Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley

Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

2022 Business Survey: Report

November 30, 2022

Survey Timeframe: October 4 – October 30, 2022

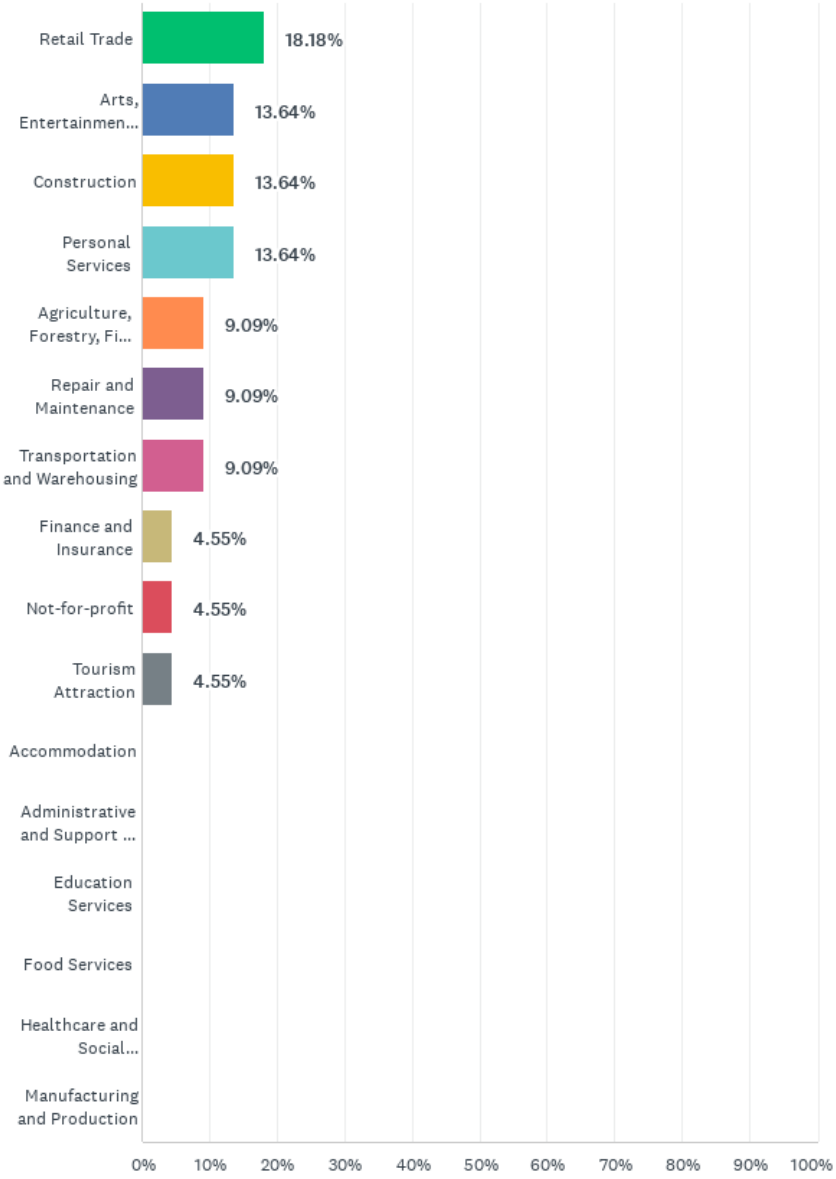
Prepared by:

