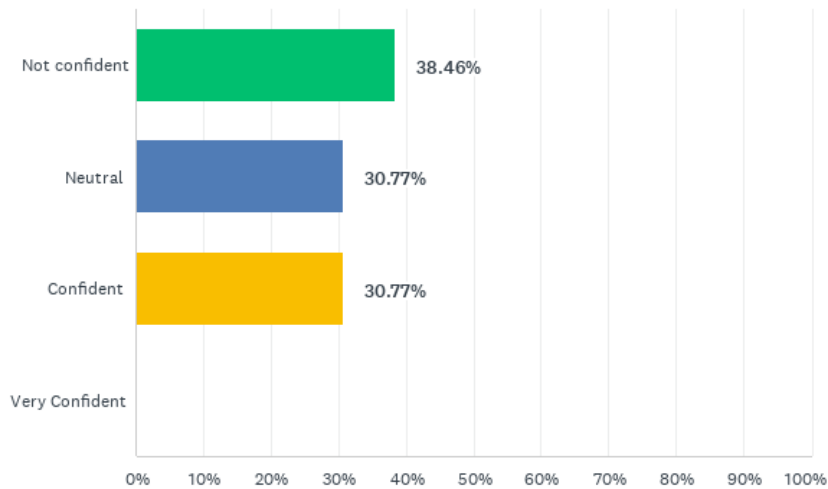


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	53.85%	7
No	46.15%	6
Total Respondents: 13		

- COVID is still an issue, American tourists very slow to return.
- More viruses, recession.... all impact people travelling or wanting to get away.
- Due to the global instability, both politically and financially.
- Because we can not find the skilled labour needed to keep growing.

#6 How confident are you in the strength of the economy?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



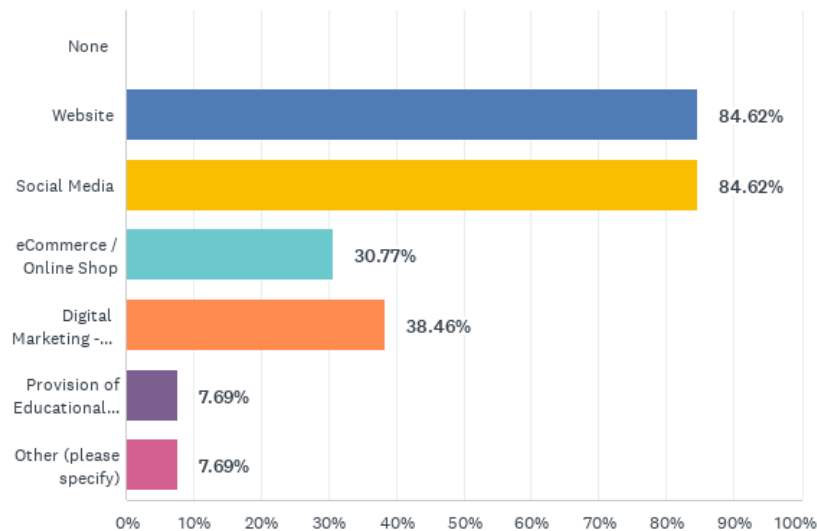
#6 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not confident	38.46%	5
Neutral	30.77%	4
Confident	30.77%	4
Very Confident	0.00%	0
TOTAL		13

#7 What type of online presence does your company have? (choose all that apply)

Answered: 13

Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None	0.00%	0
Website	84.62%	11
Social Media	84.62%	11
eCommerce / Online Shop	30.77%	4
Digital Marketing - Advertising / Email	38.46%	5
Provision of Educational Webinars	7.69%	1
Other (please specify)	Responses 7.69%	1
Total Respondents: 13		

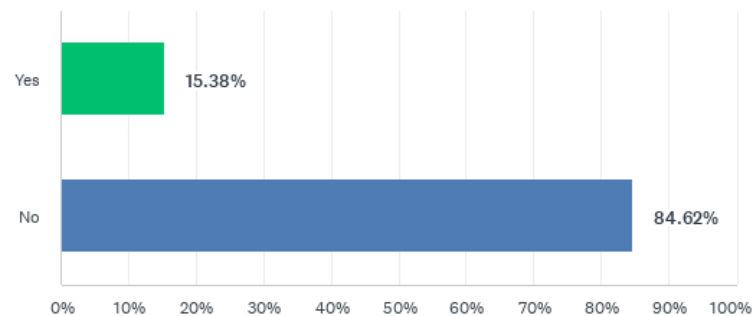
- Live Stream.

#8 Would you like to receive assistance with your online presence (website, social media, e-Commerce / online shop, digital marketing)?

