MEDIA RELEASE

Xero partners with Beyond Blue to launch online mental health course for small business advisors in Australia

The free online course is designed to give advisors the confidence and tools to support the mental health of Australian small business owners

Melbourne — September 30, 2020 — Xero, the global small business platform, today announced the release of a new online mental health course for small business advisors, developed in partnership with Beyond Blue.

The four-part course ‘Mental wellbeing: support yourself and small businesses’ has been created for small business advisors such as accountants and bookkeepers, to understand different ways to care for their own mental health and the wellbeing of their clients.

According to research from Xero, 42% of Australian small business owners are concerned about their own mental health and 44% are worried about the mental health of their employees. Analysis from a sentiment measurement tool, Mindset AI1, also shows the predominant emotion of Australian small business owners in 2020 has been one of anxiety.

“Running a business is a highly rewarding experience but it can also have its challenges. Businesses regularly turn to their advisors during these challenging times and advisors often have to navigate tough conversations. In a year of great uncertainty, this has only been exacerbated,” said Rebecca Gravestock, Director of People and Performance, Xero Australia and Asia.

“The course has been designed to help advisors understand more about mental health and how to provide support to someone who might be struggling, without them falling into the role of a psychologist or counsellor. Importantly, it also provides some tips for advisors on how to look after their own mental health and wellbeing,” added Ms Gravestock.

Kate Carnell (AO), Beyond Blue Board Director and Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, said advisors played a crucial support role for people who run a business.

“Small business owners turn to established and trusted business networks for advice and support, particularly during tough times,” said Ms Carnell.

1 Mindset AI Study, PepperComm, August 2020
“The Mental wellbeing: support yourself and small businesses course will provide advisors, who often see first-hand how stress can affect small business owners, with the confidence and tools to play a crucial support role that goes beyond advice on accounts and assets.

“On behalf of Beyond Blue, I thank Xero for their commitment to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of the small business community and their skills and expertise in developing the course with us,” concluded Ms Carnell.

Tim Hoopmann, Beyond Blue Speaker and Small Business Advisor, said: “Working closely with small business owners in any capacity comes with great responsibility and during the COVID-19 pandemic, many have required additional support. It’s been important for advisors to be mindful of the fact that everyone’s experiences are different, approaching every situation with care. Learning how best to take care of our mental health and to be able to support those around us helps all of us in our daily lives.”

The course’s four parts cover:
- An introduction to mental health and how to recognise when someone needs support
- How advisers can look after their own wellbeing in the workplace and at home
- How to have a conversation with a small business owner you are worried about
- How advisers can proactively support small business owners.

Advisors using Xero can access the free course via Xero Central.

To access the free course via Beyond Blue, visit bb.org.au/advisers.

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About Xero
Xero is a cloud-based accounting software platform for small businesses with 2.38 million subscribers globally. Through Xero, small business owners and their advisors have access to real-time financial data any time, anywhere and on any device. Xero offers an ecosystem of over 800 third-party apps and 200 plus connections to banks and other financial partners. In 2020, Xero was included in the Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index and recognised by IDC MarketScape as a leader in its worldwide SaaS and cloud-enabled small business finance and accounting applications vendor assessment.
About Beyond Blue
Beyond Blue is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to reduce the impact of anxiety, depression and suicide in Australia. It provides information and support to help everyone achieve their best possible mental health, whatever their age and wherever they live. Beyond Blue works to give everyone in Australia the confidence to speak openly about anxiety, depression and suicide – both to seek support when they need it and to check in with those close to them – and tackles prejudice and discrimination wherever they exist. Beyond Blue’s tools, resources and services create mentally healthy environments. Through its dedicated programs, Beyond Blue supports schools, universities, workplaces and community organisations to protect and promote good mental health.

Peppercomm Mindset.AI Study
Using advanced AI designed to research crisis-focused emotional states, Mindset.AI, operated by Peppercomm - an integrated marketing and communications firm, analyses millions of public conversations drawn from thousands of varied sources across the internet. See Australian analysis here.