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: 22 Skipped: 0

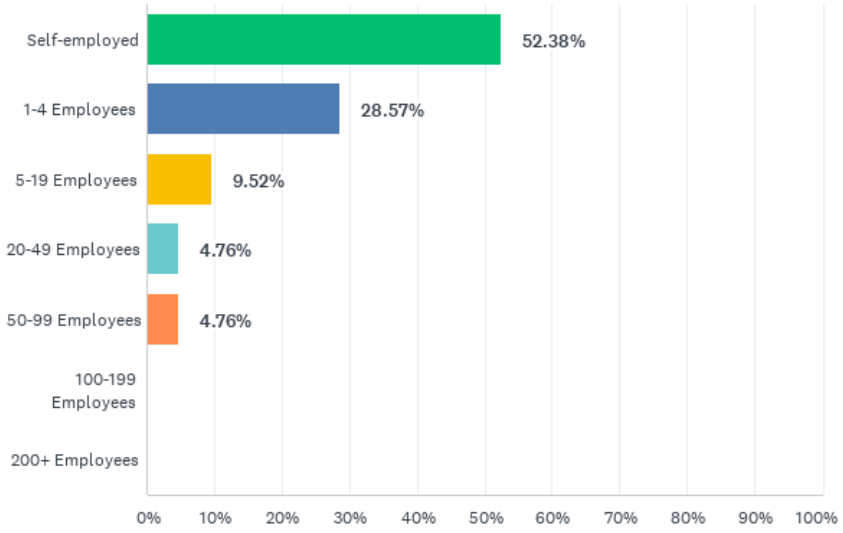


#2 continued…

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Retail Trade	18.18%	4
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	13.64%	3
Construction	13.64%	3
Personal Services	13.64%	3
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish and Hunting	9.09%	2
Repair and Maintenance	9.09%	2
Transportation and Warehousing	9.09%	2
Finance and Insurance	4.55%	1
Not-for-profit	4.55%	1
Tourism Attraction	4.55%	1
Accommodation	0.00%	0
Administrative and Support - Business Services	0.00%	0
Education Services	0.00%	0
Food Services	0.00%	0
Healthcare and Social Assistance	0.00%	0
Manufacturing and Production	0.00%	0
TOTAL		22

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

Answered: 21 Skipped: 1

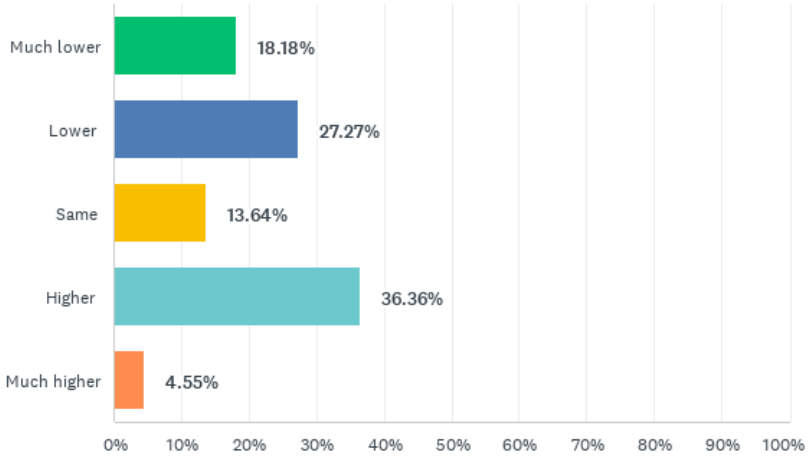


#3 continued…

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Self-employed	52.38%	11
1-4 Employees	28.57%	6
5-19 Employees	9.52%	2
20-49 Employees	4.76%	1
50-99 Employees	4.76%	1
100-199 Employees	0.00%	0
200+ Employees	0.00%	0
TOTAL		21

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

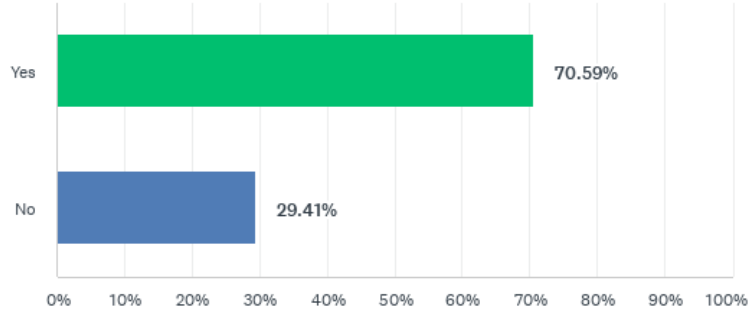
Answered: 22 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Much lower	18.18%	4
Lower	27.27%	6
Same	13.64%	3
Higher	36.36%	8
Much higher	4.55%	1
TOTAL		22

