

Township of Augusta

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

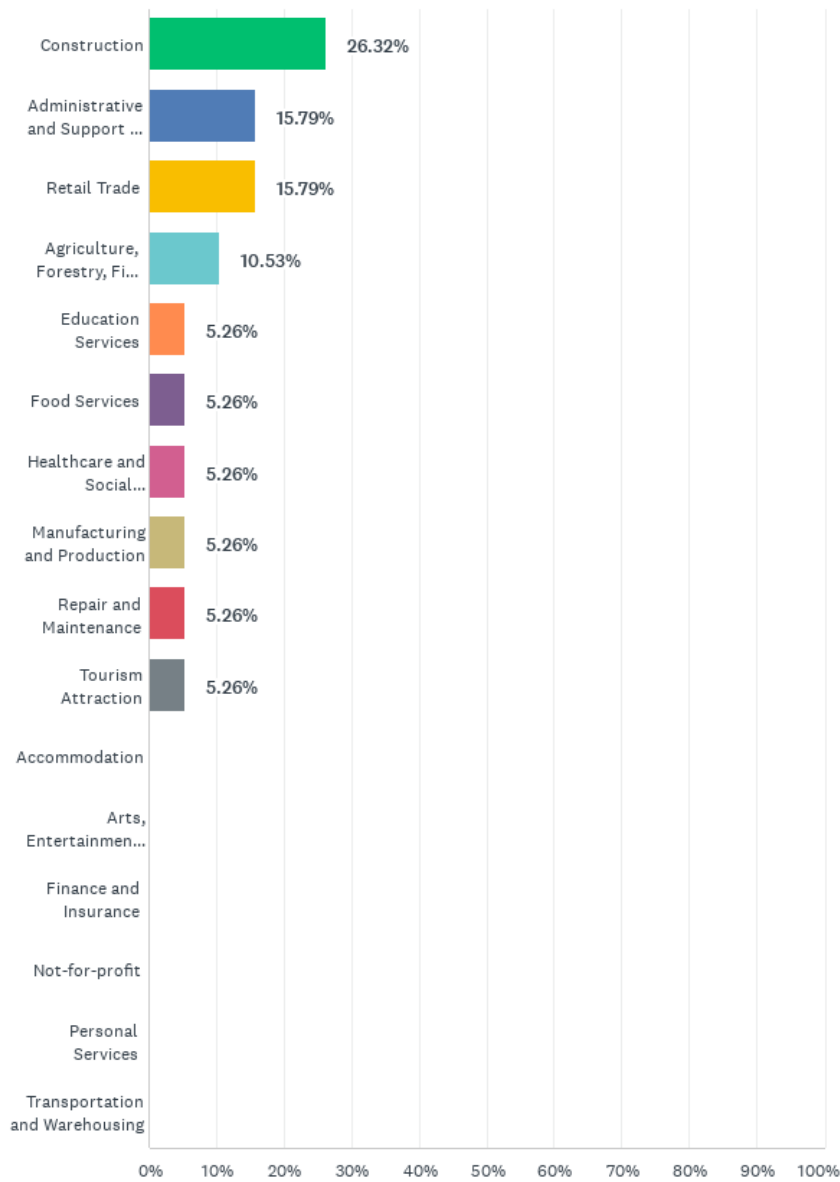


invest.leedsgrenville.com/reportsandplans

#2 What sector is your business primarily operating in?

