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MEDIA RELEASE

Small Business Owners Are Nearly Four Times Less Likely to Disconnect on Vacation than the Average American Worker

Xero survey underscores how mobile technology and the gig economy is shaping their habits

SAN FRANCISCO, August 31, 2017 - A recent survey of more than 550 small business owners reveals the way they take vacation is evolving, highlighting the impact of mobile technology and the continuing momentum of the gig economy.

The survey, commissioned by [Xero](#), a global leader in online small business technology, found that only 14 percent of respondents say they can completely check out while on vacation, as compared to [54 percent of American workers](#)¹.

With more of the U.S. workforce picking up sporadic jobs ([up to 30 percent](#)² are estimated to be participating in the gig economy) and the ubiquitous nature of technology, small business owners are more likely to work while they're away.

Mobile business apps are keeping small business owners plugged in, providing them the ability to run a business from anywhere, at anytime, even a beachside cabana. Xero's survey found that 85 percent of small businesses owners admit to working while on vacation, with 60 percent checking in proactively at least daily.

"Technology affords business owners more flexibility to stay connected while away, but it also keeps people on the job when they're supposed to be off," said Keri Gohman, President, Xero Americas. "As an industry, we have an opportunity to develop products that can help protect small business owners' mental health and wellness as they try to keep up at a rapid pace."

While small business owners find it hard to disconnect, the majority are taking time to get away. The survey found that 55 percent take two weeks or less of vacation every year, while

¹ Glassdoor.

² McKinsey.

32 percent of respondents say they take three or more weeks. However, 12 percent take no vacation at all.

Xero customers are progressive business leaders

While getting away may be harder for some than others, Xero users are more diligent about taking time off. Sixty-nine percent of Xero users have taken a week or more of vacation in the last 12 months, compared to 55 percent of non-Xero users.

While they might take the most vacation, Xero users are more likely to stay connected, with 94 percent working on vacation, compared to 78 percent of non-Xero users. Xero users are also more likely to take technology on vacation, with 96 percent taking smartphones, 75 percent taking laptops and 41 percent taking tablets to work while they're gone. By comparison, 80 percent of non-Xero users say they take smartphones, 59 percent take laptops and 41 take tablets while on vacation. Ten percent of non-Xero users say they take no technology at all, compared to zero percent of Xero users.

Newest generation of small business owners have the hardest time breaking away

Millennials are far more likely to stay plugged in, reinforcing their status as digital natives. This generation of business owners (people aged 18-34) experience burnout at a higher rate than their generation X (people aged 35-50) and baby boomer counterparts (people older than 50).

Ninety-three percent of millennials, 84 percent of gen X members and 59 percent of baby boomers report feeling burned out by work in the last 12 months. Ninety-one percent of millennials, 89 percent of generation X members and 76 percent of baby boomers say they work while on vacation. Only nine percent of millennials, 11 percent of generation X members and 24 percent of baby boomers say they do not work while on vacation.

Small business owners need to disconnect to reconnect

Xero's survey also reveals that small business owners check in with more baggage than just their luggage. Eighty-three percent of small business owners experience work-related stress while on vacation, compared to 17 percent who do not. Encouragingly, a majority of business owners find vacation revitalizing, with 61 percent feeling relaxed, refreshed and ready to work when they come back.

“While small business owners are taking vacation, the number of them experiencing work-related stress during this time is certainly concerning,” added Gohman. “With three in five business owners checking-in on a daily basis, it's clear that the demands of work are

inescapable. Using technology, we need to evolve how we think about vacation in today's connected world.”

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Notes to Editor

The survey was conducted by Dimensional research in July of 2017. The survey polled 551 business owners at companies with 20 employees or fewer across the U.S. on a range of topics related to vacations including amount of vacation taken, working while on vacation, and more.

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About Xero

Xero is beautiful, easy-to-use online accounting software for small businesses and their advisors. The company has more than one million subscribers in more than 180 countries. Xero seamlessly integrates with more than 500 apps, and was ranked No. 1 by Forbes as the World's Most Innovative Growth Company two years running and Asia Pacific winner of LinkedIn's 'Bring your Employer Brand to Life' Award.