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

Answered: 17 Skipped: 0

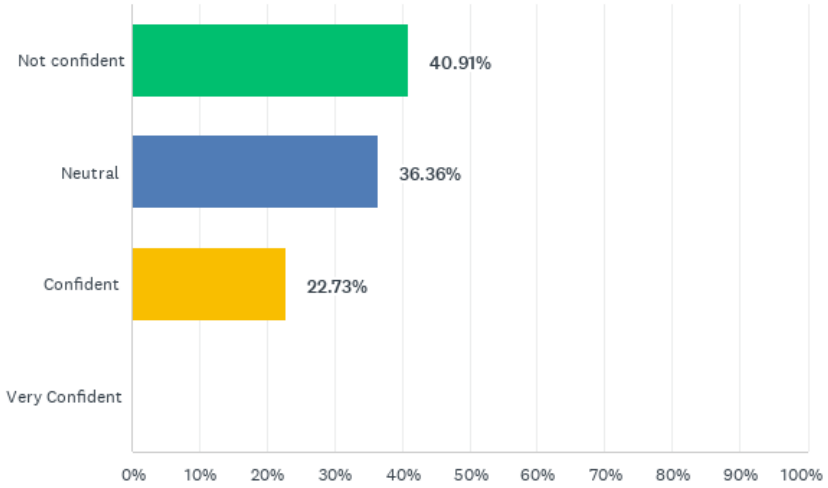


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	70.59%	12
No	29.41%	5
Total Respondents: 17		

- Not if there is a recession.
- Chose to decrease business activity level.
- We are an agritourism centre joining healing and agriculture.
- Local interest declined further for me in 2022. I'm working on pivoting to new online offerings and an additional business venture as the beginning of my exit/closing strategy.
- We have been in business 40 plus years and probably will be near retirement in the near future.

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

Answered: 22 Skipped: 0

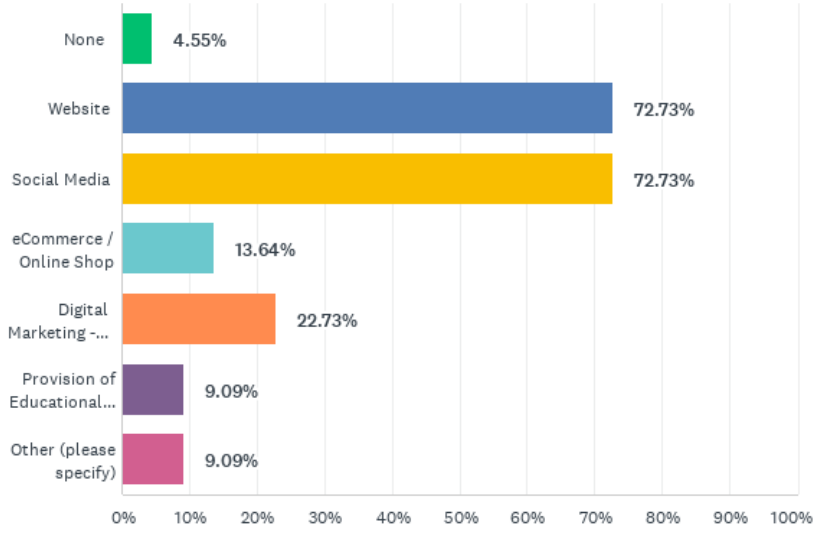


#6 continued…

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not confident	40.91%	9
Neutral	36.36%	8
Confident	22.73%	5
Very Confident	0.00%	0
TOTAL		22

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

Answered: 22 Skipped: 0

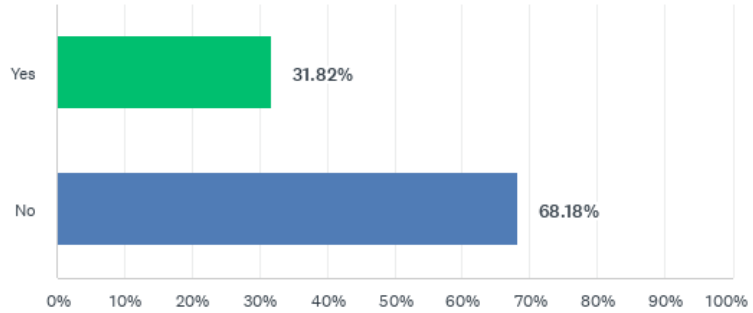


ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
None		4.55%	1
Website		72.73%	16
Social Media		72.73%	16
eCommerce / Online Shop		13.64%	3
Digital Marketing - Advertising / Email		22.73%	5
Provision of Educational Webinars		9.09%	2
Other (please specify)	Responses	9.09%	2
Total Respondents: 22			

- Recommendations from other customers.
- Only Facebook.

