



CalPoly
Pomona

A Survey of Entrepreneurs in the City of Pomona

Client: Pomona Chamber of Commerce

Consultants: Cal Poly Pomona MHR 4610S-03 Students

Instructor: Dr. Nastaran Simarasl

May 15, 2024

A Note

These slides comprise the summary of a consulting project for the Pomona Chamber of Commerce conducted in a senior-level undergraduate business course at Cal Poly Pomona instructed by Dr. Nastaran Simarasl (nsimarasl@cpp.edu) in spring 2024. The project goal was to help the Pomona Chamber understand how to enhance Pomona's business friendliness.

Only the slides that report Pomona business owners' use of business strategies, challenges, and resource needs are included.

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Our Consulting Team

- MHR 4610S course: Service-learning course.
- Student Consultants: 13 senior undergraduate students at Cal Poly Pomona.
- Course Instructor: Professor Nastaran Simarasl.
- [Students' Testimonials](#)



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Our Client

- **Client:** Pomona Chamber of Commerce
- **Number of years in existence:** 136 years
- **Current President & CEO:** Monique Robles
- **Organization's main goals:**
 - Promote economic opportunity
 - Enhance social and civic environment
 - Increase a sense of community throughout the city



Project Background

- **Professor Simar was informed about the project:** May 2023
- **Meeting with the client, Ms. Monique Robles:** May 2023
- **Setting milestones with the client:** May-Oct 2023
- **Setting Pomona as Cal Poly Community Partner:** Aug.-Dec. 2023
- **Presenting the project plan to the Chamber's board:** Oct. 2023
- **Recruiting students for the consulting course:** Sep-Dec. 2023
- **Finalizing details of the project:** Jan. 2024
- **Class started:** Jan. 24, 2024

Client Consultation Needs

1. How can the Chamber promote Pomona as a business-friendly city?
2. What support do current businesses need?



Our Research Process

- Identified client's (Pomona Chamber) needs
 - Client visited us in the classroom
 - Visited Pomona and discussed history of the city
- Learned consulting principles and effectiveness of a consultant
 - Via LinkedIn Learning
- Conducted a literature review on business-friendly cities
- Designed a survey with the client's feedback
- Collected and analyzed data
- Interpreted findings
- Presented outcomes to the client



Getting Familiar with our Client

Downtown Pomona Guided Tour

- Tour was guided by Monique Robles
- Visited different businesses including the DPOA
- Met various business owners
- Saw new developments in the city



Downtown Pomona Guided Tour



Summary of Past Research

- Business-friendly cities have fewer regulations (Douglas, 2017; Eagle, 2016).
- Business-friendly cities offer a one-stop shop: “what is needed to start a business” (NLC 100, 2023).
- Cities specializing in certain industries are more attractive to entrepreneurs (Walinder et al., 2023).
- Chambers that enhance members’ credibility and network generate more member satisfaction (Farahi & Khadem, 2018).
- Chamber members are more likely to grow their businesses (Tiwasing & Sawang, 2021).

Data Collection

- Understand entrepreneur-friendly cities (past research).
- Develop questions relevant to business owners' operations and needs.
- Run the survey by the Chamber President to solicit feedback.
- Review survey flow and possible challenges.
- Pilot test survey to ensure validity.
- Input the survey in a Google form.
- Finalize survey.
- Distribute the survey.



Pomona Business Survey (shared with students)

aida12santana@gmail.com [Switch account](#)

Not shared

Snapshot of the Survey

Which statement applies to **human resource management** (hiring, training, etc.) in your business/organization?

- We do most or all of our human resources tasks in-house.
- We outsource most or all our human resources tasks to other parties.
- If you outsource, what type of company do you utilize (e.g., small business, online/virtual assistant) Please type in the "Other" below.
- Other: _____

Does your business/organization have a succession plan (who will take over in the future)?

Does your business/organization have a **website and social media**?

- Our business/org. has a website.
- Our business/org. has social media.
- No.
- I am not sure.

Does your business/organization utilize **mobile payment systems**?

		No	I dont Know.
Credit cards processing systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Apple Pay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Square	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clover	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What types of **other technological resources** do you use for your daily operations?

Survey Features

- **Survey length:**
 - 43 Questions.
- **Survey topics:**
 - Business characteristics.
 - HR strategies.
 - Marketing strategies.
 - Management strategies.
 - Financial strategies.
 - Resource utilization.
- **Time to complete:**
 - 10-15 minutes.

Data Collection

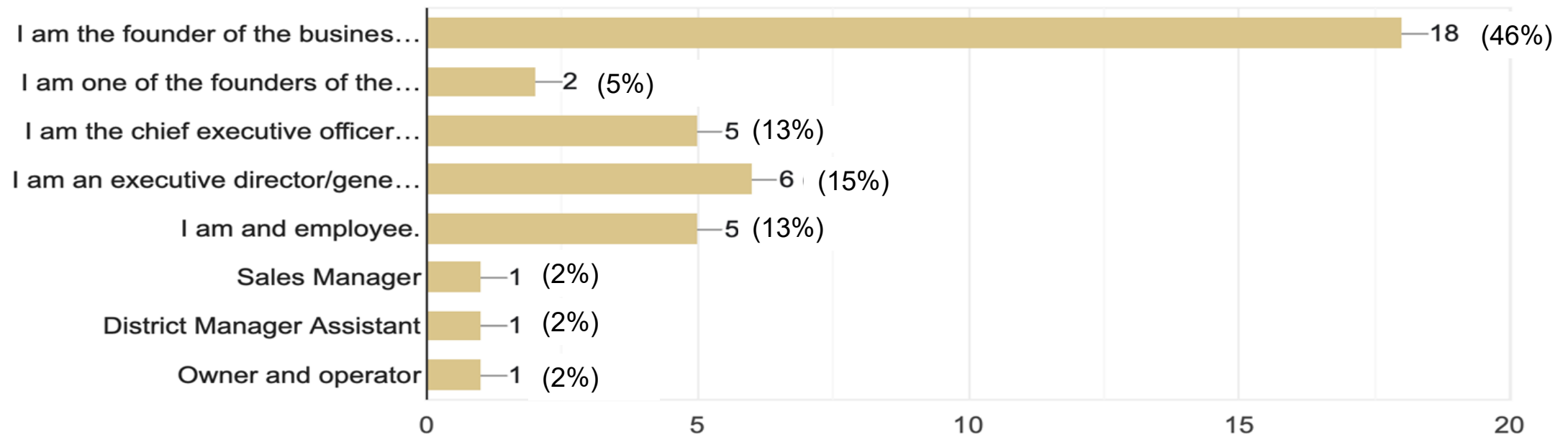
- **Online and paper surveys:**
 - Pomona Chamber of Commerce: Email, QR codes, social media and events.
 - Students: Field visits with QR codes & paper surveys.
- **Data collection:** April 1-May 1
- **Sample size:** 32 responses
- **Response rate:** 8%

Results

(Respondents' business roles)

What is your role in the business?

