Constant Contact Survey Reveals New Insights on 2018 Small Business Strategy, Outlook and Priorities

Results find most small business marketers are self-taught, digital-first and hungry for tools to elevate their business.

WALTHAM, Mass., April 19, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- In celebration of National Small Business Week (April 29 – May 5, 2018), a new survey from Constant Contact, an Endurance International Group (NASDAQ: EIGI) company and leader in email marketing solutions, sheds light on how small business owners approach and prioritize operations, marketing, strategic planning and more.

The nationally representative survey found that small business owners wear many hats and almost all (95 percent) do some form of marketing for themselves. However, when it comes to marketing and promoting their businesses, most entrepreneurs and small business owners are self-taught (64 percent) but still don't consider themselves very marketing savvy, making the vendors and tools they select to support them even more important. In fact, less than half (46 percent) consider themselves "marketing savvy" and only nine percent say they are "extremely marketing savvy."

"Marketing is key to the success of a small business, but the reality is that most small businesses and entrepreneurs aren't marketing experts and have limited time and resources available to support marketing activities," said Jonathan Kateman, general manager of Constant Contact. "At Constant Contact, we believe technology can level the playing field and, for the past 20 years, we have been committed to empowering small businesses and nonprofits with the tools and real, human support they need to succeed. From help figuring out the right marketing strategy for their individual needs, to content recommendations, design tips, expert-taught classes and professional support to take their marketing to the next level, we stand with small businesses every step of the way."

Survey Sheds Light on Small Business Operations

Below are additional findings from the survey and insights from author, consultant and small business expert, Pamela Slim, who has partnered with Constant Contact to share these findings:

- **Operating Year-to-Year vs. Looking Ahead:** Survey responses suggest that small business owners tend to operate on a year-to-year basis and often need to prioritize issues of the day and tangible, immediate business objectives over longer-term strategic plans. In fact, most small business owners (63 percent) plan strategically just a year (or less) in advance. Looking to the future, small business owners most often indicated that their top business goals for 2018 included the following:
    - 64 percent - Increasing revenue/sales
    - 53 percent - Increasing new customers
    - 33 percent - Offering superior customer service
    - 32 percent - Increasing productivity

"When you look at what small business owners are prioritizing in 2018, marketing is a critical component to achieving those goals," said Slim. "When running a business, it can be easy to become reactive and let things like marketing activities fall by the wayside, but it's important to remember that it doesn't have to be all or nothing. Small, everyday steps can make a big difference."

According to Slim, one of the best things small business owners can do to make the most of their time and resources is to leverage marketing tools that will enable them to more effectively communicate with their customers or potential customers. "Small business owners should not be afraid to try new technology," she said. "Things like AI and automation may seem complex and 'buzzwordy,' but with the right partners it's actually very fast and easy and a great way to make your marketing more effective while freeing up more of your time."

- **Email Tops List of Key Marketing Tools:** Of the tools included in the survey, email marketing is the most-used marketing tool among small business owners (42 percent). Many report that it helps them connect with new and potential customers (57 percent) and drive brand awareness (56 percent). Companies that have more employees (11-20) are more likely to use email marketing (61 percent vs. 42 percent of total small business owners surveyed), and the bigger the small business, the more important they believe it will be to their business' future. Businesses that have 11-

20 employees are also more likely to think email marketing will be important to the future of their business (69 percent vs. 51 percent of total small business owners).

- Other top marketing tools utilized by small business owners include:
  - 39 percent - Online advertising
  - 39 percent - Promotions on their business' homepage
  - 37 percent - Social media advertising and paid social content
  - 33 percent - Customer review collection

- **Digital Marketing Takes Precedence:** Many small business owners prioritize digital marketing over more traditional tactics. Survey results suggest that traditional marketing tools like direct mail and print and TV advertising, once considered table stakes for businesses, are being utilized less often:
  - 32 percent - Print advertising
  - 26 percent - Direct mail
  - 22 percent - Event sponsorships
  - 6 percent - Billboard advertising
  - 6 percent - TV advertising

- **Hard-Working and Committed, but Not Competitive:** Small business owners are unquestionably dedicated to their craft, with many describing themselves as "hard-working" (38 percent), "committed" (22 percent) or "passionate" (13 percent). However, almost no small business owners (3 percent) consider themselves "competitive."

"This doesn't mean small business owners aren't serious about their bottom lines, but rather that they are team players who see themselves as part of their broader communities," says Slim. "Small businesses are the lifeblood of our economy, and a vibrant, healthy small business community makes for a vibrant, healthy society. While small business owners are passionate about achieving their goals, they understand the importance of personal relationships and place great value on community."

- **Driven by Desire for Independence and Passion, Entrepreneurship Becomes a Way of Life:** People open small businesses for many reasons, but the biggest motivating factor is the desire to be their own boss (46 percent), followed by wanting to follow their passion (22 percent). For many small business owners, their entrepreneurial passion is so strong that they own multiple businesses. While many small business owners have only owned one small business (60 percent), two in five (38 percent) have owned between two to five small businesses.

Celebrating National Small Business Week

As part of the National Small Business Week Virtual Conference hosted by the Small Business Administration (SBA) and SCORE Association, Constant Contact will be hosting a free webinar, "Get New and Repeat Business on Autopilot with Email Marketing." The webinar, presented by Dave Charest, Director of Content Marketing at Constant Contact, in partnership with the SBA, will take place at 4:00 PM ET on May 1, 2018, and provide practical advice on leveraging email marketing to drive sales. Constant Contact will also be celebrating with the SBA and SBA Small Business Award winners live in Washington, D.C., April 29-30, 2018 and hosting four educational seminars at the Small Business Expo in New York City on May 3, 2018.

To learn more about Constant Contact and to access resources to maximize email marketing efforts, from best-in-class marketing software to step-by-step guides and best practices for planning a campaign, creating content, harnessing data to optimize your results and much more, visit www.constantcontact.com.

Connect with Constant Contact on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

About the Survey
This nationally representative survey was conducted online among 1,005 U.S. small business owners (those owning businesses with 1-20 employees; aged 18+) and fielded between March 15-20, 2018. The margin of error was +/- 3.07 and a 95 percent confidence level.

About Constant Contact
Constant Contact, an Endurance International Group company and a leader in email marketing for more than 20 years, provides hundreds of thousands of small businesses around the world with the online marketing tools, resources, and personalized coaching they need to grow their business.

About Endurance International Group
Endurance International Group Holdings, Inc. (NASDAQ:EIGI) (em)Powers millions of small businesses worldwide with products and technology to enhance their online web presence, email marketing, mobile business solutions, and more. The Endurance family of brands includes: Constant Contact, Bluehost, HostGator, Domain.com and SiteBuilder, among others. Headquartered in Burlington, Massachusetts, Endurance employs over 3,600 people across the United States, Brazil, India and the Netherlands. For more information, visit:www.endurance.com.

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