

Business Wairarapa Business Support Needs Survey Dec 24 - Jan 25



Background

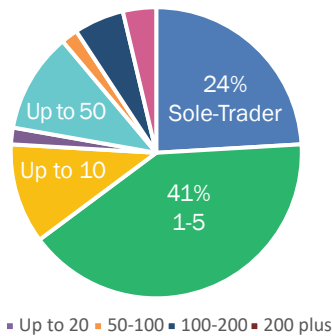
Wairarapa's economy is fundamentally driven by small businesses, with 18.6% of its 6,400 business units having five or fewer employees, and just 33 businesses employing more than 50.

However, these SMEs often miss out on crucial workplace capability and training opportunities due to financial constraints, time limitations, and lack of scale in the region. This skills gap limits their growth potential and impacts the region's overall economic performance.

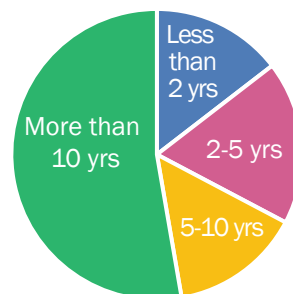
To address this, Business Wairarapa conducted a district-wide Business Needs Survey (December 2024 – January 2025), identifying five key capability areas:

- Digital Mastery:** Leveraging AI, enhancing online presence, and using social platforms for growth.
- Marketing & Customer Engagement:** Attracting and retaining clients, boosting online sales, and improving branding.
- Leadership & Team Development:** Strategic planning, team motivation, talent attraction, and conflict resolution.
- Practical Business Essentials:** Financial literacy, compliance support, business systems, recruitment, and accessing grants.
- Networking & Professional Skills:** Effective networking, identifying new markets, and converting leads to customers.

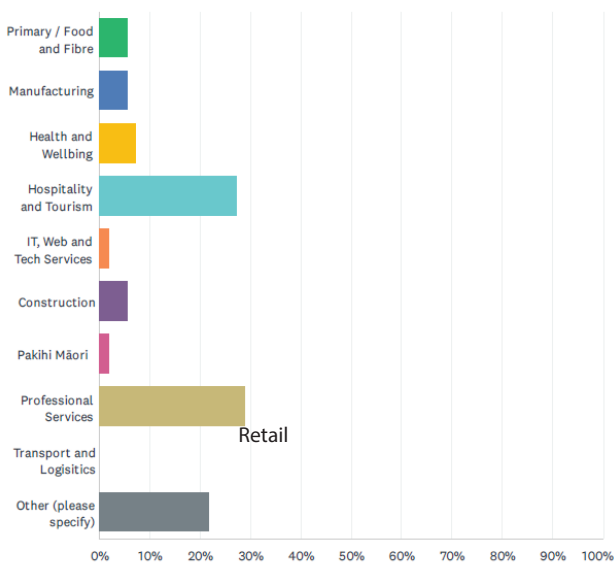
How many employees does your business have?



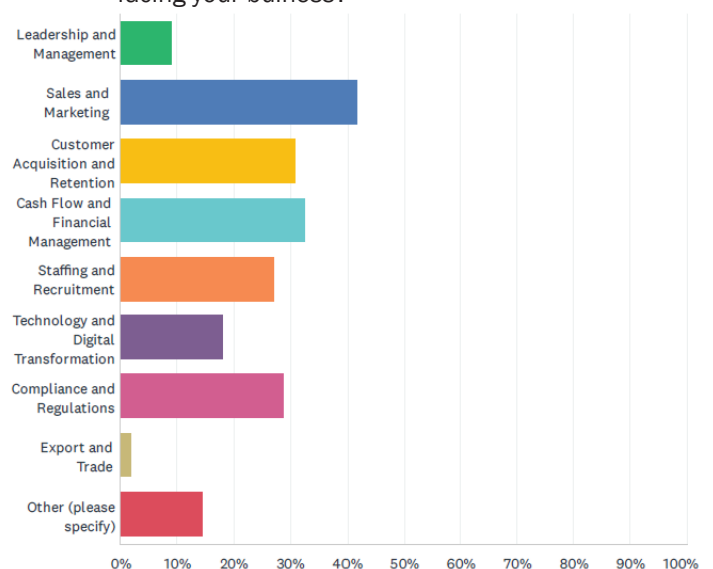
How long has your business been operating in the Wairarapa region?