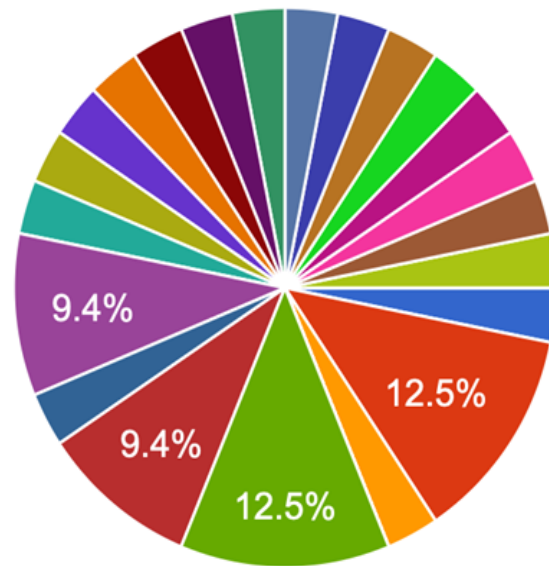
32 responses



Data Analysis (Industries)

What products or services does your business/organization offer in Pomona?

32 responses

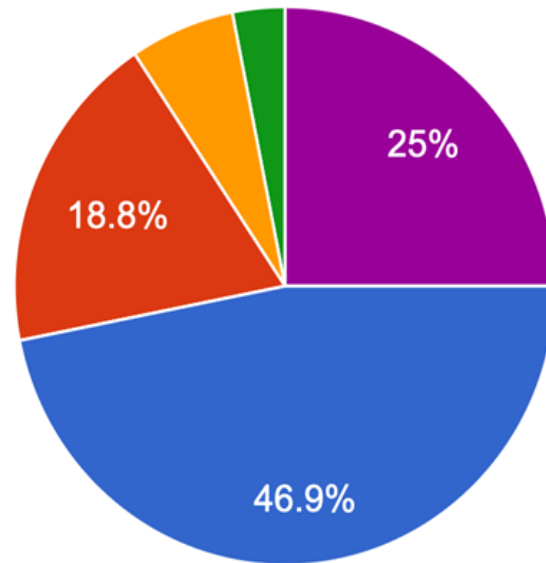


- Healthcare and Pharmaceuticals
- Restaurants (food service)
- Manufacturing
- Finance and Banking
- Agriculture
- Transportation and Logistics
- Energy and Environment
- Retail and E-Commerce

Data Analysis (Time in Pomona)

How many years has your organization been in business in Pomona?

32 responses



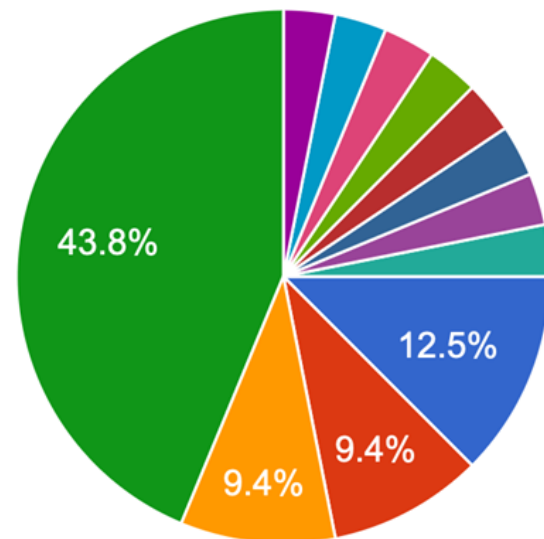
- 1 to 5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21 years and older

1-5 years: Mostly services
6-10 years: Diverse types of businesses
21 years and older: Education, manufac., antiques.

Data Analysis (Pomona Location)

Where in Pomona is your business located?

32 responses

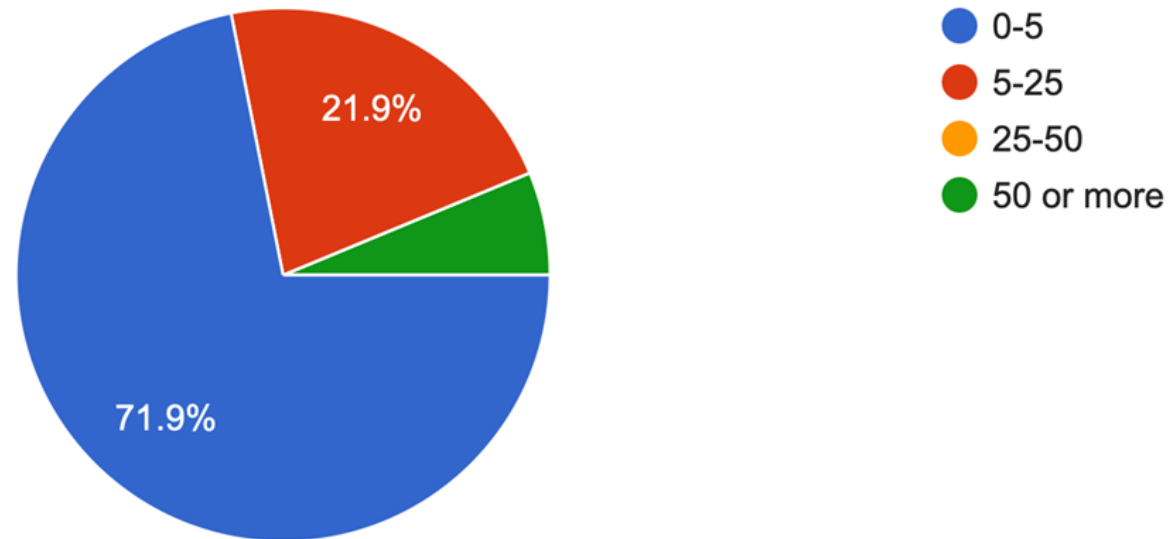


- Holt Corridor
- Garey Corridor
- Mission Corridor
- Downtown Pomona
- Business Complex
- Home-based business outside Lincoln...
- 2855 Metropolitan Place
- We services the entire city

Data Analysis (Employee Size)

How many employees are currently employed in your business/organization?

