



**WHAT
WE
HEARD.**



**PUBLIC
PARTICIPATION**

Retail Demand Study – Business Survey

Project Overview:

The City of Airdrie conducted a business retail survey as a key component of a larger retail demand study. From October 7 to 25, 2024 Economic Development implemented an online survey to better understand how local business owners engage with other businesses in the community, and the factors that either support or hinder these relationships. The City used its digital communications channels including Facebook and Instagram, as well as direct outreach to business and business organizations to create awareness of the survey. 23 businesses responded to the survey. This report provides a synopsis of the business survey results.

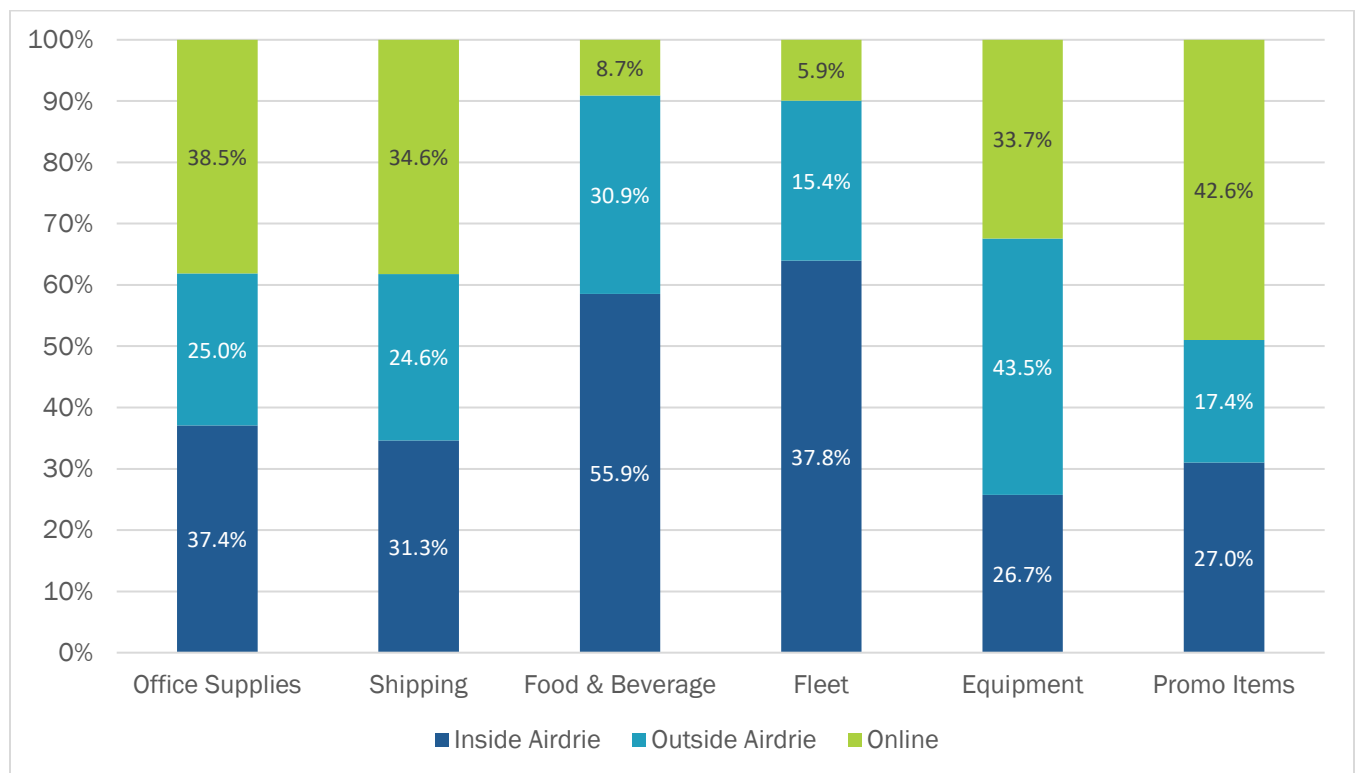
Date: April 2, 2025

Prepared by the City of Airdrie

Executive Summary

Economic Development implemented an online survey to better understand how local business owners engage with other businesses in the community, and the factors that either support or hinder these relationships. Most respondents indicated they have a storefront (52%) but this was closely followed by those who indicated they are home or online based (47%). The largest group of respondents indicated they have been operating in Airdrie for 1-5 years (35%).

When asked about annual spending within Airdrie, respondents indicated that food and beverage, office supplies and fleet are well represented within Airdrie purchases, while other items such as shipping, equipment and promotional items are largely sourced outside of Airdrie or online.



When collaborating with other businesses, the most often cited benefit was increased customer base (29%) followed by strengthened community presence (19%).

Time and financial constraints (together 28%) were identified as top barriers to engaging with or supporting other local businesses. Cross-promotional discounts or offers (19%), group purchasing power, Industry-specific collaborations and joint marketing campaigns (each at 17%) were identified as the business-to-business opportunities of most interest to respondents.

Project Information

The City of Airdrie conducted a consumer retail survey as a key component of a larger retail demand study. This project was designed to better understand the shopping habits, preferences, and needs of both residents and businesses. The purpose of the study is to gather detailed insights on what goods and services are currently in demand, where people prefer to shop, and what influences their purchasing decisions.

The findings from this survey will help identify gaps in the local retail market, highlight opportunities and support the development of a more tailored and vibrant retail environment.

Public Participation Approach

From October 7 to 25, 2024 Economic Development implemented an online survey to gather feedback to better understand how local business owners engage with other businesses in the community

A comprehensive marketing plan was developed. Social media, newsletters and portable signage were the main tools used to create awareness of the survey opportunity.

