



## SMALL BUSINESSES MOBILITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

According to a survey conducted by AT&T Inc. (NYSE:T), small businesses are using technology in varying degrees to achieve a greater edge in today's global marketplace. Nearly two-thirds (59 percent) of small business owners surveyed indicated that they use technology strategically, with one in 10 (11 percent) claiming to have so much technology, they put NASA to shame.

### Wireless Use

Just more than half of small business owners surveyed (51 percent) said they rely more on wireless technology today than they did two years ago, and slightly more (55 percent) said they expect to depend on it more two years from now.

### Wireless Advantage

Overall, small business owners see new technologies giving them an edge. Half (49 percent) said they were optimistic about wireless technology giving their business a competitive advantage while only 16 percent of respondents disagreed with that statement.

### Very Important Technologies

Nearly all respondents put a premium on traditional wired, wireless and Internet communications, with a significant number of respondents viewing newer wireless technologies as being very important. Shown below is the percentage of small business owners viewing each technology as being very important:

- Computers — 82 percent
- Landline telephones and/or voice mail — 75 percent
- High speed Internet access — 72 percent
- Mobile phones — 67 percent
- E-mail — 67 percent
- Fax machines — 57 percent
- Wireless PDA devices — 26 percent
- Hosted applications — 25 percent
- PC data cards — 22 percent
- Wi-Fi hot spots — 21 percent
- Unified messaging — 18 percent
- Video or television service — 14 percent
- VoIP — 12 percent

## The Flexible Connectivity of Wireless

Nearly two-thirds (61 percent) of small business owners surveyed are likely to conduct business while away from the office (e.g., during a day off or while on vacation). When asked about the importance of having the flexibility to mix work and personal business in their daily routine, one-third (35 percent) rated this flexibility a 9 or 10 on a 10-point scale, and an additional 21 percent rated it a seven or eight.

- **Wireless and Flexibility.** For about 70 percent of small business owners, the flexibility offered by today's wireless devices play a large role in the owners' decision to operate at a small business. When asked to rate the flexibility to mix work and personal business as the reason that they work at a small business, nearly half (46 percent) cited this flexibility as a major factor (rating of nine or 10 on a 10-point scale). An additional 23 percent rated it a seven or eight.
- **Wireless Out-of-Office.** Of the 41 percent of respondents who said they were very likely to conduct business while away from the office, slightly more than half (53 percent) said the success of their business depends on wireless technologies, such as mobile phones, PDAs and PC data cards. Overall, more than four in 11 (42 percent of respondents rely on wireless technology so much that their business could not survive — or it would be a major challenge to survive without it.

## Small Business IT Support

Even with all of this technology, however, only 25 percent of small business owners surveyed have in-house employees dedicated to IT support; most have someone on staff who knows about IT (33 percent) or depend on someone outside the company (28 percent). According to the survey, this reality aligns extremely close to what small business owners consider "ideal" technical support.

## Wireless and Newer Businesses

The study indicates that newer businesses tend to be more reliant on wireless and new technologies than more established businesses. For example, 95 percent of businesses less than two years old use wireless while only 89 percent of businesses older than two years do.

- *Surviving Without Wireless* — Additionally, 60 percent of businesses less than two years old either could not survive without wireless or would consider it a major challenge, compared with 41 percent of older businesses.
- *Advanced Technology and Newer Businesses* — The study also showed a correlation between the age of the small business and the use of advanced technologies. Of the 11 percent using copious amounts of technology, one-third (37 percent) had been in business less than five years.

## **PDA: Gender Differences**

The study showed interesting differences between men and women in the use of some technologies.

- For instance, 30 percent of male business owners said PDAs were very important (nine or 10 on a 10-point scale) while only 18 percent of female business owners did.
- Of those who use a PDA, slightly more men than women use them to view data (60 percent of men vs. 54 percent of women). However, women are more likely to use a PDA as a mobile phone (72 percent of women vs. 62 percent of men).
- Of all respondents who use a PDA to view data, 82 percent check e-mail and 43 percent use them to access the Web.

## **Study Methodology**

The results are based on a telephone survey of 1,000 owners and/or employees responsible for Information Technology (IT) at small businesses in 10 U.S. metropolitan/regional areas. One hundred interviews were completed in each of the 11 markets. The sample of participating companies was drawn from Dunn and Bradstreet's business list of companies located in each of the 10 areas. Each company was screened to include only those that have between two and 25 employees (full- and part-time). Eight of the 11 metropolitan areas are based on DMAs (Designated Market Areas). The other two markets are the states of Connecticut and Oklahoma. Interviewing was conducted between July 2 and Aug. 10, 2007.

## **About AT&T**

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