
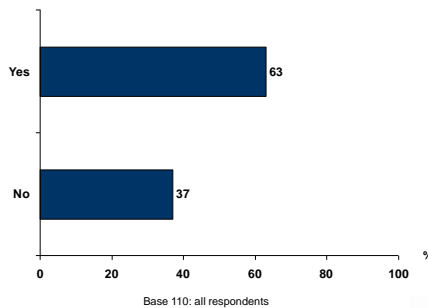



GOLDBLATT MCGUIGAN BUSINESS RESILIENCE SURVEY FOR BUSINESS TELEGRAPH

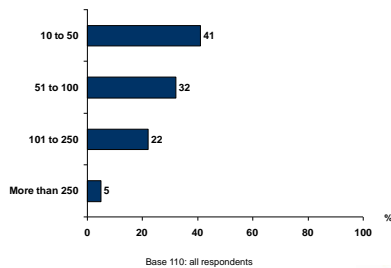
The loss of key people, the loss of computer and telecom systems and the loss of utilities (electricity, gas or water supplies) are the three biggest threats to business continuity locally. And 63% of businesses surveyed have experienced some form of disruption or crisis which had affected their operation in the last two years.


 In the last two years has your business suffered any disruptive challenges?

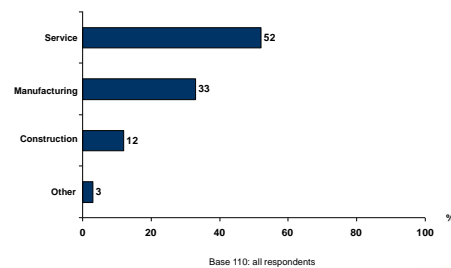


These are some of the findings of the latest Goldblatt McGuigan Business Survey, undertaken in conjunction with the Business Telegraph, and conducted in August 2008 amongst a sample of 110 local businesses representing a cross section of private sector enterprises, large and small.

 Approximately how many employees do you have in Northern Ireland?



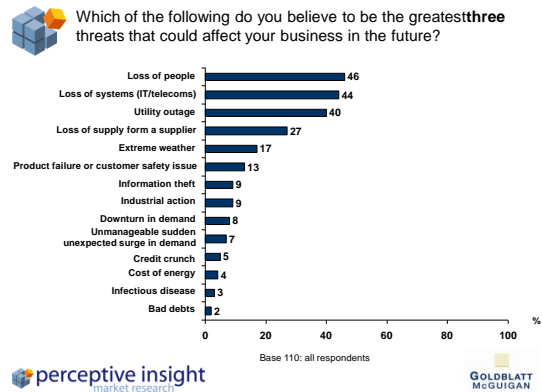
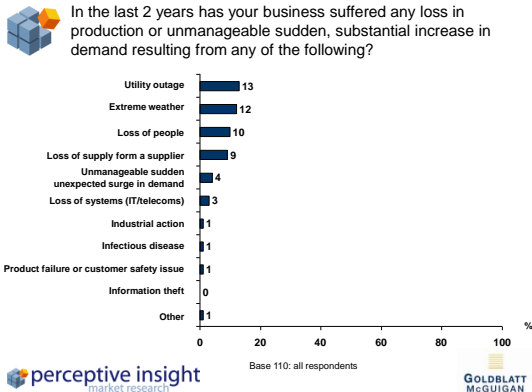
 Which of the following sectors best describes the main activity of your business?



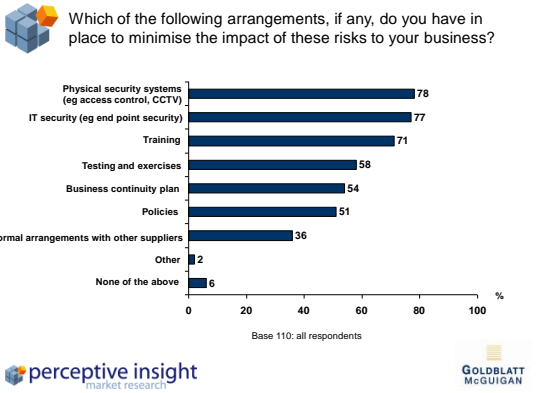
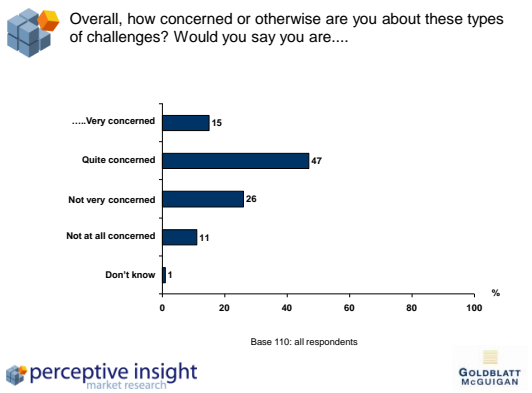
This quarter's survey focused on identifying the external and internal events that could put the continued operation of local companies in jeopardy and on the measures that businesses have in place to plan for and deal with such a crisis situation.

40% of the companies surveyed cited the top three threats as presenting the greatest risk to the continuity of their businesses. 17% highlighted the impact of extreme weather on their businesses – influenced no doubt by the wet weather and flooding experienced

by so many last month – while perhaps surprisingly, the more obvious business crisis issues such as a downturn in demand was highlighted by only 8%, just 5% were concerned about the impact of the credit crunch on their operation and only 2% were worried about how bad debts could affect the sustainability of their business.



To minimise the risk and impact of disruptive challenges to their businesses, 54% of the respondents said that they had a Business Continuity Plan in place (5% above the UK national average) and 87% were training senior leaders to deal with such challenges.



Commenting on the findings of the Survey, Michael Clarke, Director, Management Consultancy Services, Goldblatt McGuigan, said that it was encouraging to see how many of the businesses surveyed were taking a positive approach to preparing themselves for potential external and internal threats particularly with regard to preparing a Business Continuity Plan and in focusing on the need to train leaders for the unexpected. He went on to say that all of this positive action begs the questions that if businesses are as well prepared as the say, are they making the most of transferring these skills into day-to-day business to achieve a competitive advantage?

“We would argue that it is not just about having a ‘break glass in case of emergency’ Crisis Management Plan in the filing cabinet’ says Michael Clarke. ‘If a business is to be able cope in the face of adversity and continue to operate and service its customers



irrespective of the pressures that are being brought to bear upon it, leaders at the top of a business might need to think differently about how to lead in times of adversity. If they can lead in this context, transferring this skill to daily business is very likely to yield a meaningful competitive advantage” said Michael Clarke.

What The Companies Said:

John Toner, Director, Hastings Hotels Group

“In the hotel sector the scope for the unexpected happening and causing business continuity difficulties is considerable. People, property, systems, security, health and safety are all vulnerable areas in our business. At Hastings Hotels we undertake continual risk assessments and have in place, and regularly test and update, a Business Continuity Plan for the Group and for each of our individual properties.”

Norman Taylor, Director, Dyno-Rod Northern Ireland

“The biggest threat to the continuity of any business operation is the fortune of its customers’ businesses. The downturn that the construction and manufacturing sectors are currently facing is a major cause for the local economy. While we can all take steps to protect the long term viability of our businesses by being as lean and as efficient as possible, none of us can operate in a vacuum. All businesses are interdependent and individually we are only as strong as the weakest link in the chain.”