The survey was published using Involve Airdrie, the City's online public engagement portal. 23 businesses responded to the survey. Because the number of responses is limited, open-ended results are presented here without summary or key themes.

Summary of Public Participation Input

Most respondents indicated they have a storefront (52%) but this was closely followed by those who indicated they are home or online based (47%). The largest group of respondents indicated they have been operating in Airdrie for 1-5 years (35%). Businesses said they rely largely on word of mouth (30%) and social media (30%) to get the word out about their business and identified variety and selection of products (26%) and competitive pricing (39%) as the factors that are most influential in preventing customers from supporting businesses in Airdrie.

Respondents indicated they are engaging in business-to-business transactions occasionally (35%) or frequently (30%). Most often this involves retail goods and services (27%), full service restaurants (17%) or professional services (legal, accounting, etc.)(16%). In terms of annual spending within Airdrie, respondents indicated that food and beverage (55%), office supplies (37%) and fleet (38%) are well represented with in Airdrie purchases, while other items such as shipping, equipment and promotional items are largely sourced outside of Airdrie or online.

When collaborating with other businesses, the most often cited benefit was increased customer base (29%) followed by strengthened community presence (19%).

Time (14%) and financial (14%) constraints were identified as top barriers to engaging with or supporting other local businesses. Cross-promotional discounts or offers (19%), group purchasing power (17%),

Industry-specific collaborations (17%) and joint marketing campaigns (17%) were identified as the business-to-business opportunities of most interest to respondents.

What we heard?

The following sections provide summaries of responses to each survey question organized by category of question.

What we heard?.....4

BUSINESS OVERVIEW.....5

CURRENT BUSINESS TO BUSINESS (B2B) PREFERENCES.....9

BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO B2B COLLABORATIONS..... 12

Notes:

Numbers of responses to individual questions in the survey are reported as n=x included in brackets at the end of the question wording, for example, “Q1 Where is your business located in Airdrie? (n=23)”

Where a question asks participants to choose multiple responses, for example ‘select all that apply’ or ‘select the top three,’ the total number of question responses will be larger than the number of survey responses. This will be shown in brackets at the end of the question wording as (n=23, 54). Where the first number is the number of individual responders, and the number after the comma is the total responses received to the question.

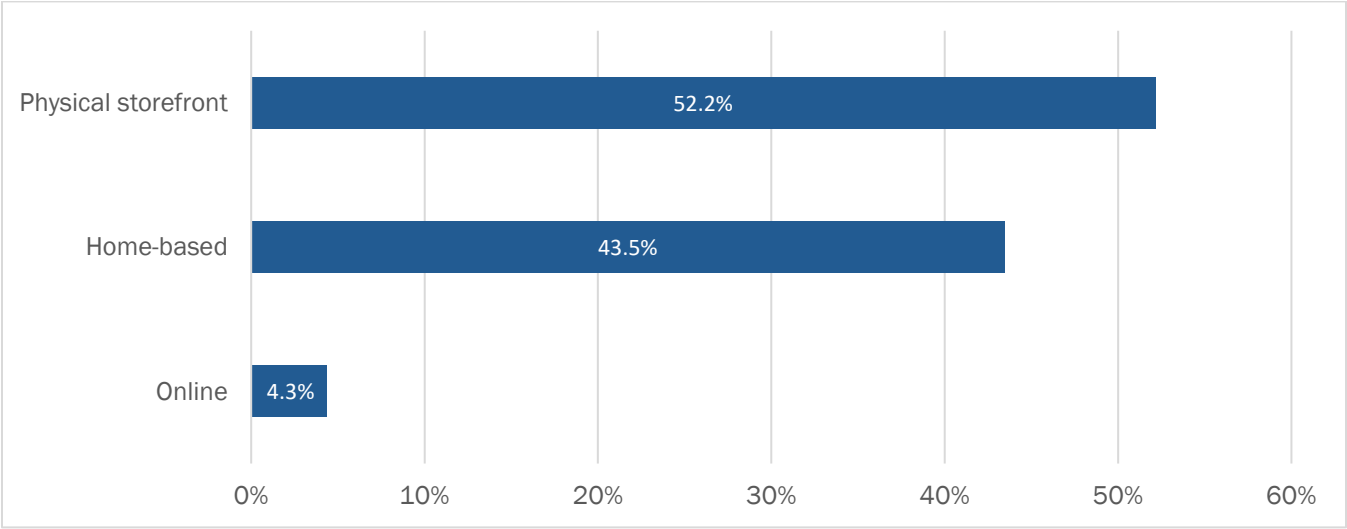
BUSINESS OVERVIEW

Q1 Where is your business located in Airdrie? (n=23)

