



# GoDaddy Venture Forward 2024 Annual Report

UK Edition

This report is powered by the latest data from Venture Forward, GoDaddy's research initiative to quantify the presence and impact of over 20 million global online microbusinesses on their local economies, while shining a light on the entrepreneurs behind them.

# Introduction

In this Venture Forward Fall 2024 Report, you'll find:



Latest quarterly data on microbusiness growth, annual e-commerce trends, and updated economic outcomes.



2024 UK survey results with insights on income, resiliency, GenAI use, and economic/hiring outlooks.



New economic research on job creation linked to microbusiness density in the UK.



A glimpse at 2024 press highlights and resources available.



# A Message From GoDaddy Chief Strategy & Legal Officer Jared Sine



We love to celebrate entrepreneurship, and this report highlights GoDaddy's deep connection with small and microbusiness owners. We're there from the start of their journey, supporting millions of entrepreneurs from the moment they launch their business idea.

This year, GoDaddy's microbusiness research initiative, Venture Forward, expanded to four countries, to provide exclusive data on the presence, contributions and mindset of entrepreneurs across the U.S., U.K., Australia and Canada. Our goal is to widely share our insights so others can join GoDaddy in supporting and advocating for entrepreneurs.

In this 2024 edition of our annual Venture Forward report, you'll find insights on where and how these business owners are starting and growing their ventures, as well as who they are - from motivations and goals to challenges and demographics.

One thing is clear: these entrepreneurs are resourceful. Running small businesses with typically fewer than 10 employees means they must embrace new opportunities and tools, such as Generative AI to grow and compete.

They are also resilient. They bet on themselves in all economic conditions, contributing to their local economies, creating jobs and supporting households with their ambition and drive.

We share their optimism, especially as our data reveals their outsized impact on communities and job creation. By uncovering and publicizing data about entrepreneurs, it is our hope other stakeholders will leverage this research to help - as GoDaddy's mission states - make opportunity more inclusive for all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized initials 'JS' followed by a long horizontal stroke that tapers to the right.

# Table of Contents

<b>01   A Snapshot of Microbusinesses</b>	<b>6</b>
Behind GoDaddy Venture Forward	7
Updated Economic Impact of Microbusinesses	8
Regional Maps and Growth	9
E-commerce Trends by Industry	13
<b>02   2024 National Microbusiness Survey Results</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>03   Macroeconomic Research</b>	<b>22</b>
Frontier Economics Research: Annual Update	23
<b>04   Press and Resources</b>	<b>26</b>



01 | LATEST NUMBERS

# A Snapshot of Microbusinesses

A deep dive into the latest data of online microbusinesses, their outsized impact, and their growth across regions and industries.

01

Venture Forward quantifies the presence and impact of over 20 million online microbusinesses on their local economies, providing a unique view into the attitudes, demographics, and needs of the entrepreneurs who create and operate them.

GoDaddy knows that to truly advocate and empower entrepreneurs, you first have to really understand them. In 2018, we began analyzing millions of microbusinesses, which we defined as an entity with a discrete domain name and an active website, and the majority of whom have fewer than 10 employees. We measured their effect on household incomes and unemployment, together with renowned academics at the University of Iowa and University of Arizona, and established they had an outsized impact on these and other economic health indicators.

In 2019, we began surveying the entrepreneurs who own these ventures, nationally and across cities, at least once a year, to better understand their mindsets and circumstances.

In 2020, we built a proprietary Microbusiness Activity Index and established causality with economists at the UCLA Anderson Forecast. We also created a [data hub](#) to update and share our data publicly so those advocating for and studying entrepreneurs could access more information, including measurements of microbusiness density by geography, down to the ZIP code. We update this data on a quarterly basis.

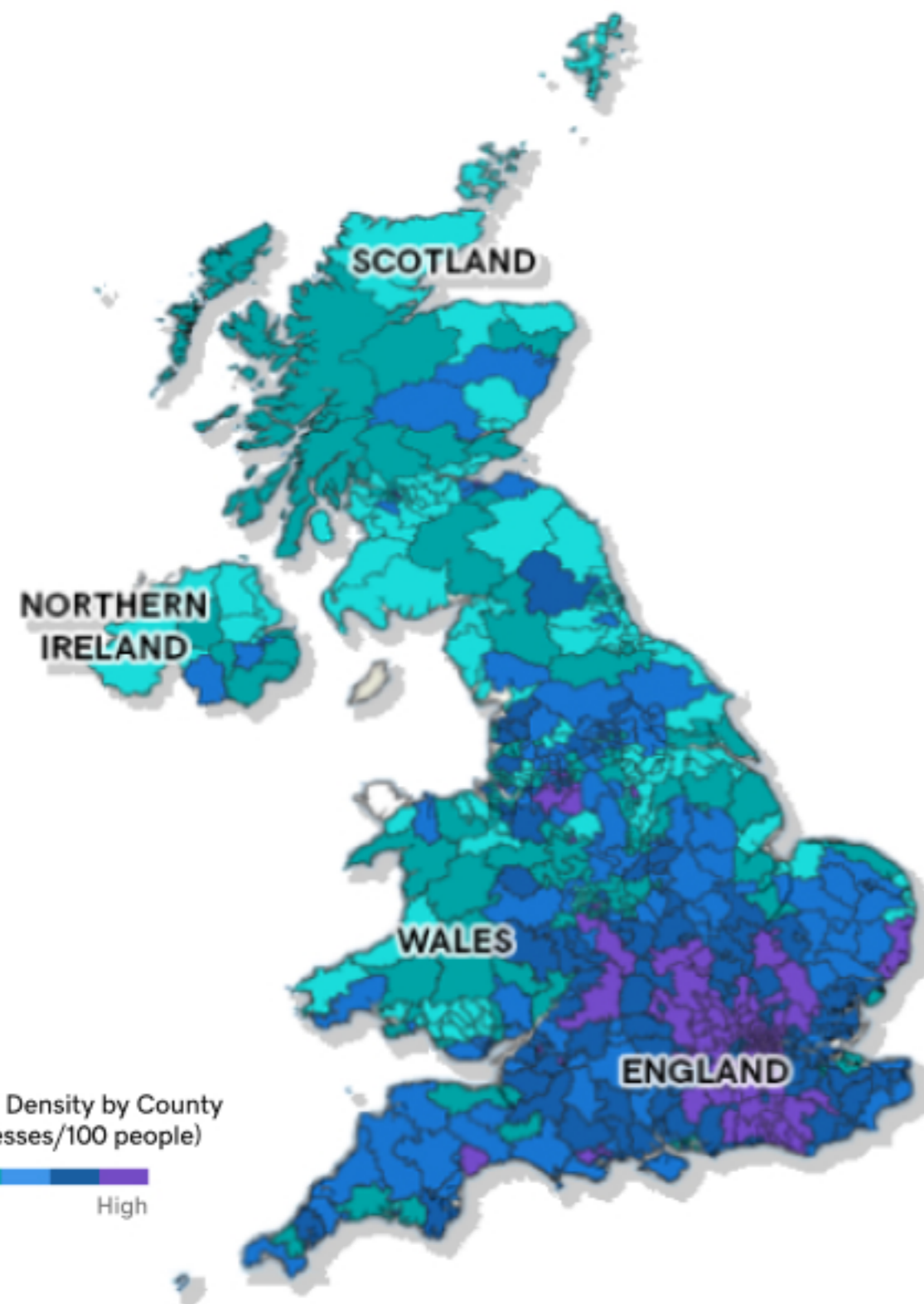
In 2021, we expanded our research to the United Kingdom, and this year, in 2024, we added Australia and Canada to our regularly updated data sets including regional and survey insights.