#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: 22 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	31.82%	7
No	68.18%	15
TOTAL		22

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

Answered: 22 Skipped: 0

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL
Increasing product prices	4.55% 1	4.55% 1	9.09% 2	0.00% 0	18.18% 4	9.09% 2	4.55% 1	13.64% 3	9.09% 2	27.27% 6	22
Supply chain	13.64% 3	0.00% 0	4.55% 1	9.09% 2	27.27% 6	4.55% 1	4.55% 1	13.64% 3	9.09% 2	13.64% 3	22
Labour force	31.82% 7	9.09% 2	4.55% 1	4.55% 1	9.09% 2	9.09% 2	0.00% 0	9.09% 2	4.55% 1	18.18% 4	22
Changes in your product demand	31.82% 7	18.18% 4	0.00% 0	9.09% 2	9.09% 2	9.09% 2	4.55% 1	13.64% 3	0.00% 0	4.55% 1	22
Increased overhead costs	4.55% 1	9.09% 2	4.55% 1	9.09% 2	9.09% 2	4.55% 1	22.73% 5	9.09% 2	4.55% 1	22.73% 5	22
Debt servicing capacity	33.33% 7	0.00% 0	4.76% 1	9.52% 2	23.81% 5	0.00% 0	4.76% 1	4.76% 1	0.00% 0	19.05% 4	21

#9 continued…

- I need grants and there are none for me.
- We are struggling with being able to afford qualified help. Plus, we need to pay back the CEBA that the government provided for us to use during COVID. Due to cost of everything increasing we are increasing in debt and not able to return the money loaned to us without a struggle. Customers are having a hard time paying us as well, because we needed to increase our pricing as well to stay afloat. We have considered selling, but are not to get the money required to cover the debt. We continue to look for places to cut and decrease cost. Well no one told us it would be easy.
- Transportation costs, fuel surcharges, increases in commercial insurance, utilities, etc… there are no breaks for small businesses. We are working extra hard just to make a living. Interest rates are thru the roof, product is difficult to get or non-existing.

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

Answered: 22 Skipped: 0

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	TOTAL
Employees returning to the workplace	72.73% 16	9.09% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	13.64% 3	0.00% 0	4.55% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	22
Ability to offer competitive wages and benefits	45.45% 10	13.64% 3	4.55% 1	4.55% 1	13.64% 3	4.55% 1	4.55% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	9.09% 2	22
Desire for hybrid workplace models	77.27% 17	4.55% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	13.64% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	4.55% 1	22
Attraction of new employees	50.00% 11	13.64% 3	9.09% 2	0.00% 0	9.09% 2	4.55% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	4.55% 1	9.09% 2	22

- Small business self-employed.
- We are working with apprentices as we can not afford a licensed mechanic. The apprentice program has offered incentives for employers but we have not seen any of it to date.

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

Answered: 11 Skipped: 11

- Good communication.
- Training/skills.
- Training work placement.
- Be more welcoming to new Canadians.
- Provide linkages for new residents seeking employment, training options and communications highlighting success stories.

#11 continued…

- Continue training, awareness and opportunities presented locally. Marketing and promotion of small business.
- Every occupation is vital and important. Just because some jobs are undesirable doesn't mean they aren't worthy or important.
- Encourage employers to Respect for employee. Consider the employer as a supporter rather than a boss and Retention would be higher. Pay weekly rather than bi weekly.
- I do not understand the workforce shortage. Where did the people go? Or is the government supporting these people so they do not want to work? So, I really could not begin to guess how to change this situation.
- Get people off welfare and teach them how to work. Get students in high school out in the community doing things and teaching them skills so they have something on their resume once they graduate. Change your curriculum and bring back the trades, cooking etc. giving certificates etc. Not every parent sends their child to Girl Guides or Scouts so many are missing out on these opportunities.
- Hard for me to say. Based on my own experience looking for work, there's more competition in the positions I've applied to. I, more often than not, don't get call backs after applying to positions that I'm more than qualified for which has led me to believe there are more people looking for work than jobs available.

