

## 2025 Business Survey

# What businesses are gaining from financial insight

### CITIZENS BUSINESS BANKING

New data reveals how hundreds of small and midsize business outperformers set themselves apart.



# Business leaders report clear advantages from financial advice and data-gathering tools

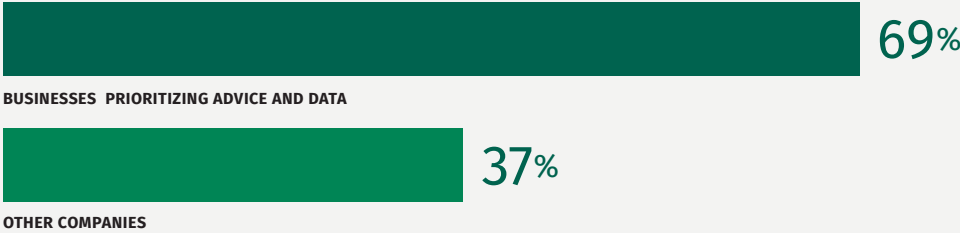
Findings from the fourth annual Citizens Business Report Survey<sup>1</sup> shed light on how some company leaders are achieving strong business outcomes by prioritizing financial insight. The most optimistic U.S. small and midsize businesses (SMBs) in the survey seek expert advice from their CPA, attorney or business banker at least monthly and, at least weekly, use financial data-gathering applications and tools to monitor, manage or gain insight into company finances. The tactics of these outperforming SMBs are particularly important to understand in a shifting economic landscape.

## Financial insight...

### CORRELATES WITH OPTIMISM

For the second year in a row, SMBs prioritizing financial advice and data are more likely to expect growth in the next five years.

### EXPECT 5-YEAR GROWTH



“Financial tools and trusted experts set up SMBs with the most comprehensive picture of their company’s finances for cash flow management, business planning, succession planning and making informed, confident decisions.”

**Mark Valentino**, Head of Business Banking

<sup>1</sup>An online survey of 600 principals (Owner, Founder, Partner, CEO, President, etc.) of U.S.-based businesses with up to \$100 million in annual revenue, conducted from Nov. 1 through Nov. 19, 2024 by Bredin. Data from companies prioritizing financial advice and data-gathering tools in this report are from companies with \$500K to \$100 million in annual revenue, unless noted otherwise.

# The business tactics that set SMB outperformers apart

An analysis of the survey data to identify top tactics among business leaders focused on financial insight reveals key similarities. They use these business tactics:



## Optimize cash flow

53% of businesses prioritizing financial advice and data-focused tools are also [prioritizing cash flow](#) in 2025 compared with only 38% of other companies.



## Use financial management tools

48% of businesses that prioritize financial advice and data will start using new tools for cash management this year. An adoption rate five times that of other companies.



## Seek expert advice

29% of businesses prioritizing financial advice and data speak with their CPA, attorney or business banker at least weekly. 47% say they will lean even more heavily on expert advice in 2025 compared with only 6% of other businesses.