For more details on our research methodology and other findings, please read [About Us](#) on the Venture Forward website.

**"The UK witnessed a surge in small digital businesses making more than £100,000 last year despite continued economic pressures, according to GoDaddy's Venture Forward."**

— The Independent  
February 2024

# Microbusinesses demonstrate major growth in numbers



Source: GoDaddy Venture Forward 2024

## Top 20 Constituencies By Microbusiness Growth

Parliamentary Constituency	2024 Microbusiness Count % Growth	Active Microbusinesses July/Aug '24	Microbusiness Density July/Aug '24
Stoke-on-Trent Central	57%	1,623	2.0
Sittingbourne and Sheppey	27%	2,108	1.9
Croydon Central	24%	2,955	2.6
Bootle	20%	913	0.9
East Renfrewshire	19%	1,574	1.7
Leeds West	16%	1,165	1.3
St Albans	15%	9,145	9.4
Croydon South	14%	3,195	2.8
Coatbridge, Chryston and Bellshill	14%	766	0.8
Glasgow East	12%	715	0.8
Feltham and Heston	12%	1,913	1.5
Ealing Central and Acton	12%	4,179	3.5
Cities of London and Westminster	12%	26,863	24.4
Warley	12%	1,086	1.2
Rochdale	11%	1,253	1.2
Staffordshire Moorlands	11%	877	1.1
Watford	11%	2,722	2.4
Barking	11%	1,945	1.6
Bolsover	11%	793	0.8
Lanark and Hamilton East	11%	892	0.9

# Microbusinesses have major impact



# £320

A 10% year-on-year increase in microbusiness density leads to an annual £320 increase in median annual pay for full-time workers.



# ~5

Each additional digital microbusiness per resident is associated with an average increase of approximately 5 jobs per resident.

Source: Frontier Economics analysis of GoDaddy proprietary dataset and UK public data



# Which industries saw the greatest change in the number of online orders?

## Year-Over-Year Average Revenue Change by Industry (Aug 2023 - Aug 2024)

### Top 5 Industries (by % Gain)

Industry	Y/Y Change
Marketing	577%
Outdoors	341%
Photography	261%
Home Decor	254%
Transportation	213%

### Bottom 5 Industries (by % Loss)

Industry	Y/Y Change
Pets	-97%
Sports	-97%
Public Spaces	-94%
Industrial	-86%
Retail	-85%

## Industry Glossary as Self-Reported by Website Owner



### Pets

Pet stores and supplies, related animal sites



### Sports

Teams, venues, news, and other sports sites



### Public Spaces

Parks, aquariums, art museums



### Industrial

manufacturing, processing, other types of physical production



### Retail

Online retailers



### Transportation

Commercial trucking, boating supplies and shipping



### Home Decor

Interior designers and decorators, retailers of home products



### Photography

Photographers, their portfolios, and photography equipment



### Outdoors

Camping, campgrounds, suppliers



### Marketing

Marketing companies, lead generators, marketing consultants

# Which industries saw the greatest change in online revenue growth?

## Year-Over-Year Average Revenue Change by Industry (Aug 2023 - Aug 2024)

### Top 5 Industries (by % Gain)

Industry	Y/Y Change
Software/IT	344%
Restaurant	278%
Home Decor	273%
Photography	199%
Personal	129%

### Bottom 5 Industries (by % Loss)

Industry	Y/Y Change
Public Spaces	-99%
Retail	-96%
Pets	-96%
Sports	-95%
Professional Services	-91%

## Industry Glossary as Self-Reported by Website Owner



### Public Spaces

Parks, aquariums, art museums



### Retail

Online retailers



### Pets

Pet stores and supplies, related animal sites



### Sports

Teams, venues, news, and other sports sites



### Professional Services

Technical assistance, consultants, grant writing



### Personal Services

Services for individuals



### Photography

Photographers, their portfolios, and photography equipment



### Home Decor

Interior designers and decorators, retailers of home products



### Restaurant

restaurants, suppliers



### Software/IT

Software companies, cybersecurity firms, cloud computing

03 | LATEST FINDINGS

# 2024 National Microbusiness Survey Results

From serial entrepreneurship and resiliency to Gen AI use and closing equity gaps, microbusiness owners tell us who they are and what they care about.

# Venture Forward Survey Research Since 2019

4

**Countries**

(AU, CA, UK, US)

20+

**Cities**

50,000+

**Customers**

5

**Years of Research**

# UK microbusinesses at-a-glance

Microbusinesses  
are **small**.



24% are solo entrepreneurs  
76% have employees.

Microbusinesses generate income.



**36%** of respondents in the UK turned their supplemental income into their main source of income.

About **1 in 3** currently own more than one business.



