

Business Network International (BNI®), the world's largest business networking organisation, has taken the pulse of businesses worldwide to gauge the state of the global business economy. The BNI Business Index created by BNI is conducted twice a year and more than 1000 business people from every populated continent in the world responded for latest survey. The index gauges the economic state of business worldwide based on results of retailers, service companies, and manufacturing companies all around the world. The next survey will be launched in July 2014. According to BNI Australia director Frederick Marcoux, the statistics gathered from the survey results are intended to keep small business owners, entrepreneurs, and companies, as well as the public, educated and informed as to the changing state of the global business economy and the current business trends that become apparent over time. The survey results from late last year revealed that almost 76 per cent of the respondents felt that business was better today than in 2012. That's up over 9 per cent from the 2011 survey. This compares to 67.5 per cent of Australian and New Zealand respondents to the survey. In addition, only 6.1 per cent felt that it was declining in the 2013 survey which is down from the 9.6 per cent that said that business was declining in 2011. The most promising news was the hiring trend numbers. The 2013 survey found that 55.3 per cent of the respondents said that they would be or possibly would be, hiring in the 2013 survey compared to an anemic 42.9 per cent in 2011. Of Australian and NZ respondents, 48 per cent were considering hiring in 2013. The three most common reasons cited for growth by the respondents was restructuring, niche marketing, and networking. Networking continued to be a strong business builder as represented by comments such as: "my business depends a lot on referrals and networking" and "my business is flourishing today as a result of my networking efforts both via the internet and face to face." One respondent claimed that "my business has tripled its income over the past year due largely to my committed involvement to networking". Restructuring was also a common theme relating to many respondents. Comments such as: "one of the reasons my business keeps growing is that I adapt my offerings to support the goals [of my clients]." Other respondents focused on a niche market. Such as those who said things such as: "last year I became clearer about my target market, strategic partners and taking a hard look at my numbers and what work would be necessary to grow" and "many of my competitors were bought out and closed their doors. I focused on my core business". Mr Marcoux said the statistics affirmed the importance of networking for business success. "BNI is a business referral organisation whose primary purpose is to assist its members to find and exchange qualified business referrals," Mr Marcoux said. "BNI provides its members with a professional structure and an ongoing training which enables members to network in a deliberate manner for the sole purpose of generating more business. The way we network in BNI attracts busy, no nonsense successful business people who appreciate the power of business networking." For more information about BNI Australia please visit <http://www.bni.com.au/>

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