Answered: 19

Skipped: 0



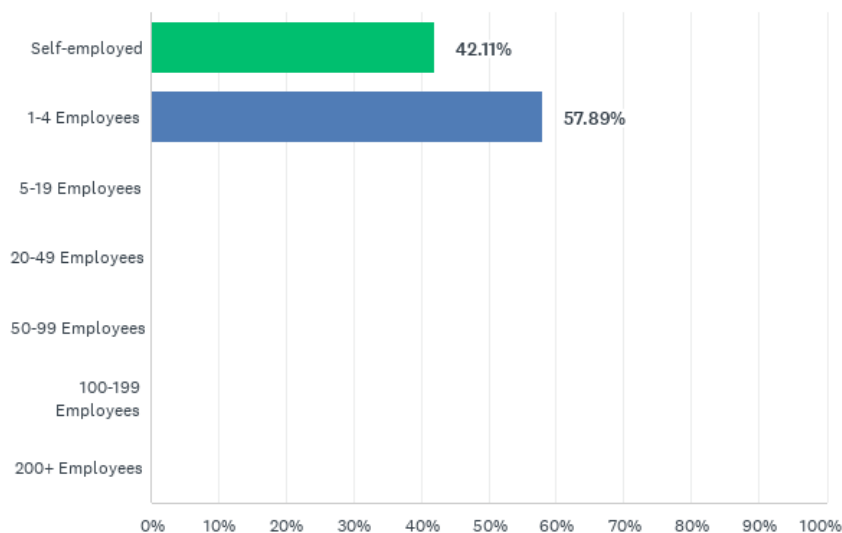
#2 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Construction	26.32%	5
Administrative and Support - Business Services	15.79%	3
Retail Trade	15.79%	3
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish and Hunting	10.53%	2
Education Services	5.26%	1
Food Services	5.26%	1
Healthcare and Social Assistance	5.26%	1
Manufacturing and Production	5.26%	1
Repair and Maintenance	5.26%	1
Tourism Attraction	5.26%	1
Accommodation	0.00%	0
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	0.00%	0
Finance and Insurance	0.00%	0
Not-for-profit	0.00%	0
Personal Services	0.00%	0
Transportation and Warehousing	0.00%	0
TOTAL		19

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

Answered: 19

Skipped: 0



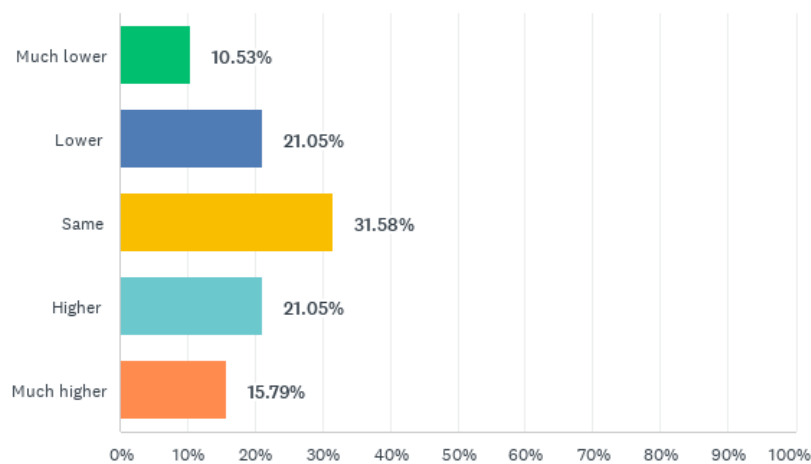
#3 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Self-employed	42.11% 8
1-4 Employees	57.89% 11
5-19 Employees	0.00% 0
20-49 Employees	0.00% 0
50-99 Employees	0.00% 0
100-199 Employees	0.00% 0
200+ Employees	0.00% 0
TOTAL	19

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

Answered: 19

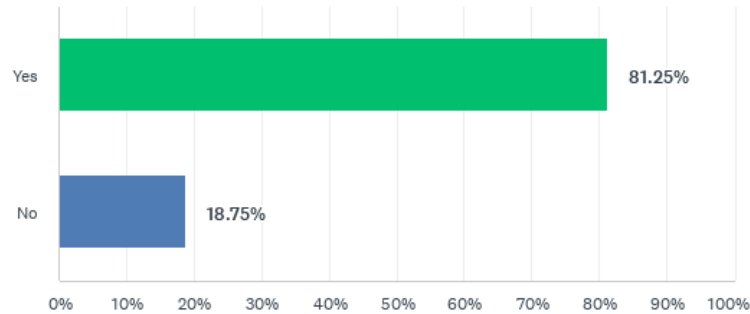
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Much lower	10.53% 2
Lower	21.05% 4
Same	31.58% 6
Higher	21.05% 4
Much higher	15.79% 3
TOTAL	19