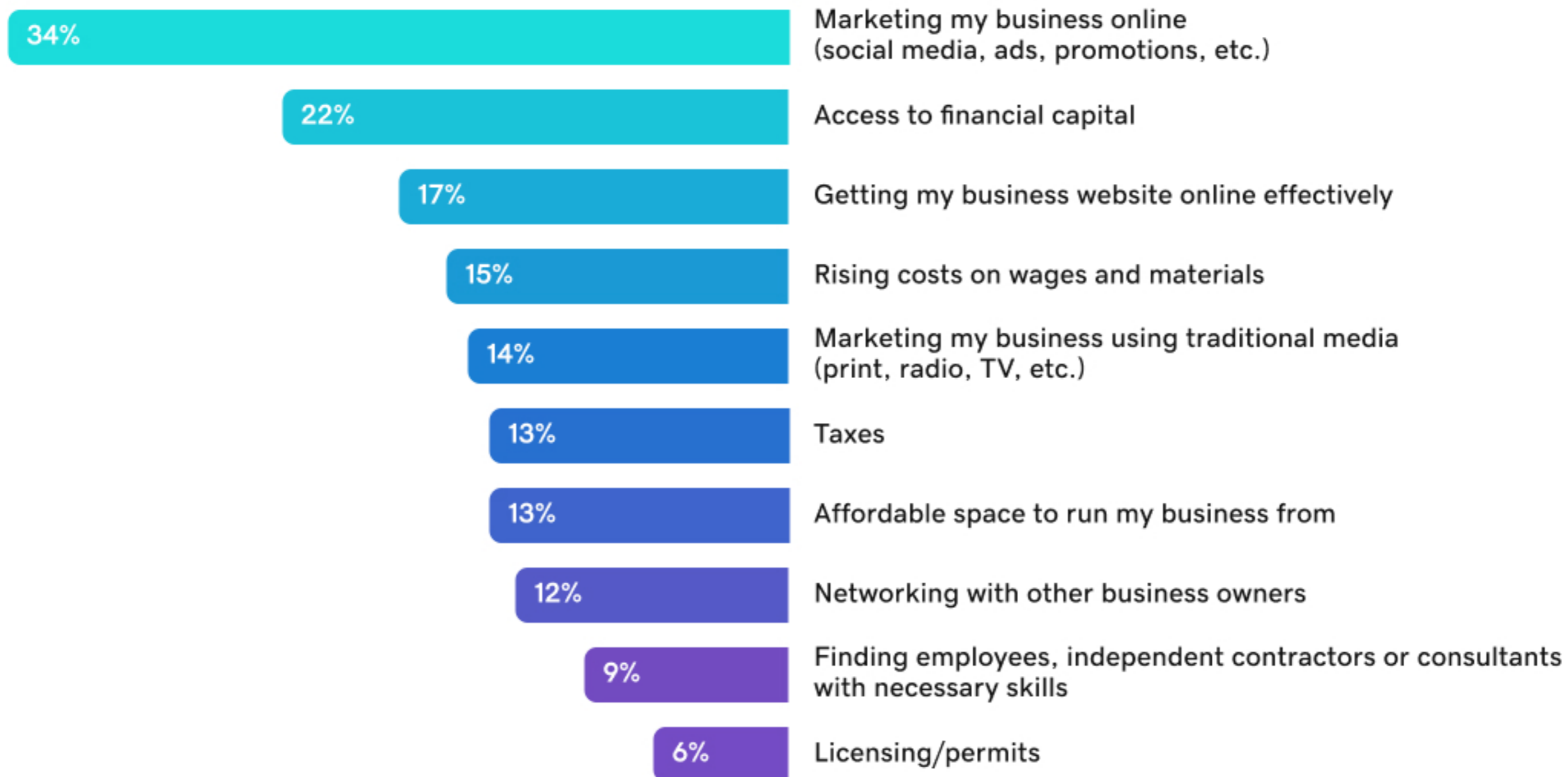
Microbusinesses can  
**support a household**.



Also known as “breadwinners”

# Marketing and capital continue to rank as top challenges for new businesses

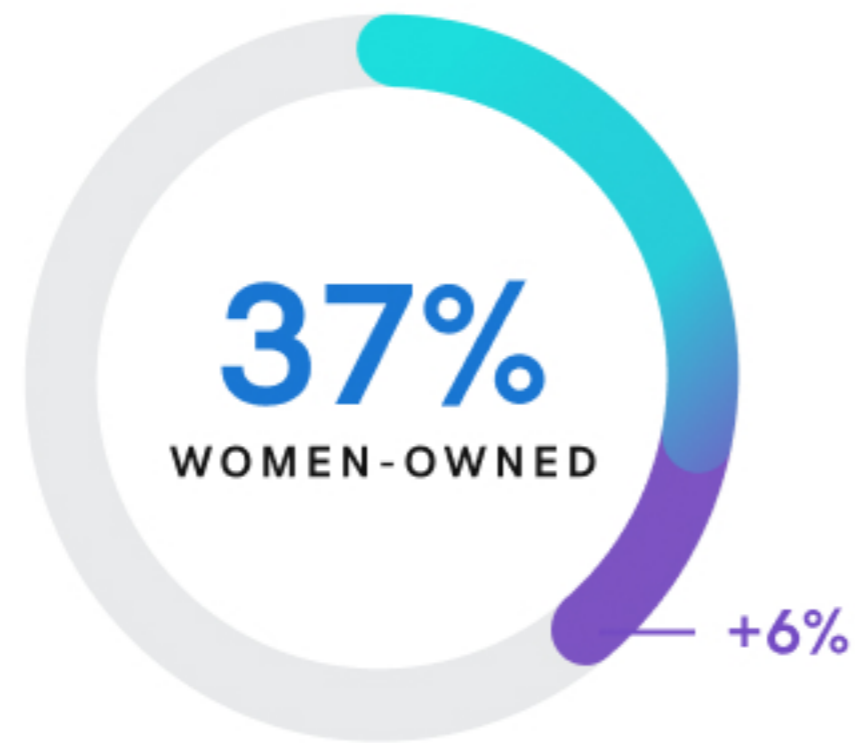
## Top challenges when first starting a business:



Source: GoDaddy Venture Forward U.K. National Survey, May 2024 (N = 2,153)

# Digital entrepreneurship challenges traditional perceptions of business owners

Microbusinesses are closing the gender gap.



DEC 2021  
31%



MAY 2024  
37%

About 29% of women with a microbusiness are the breadwinners in their home.



