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Optimistic about 2013

Web.com and NAWBO survey reveals the primary factors impacting women business owners.

Feb. 11, 2013

THE STATE OF WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES

Most Valuable to the Company's Bottom Line:



87%

**WEBSITE DESIGN
AND MAINTENANCE**



75%

**SOCIAL MEDIA
MARKETING & SEO**



66%

EMAIL MARKETING

A national survey of women business owners (WBOs) conducted by [Web.com](#) Group, Inc. and the [National Association of Women Business Owners](#) (NAWBO) found a

strong sense of economic optimism, including a prediction by 85 percent of women

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year ahead. They were also optimistic, though slightly less so, about the broader economic outlook (74 percent) in 2013.

“The 2013 State of Women-Owned Businesses Survey reveals that even in these tough economic times, women entrepreneurs are optimistic about business opportunities for the year ahead,” said NAWBO President, Diane L. Tomb.

“This survey informs us of the challenges and opportunities facing NAWBO members as well as women business owners in general. At NAWBO we will strive to address these issues on behalf of all women entrepreneurs.”

The survey also uncovered serious challenges facing WBOs, including the need to reach new customers. Web.com and NAWBO developed the survey to better understand the state of women entrepreneurship, including: women business owners' (WBO) motivations for starting their businesses, what business challenges they face, what and how micro- and macroeconomic factors impact their businesses, what investment plans they have for the year ahead and what public policy issues are of greatest concern.

What Keeps Women Business Owners Up at Night?

With regard to public policy matters, the top four issues on the minds of WBOs are: the state of the economy (57 percent), health insurance cost and affordability (40 percent), business tax issues (36 percent), and access to a quality workforce (36 percent).

Though two in five WBOs said that health insurance costs and affordability are important issues to them, many (71 percent) feel that the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (“Obamacare”) will have no impact upon the way they do business.

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Who Should Become an Entrepreneur?

Survey respondents assert that women start their own businesses for a variety of reasons, including: having a vision for a business idea or a passion for solving a specific industry problem, wanting control or a more flexible work-life balance, and being in the right place at the right time.

When asked the biggest motivation for starting their business, the most common answer was that they were following their vision (28 percent), followed by finding an idea that allowed them to become an entrepreneur (21 percent). The survey found that the most important traits for running a successful business are to have a passion for an idea (1st), to have a vision to succeed long-term after the business is launched (2nd) and a willingness and attitude to fail before you succeed and to take risks (3rd).

Finding New Customers through Online Investments and Social Media Marketing

When asked what they see as their biggest challenge to running their business in 2013, nearly two in five (39 percent) of WBOs said that it was gaining new customers. To gain customers, nearly three quarters (73 percent) of WBOs plan to invest more in marketing in 2013. Specifically, they will invest in social media marketing (36 percent) and search engine optimization (SEO) (36 percent).

This is not surprising, as nearly half (44 percent) predict that social media and SEO are the future of small business marketing. Conversely, WBOs anticipated that traditional outreach approaches, including print and direct mail (1.6 percent), online advertising (4.4 percent) and email marketing (6.2 percent), will have less impact on small business marketing in the future.

When considering what marketing tactics currently have the greatest impact on a business' bottom line, more than half (52 percent) of respondents indicated that website design and maintenance was very important, followed by social media marketing and SEO (38 percent) and email marketing (25 percent). And WBOs

indicated that LinkedIn (27 percent) is the most valuable social media platform to

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