32 responses

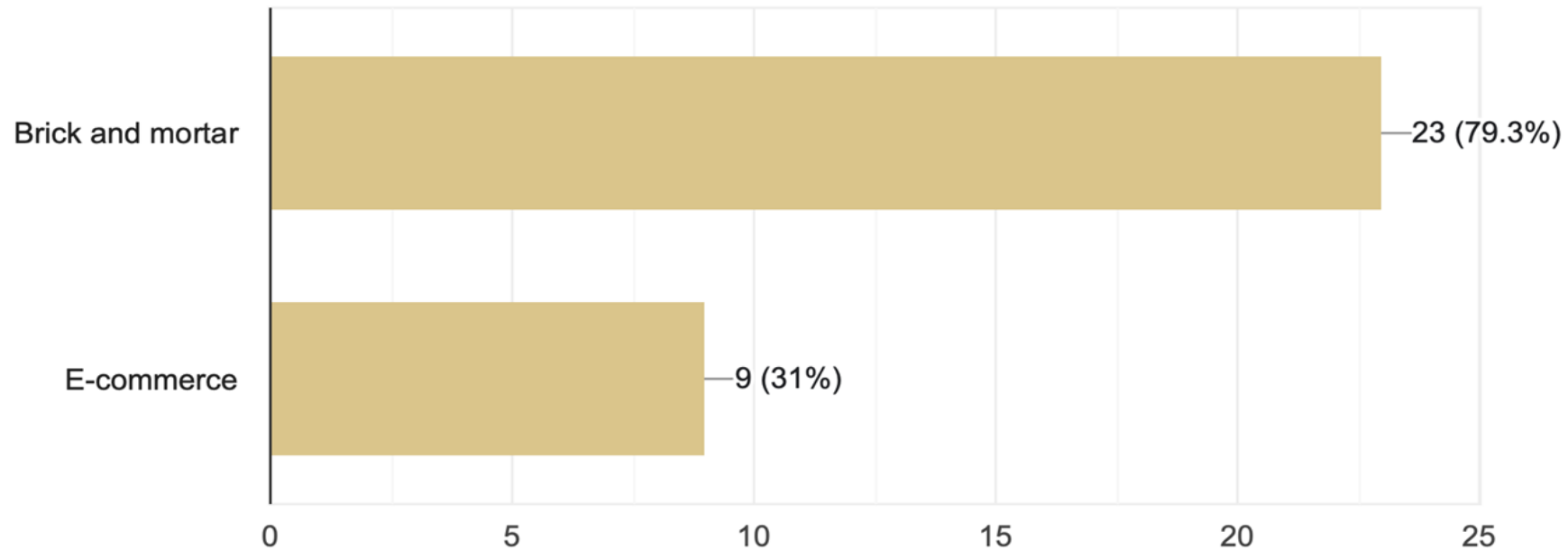


Data Analysis (Business Type)

Only 9% operate as both
brick-and-mortar and
ecommerce.

What type of establishment do you operate?

29 responses

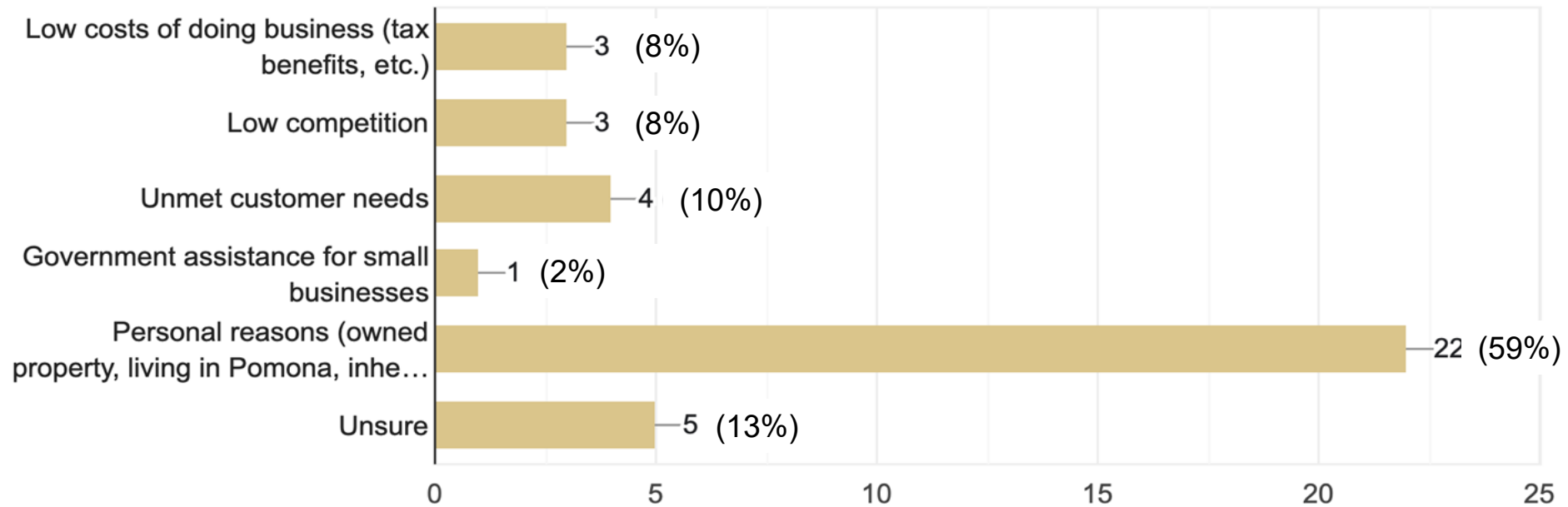


Data Analysis

(Reason for Pomona as Location)

What made you choose Pomona as your location?

