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SurePayroll Inc., a provider of online payroll to small businesses nationwide, has announced December 2012 results for its monthly SurePayroll Small Business Scorecard showing month-over-month hiring was down 0.1 percent and the average paycheck was up ever so slightly 0.1 percent. Small business owners' optimism sits at 55 percent, down five points from last month.

"Small businesses had been asked to play a game where they didn't know the rules in 2012," said SurePayroll CEO and President Michael Alter, referring to uncertainty over government action. "That being the case, they'd rather just not play. That's likely why we've seen a drag on hiring throughout the year. On the bright side, they've been innovative and creative. Our customers tell us they've been using new services to outsource nonessential work and technology to increase productivity, as well as focusing on their most profitable customers."

Month-over-month SurePayroll Scorecard data showed hiring down 0.1 percent and the average paycheck was up slightly at 0.1 percent. Hiring was down month over month in every region of the country except for the South, where it was up 0.3 percent.

Paychecks were up month over month in the Midwest (0.2 percent) and West (0.2 percent), and down or flat across the rest of the country.

Year over year, nationwide hiring is down only 1.3 percent and paychecks are down 1.0 percent. Year over year, the South is the only region where hiring was up at 1.7 percent and paychecks there were down 0.5 percent.

The West shows a hiring decline at 4.8 percent, with paychecks down 0.4 percent.

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an average of eight employees.

Technology

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