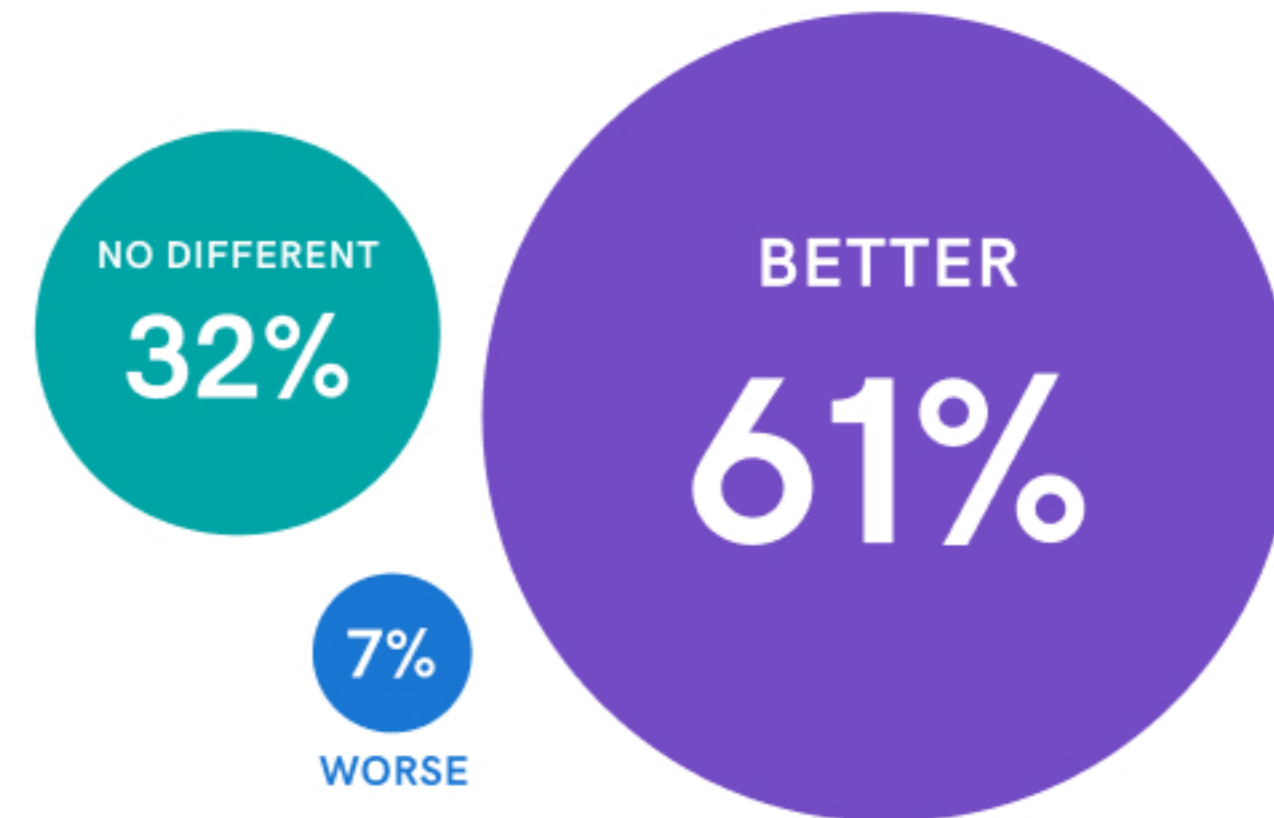
Breadwinners contribute 51% or more of their household income

# Motivations may vary, but microbusiness owners are committed

## “Why did you start your business?”



## Microbusiness owners agree: Life is better as an entrepreneur.



Source: GoDaddy Venture Forward U.K. National Survey, May 2024 (N= 2,153)



# Serial entrepreneurs demonstrate resiliency, and it pays off



**69%** of business owners who previously closed or sold a business without a profit persevered to create new businesses.

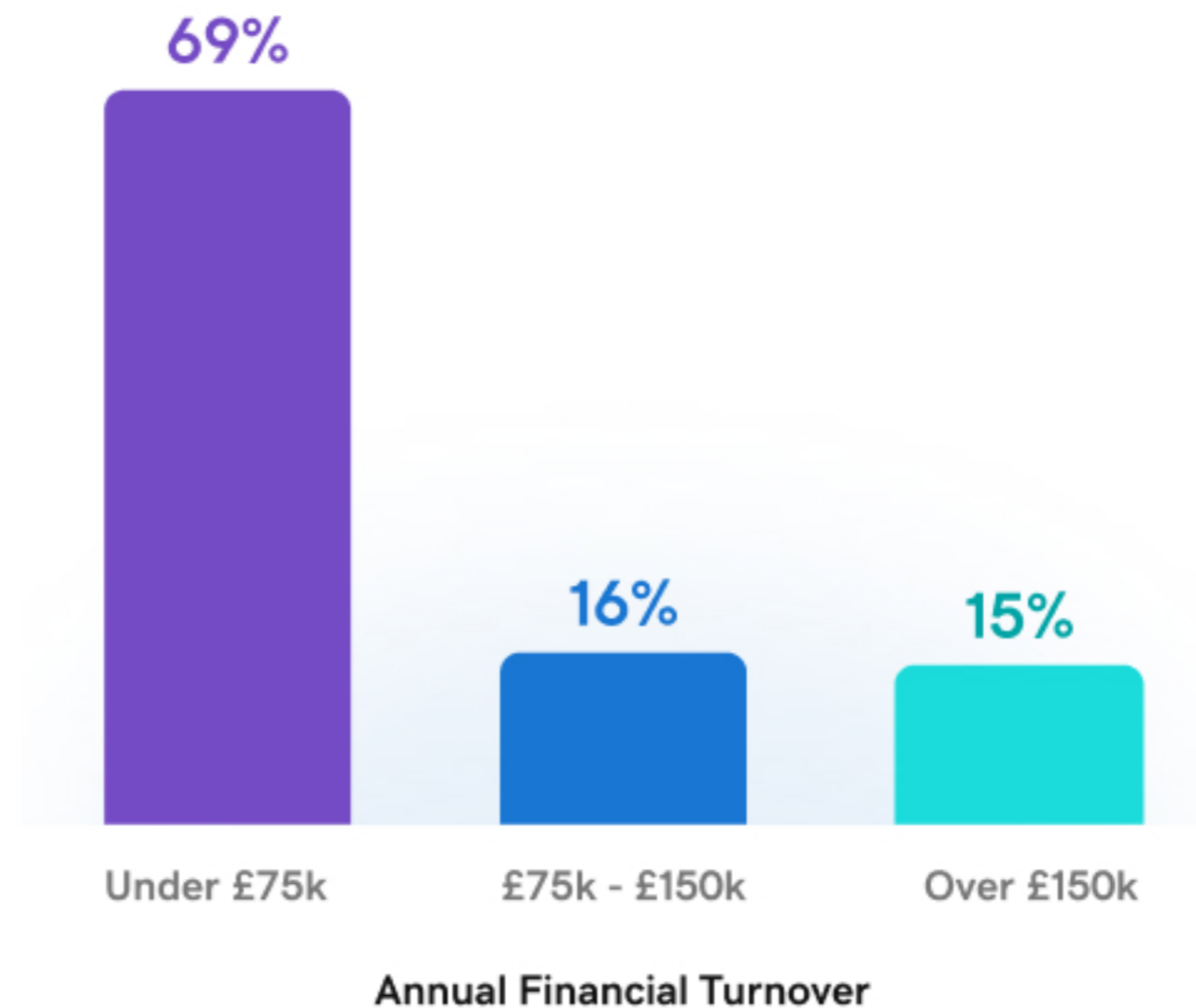
Nearly **1 out of 3** current business owners who previously didn't sell at a profit are now the breadwinners of their households with their latest venture.



● Household contribution is 50% or less

● Household contribution is 51% or more

About **1 in 6 entrepreneurs** who previously sold without profit shows make over £150k annually.