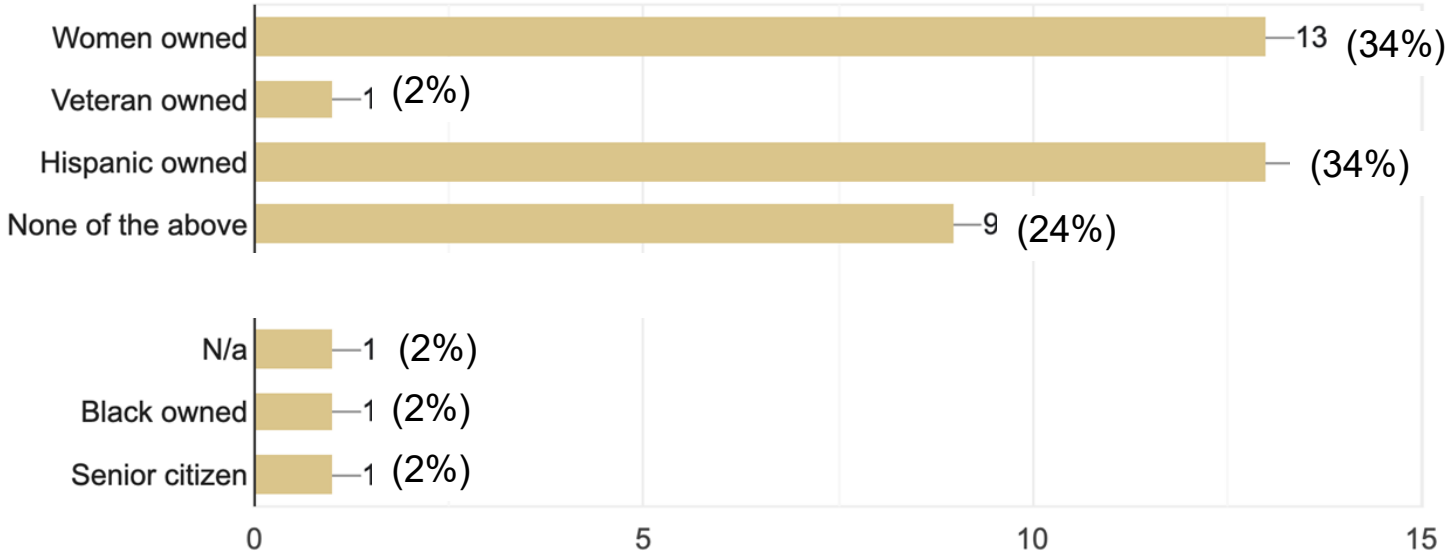
32 responses



Data Analysis (Minority Status)

To understand if your organization may qualify for any state and federal assistance, which category does it belong to?

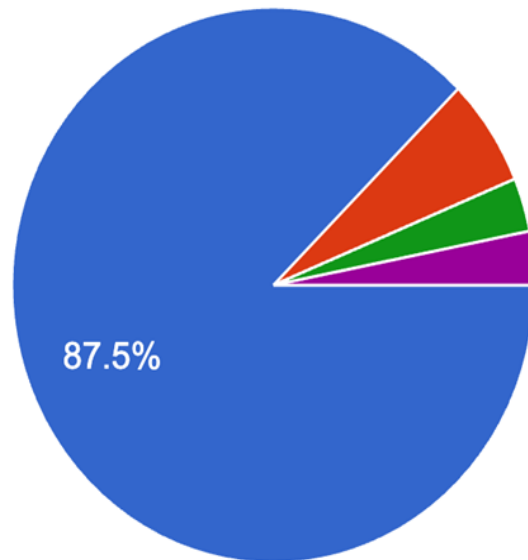
32 responses



Data Analysis (HR Strategies)

Which statement applies to human resource management (hiring, training, etc.) in your business/organization?

32 responses

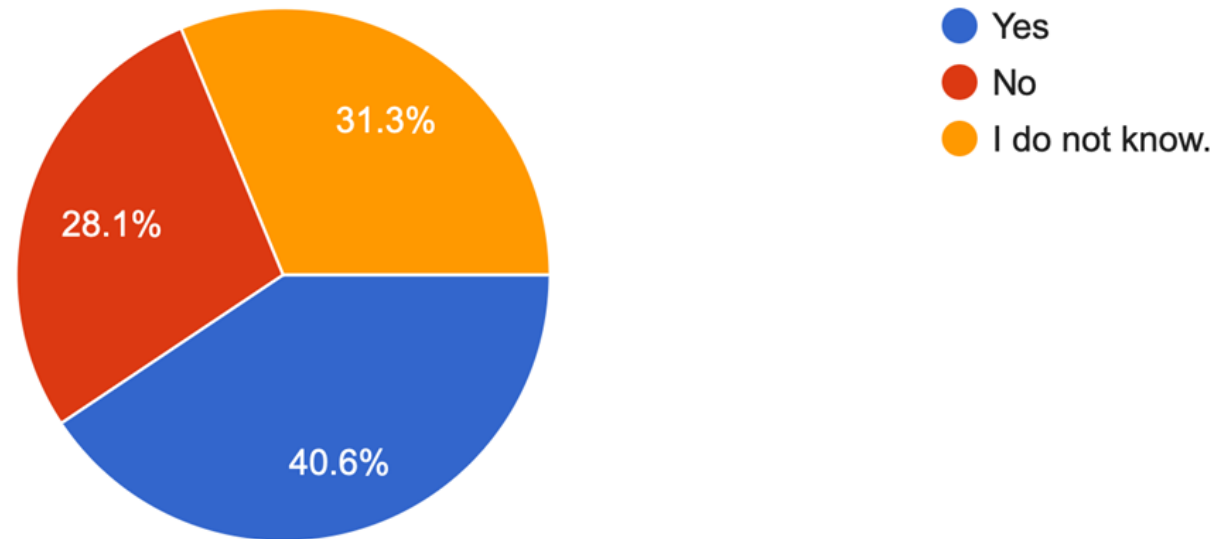


- We do most or all of our human resources tasks in-house.
- We outsource most or all our human resources tasks to other parties.
- If you outsource, what type of company do you utilize (e.g., small business, online/virtual assistant) Please type in the "Other" below.
- It is just me in this business

Data Analysis (HR Strategies)

Does your business/organization have a succession plan (who will take over in the future)?

