



19 June 2005

COST FEARS HOLD BACK UK'S 'WANTREPRENEURS'

Entrepreneurial black hole consumes a quarter of working adults

Fears of spiralling day-to-day costs are holding back the UK's budding entrepreneurs, according to a new study by printer experts Lexmark.

An independent survey of 1,000 working adults found that despite an incredible 40% saying they would start their own business if they could, over half of those (22%) - dubbed 'wantrepreneurs' —are failing to realise their dream due to a variety of fear factors.

Lexmark commissioned the research to better understand the needs and motivations of its start-up and small business customers.

Nation of Entrepreneurs

Almost a fifth (18%) of the working population have started their own business or plan to start one in the next five years, according to the research, whilst 40% wish they could.

The research reveals the entrepreneurial spirit is strongest among 18-24 year olds, with a staggering 68% saying they'd start their own business if they could.

A 'well presented business plan' emerged as the key single ingredient for initiating success (22%); whilst only 17% believed 'a great idea' was *the* essential factor. The need for 'someone to support and advise' was crucial for 15%.

Fear Factor Holds Back *Wantrepreneurs*

Despite wanting to start their own business, nearly a quarter of working adults (22%) had no firm plans to do so. The key barriers were 'risk of losing security' according to 61%, whilst half (51%) cited the 'fear of unknown day to day costs'. Over a third (36%) of those questioned said 'getting to grips with IT systems and new technology' was a major barrier.

Business Adrenalin

Conversely, 88% of people cited 'being my own boss' and 70% 'making money' as the key motivations for starting a business. Over half (57%) wanted to savour the achievement of 'bringing a great idea to life', whilst 56% cited the sheer 'adrenalin rush'.

When just looking at the over 65's, two thirds (66%) saw the adrenalin rush as a bigger priority than making money (52%).

South West is Best

Britain's entrepreneurial spirit is most densely focused in the South West, with a quarter of those questioned (24%) planning to start their own business within the next five years.

London emerges from the study as one of the least conducive places to start a new business with only 14% of those questioned planning to do so.

"This study reveals the extent to which we are an entrepreneurially-minded nation, but also the barriers to starting a business" said Giovanni Giusti, managing director Lexmark UK. "Seemingly trivial things like not having a handle on what printing will cost day to day, or not knowing how to set up your technology efficiently can end up having a massive impact."

"Once inspiration has struck, Lexmark can help provide the technology and keep a tight control on the costs."

A recent study by Lexmark revealed that bad printing practice is costing UK businesses £230 million a year, with one in five printed sheets lost on desks, left on the printer or binned within five minutes.

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Notes to Editor

ICM Research interviewed a random sample of 1007 adults aged 18+ by telephone between 18-19 May 2005. Interviews were conducted across the country and the results have been weighted to the profile of all adults. ICM is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules. Further information at www.icmresearch.co.uk

About Lexmark

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