# Economic resiliency: entrepreneurs are betting on themselves and creating jobs for others

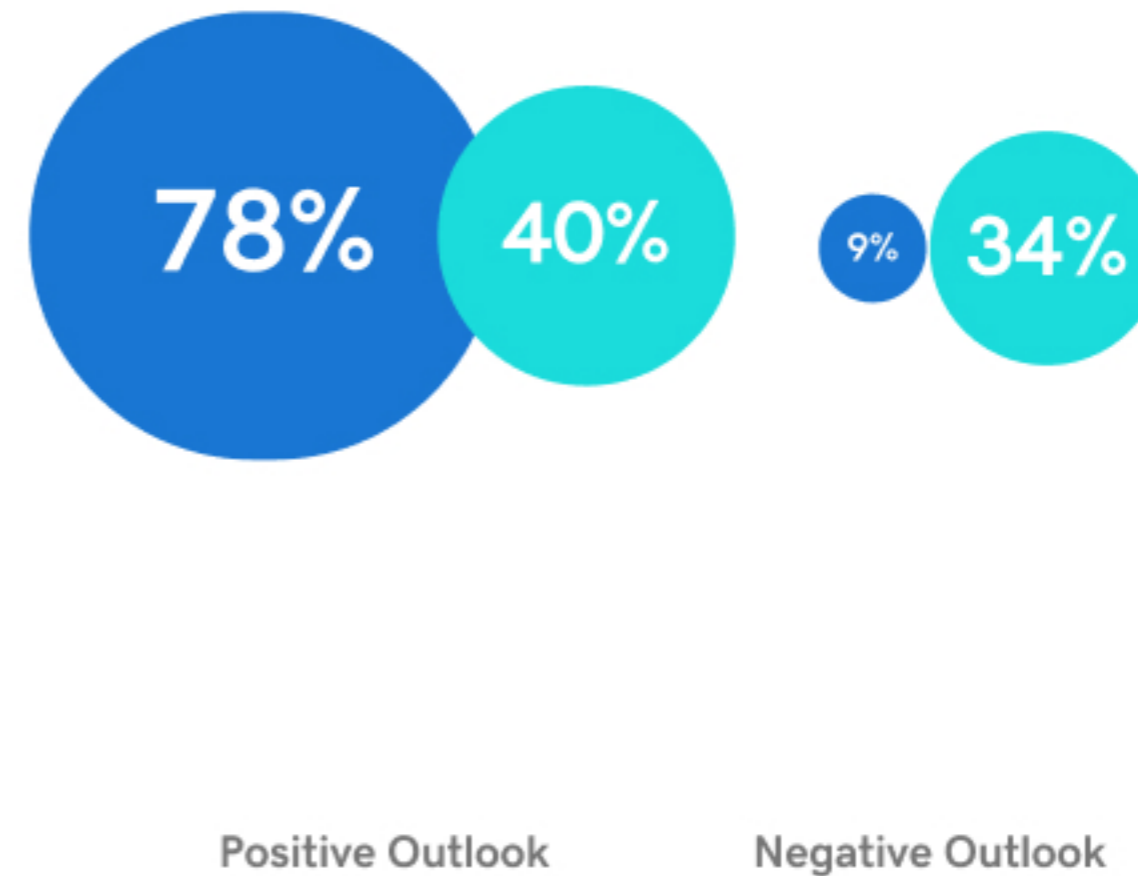
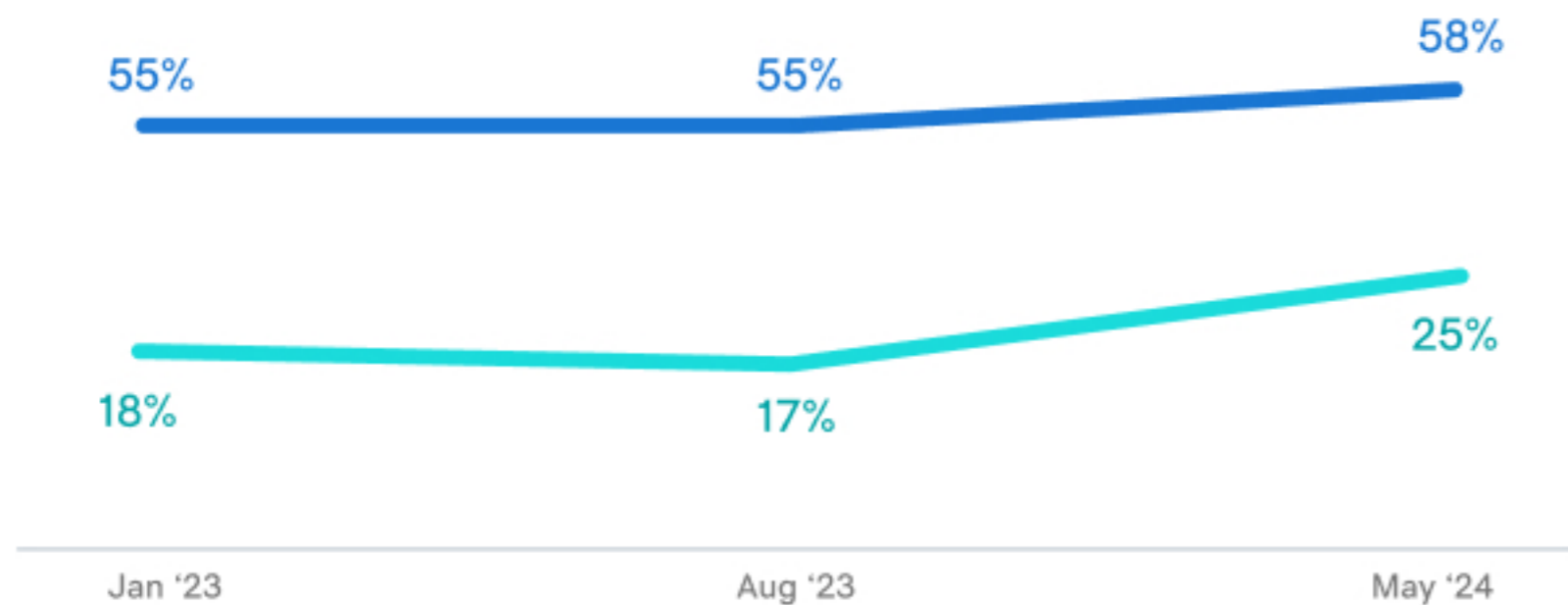


Over 1 in 6 of business owners with a negative outlook on the national economy still plan to hire employees in the next 12 months.

People who plan to hire in the next 12 months are driven by their business outlook not their economic outlook.

● Business ● Economy

Positive outlook for my **business** vs. the **economy**.



# Generative AI and microbusinesses



**45%**

agree that GenAI will help them compete with larger businesses.

