IO1/A2 – Survey report: UK

Date (15. 07. 2021)

Glossary

EU	European Union
PEACOC	Personalised e-Business Coaching for Construction SMEs
…	

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PEACOC

Co-funded by the
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1   Methodology

This report represents IO1/A2 of the PEACOC project, which is the follow-on activity to IO1/A1. In IO1/A1, the project consortium produced a number of national reports about the state of the construction industry and e-commerce in each of their countries. This activity is attempt to validate the findings of those reports through engagements with stakeholders in these areas.

As such, partners sent out specifically-constructed surveys to stakeholders in each of their countries, and received back a number of responses. This document presents these responses for the given country as well as analysis, and draws whatever conclusions are evident from the results.

2   Introduction

CIVIC – the UK representative on the PEACOC project, obtained 12 responses across a range of age brackets, according to the survey responses. These responses indicate that 25-34 year olds, 35-44 year olds, and 45-54 year olds each represented 30% of the responses, with the remaining 10% reporting themselves as under 25.

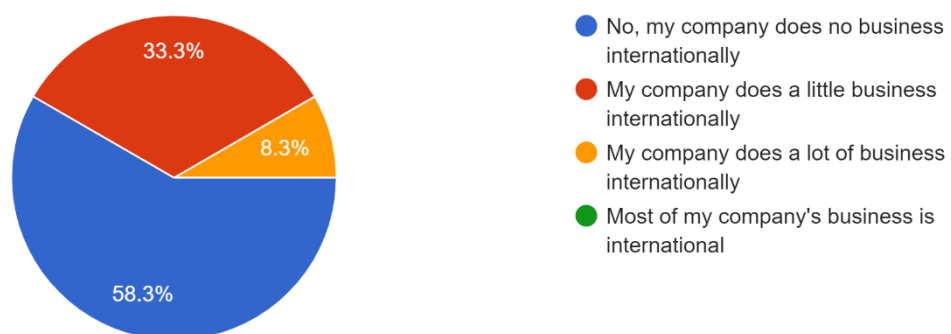# 3   Which of these best describes the business you represent?

Half of all responded to this question claimed that the business the respondent represented was a small construction company, the other half of respondents were split evenly between "other small" and "other medium" company.

4   Does your company do much business internationally?

A majority of respondents answered that they do no international business, although a significant minority of one-third claimed that they did a little business internationally. Less than 10% said they did a lot of international business, and none said that international business represented most of their business.

Does your company do much business internationally?
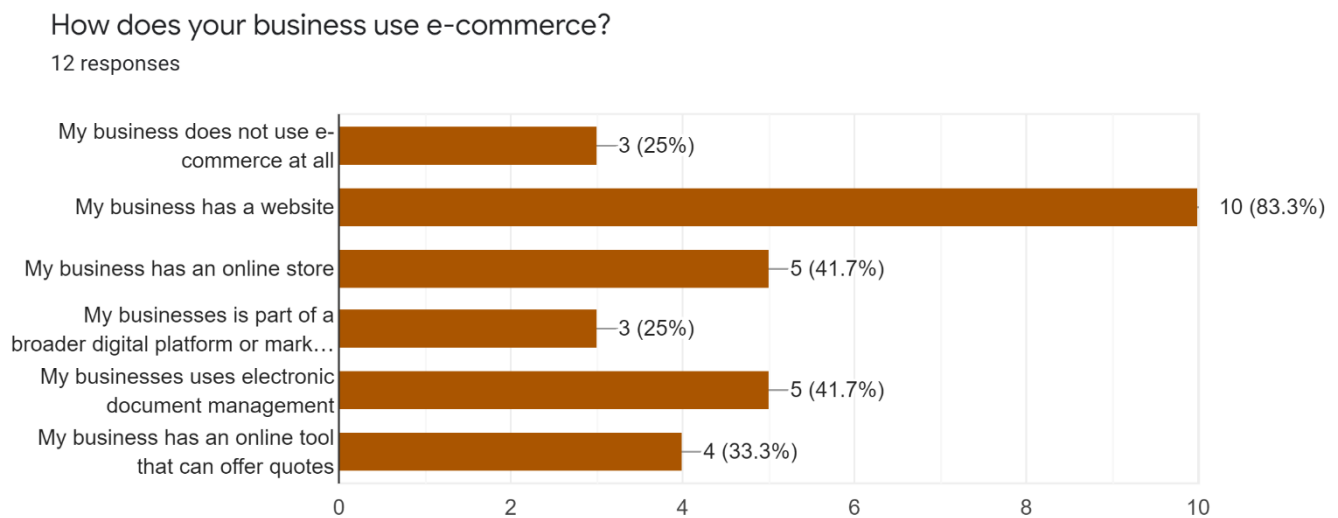12 responses

Legend:
- ● No, my company does no business internationally
- ● My company does a little business internationally
- ● My company does a lot of business internationally
- ● Most of my company's business is international

5   How does your business use e-commerce?

This question allowed respondents to choose more than one answer, creating a more complex set of responses. Most respondents did claim to use e-commerce in their business, with over 80% stating that their business has a website, but the results aside from this were decidedly more mixed.

25% claimed that their business does not use e-commerce at all, suggesting that at least one person has a website for their business but does not consider this e-commerce. Aside from this, only just over 40% of respondents say that their business has an online store or use electronic document management, only a third have an online quotes tool, and only one quarter are associated with a business that is part of a broader digital platform or market.