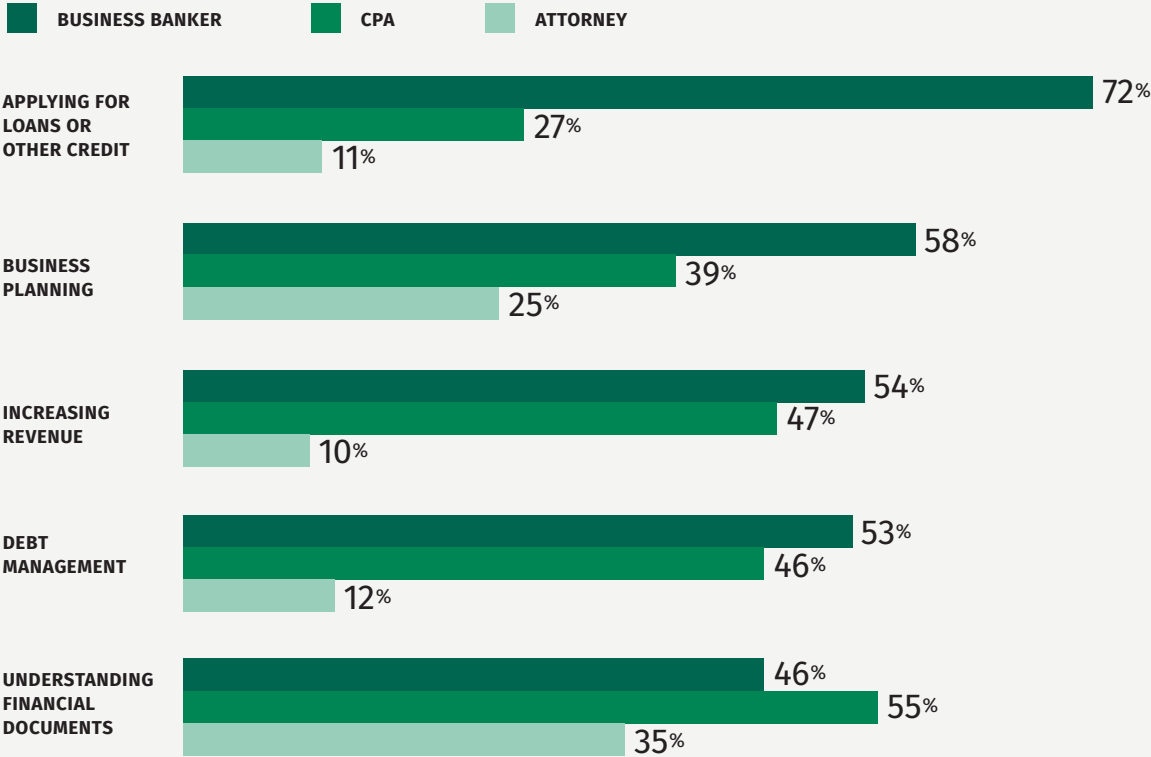
“Finding the right financial tools and expert advice leads to better planning, more informed, confident decision-making and better outcomes.”

**Manny Tocco**, COO Business Banking

# How businesses use expert financial advice to succeed

49% of business leaders who turn to experts, such as a CPA, attorney or business banker, for financial advice agree that the top reason to seek expert counsel is better decision-making, followed closely by increased profitability at 48%.

## Business leaders reach out to experts for help with:



“Working with the right team of experts is important, even for experienced business leaders. Whatever stage your business is in, financial advice can help you bring your business’ vision further into focus and plan for the next step.”

**Meline Gasparyan**, Head of Business Banking Treasury Solutions

# 2025: How business leaders will use financial advice

SMBs using the most financial advice anticipate better cash management, improved decision-making and improved business planning. This year they will:

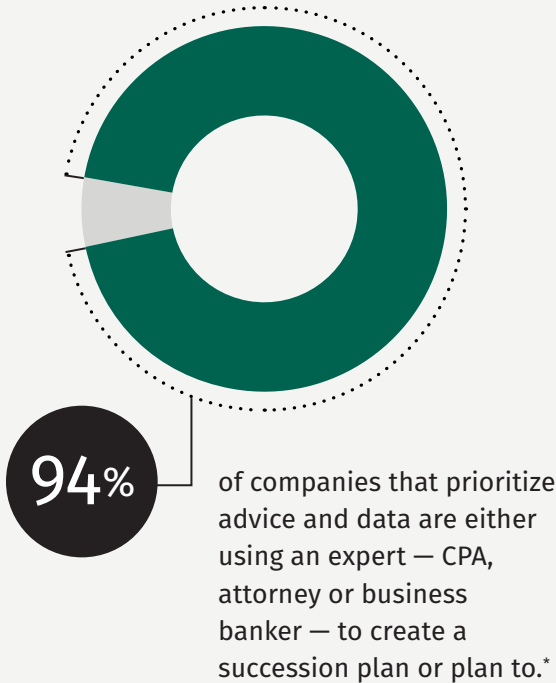
## Lean on bank advice

**84%** of advice-driven companies specify that their business banker is a key member of their team of expert advisors.

Survey data shows that expert advice from a business banker can provide better:

- Access to business credit
- Insight into cash position
- Decision-making
- Idea of cash flow

## Speak to experts about succession planning:



\*Among companies creating a succession plan.

# Key takeaways

Research findings indicate that relying on advice from trusted experts and using financial data-gathering tools helps business leaders with cash flow management, business planning, succession planning and making informed, confident decisions.



### Cash management

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Thriving businesses are committed to increasing financial insight and making more informed decisions.



### Financial management tools

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Businesses with fast growth and increasing revenue are using financial tools to efficiently gather important financial data.



### Expert advice

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Support from experts helps with gathering financial data, business planning and making informed, confident decisions.

# See how we can help your business reach its goals.

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a Citizens  
Business  
Banker  
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## About the 2025 Business Survey

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