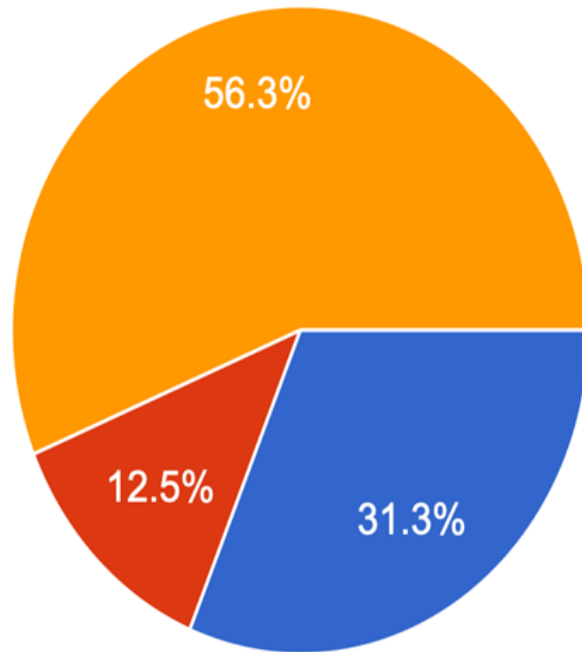
32 responses



Data Analysis (Target Markets)

Who are your customers/clients?

32 responses

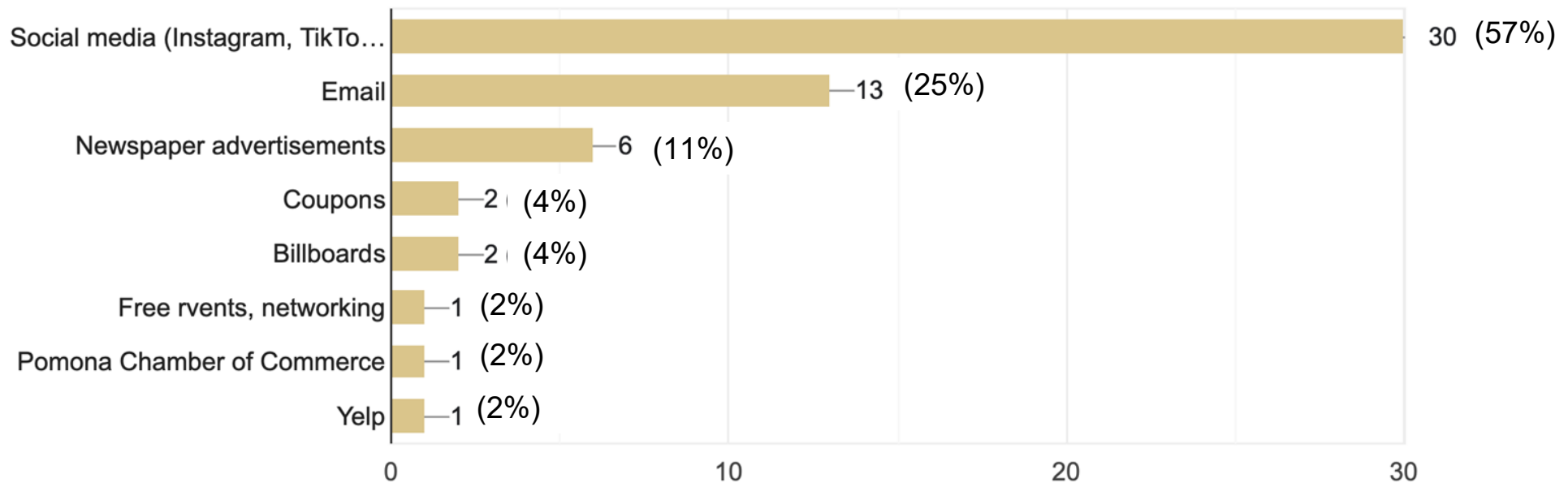


- Individual customers
- Businesses/organizations
- Both
- None (please name them in the "Other" option below)

Data Analysis (Use of Marketing Tools)

What marketing tools do you utilize?

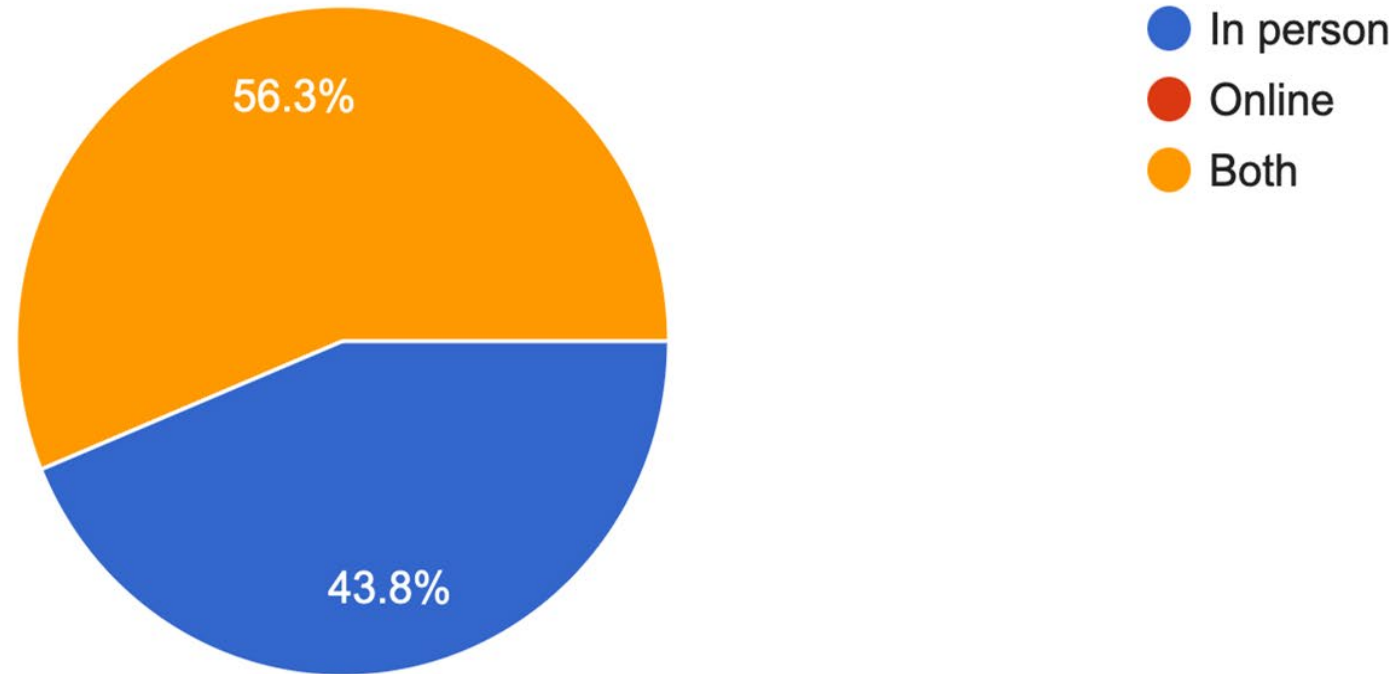
31 responses



Data Analysis (Distribution Channels)

How do customers access your products/services?