Please provide your contact information in #16.

Answered: 13

Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	15.38% 2
No	84.62% 11
TOTAL	13

#9 Identify your biggest challenges using the rating scale for each item, with 1 being smallest and 10 being your biggest challenge.

Answered: 13

Skipped: 0

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL
Increasing product prices	15.38% 2	7.69% 1	0.00% 0	7.69% 1	7.69% 1	7.69% 1	0.00% 0	23.08% 3	15.38% 2	15.38% 2	13
Supply chain	15.38% 2	7.69% 1	23.08% 3	0.00% 0	7.69% 1	0.00% 0	23.08% 3	7.69% 1	15.38% 2	0.00% 0	13
Labour force	30.77% 4	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	15.38% 2	15.38% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	15.38% 2	7.69% 1	15.38% 2	13
Changes in your product demand	15.38% 2	30.77% 4	15.38% 2	0.00% 0	7.69% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	23.08% 3	7.69% 1	0.00% 0	13
Increased overhead costs	15.38% 2	0.00% 0	15.38% 2	0.00% 0	7.69% 1	0.00% 0	15.38% 2	7.69% 1	15.38% 2	23.08% 3	13
Debt servicing capacity	30.77% 4	7.69% 1	7.69% 1	7.69% 1	15.38% 2	7.69% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	23.08% 3	13

#10 Identify your biggest workforce challenges using the rating scale for each item, with 1 being smallest and 10 being your biggest challenge.

Answered: 13

Skipped: 0

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL
Employees returning to the workplace	53.85% 7	0.00% 0	7.69% 1	0.00% 0	7.69% 1	7.69% 1	15.38% 2	7.69% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	13
Ability to offer competitive wages and benefits	23.08% 3	7.69% 1	15.38% 2	7.69% 1	7.69% 1	7.69% 1	15.38% 2	7.69% 1	0.00% 0	7.69% 1	13
Desire for hybrid workplace models	76.92% 10	7.69% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	15.38% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	13
Attraction of new employees	30.77% 4	0.00% 0	15.38% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	15.38% 2	7.69% 1	7.69% 1	23.08% 3	13

- I would hire a cleaner to help if I could afford it.
- I hire part time employees. Very difficult to obtain reliable, responsible staff.

#11 What should the region's focus be to address workforce shortages?

Answered: 10

Skipped: 3

Affordable housing

- Affordable housing in smaller communities, no place is affordable for casual workers.
- Lower income housing and lifestyle affordability.
- Affordable housing and/or public transportation.
- Living costs Real estate prices. Ebb and flow of the seasonality of the industry.
- Affordable housing to bring new employees to the local work force.
- Affordable housing to allow labourers to live in the area they work.
- Affordable housing, transportation.
- Affordable housing.

Other

- Better financial support and incentives for training and enticing new young workers.
- Start in schools.

#12 What are the 3 top areas of support that would be most helpful to your business right now?

Answered: 11

Skipped: 2

Tourism

- Targeted tourism campaigns during the off season that is not centred around the Rideau Canal. The area around the Rideau lakes has much more to offer than boating. Year-round outdoor activities, music, food & beverage, arts, photography.
- Increased tourism during shoulder seasons, support for small Ontario producers, more help with internet infrastructure.
- General tourist attraction of the area. Living costs for all, especially for staff and attracting staff.

Digital Support

- Social media/website development.
- Identifying and accessing additional online/social media advertising opportunities for our outdoor market.

Other

- Infrastructure repairs.
- Lower taxes.
- Reduction in corporate taxes.
- Wage subsidies for training.
- Getting more young people in the trades.
- Less red tape.
- People get over fear of COVID.
- More hireable employees.
- Further promotional funding for organizations such as "What's On Westport" that assist local businesses with event organization without need to apply for onerous forms.
- New event support through funding. Increased efforts in the off-season direct features and collective efforts to spotlight our individual businesses.

#13 What are your expectations for 2023?

Answered: 12

Skipped: 1

Positive

- Good.
- I hope for a much better winter and spring.
- Better but still tentative with COVID. We are looking to have more success with a growing economy in this area. Better room amenities and renovations to be a better overall draw for our business.
- 5% increase in receipts.
- A continued return to pre-COVID numbers. Unfortunately, there is still some hesitancy and trepidation in terms of travel with increased costs and health concerns for example.
- We still expect vendor participation and public engagement to continue to increase.

#13 continued...

Neutral

- Zero growth, hope to maintain 2022 numbers.
- Steady, but no growth.
- To continue as normal working to full capacity but not able to expand.

