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Jan. 15, 2013

As 2013 begins, small business owners are excited about the year's prospects according to a new survey of more than 600 small business owners released today by [ONTRAPORT](#), provider of the comprehensive business and marketing automation platform [OfficeAutopilot](#).

Entrepreneurs are almost universally expecting to grow in 2013, with that growth translating into hiring – more than half of all small businesses surveyed plan to hire staff in 2013. The market for financing a small business remains sluggish, however, as those surveyed indicated that securing financing is more difficult today than in the past and those seeking financing are outnumbered 4-to-1 by those who are waiting for better conditions.

Through a survey of more than 600 small business owners ranging across a number of industries including financial services, information marketers, restaurants and retail, ONTRAPORT secured a snapshot of small business sentiment today. Highlights of the survey include:

- **Holiday sales were great this year.** More than 80% of small business owners reported seeing or expecting an increase in December/holiday sales this year. Last year, a study by [Intuit](#) stated that small businesses saw a 5% growth in sales volume over the holiday season. Small business owners seem particularly optimistic this year because almost 40% of respondents forecasted their holiday sales will increase this year by 10% or more.

- **Small businesses will continue to be job creators in 2013.** Small business owners

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2013. The choice to operate on a shoestring budget may be due to the fact that more than 40% of respondents indicated that it's harder to secure financing today than it was in the past.

- **They may be pursuing their passion, but what small business owners really want is more personal time.** When asked the biggest factor in deciding to start their own business, 42% of respondents indicated that they wanted to pursue their passion. When asked what they would do if they had an extra hour every day, however, the number one response was "take more personal time" (34%), which beat out more focus on marketing, product development and customer service.

"ONTRAPORT expects 2013 to be another great year of continued business growth and it looks like many other small businesses feel equally optimistic" said Landon Ray , CEO of ONTRAPORT. "We found it interesting that many entrepreneurs indicated they wanted more personal time. Our hope is that tools like OfficeAutopilot will help entrepreneurs automate more of their daily marketing and sales tasks so they *can* enjoy more time with their family and friends."

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