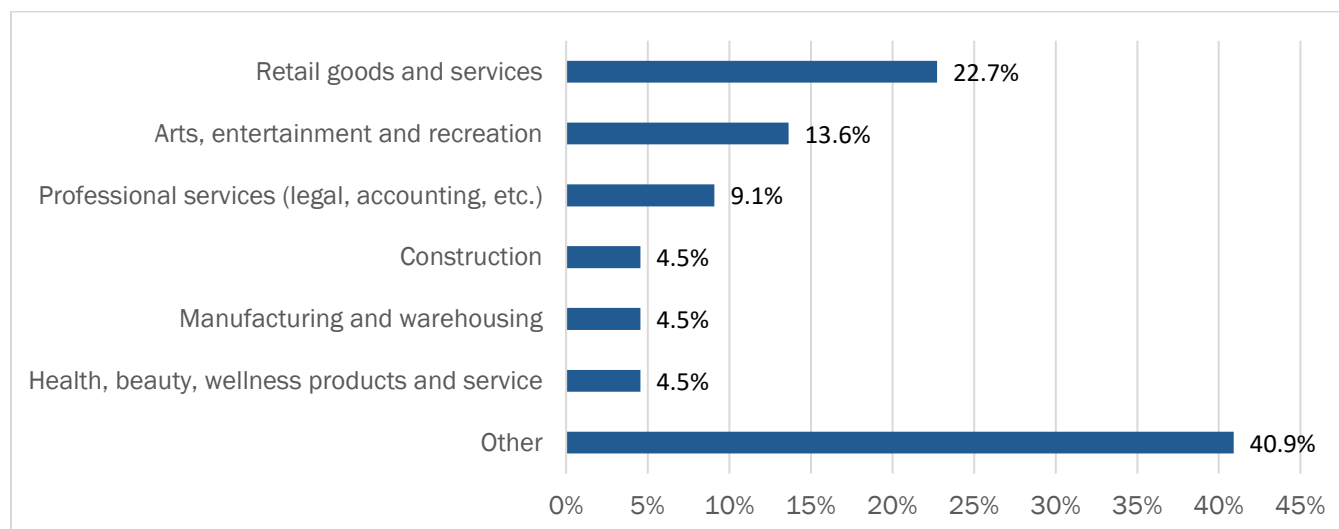


Northwest	17%
Northeast	17%
Central	26%
Southwest	13%
Southeast	26%

Q2 Where does your business operate? (n=23)



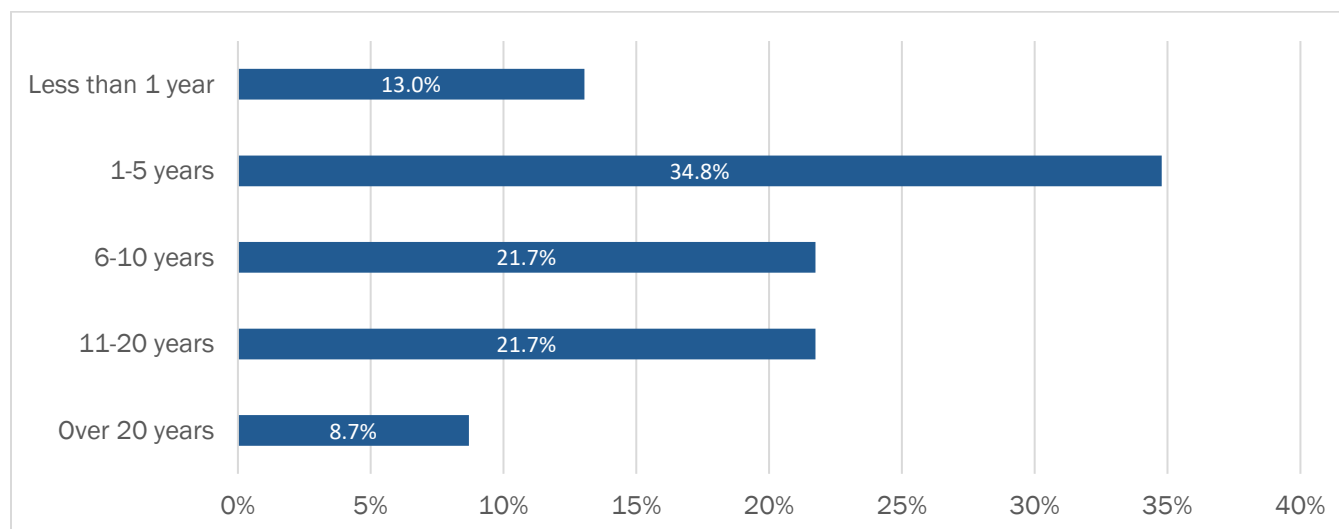
Q3 What type of business do you operate? (n=23)



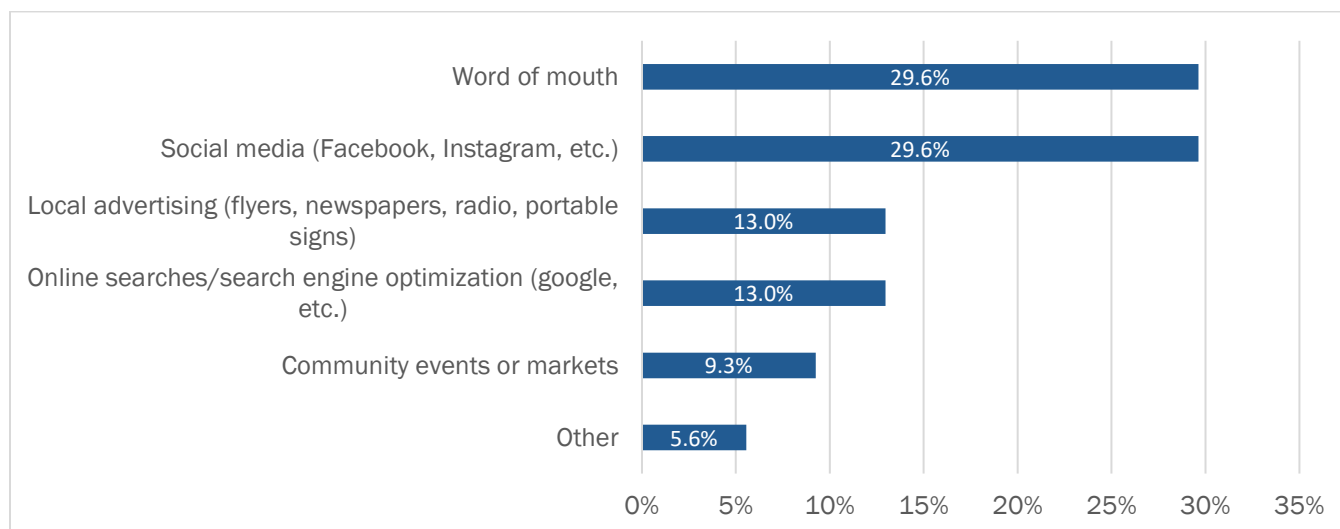
Q3 "Other" responses

Response	Number of mentions	Response	Number of mentions
Custom orders, food based	1	Vehicle services	1
Commercial kitchen	1	Bakery and bookkeeping	1
Courier	1	Software & technology	1