32 responses

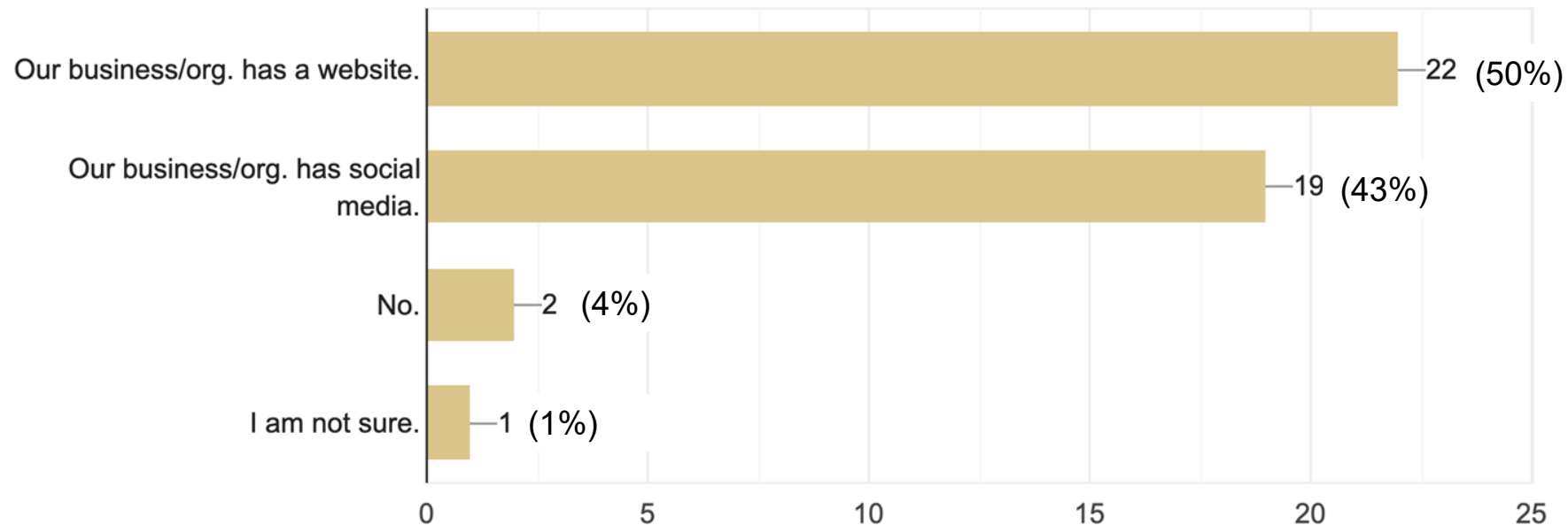


Data Analysis (Use of Technology)

Only 30% have a website
and social media.

Does your business/organization have a website and social media?

31 responses

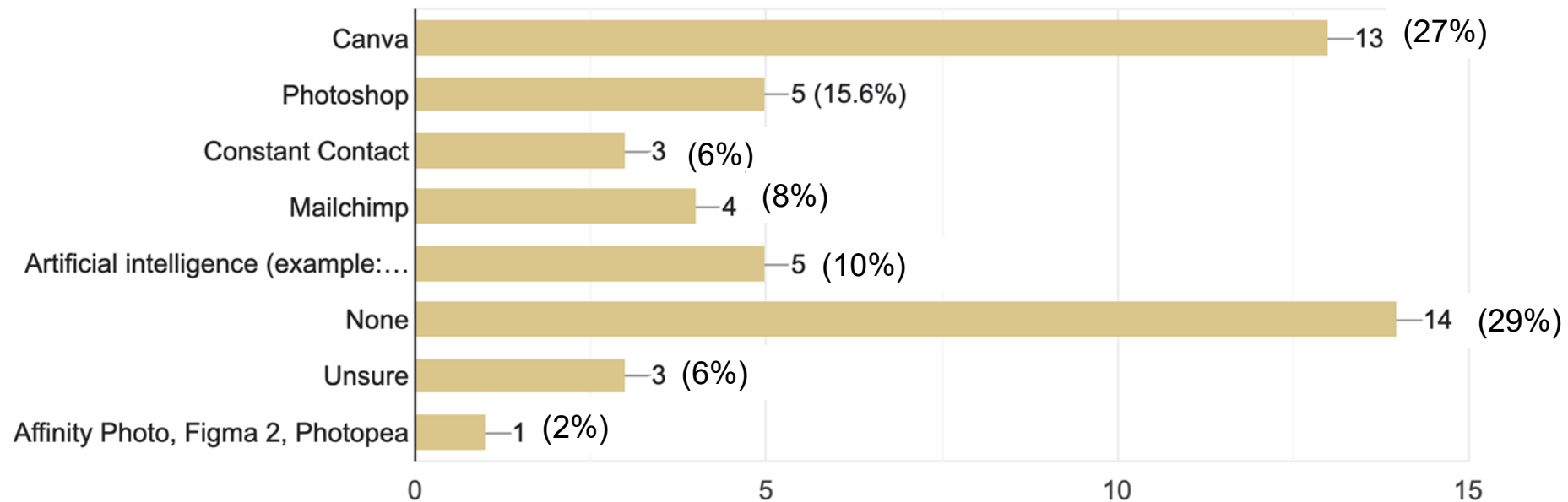


Data Analysis (Use of Technology-Other)

Almost 30% do not use any technology!

What types of other technological resources do you use for your daily operations?

