



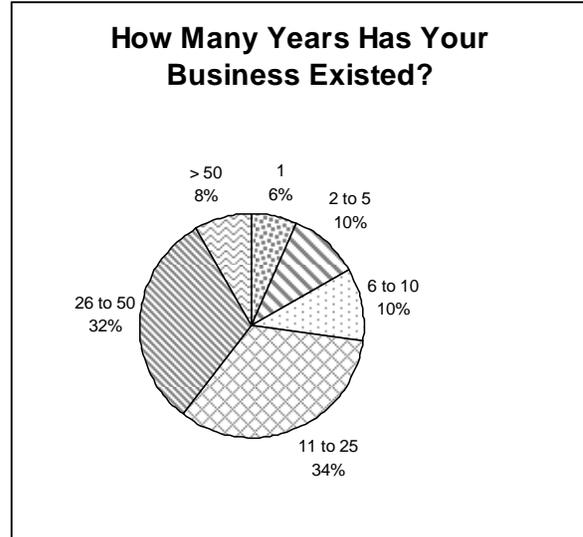
## Key Findings: 49 Survey Responses

- ❖ Several recurring reasons were cited for the choice of Standish as the location for the business:
  - High quality of life
  - Business growth opportunities
  - Low taxes/low cost of doing business/low overhead
  - Where their family home is located &/or lifelong Standish resident
  - Location - access to customers. (Q1a)
- ❖ Two-thirds of respondents reported their business has always been located in Standish. (Q1a)
- ❖ About half of respondents had recently gone through a business permitting process. Three quarters (77%) were “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with the process. (Q2)
- ❖ Health Insurance Costs was the most often cited “Business Challenge” by respondents, cited by over half (57%). Other Challenges (cited by over 25%) include:
  - Utility Costs & Availability (32.5%)
  - Other Insurance Costs (30%)
  - Out of Town Competition (27.5%)
  - Personnel Costs (27.5%). (Q3)
- ❖ One quarter of respondents stated they “Plan to Expand Products/Services or Square Footage” in Standish. Few respondents (3) reported plans to reduce their business or expand elsewhere. (Q6)
- ❖ A “Low Interest Business Loan Program” was cited as the most useful type of Business Assistance program to respondents (58.5% would “Definitely Use” or “Probably Use” this type of program if offered). (Q7)
- ❖ Businesses in “Windham or Gorham” were cited as the primary “Major Competition” by Standish businesses. Most competition was local and regional (greater Portland) in scope. (Q8)
- ❖ “Customer Service” was the number one competitive business edge cited (43%). (Q9)
- ❖ For respondents, the customer base for Standish businesses is mostly local (from within Standish) and regional (Windham/Gorham) and greater Portland. (Q13)
- ❖ The vast majority of respondents (85%) rely on “Word of Mouth” as their primary means of advertising. Other responses over 25% include:
  - Yellow Pages (40%)
  - Internet (38%)
  - Newspapers (38%). (Q15)
- ❖ A strong majority of businesses were satisfied with local governmental services, zoning/permitting and local taxes. The highest level of dissatisfaction was with local phone service. (Q19)
- ❖ Businesses cited the following ways Standish could “Best Serve” their business:
  - Assistance with advertising/networking with other Standish businesses
  - Keeping taxes low
  - Be more business-friendly in permitting and business licensing. (Q18b)

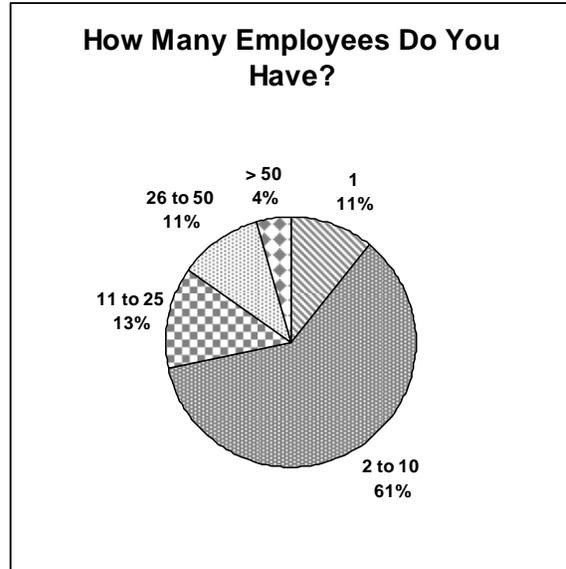


- ❖ Businesses cited the types of businesses that would best complement their businesses as a customer or supplier:
  - Restaurants
  - Professional services (lawyers, accountants, real estate agents)
  - More retail businesses
  - Big box hardware and supply stores
  - Manufacturing
  - Medical businesses. (Q12)

Survey respondents were typically mature businesses with the majority in business over ten years. Three businesses reported being in business for over 100 years. (Q1)



Over three quarter of respondents had 25 or fewer employees in 2007, with two reporting more than 50. (Q4a) Sixty five percent reported that their number of employees was essentially unchanged since 2006; 17.5% reported they had more employees and 17.5% reported less employees. (Q4b)



Methodology

Approximately 200 surveys were mailed to business addresses within Standish. In addition, surveys were made available at Town Hall and an on-line/internet-based version of the survey was also made available. Forty-nine completed surveys were mailed back or completed on-line. The surveys were tabulated by GrowSmart Maine. The survey response rate was approximately 25%.