Q4 How long has your business been operating in Airdrie? (n=23)



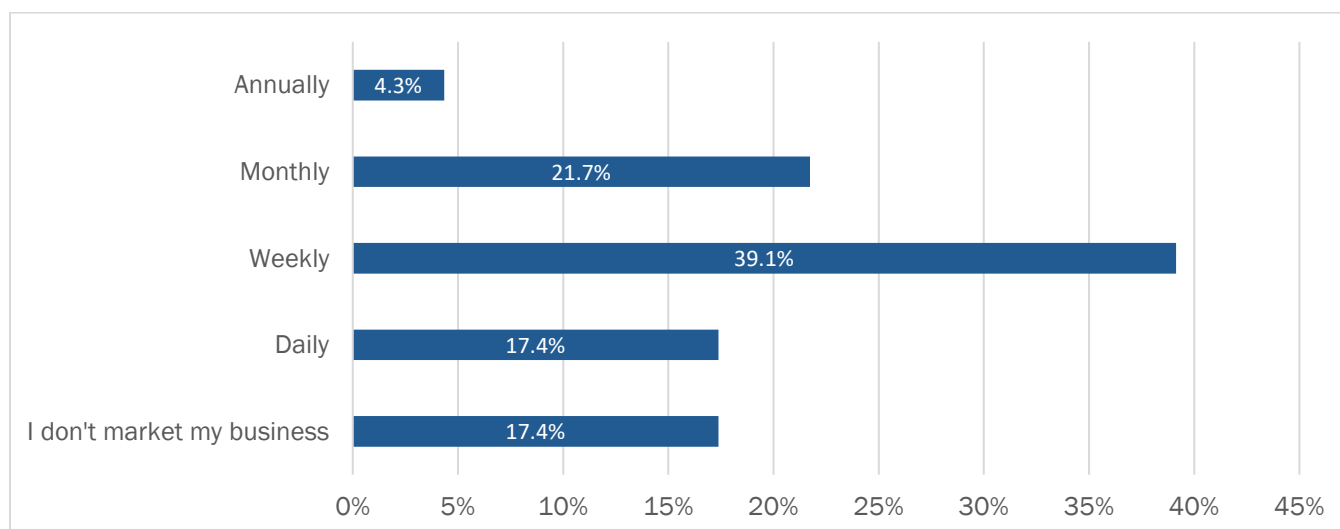
Q5 How do you typically market your business to customers in Airdrie? Select all that apply. (n=23, 54)



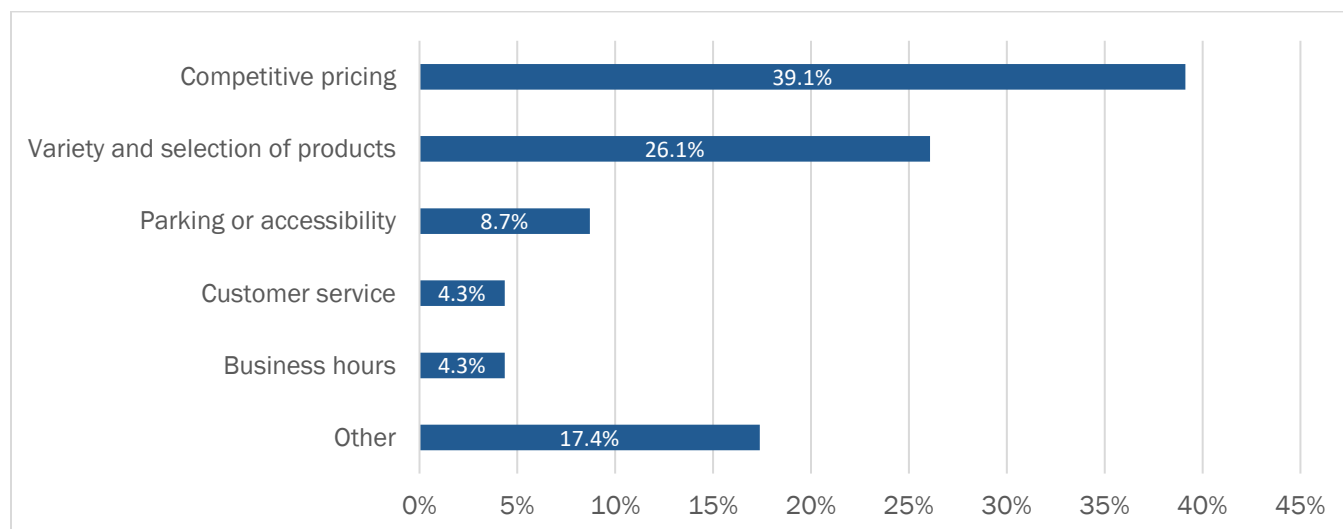
Q5 "Other" responses

Response	Number of mentions	Response	Number of mentions
Referral-based healthcare	1	No customers in Airdrie	1