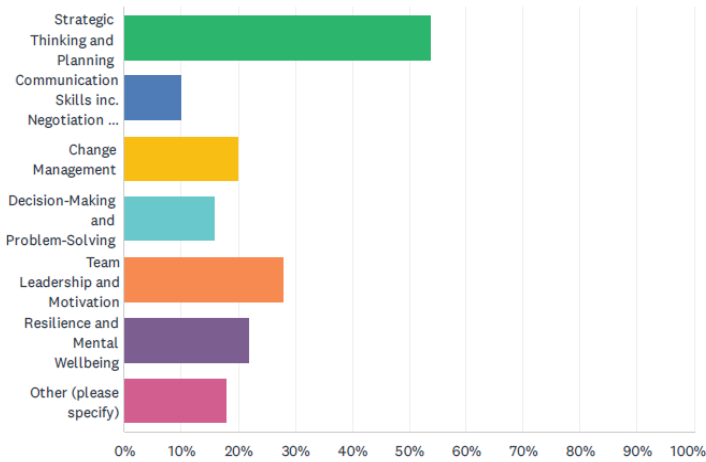
What industry is your business in?



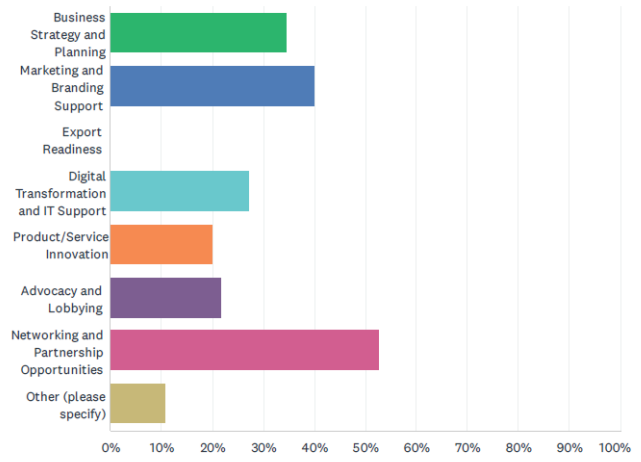
What are the biggest challenges currently facing your business?



What areas of development would most benefit your business?



What type of support do you need most for your business?



What new opportunities would you like to see in Wairarapa that could support your business growth?

1. Business Development and Networking

- Encourage locals to shop locally
- Organise business coaching and guest speaker events
- Facilitate stronger partnerships between businesses and charities
- Create focus group events for specific business fields (e.g., tourism, finance)
- Offer digital marketing and e-commerce workshops
- Promote AI training and technological advancements
- Host visiting tech experts for web and security talks

2. Infrastructure and Transport

- Improve road and rail connections to Wellington
- Upgrade water infrastructure and sewer systems
- Enhance electricity supply and EV fast charging stations
- Reinstate airport services to major cities

3. Government and Community Relations

- Strengthen connections with government representatives
- Streamline local government (consider consolidating councils)
- Increase support for regional economic development
- Encourage more residential development
- Promote forward-thinking district plans
- Open up more land for development, especially in South Wairarapa towns

How can Business Wairarapa better support your business?

- Facilitate more networking events and opportunities
- Connect businesses with local community organisations

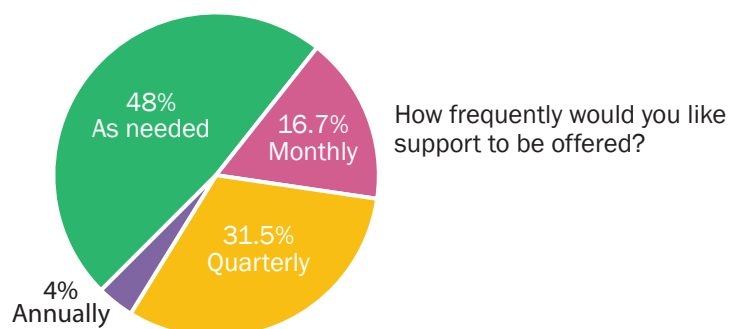
Training and Development

- Offer training for staff similar to other Chambers
- Offer workshops on digital skills, marketing, and financial management
- Offer digital support for e-commerce and online marketing
- Provide access to business mentors and experts
- Host support groups for business owners to share ideas
- Spotlight local businesses in newsletters and social media
- Support tourism campaigns to attract visitors

Advocacy and Representation

- Explore the potential for a "Business Wairarapa 2.0" reset
- Share market insights and industry data
- Provide information on funding opportunities and grants
- Lobby for infrastructure improvements (sewer system, EV charging)
- Advocate for policies benefiting small businesses
- Represent business interests to local and central government

Many respondents expressed satisfaction with Business Wairarapa's current efforts, suggesting that maintaining and expanding existing services would be beneficial.



How frequently would you like support to be offered?