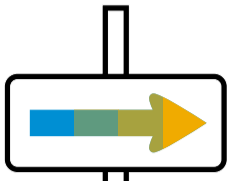


Thinking About Expanding Your Business?

Five Best Practices from SMB Finance Leaders to Help You on Your Growth Journey

Oxford Economics and SAP surveyed 150 financial decision-makers at small and midsize businesses (SMBs) around the world that have experienced growth – revenue increases, new locations, or mergers and acquisitions – over the past year.¹ The survey found that a **cost-conscious approach**, with clear visibility into spending across the organization and careful attention to cash flow, supports successful expansion.



Top business drivers for expansion

37%



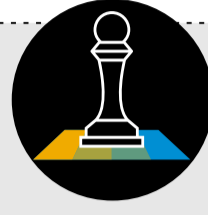
Of SMBs ranked **“improve the customer experience and client satisfaction”** among their top three reasons for growth

28%



Of SMBs underwent a recent expansion to **operate more efficiently**

15%



Of SMBs ranked **“increased competition from within their industry”** as the number-one reason they undertook expansion efforts



Cash flow and cost controls should play a key role in expansion decisions.

85%



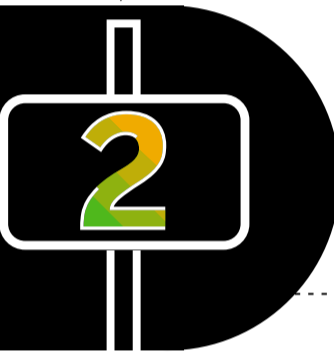
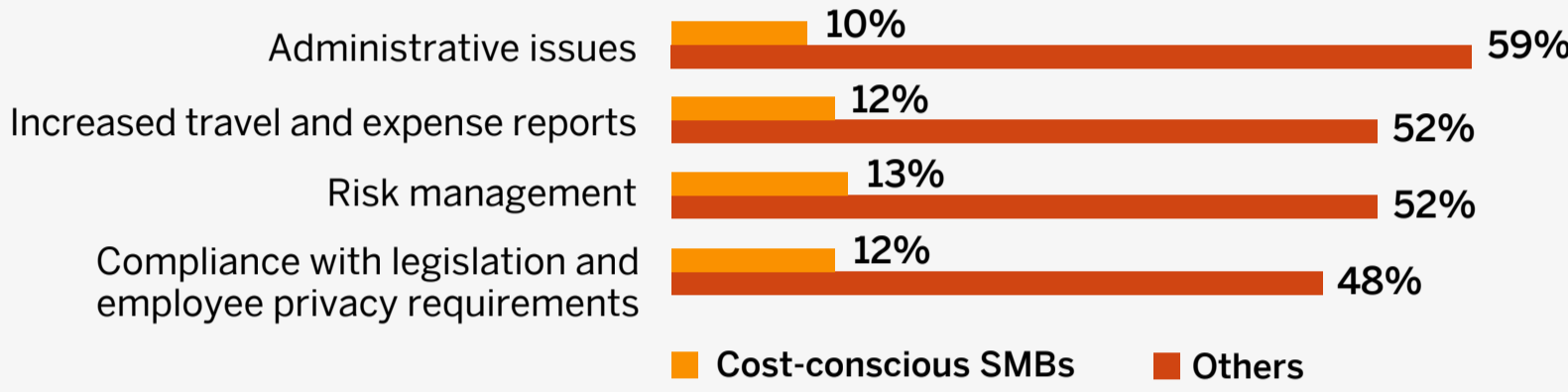
Of SMBs agree they would benefit from **focusing more on efficiency and cost control**

81%



Of SMBs identified as “cost-conscious” companies consider **cash flow** a “somewhat” or “very important” factor in their growth decision-making

SMBs that do not prioritize cash flow and spending report more challenges after growth. “Very” and “extremely challenging” responses regarding processes and activities since organizational expansion include:



Being cost conscious pays off – big time.

Cost-conscious SMBs:



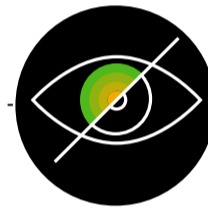
Are less likely to experience expansion challenges



Are more likely to stay within their budget



Are more nimble in reacting to market changes and challenges



Report better visibility into spending than non-cost-conscious SMBs



Expect workloads and data to grow with your business.

Finance executives at both cost-conscious and non-cost-conscious SMBs say that since their businesses expanded, they spend more time on many tasks. Specifically, cost-conscious SMBs report the following increases:

67%



Expense report processing

47%

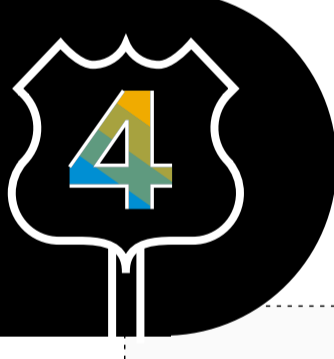


Vendor invoice processing

35%

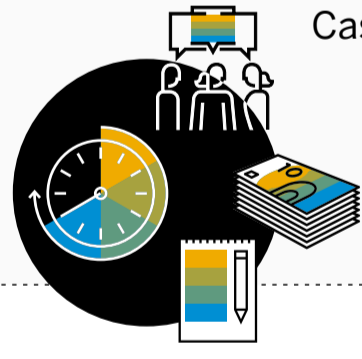


Compliance and risk management



Don't let an overburdened finance function become a barrier to growth.

In addition, cost-conscious SMBs are significantly more likely than others to spend more time on:



Cost-conscious SMBs are spending more time dotting their i's and crossing their t's, which can lead to **higher performance, greater visibility over spending, and more successful growth efforts.**

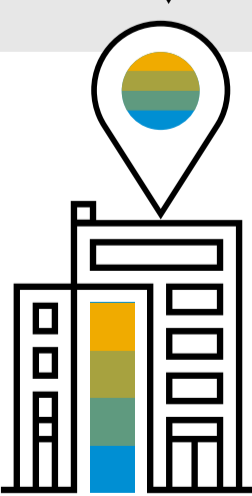


Collaborate with IT to harness intelligent, scalable tools that enable efficient growth.



Among **cost-conscious SMBs, 87%** of finance executives say the finance function was a critical strategic partner in planning their growth efforts, and **76%** report that the IT function was a critical strategic partner.

Only two-thirds of non-cost-conscious SMBs said finance and IT were considered critical strategic partners for growth.



Take the right steps to enable cost-conscious and efficient growth.

As expanding SMBs take on increased workloads and face tighter margins, finance leaders seeking to help expand their business can learn from their cost-conscious counterparts and take action by:



Prioritizing cash flow and spending while also focusing on efficiency and cost control



Partnering across functions – including IT – to automate and scale core processes such as cash flow management, expense management, and invoice processing



Choosing connected, automated, and intelligent solutions that provide the visibility, focus, and agility needed to transform cash flow and discretionary spend management and fuel growth strategies



Only 59% of SMBs report automating more day-to-day processes since expanding.

For more information, read the [Oxford Economics report](#) to explore how intelligent cost controls and spend management can help you drive efficient growth.

1. “Managing SMB Growth: How Cost-Conscious Planning Helps Businesses Scale Up.” Oxford Economics, 2019.