**61%**

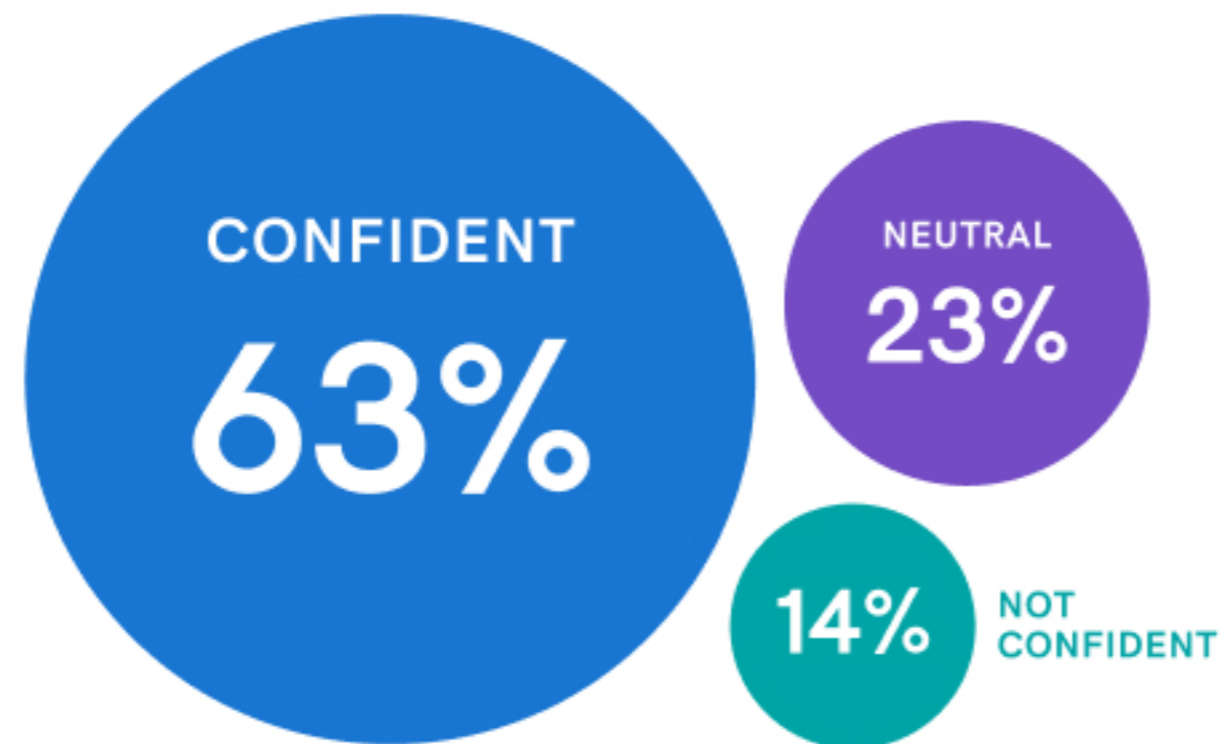
tried GenAI tools in the past few months.

**28%**

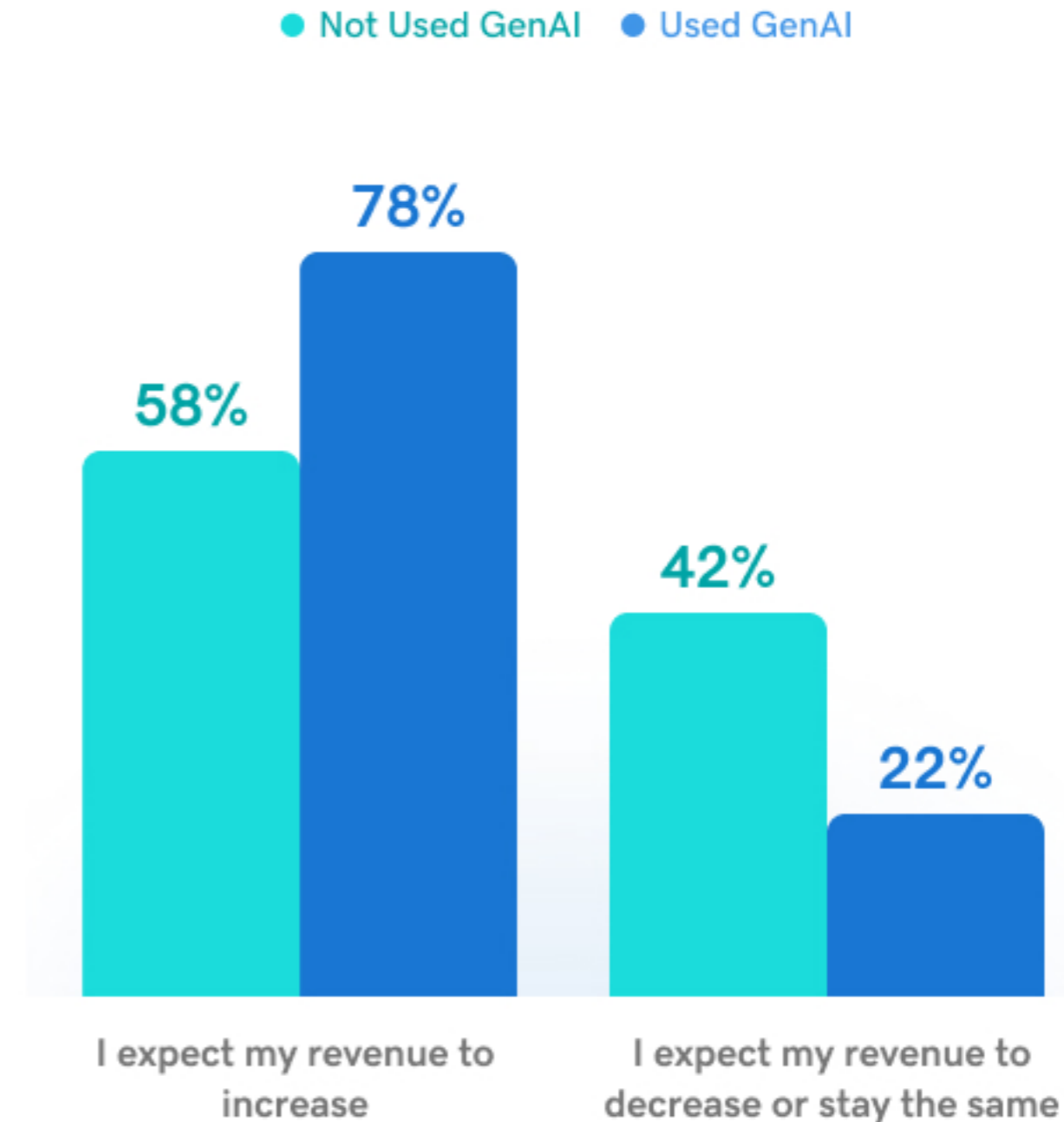
tried GenAI for their business specifically.

# GenAI use is connected with confidence and higher expectations for financial turnover

How confident are you as a user of GenAI for your business?



How do you expect your financial turnover to change in 2024?