Q6 How frequently do you market your business to customers in Airdrie? (n=23)



Q7 What factors are most influential in preventing customers from supporting businesses in Airdrie? (n=23)

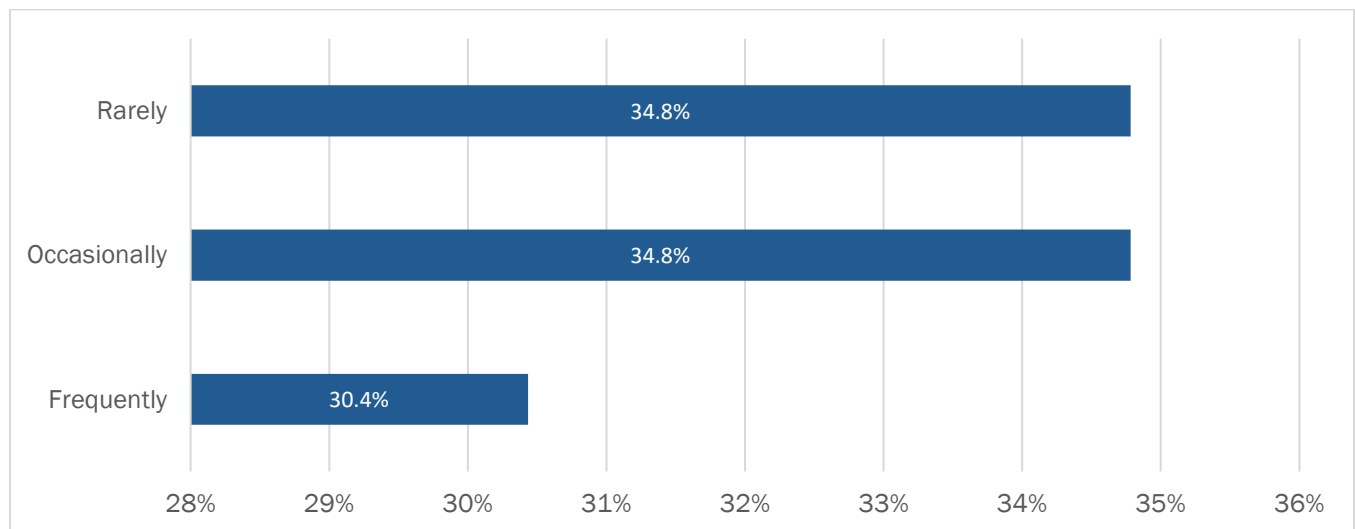


Q7 "Other" responses

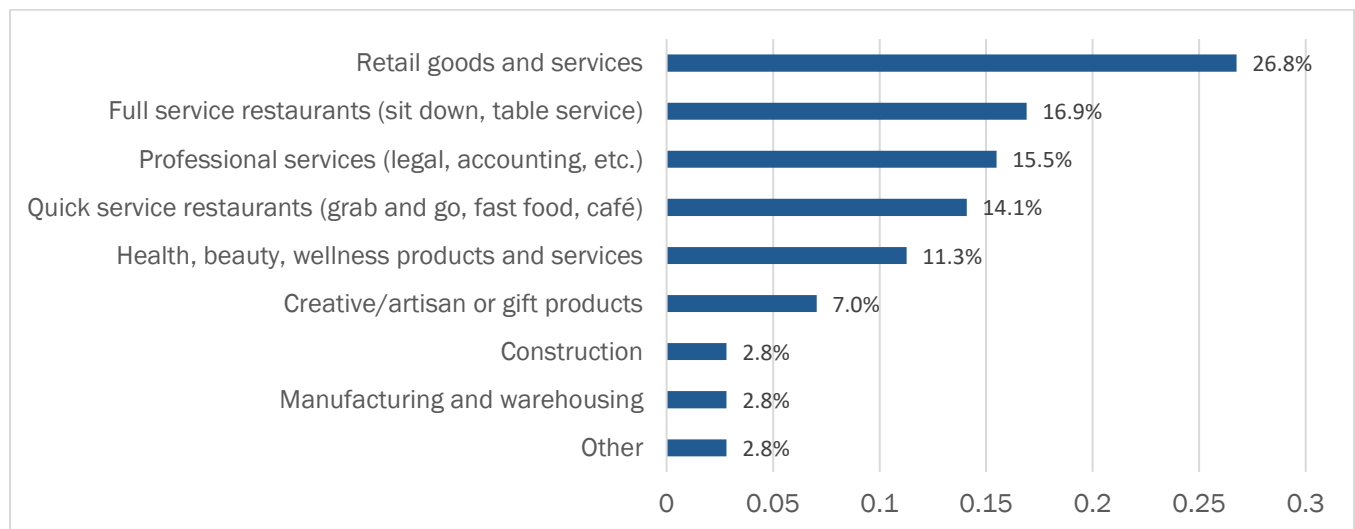
Response	Number of mentions	Response	Number of mentions
Lack of traffic management at plaza entrance	1	Consumers choosing services in home vs. at third party location	1
Lack of awareness of what businesses are in Airdrie	1		

CURRENT BUSINESS TO BUSINESS (B2B) PREFERENCES

Q8 How often do you engage in business-to-business transactions with other Airdrie businesses? (n=23)