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

Answered: 16 Skipped: 3



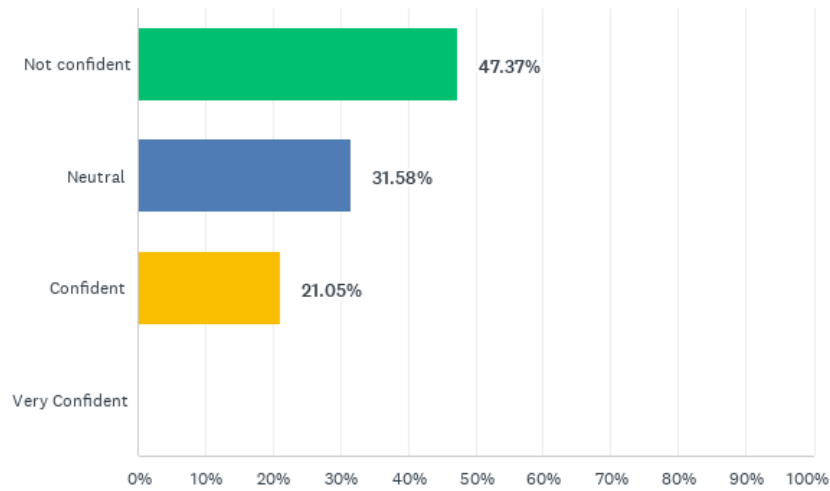
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	81.25% 13
No	18.75% 3
Total Respondents: 16	

- With marketing.
- I work in the digital marketing field and the demand is huge. I don't see the demand decreasing- only evolving with advancing technology.
- I am confident that our business will grow, however supply chain issues have contributed to slow completion of projects.
- We have been attempting for 2 ½ years to find an additional employee. We are flooded with resumes when we advertise, but they never return your call. The occasional one who does, never shows up for the first day of work. It is virtually impossible to grow a business without more employees. We have been in business for 34 years and could take on more work if we had the manpower. We use Indeed and the local employment service to advertise.
- I am a new business.
- Working employees and local apartment/housing rent are unavailable in this area.

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

Answered: 19

Skipped: 0

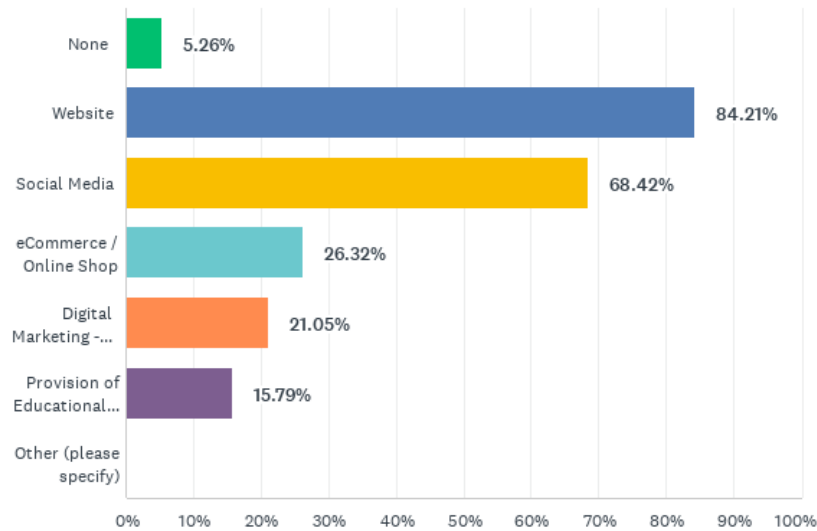


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Not confident	47.37% 9
Neutral	31.58% 6
Confident	21.05% 4
Very Confident	0.00% 0
TOTAL	19

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

Answered: 19

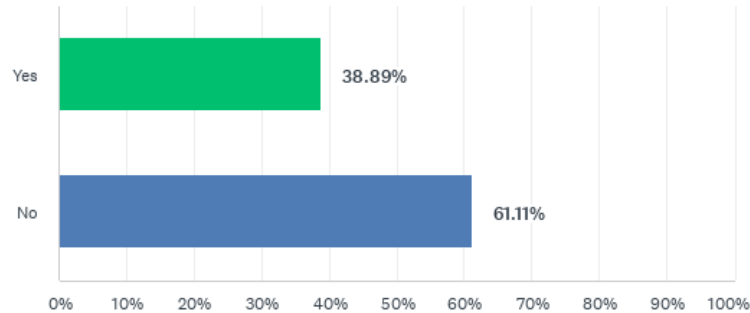
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None	5.26%	1
Website	84.21%	16
Social Media	68.42%	13
eCommerce / Online Shop	26.32%	5
Digital Marketing - Advertising / Email	21.05%	4
Provision of Educational Webinars	15.79%	3
Other (please specify)	Responses 0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 19		