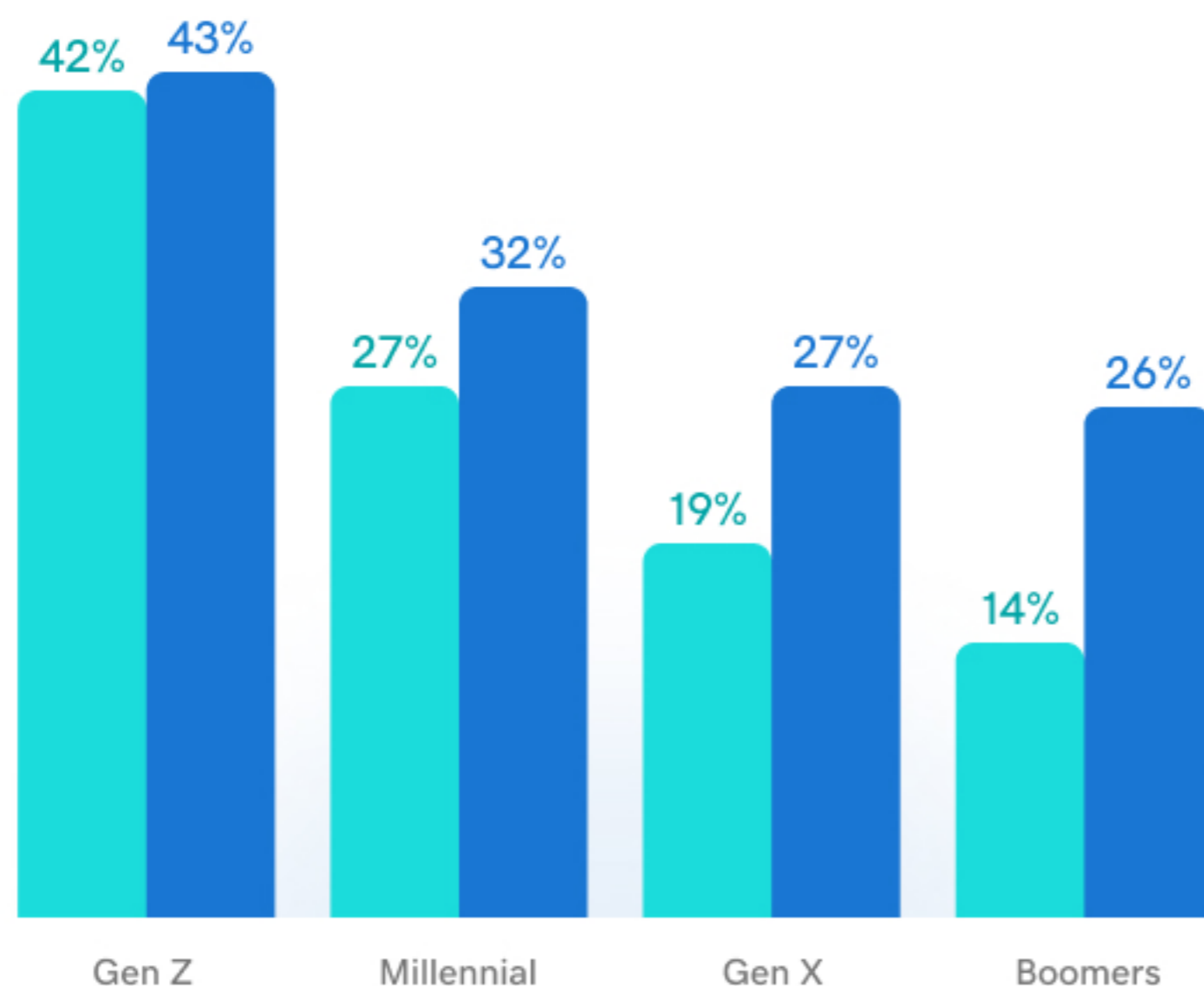


Microbusiness owners who expect their financial turnover to **increase** are more likely to have used GenAI for their business.

# Who is and isn't using GenAI?

Business owners of every age tend to use GenAI for business more than personal use.

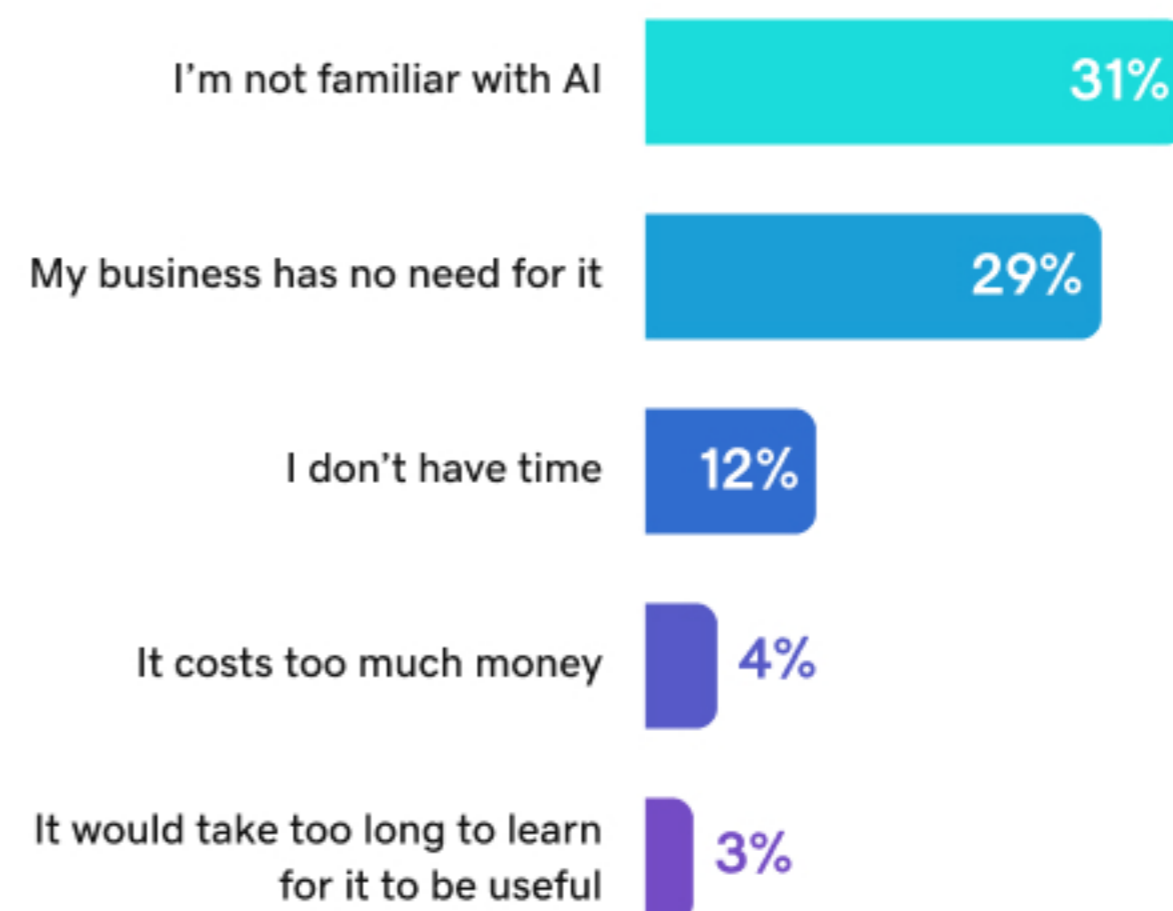
● Yes, for personal ● Yes, for my business