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

Answered: 16 Skipped: 6

- Fuel costs lowered. x2
- Tax relief. x2
- Interest rate reduction. x2

Labour

- Labour.
- Employees.
- Lower labour costs.
- Employee retention.

Advertising/Marketing

- Advertising.
- Media coverage.
- A new method or opportunity to advertise within rural communities that don't have a central plaza or cluster of storefronts.

Grants

- Grants.
- Support for employee training.
- Financial assistance for those that don't qualify for government grants would be great, if at all possible.

Digital Support

- Computer, web page and Facebook help.
- Getting a good website up within my school course selection. Online store.

Loan Repayment

- Repayment of loans.
- The government has given us another year to try to pay them back and if we don't, we can pay back at a 5% interest rate which is far better than the bank will offer us. So, if we could get a 40,000 loan at 5% interest we will be forgiven 20,000 this would take a huge stress from us at any rate, because we will not likely have that amount by the end of the year.

Other

- Internet.
- Inflation Reduction.
- Economy Stabilization.
- Insurance premium discounts.
- Shop local education.
- Exposure to more tourists.
- Member support for hospitality services.
- Understanding the new government recycling contract will need a lawyer.
- Better centralized networking opportunities (apart from privately-run groups).
- How best to utilize existing resources and making connections easier to support businesses.
- Bringing in skilled immigration that can be a valuable addition to our business retention and expansion.

#13 What are your expectations for 2023?

Answered: 16 Skipped: 6

Positive

- Increase revenue.
- Expansion if possible.
- Slight increase in sales.
- To improve membership.
- Back to pre-COVID business.
- Increases in sales for hospitality.
- We hope to offer more attractions to our business.
- Hopefully to improve our income as shows and sales return.
- Strong year. Continued growth and success for our staff, partners, clients.
- My business will continue to expand, expecting a 15% growth. Generally regional economy will struggle due to inflation, labour availability and supply chain issues.

Neutral

- Business to stay on current course and profits, unless we are able to hire a qualified candidate.

Negative

- I suspect that we will be at a loss in 2023 unless something amazing happens.
- No crystal ball... it's day-by-day, month-by-month.

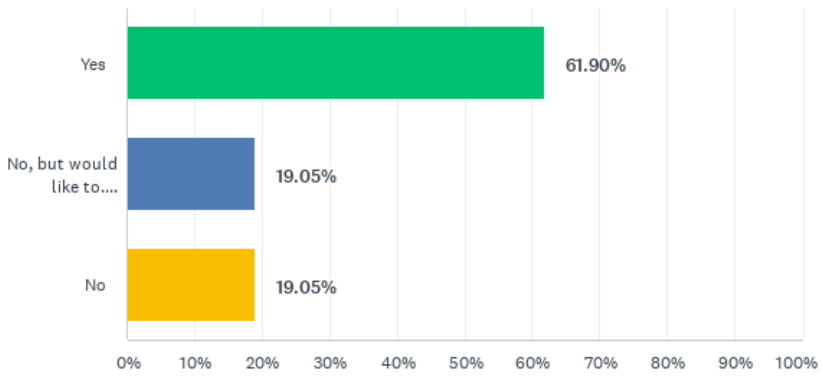
#13 continued…

Other

- Trying to retire.
- Fields prepped to receive lavender and blueberries.
- I'm working part-time jobs on top of operating my business and expect this will be the new norm.

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

Answered: 21 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	61.90%	13
No, but would like to. (please provide your contact information in #16)	19.05%	4
No	19.05%	4
TOTAL		21

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

Answered: 3 Skipped: 19

- Very important to take things day by day, stay on top of changes and adjust where necessary.
- High taxes, high fuel costs, high insurance costs.
- Personally, my biggest challenge has been relocating to this area and experiencing the decline in local interest and the ability to network. I have not received a warm welcome since moving here because I'm not originally from this area… and this became even more evident in my attempts to network and create alliances. I've taken this as a queue to shift away from focusing on local business because it's no longer sustainable for me.

#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: 9 Skipped: 13

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Contact Name	Responses	88.89%	8
Business Name	Responses	88.89%	8
Contact Number	Responses	77.78%	7
Email	Responses	100.00%	9

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
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