#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: 18 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	38.89% 7
No	61.11% 11
TOTAL	18

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

Answered: 18 Skipped: 1

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Increasing product prices	16.67% 3	5.56% 1	5.56% 1	5.56% 1	5.56% 1	0.00% 0	11.11% 2	27.78% 5	5.56% 1	16.67% 3
Supply chain	11.11% 2	0.00% 0	11.11% 2	0.00% 0	11.11% 2	11.11% 2	11.11% 2	22.22% 4	5.56% 1	16.67% 3
Labour force	29.41% 5	5.88% 1	5.88% 1	0.00% 0	17.65% 3	0.00% 0	5.88% 1	11.76% 2	0.00% 0	23.53% 4
Changes in your product demand	29.41% 5	11.76% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	23.53% 4	11.76% 2	11.76% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.76% 2
Increased overhead costs	5.56% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5.56% 1	16.67% 3	5.56% 1	5.56% 1	33.33% 6	16.67% 3	11.11% 2
Debt servicing capacity	40.00% 6	13.33% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 3	6.67% 1	0.00% 0	20.00% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0

- Advertising, getting people to know that I exist, where I am and what I offer.

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

Answered: 16

Skipped: 3

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Employees returning to the workplace	62.50% 10	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	6.25% 1	6.25% 1	0.00% 0	18.75% 3	6.25% 1	0.00% 0
Ability to offer competitive wages and benefits	25.00% 4	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	12.50% 2	6.25% 1	0.00% 0	25.00% 4	25.00% 4	6.25% 1	0.00% 0
Desire for hybrid workplace models	68.75% 11	6.25% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	6.25% 1	0.00% 0	6.25% 1	12.50% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0
Attraction of new employees	31.25% 5	6.25% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	12.50% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	25.00% 4	0.00% 0	25.00% 4

- "Quality" of the employees re: qualifications, desire, reliability and flexibility.
- We continued working during COVID-19 as the majority of our work is contract work in new home subdivisions in Ottawa. Our work in private homes decreased for a while but is now back to its normal levels.
- It is just me, I do not employ any help as I do not have a washroom outside of the one in my home.
- No employees at this point.

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

Answered: 14

Skipped: 5

Affordable Housing

- "Affordable and desirable" rental housing to attract new people from major cities to the area wanting a change.
- Affordable living units would help for sure.

Immigration

- Ability to bring people from other provinces or countries! Incentives to bring younger people into the trades.
- Our immigration policies are too archaic. Too often I see new immigrants, with skilled training from other countries and yet they are not permitted to work in their field, or need to jump through hoops to obtain accreditation in Canada. I realize these are beyond regional control, however local input to other levels of government, hopefully would help.

#11 continued...

Social Assistance

- Make it harder for people who are healthy and able bodied to stay at home.
- The government has to stop giving out free money.
- Stop increasing minimum wage and start increasing pension, benefits, and RRSP matching programs. Raising the minimum just keeps raising the cost of living. What this generation needs is help planning and preparing for the future and being able to afford medication and physio etc. to keep them at work instead of off sick.
- Encourage all levels of government to review EI, and other subsidy payments to individuals that simply find it as financially beneficial to stay at home as it is to work

Other

- Better wages.
- Flexibility. Transportation services.
- Train more people in areas required. Give out incentive programs for training.
- Just people do not want to work... I don't see this going away anytime soon.
- This is difficult to answer as I don't have employees however if I was looking for work in my field... I would expect to have the flexibility to work from home at least occasionally. And the issues with digital marketing roles I see posted is that there is often expectations that the individual knows all social media platforms, graphic design, photography, videography, copywriter, web design, analytics etc. etc. but at entry-level pay. It's a must-have role but it's not valued at times. I don't think this answers the workforce shortage question but it would attract better candidates in the digital field if these issues were addressed.