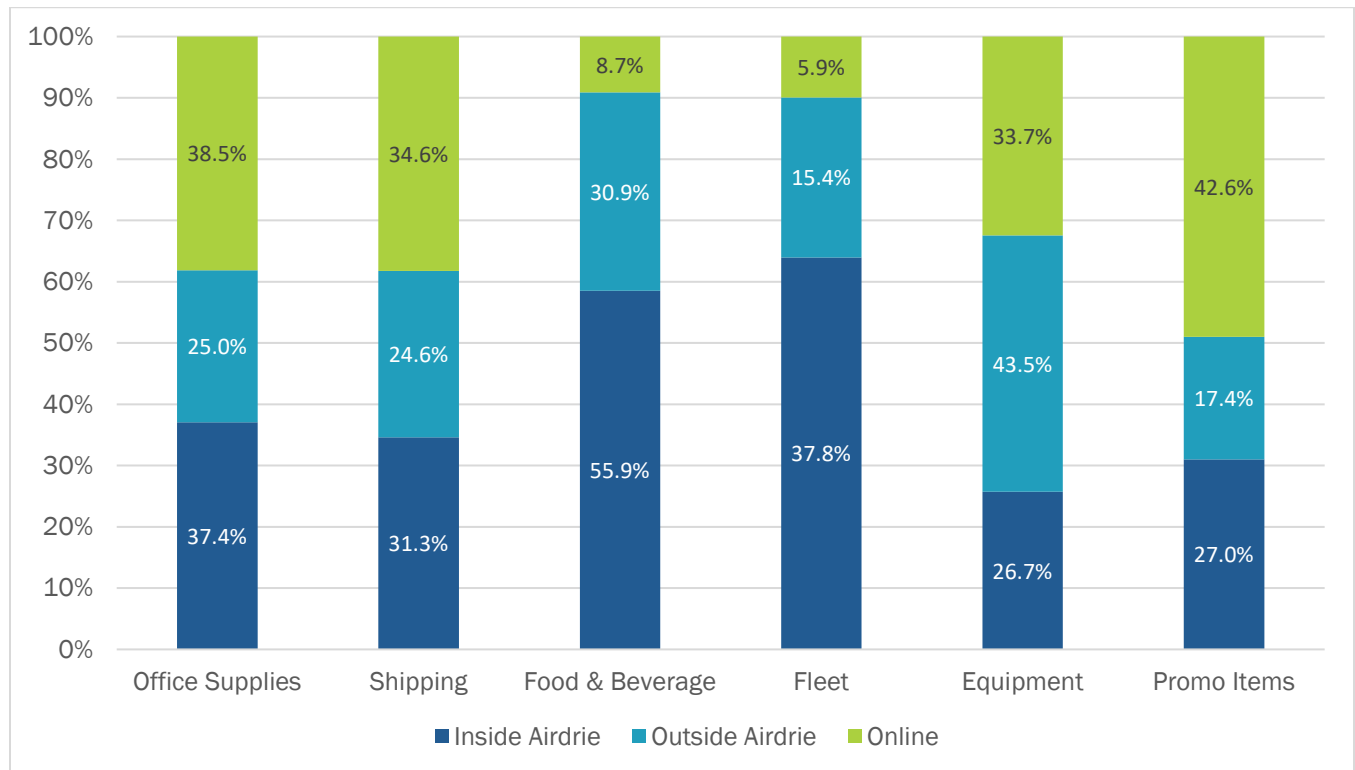
Q9 What types of local businesses do you use most frequently? Select all that apply. (n=23, 71)



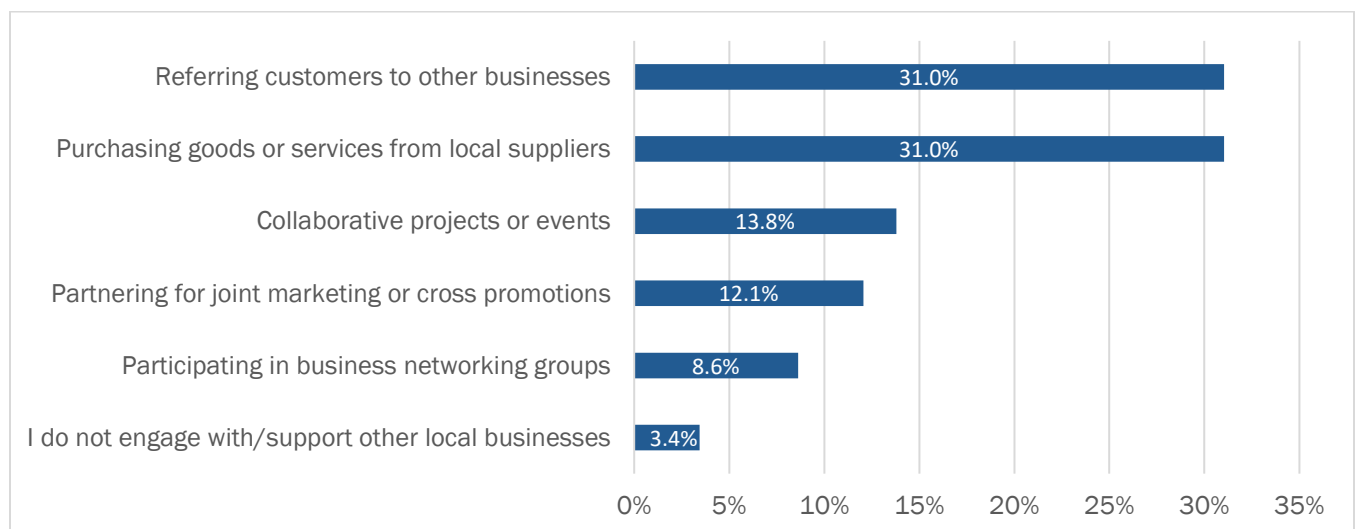
Q9 "Other" responses

Response	Number of mentions	Response	Number of mentions
Vehicle repair and maintenance	1	Home-bases entrepreneurs	1