Negative

- Recession.
- I would like to say that the business will grow in 2023 but without adequate amount of staff, I see 2023 to have the same struggles as this year.

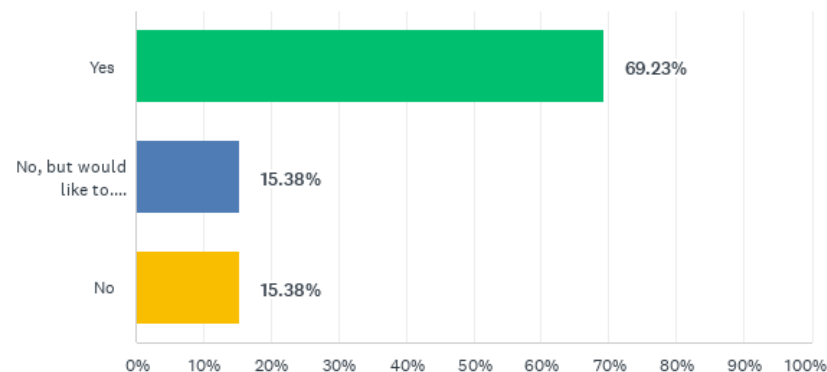
Other

- We are re-evaluating our business plan.

#14 Do you currently receive the Leeds Grenville business eNewsletter?

Answered: 13

Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	69.23%	9
No, but would like to. (please provide your contact information in #16)	15.38%	2
No	15.38%	2
TOTAL		13

#15 Please provide any additional comments related to your business viability and your challenges as a business owner.

Answered: 5

Skipped: 8

- The off season is our biggest challenge. Increasing support and collective attractions to bring customers year-round is our greatest need.
- Reports of doom in mainstream media are damaging the industry.

#15 continued...

- This far end of the region gets very little attention other than the casual mention of the view from Spy Rock. The music scene is phenomenal with local talent and talent from far and wide. The food and beverage scene is competitive with other regions with the benefit of everything being in walking distance. There are scenic drives in 5 different directions from Westport. You can hike the Rideau trail from the village to the top of Foley Mountain, along the ridge with spectacular views and down the hill out towards the Winery. I would like to see the county review this gap in your tourism marketing.
- The expectation of patrons is that the service level will remain the same without large increases in pricing. Costs, however are rising at a rate where maintaining a seasonal business becomes unfeasible.

#16 If you would like to speak to someone regarding support available to business, or if you answered yes to question #8 or #14, please provide your contact information.

Answered: 4

Skipped: 9

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Contact Name	Responses	100.00%	4
Business Name	Responses	100.00%	4
Contact Number	Responses	100.00%	4
Email	Responses	100.00%	4

Additional Notes:

- Survey Timeframe: October 4, 2022 to October 30, 2022
- Survey Distribution: Businesses that were part the Counties Economic Development business directory, with active email addresses, received the survey directly. In addition, some members of Business Support Working Group distributed the survey through their membership lists and social media channels.

Business Support Working Group:

Municipalities

Athens | Augusta | Brockville | Edwardsburgh Cardinal | Elizabethtown-Kitley | Front of Yonge | Gananoque | Leeds and the Thousand Islands | Merrickville-Wolford | North Grenville | Prescott | Rideau Lakes | Westport

MP / MPP

MP Office of Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

MPP Office of Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

Community Futures Development Corporations

1000 Islands CDC | Grenville CFDC | Valley Heartland CFDC

Small Business Enterprise Centres

Leeds Grenville Small Business Centre

Small Business Advisory Centre – Smiths Falls | Lanark

Chambers of Commerce

1000 Islands Gananoque | Brockville and District | Lyndhurst, Seeley's Bay & District | Merrickville and District | North Grenville | South Grenville

BIAs

Downtown Brockville | Downtown Gananoque | Downtown Prescott | Old Town Kemptville

Employment Services

CSE Consulting | Employment and Education Centre | KEYS Job Centre

Other Business & Education Agencies

Regional Tourism Organization 9 | St. Lawrence Corridor Economic Development Commission | Eastern Ontario Workforce Innovation Board | St. Lawrence College | Kemptville Campus Education and Community Hub

THANK-YOU!

On behalf of the Business Support Working Group, I would like to thank each business who took the time to complete the survey. Members of the Working Group will be reaching out to assist businesses who indicated they would like assistance. The Working Group contact list is available on the webpage, along with any new programs and resources as they become available.

Ann Weir, Economic Development Manager

United Counties of Leeds and Grenville

W: invest.leedsgrenville.com/reportsandplans | E: ann.weir@uclg.on.ca