Born in 1997 or later Gen Z - Born 1981 - 1996 Millennials - Born 1965 - 1980 Gen X - Born 1947 - 1964 Baby Boomers

The majority of microbusiness owners who tried GenAI said they experienced a positive impact on their business. Those who haven't, however, most commonly cite the following five reasons for their hesitation:

Reasons for not having tried GenAI for my business



Source: GoDaddy Venture Forward U.K. National Survey, May 2024 (N= 2,153)

03 | NEW RESEARCH

# Macroeconomic Research

New insights from Frontier Economics on the outsized impact made by UK microbusinesses.



# Second year of an outsized impact captured in the UK



## INTRODUCTION

GoDaddy Venture Forward partnered with economics consultancy Frontier Economics on a landmark study in 2023, and this year, the team re-engaged to extend and update the outcomes.

The findings were again significant: Digital microbusinesses are associated with a higher number of jobs available for each resident.

What follows are key excerpts.

FOR THE FULL REPORT, [PLEASE DOWNLOAD HERE.](#)

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

**The microbusiness sector in the UK continues to play a pivotal role in driving both economic growth and employment.** In 2023, there were 5.3 million microbusinesses (defined as businesses employing 0-9 people, excluding the employer), representing 95% of all businesses, 32% of total employment, and 21% of turnover (excluding the financial services sector).

This study builds on the previous report by incorporating more advanced modelling techniques. While linear regression was already employed in the earlier analysis, we have now introduced panel regression and random forest analysis.

**These new methods provide fresh insights into the relationships between digital microbusiness density and key local economic and labour market outcomes.** Our findings reaffirm the strong association between digital microbusinesses and two critical indicators: (i) the number of jobs available per resident and (ii) annual pay for full-time workers.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/business-population-estimates-2022>  
<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06152/SN06152.pdf>

**“This refreshed study strengthens the evidence [that] digital microbusinesses play a significant role in fostering economic growth at the local level.”**

— Frontier Economics



# Key findings on jobs and income impact

In 2023, microbusinesses accounted for **95%** of all businesses in the UK.

## Highlights:

- Each additional digital microbusiness corresponds to approximately 5 new jobs [so] the creation of a new microbusiness may generate employment beyond its own workforce, as 79% of microbusinesses have between 0 and 4 employees, and the analysis captures the impact within the first year of the business's creation
- A higher microbusiness density is associated with a higher median annual pay...a 10% increase in microbusiness density leads to a 20% of the average increase in median annual pay for full time workers across local authorities registered between 2020 and 2022 [1].

[1] The average increase in median annual pay for full time workers across local authorities was £1,574, according to the data employed in this study. Moreover, the average median annual pay per full time worker was £33,246 in 2022.



## The Impact of Digital Microbusinesses on Local Economic Outcomes in the UK

Outcome variable	2023 Headline Findings	2024 Headline Findings
Job density	We find that each additional microbusiness per resident in 2020 is associated with an average increase of approximately 7 jobs per resident in 2021 (1% level of significance).	The random forest analysis shows that microbusiness density improves the prediction of jobs density, confirming the strong statistical association.
Job density (Excluding London and Westminster)	We find that each additional digital microbusiness per resident in 2020 is associated with an average increase of approximately 6 jobs per resident in 2021 (1% level of significance).	We find that each additional digital microbusiness per resident in 2021 is associated with an average increase of approximately 5 jobs per resident in 2022 (1% level of significance).
Median annual pay (full-time)	A 10% increase in the number of active digital microbusinesses between 2020 and 2021 is linked to an approximately £138 increase in median annual pay for full-time workers in 2021 (1% level of significance).	Using a panel regression model that controls for time-fixed effects, we find that a 10% year-on-year increase in microbusiness density leads to an annual £320 increase in median annual pay for full-time workers (1% level of significance).  The random forest analysis shows that microbusiness density improves the prediction of median annual pay for full-time workers, confirming the strong statistical association.
GDP	10 additional digital microbusinesses per 1,000 residents in 2020 is associated with an approximate increase of £37,000 in GDP for 2021 (1% significance).	Despite not finding a clear link between digital microbusinesses and GDP through regression analysis, the random forest analysis shows that microbusiness density improves the prediction of GDP, showing that microbusiness density is statistically associated to higher GDP.
GDP (Excluding London and Westminster)	10 additional digital microbusinesses per 1,000 residents in 2020 is associated with an approximate increase of £18,000 in GDP for 2021 (1% significance).	

Source: Frontier Economics analysis of GoDaddy proprietary dataset and UK public data (see Annex)

04 | CLOSING

# Press and Resources

Key coverage highlights and data resources available online.

04

# Spreading the word

We share our research to empower the people and organisations supporting entrepreneurial growth in communities, starting with economic and community stories.

Here are a few examples of Venture Forward mentioned in the UK media. More are available on the [Venture Forward](#) website.



PRESS

## How coastal towns in Britain have become micro-business hotspots

The fresh sea air and occasional sun might be the main attraction of Britain's coastal towns, but they've also become a hotspot for entrepreneurship.



PRESS

## Is London losing its crown? Here's where UK start-ups are really thriving

Regional entrepreneurship in the UK is booming, and new research has highlighted the fact that the top fastest-growing start-ups are now based outside the capital.



PRESS

## More small digital firms making £100,000-plus across the UK, data shows

Around 17% of digital microbusinesses, companies with fewer than 10 employees, now have a six-figure turnover, according to a GoDaddy report.



PRESS

## Degree of uncertainty: Are young entrepreneurs skipping higher education?

Young entrepreneurs are skipping the traditional path of higher education in favour of starting their own businesses, new research has shown.



## United Kingdom Research

A unique view into the attitudes, demographics, and needs of microbusiness entrepreneurs, as well as their presence, growth and impact since 2021.

### Data Hub

Download the data available on digital microbusinesses.

### Reports

Download economic and research reports.

### Use Cases

Customer stories, deeper dives into data and more.

### FAQ

How to use this data to advocate for microbusinesses.

View more [data downloads](#), recent [press](#), and our [research methodology](#) at [Venture Forward](#) →

# We're here to support entrepreneurs.

Contact GoDaddy Venture Forward  
at [VentureForward@GoDaddy.com](mailto:VentureForward@GoDaddy.com)

