

AUSTIN, Texas, March 15, 2016

Global Research Study Reveals Nearly Half of All Business Leaders Experiencing a Confidence Crisis When It Comes to Managing Growth

Survey Shows Perceived Pitfalls of Unplanned Growth and Underlying Anxiety in Ability to Succeed in the Face of Growth and Change

While organizations strive to achieve growth and profitability, new research reveals a significant underlying level of anxiety exists among top business leaders regarding their company's ability to succeed in the face of growth and change.

New international research from Epicor Software Corporation, a global provider of [industry-specific enterprise software](#), has unveiled the potential pitfalls of business growth, and the key concerns causing executives fear, uncertainty and doubt, when growth is unplanned -- nearly nine-in-ten (89%) organizations surveyed experienced growth that hadn't gone exactly according to plan.

The research, which was conducted by MORAR Consulting and commissioned by Epicor, questioned over 1,800 business leaders from 12 countries across the globe.¹ Of those surveyed globally, 58 percent of businesses reported growth in 2015 and nearly 70 percent expect to grow in 2016, however only 11 percent experienced growth totally in line with their plans in 2015.

The business leaders surveyed admitted they often fear the consequences of growth, citing a number of negative impacts when growth is not planned for effectively. Half (48%) said they worry that business growth puts excessive pressure on operations, damaging quality and customer satisfaction. A substantial number of businesses (42%) were also concerned that their business IT systems may prove unable to cope with managing a larger, more complex, business model. The top concern cited by CEOs was the perceived loss of customer intimacy that may come about as a result of growth.



“Although the majority of businesses intend to grow in 2016, it’s clear that there are significant concerns with regard to businesses ability to deal with growth.”

*Malcolm Fox
Vice President, Product Marketing
Epicor Software*

¹The research was conducted by MORAR Consulting and surveyed 1,824 managing directors, and heads of finance, operations and IT in businesses with 100+ staff spanning the manufacturing, distribution and service industries (and in businesses of all sizes in Retail) in Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Mexico, Singapore, Sweden, the UK, and the US. (MORAR, Growth Survey, 2015).

Growth also poses a number of concerns about resource availability as business activities scale. Forty-five percent of business leaders said that as a result of growth, they worry that their business might take on large or complex projects that they lack the skillset and technology to deliver effectively, damaging their brand reputation. They were also concerned that by growing the business, workloads may increase to a level that places too much pressure on staff, prompting key personnel to leave the organization (43%). The vast majority of survey respondents said “market expansion and global expansion” would likely contribute to their company’s growth in 2016, and just under half (45%) of business leaders polled worry they are not personally prepared for the challenges of managing a larger, more diverse business.

Confidence crisis is not unwarranted

Survey results show growth presents very poignant challenges that can threaten to undermine leaders’ abilities to navigate business strategy. Globally, significant levels of unplanned growth were more likely to be experienced by mid-sized businesses with 100-999 employees (37%), than larger enterprises with over 1,000 employees (29%). Unplanned growth can bring challenges and pitfalls which nearly three quarters of businesses agreed are of at least some concern to them. Growth was most likely to be described as painful (in as many as one in ten cases) by smaller mid-sized businesses (100-249 staff) as they make the difficult transition from small to mid-sized enterprises.

In light of this it is not surprising that business leaders across the globe found growth to be difficult as well as rewarding, suggesting businesses across the globe need to prepare for growth more effectively. Nearly half (45%) admitted that they found growth challenging in 2015.

To support business growth, and prepare for its challenges better, 79 percent of businesses believe that an effective and integrated IT infrastructure is essential. “This adoption of new technologies should position organizations to reap the benefits of newfound efficiencies and pave the way for growth,” said Malcolm Fox, vice president, product marketing, Epicor.

“Although the majority of businesses intend to grow in 2016, it’s clear that there are significant concerns with regard to businesses’ ability to deal with growth,” said Fox. “These concerns are not altogether unfounded, as our research shows even when businesses plan to grow, this growth can still surprise them; putting unexpected pressures on the organization. The proper time to prepare for growth is well in advance, as having an information framework to enable an organization to respond and keep pace in the face of growth has never been more vital.”

Learn more about how [manufacturing businesses](#) and [modern distributors](#) approach growth and achieve success in their industries.

About Epicor Software Corporation

Epicor Software Corporation drives business growth. We provide flexible, industry-specific software designed around the needs of our manufacturing, distribution, retail, and service industry customers.

More than 40 years of experience with our customers' unique business processes and operational requirements are built into every solution—in the cloud, hosted, or on premises. With this deep understanding of your industry, Epicor solutions manage complexity, increase efficiency, and free up resources so you can focus on growth. For more information, [connect with Epicor](#) or visit www.epicor.com.

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