How does your business use e-commerce?
12 responses

Response	Count
My business does not use e-commerce at all	3 (25%)
My business has a website	10 (83.3%)
My business has an online store	5 (41.7%)
My businesses is part of a broader digital platform or mark…	3 (25%)
My businesses uses electronic document management	5 (41.7%)
My business has an online tool that can offer quotes	4 (33.3%)

6   Which of these do you feel are factors preventing entrepreneurs from adopting new e-commerce tools and behaviours?

Similarly to its immedite precendent, this question allowed for multiple responses. The responses in question here, however, were less clear-cut than the preceding question. A clear majority of respondents cited technology as a blocking factor when it comes to e-commerce tools and behaviours, but only slightly fewer (two-thirds) cited business culture and habits. Following this was just under 60% who suggested the necessity of training staff was a factor.

Below this was a three-way tie: complexity and cost of technology were both on 50%, as was the time and effort required to digitise. There was a significant gap between these responses and those that followed: namely data protection and security with 25% of

repsondents and excessive bureaucracy with about 17%.

Which of these do you feel are factors preventing entrepreneurs from adopting new e-commerce tools and behaviours?

12 responses
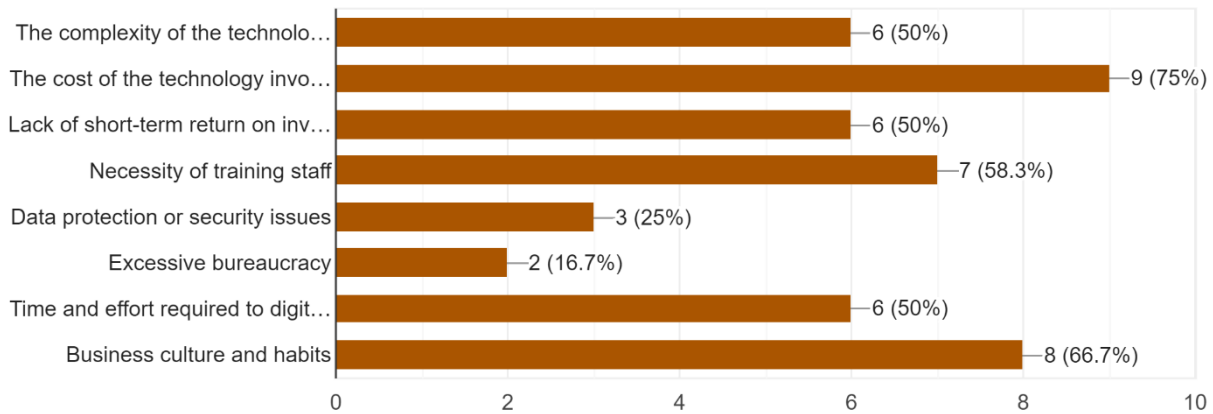
7 Do you feel that there is good training and support on e-commerce in construction in your country?

With this question, the survey returned to one-response multiple choice. Half of respondents said that courses and support on e-commerce and digitisation do exist in the UK, just not for construction specfically, while the other half were split between saying that such support and training does exist for construction or else does not exist at all.

8 To what degree do you think consumers in your country trust online payment?

This final question again saw exactly half of respondents giving the most popular answer – namely in this case that most consumers trust online payment – while a large minority thought that consumers almost entirely trust online payment. The remainder – just under 10% - asserted that only some consumers trust online payment, with no

respondents suggesting that almost no consumers trust this payment method.

To what degree do you think consumers in your country trust online payment?

12 responses

- Consumers almost entirely trust online payment
- Most consumers trust online payment
- Only some consumers trust online payment
- Almost no consumers trust online payment
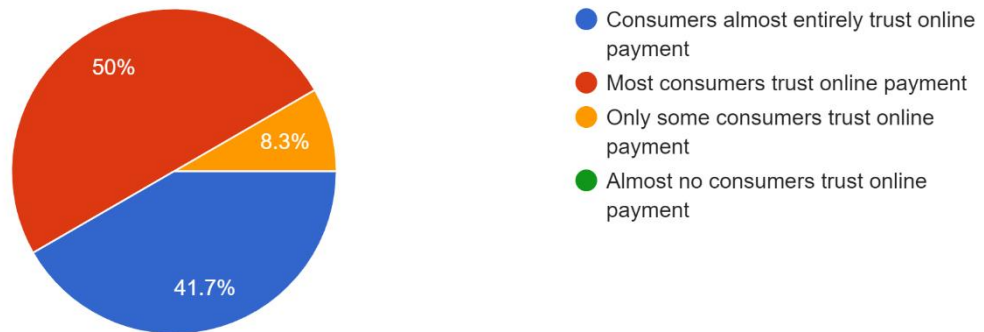
9   Conclusions

The findings of this survey, though only sampling a very small section of the target group, do seem to illustrate that there is a need and an opportunity for tools and courses such as the one that PEACOC is proposing. Most businesses, for example, claimed that they do not use most of the examples of e-commerce suggested. Similarly, they cited the need for training and their general business culture as two of the main factors preventing them from adopting such e-commerce practices and a significant majority claimed that there is no construction-specific training course or support already extant in the UK. These are gaps that PEACOC can help to fill, with the course and learning tools that it proposes to create.#