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Susana Mendez
Marketing Communications Specialist
The Alternative Board
303-839-1200 x158
smendez@thealternativeboard.com

Business Owner Survey Reveals Key Economic Recovery Trends in the US & Canada

Taxes, Healthcare, Access to Capital Top the List of
Challenges for Small Business Owners

Denver, Colo., July 27, 2011 – The Alternative Board® (TAB) – in connection with Corona Insights, a leading market research firm based in Denver – annually polls its members as well as a mirror group of non-member business owners regarding their performance relative to projections and their coming year business forecasts.

The state of small business has been tumultuous throughout the economic downturn and recession, but a key subset of business owners are not only reporting an increase in optimism, but also reveal indicators for growth in the months to come.

According to the survey, private business owners are demonstrating their confidence in the market by increasing their marketing investments, improving their tax situation and increasing or maintaining their pricing structure.

Complete results are mapped in *The Alternative Board's 2011 State of Small Business: Key Economic Recovery Trends for US & Canada* Infographic, which provides a visual representation of the state of small business, including:

- 68% of US small business owners and 61% of Canadian small business owners are “optimistic” that the economy will improve in 2011.
- Top four challenges facing business owners:
 - Taxes
 - 87% of US small businesses
 - 77% of Canadian small businesses
 - Government Regulations
 - 86% of US small businesses
 - 94% of Canadian small businesses
 - Finding New Customers
 - 84% of US small businesses
 - 76% of Canadian small businesses
 - Access to Credit / Capital
 - 70% of US small businesses

- 65% of Canadian small businesses
- More than half of US business owners believe the HealthCare Reform Act to be bad for business
- US Small business owners' top three threats to the economy in 2011:
 - Unemployment
 - National debt
 - Political environment

“As the United States begins to emerge from the recession, it has become even clearer that small businesses are essential to keeping our nation afloat. We must recognize the perils independent business owners are presented on a daily basis as well as the incredible resiliency they have demonstrated,” stated Jason Zickerman, President and CEO of The Alternative Board. “Although optimism is increasing, business owners with access to an advisory board of fellow business owners consistently prove to have an advantage over business owners that try to achieve everything within the confines of their organization.”

Survey results reinforce previous year's indicators that business owners who become members of an alternative board of directors are more likely to succeed than their non-member counterparts. Specifically, this year's survey found that:

- 76% of small business owners with access to an alternative board of directors feel “optimistic” about their business' success in the current economy
- 1 out of 4 Alternative Board members increased their product or service pricing
- Alternative Board members are 8% less likely to see a decrease in profits

About The Alternative Board

The Alternative Board (TAB) is an exclusive, membership-based organization that helps business owners achieve profitability, productivity, and personal fulfillment through the use of peer advisory boards and private business coaching. Through a platform of knowledge and guidance, The Alternative Board delivers real world advice that provides a result driven advantage to help business owners stay focused on what matters most. Headquartered in Denver, CO, The Alternative Board has been helping business owners succeed for over 20 years. For more information visit www.TheAlternativeBoard.com and www.facebook.com/TheAlternativeBoard.

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