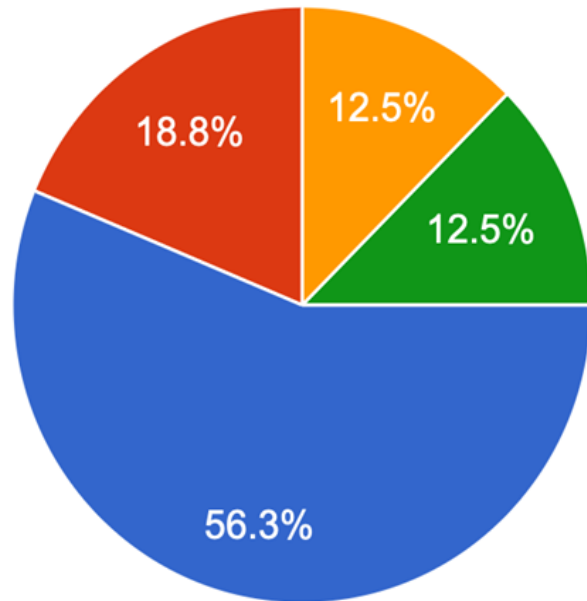
32 responses



Data Analysis (Business Plan)

Does your organization have a business plan?

32 responses

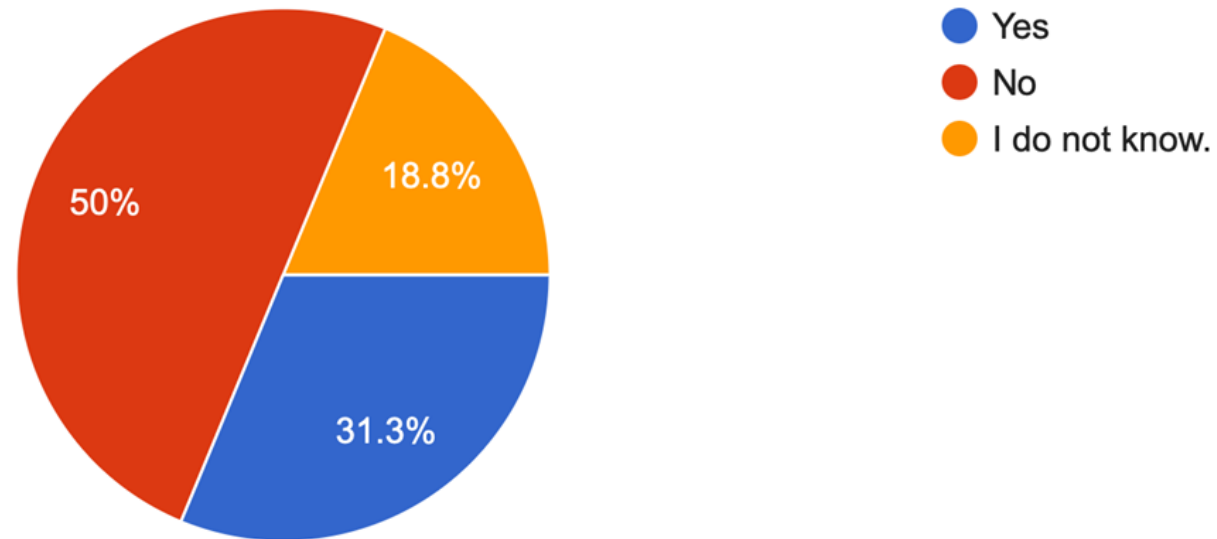


- Yes
- No
- I do not know.
- I am interested in developing a business plan for my organization.

Data Analysis (Annual Budget)

Does your business/organization have an annual budget?

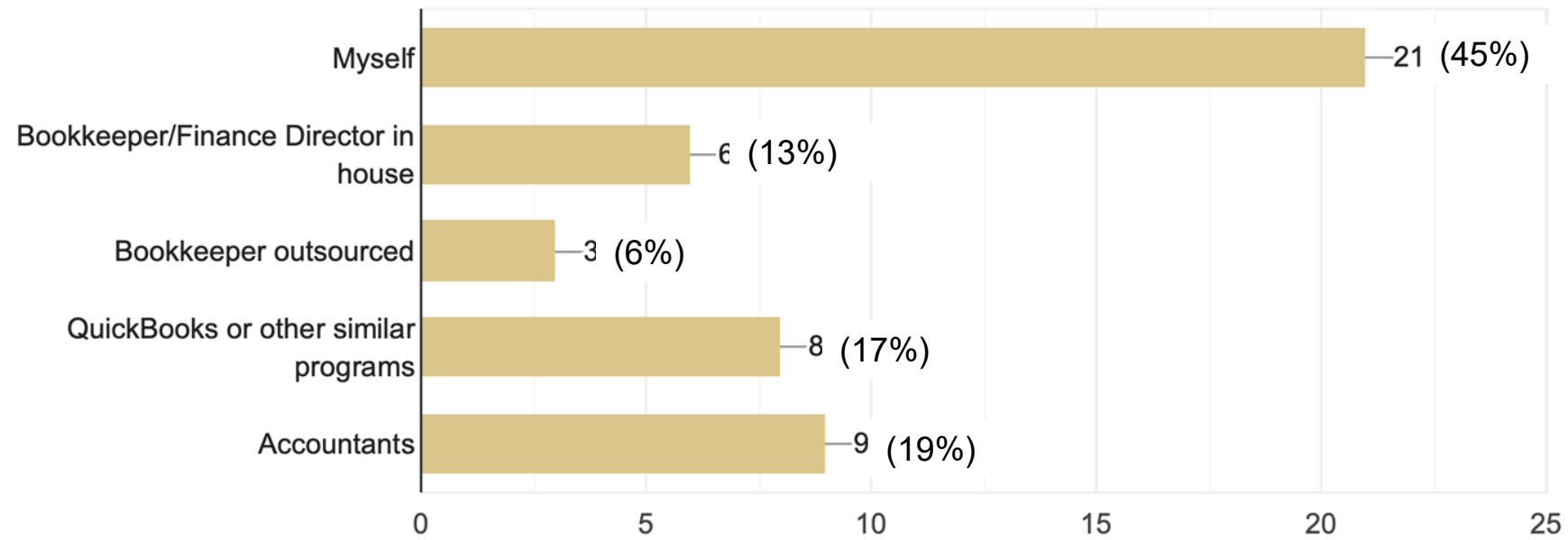
32 responses



Data Analysis (Financial management)

How do you manage your business finances?