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

Answered: 14

Skipped: 5

- Find employees. x2

Costs

- Inflation/operating costs.
- Prices from suppliers coming back down.
- Lower tax for small businesses.
- Reducing price of fuel/gas.

Business Support Services

- Workforce hiring.
- More support from government for small business.
- Budgeting/cash flow planning marketing above the ordinary. The how and when to scale up.
- Financial planning/managing business finances, developing contracts, and hiring.
- Strategic consumer-based marketing plans (with implementation plans and money to support), to attract people to 1. come and live/work 2. come and visit this region.
- More business networking.

#12 continued...

- Apprentice financing.
- Marketing grant referrals.
- Improved supply chains/ transportation.
- Financial assistance for new hires.
- Cost of living.
- Finding wholesalers.
- Good internet without having to use towers.
- Fraud with online services.
- Advertising options that are affordable. I would love to get on the radio and into the newspaper but the cost is astronomical even for just Brockville let alone the surrounding smaller hamlets that I service.

#13 What are your expectations for 2023?

Answered: 13

Skipped: 6

Positive

- Hopeful.
- Moving up.
- To improve sales.
- Better than 2022.
- Growth in sales and consistency in supply to our customers.
- I have confidence that 2023, will return to growth year over year.
- Hope things get back to normal and supply chain gets better with pricing.

Negative

- Slowing construction. Poor financing options.

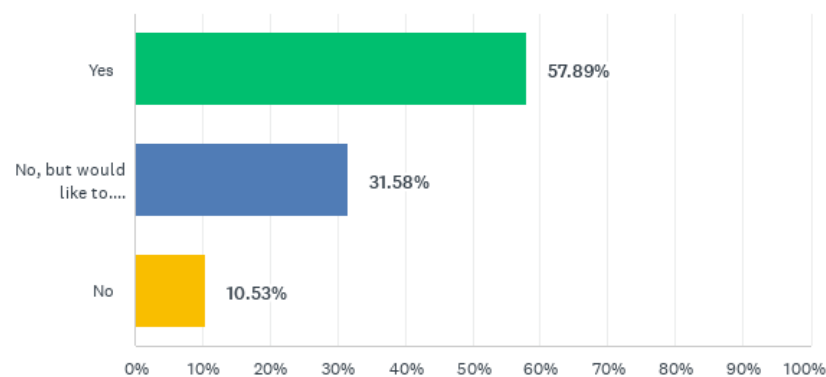
Other

- Increase wages to keep employees.
- Unknown.
- Business change of direction.
- That we would begin implementing the strategic tourism plan outline that was completed in 2022. That the new slate of elected officials in the region work together, better to create a stronger regional presence rather than a "township" approach.
- To bring in products that are greatly needed in our community at affordable prices. I opened my store at home to avoid the overhead of unaffordable rent. I put those savings into my pricing to do my part to help the community.

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

Answered: 19

Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	57.89% 11
No, but would like to. (please provide your contact information in #16)	31.58% 6
No	10.53% 2
TOTAL	19

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

Answered: 7

Skipped: 12

- Setting up a mentoring program.
- Have had a hard time due to the number of people hiring, retaining employees and staying competitive pricing in our area.
- I did receive assistance in setting up and designing a website, so thank you for that help. Also, an employee is presently receiving training with support from CSE and COJG. This support is very much appreciated.
- I'm happy to be referred to businesses looking for marketing support!
- A home-based registered business that has been paying taxes and HST for over 10 years should have access to same Digital support grants as storefronts.
- I am 3 houses outside of Brockville, so technically Augusta, there are so many more opportunities for promotion within Brockville. I would love to see a collaboration; my shop saw only a few tourists this summer. If I could participate in Brockville tourism programs it would be of great benefit.
- We have to shop local and keep money here in the area, also like to see prices of fuel go down and product cost down, it's out of control.

#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: 10

Skipped: 9

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Contact Name	Responses	100.00%	10
Business Name	Responses	100.00%	10
Contact Number	Responses	90.00%	9
Email	Responses	100.00%	10

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