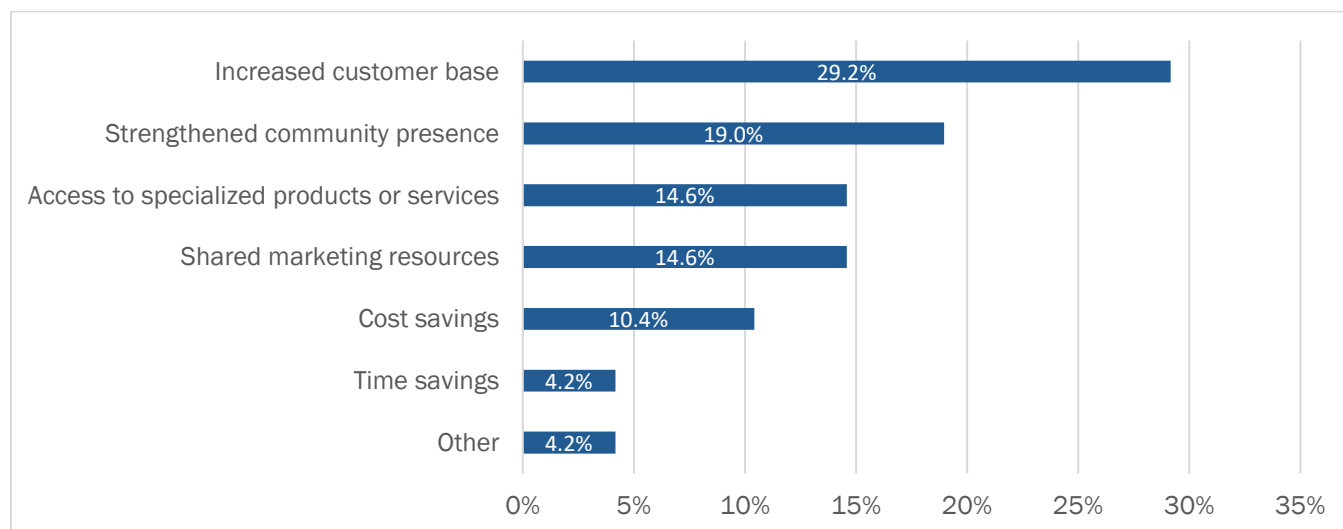
Q10 When thinking about your average annual business spending, what percentage (%) of your spending occurs inside Airdrie, outside Airdrie or online for the following categories? Please use scale to insert percentages, adding up to no more than 100% per category. (n=23)



Q11 In what ways do you engage with/support other local businesses in Airdrie? Select all that apply. (n=23,58)



Q12 If you collaborate with other businesses, what is the main benefit you see? Select all that apply. (n=23, 48)