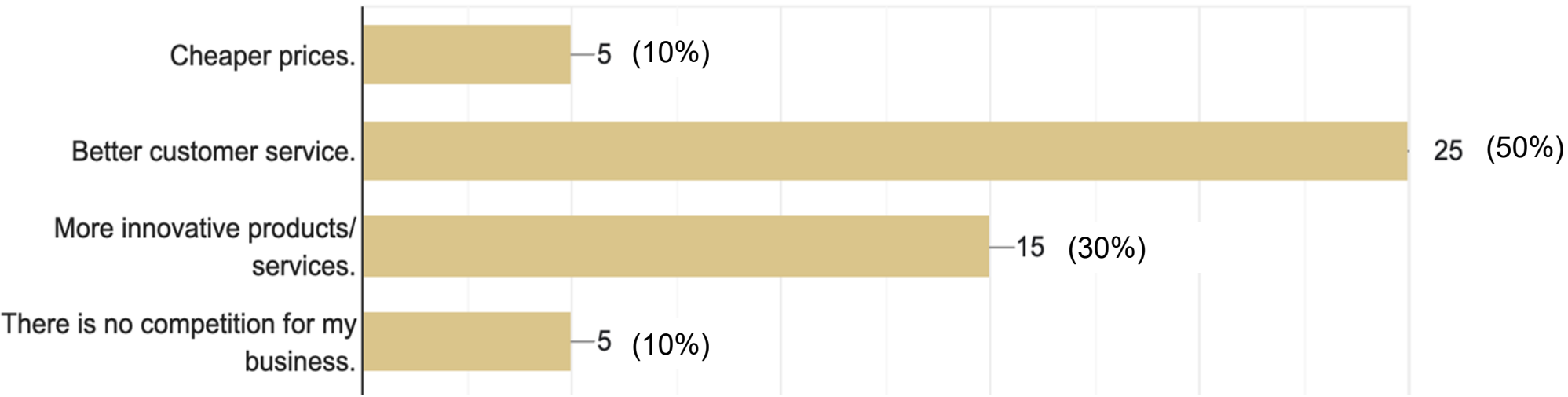
32 responses



Data Analysis (Competitive Advantage)

How do you set your business/organization apart from competitors?

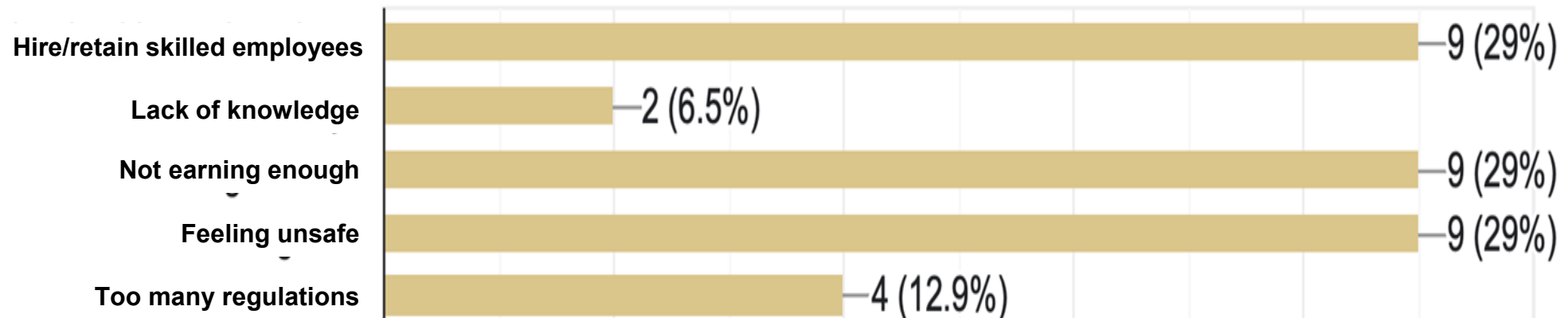
32 responses



Data Analysis (Major Concerns)

What are your biggest areas of concern regarding the operation of your business in Pomona?

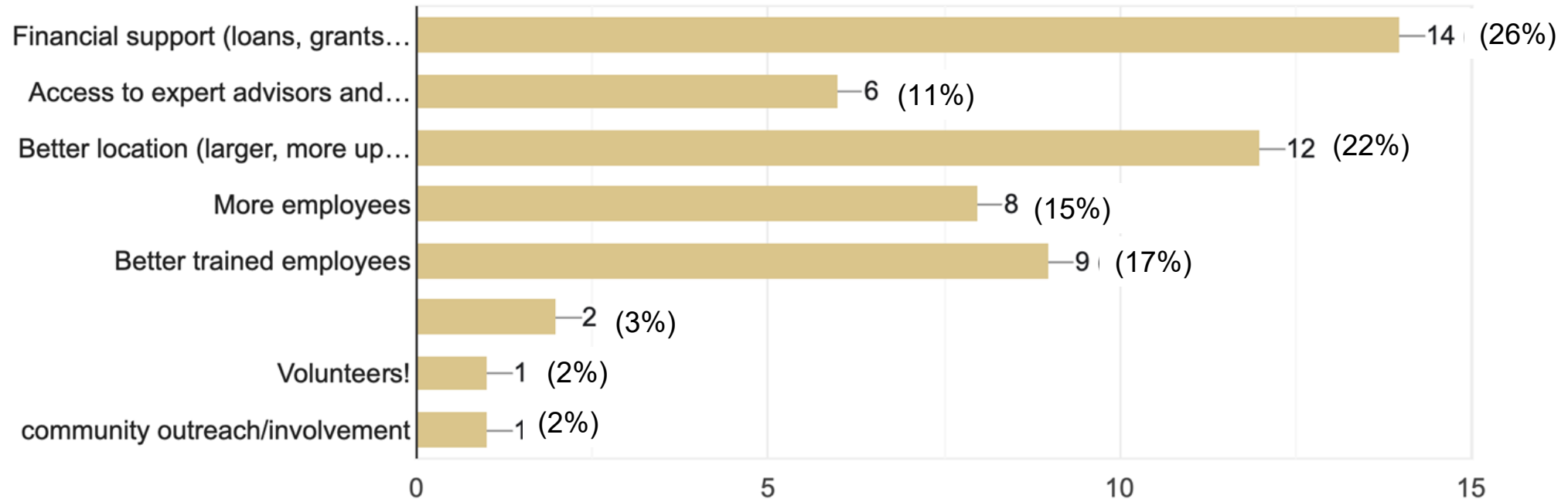
31 responses



Data Analysis (Resource Needs-General)

What resources does your small business need to stay competitive?

31 responses



Please contact Dr. Nastaran Simarasl (nsimarasl@cpp.edu) for any inquiries.

To cite this work:

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