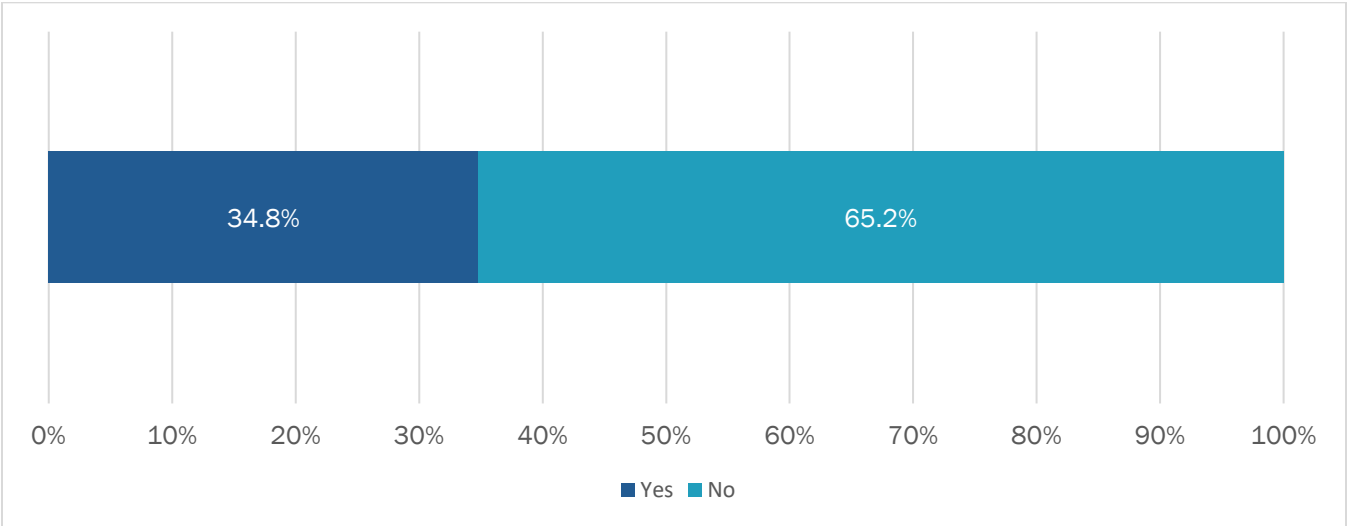


Q12 "Other" response

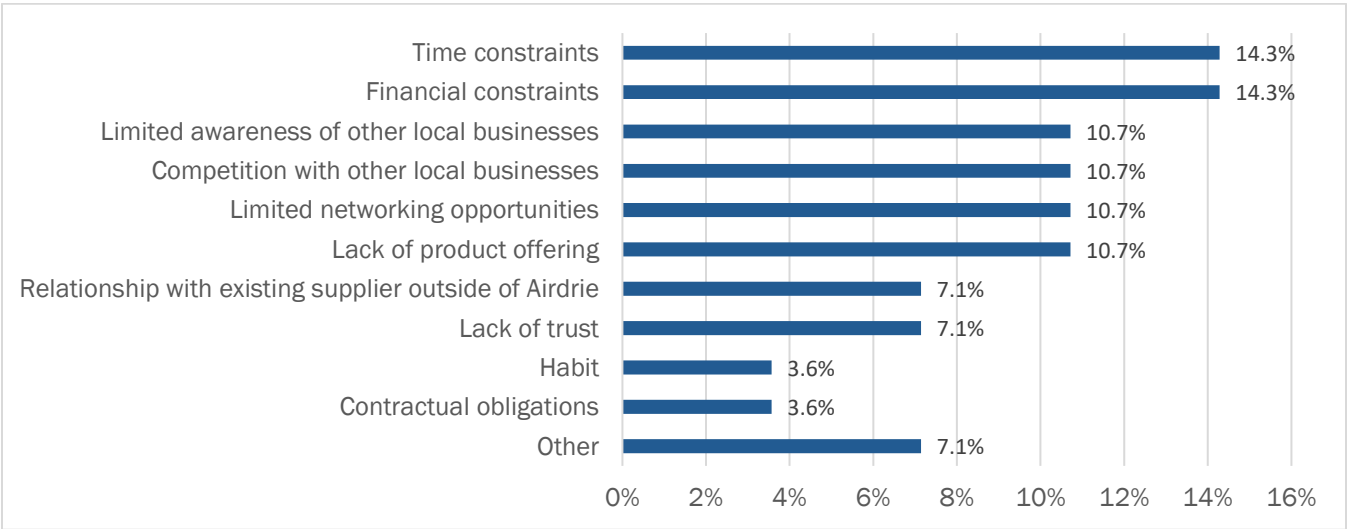
Response	Number of mentions		
Supporting other small businesses	1		

BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES TO B2B COLLABORATIONS

Q13 Do you face any challenges in engaging with or supporting other local businesses? (n=23)



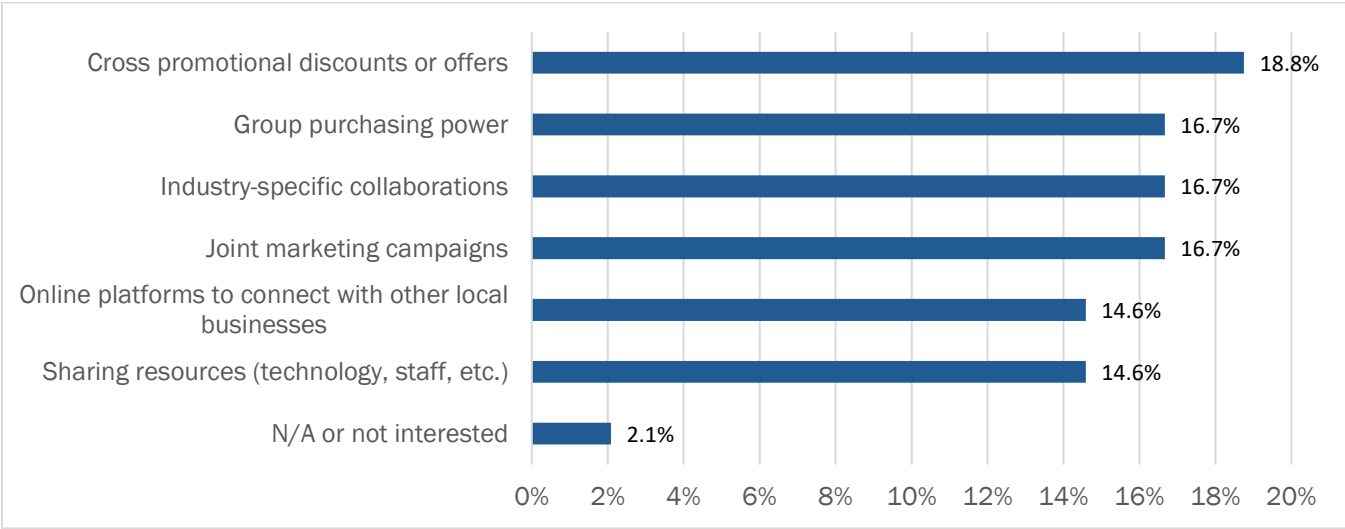
Q14 What are the main challenges you encounter? Select all that apply. (n=8,28)



Q12 "Other" response

Response	Number of mentions	Response	Number of mentions
Finding spaces/businesses where I can host pop ups	1	Too many road blockages	1
		high-cost insurances	

Q15 What types of B2B opportunities would most interest you? Select all that apply. (n=23,48)



Q16 Please provide any additional comments or suggestions you have? (n=6)

Having more informal meet ups available for small businesses, as some paid memberships are cost prohibitive if you are struggling to keep your business on track with constant pricing increases in Airdrie. Retail space to rent in Airdrie is not affordable.

Traffic management into/out of retail plazas needs attention.

Home music teachers and music schools need a way to mix and support each other.

Permitting, licencing and renewals, and insurances requirements in Airdrie are burdensome to businesses. Airdrie needs to help businesses to grow.

What's Next & Timelines

The findings from this survey will be used over time to help identify gaps in the local retail market and to identify opportunities to support the development of a more tailored and vibrant retail market in Airdrie.

Contact Information

For more information about this project, please contact:

Economic Development

Phone: (403) 948-8844

Email: economic.development@airdrie.ca