

MintHC

Business
Insights

A man with dark hair, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and blue patterned tie, is sitting in a brown leather chair. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. His hands are clasped in his lap. The background is a solid blue color.

**Economic upturn
drives pricing and
recruitment planning**

with Tony Alexander

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Economic upturn drives pricing and recruitment planning

My Aim

To help Kiwis make better decisions for their businesses, investments, home purchases, and people by writing about the economy in an easy-to-understand manner.

Each month I send an invitation to people on my Tony's View subscribers list inviting recipients to give insights into what is happening in their business sectors at the moment. 349 people replied from a wide variety of sectors this month. The aim is to gain real time insights into what is happening in various sectors with respondents choosing whether to focus on customer flows, pricing and cost pressures, expansion plans, and so on – whatever they consider to be the most important developments.

Key results from this month's survey include the following

- There has been some backing away from the high optimism displayed going into Christmas. Concerns are strong about the election bringing policy changes and increased costs whilst high uncertainty surrounds the offshore trading environment.
- Business expectations for higher revenues are strong, but they are raising their plans for increasing selling prices over the coming year.
- Businesses are quickly bringing forward plans to boost recruitment.

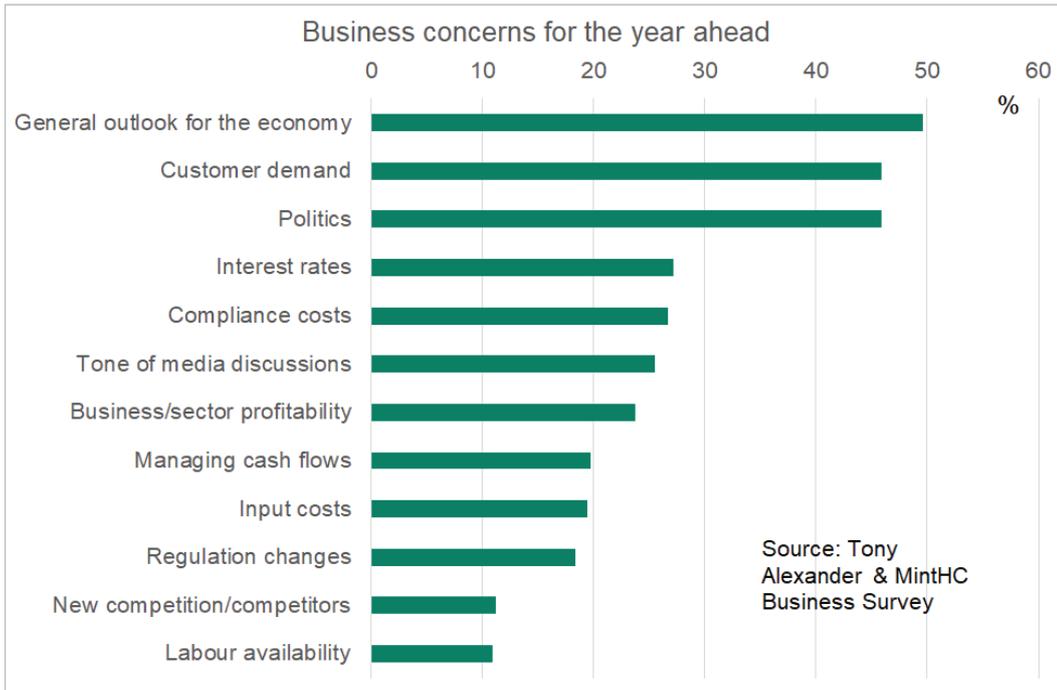


Tony Alexander
Independent Economist

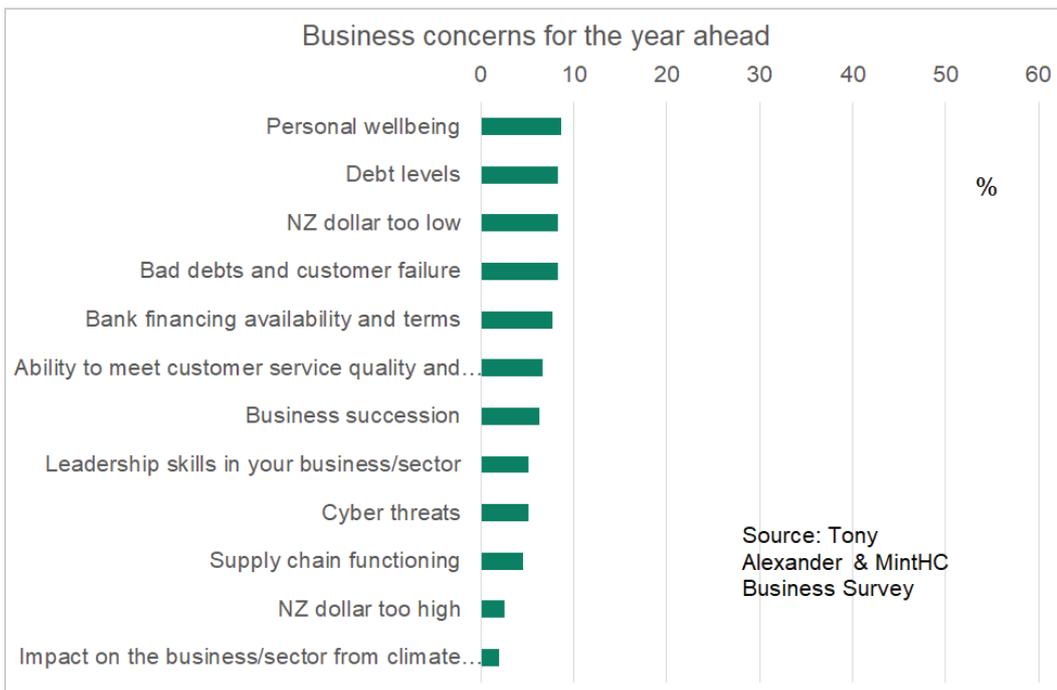
What concerns you most for the year ahead?

We ask businesses to choose the things which concern them most about the year ahead. They can choose more than one area of concern. The following two graphs show the most common and then least common areas of concern cited by business in this month's survey.

The three top ranking areas of concern for Kiwi businesses are again the general outlook for the economy, customer demand, and politics. Cyber threats, supply chain functioning, high currency worries and the climate rank as only minor areas of concern

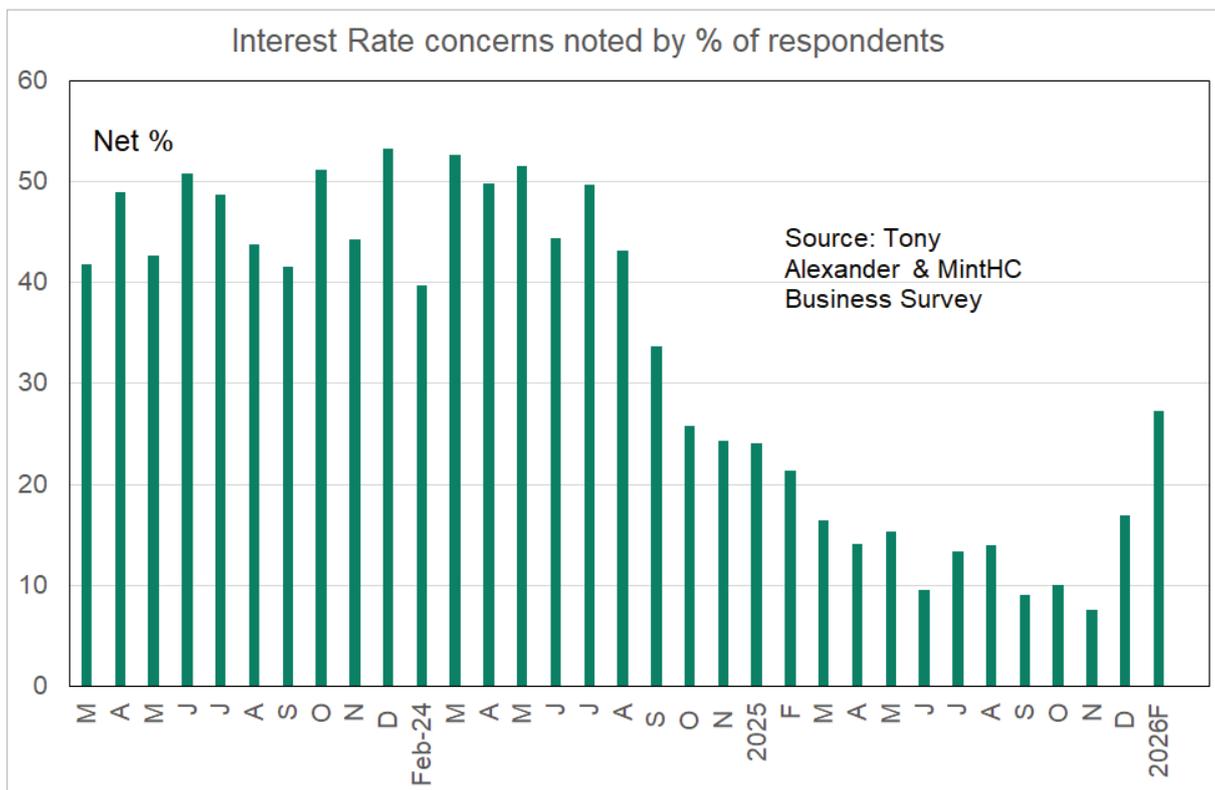
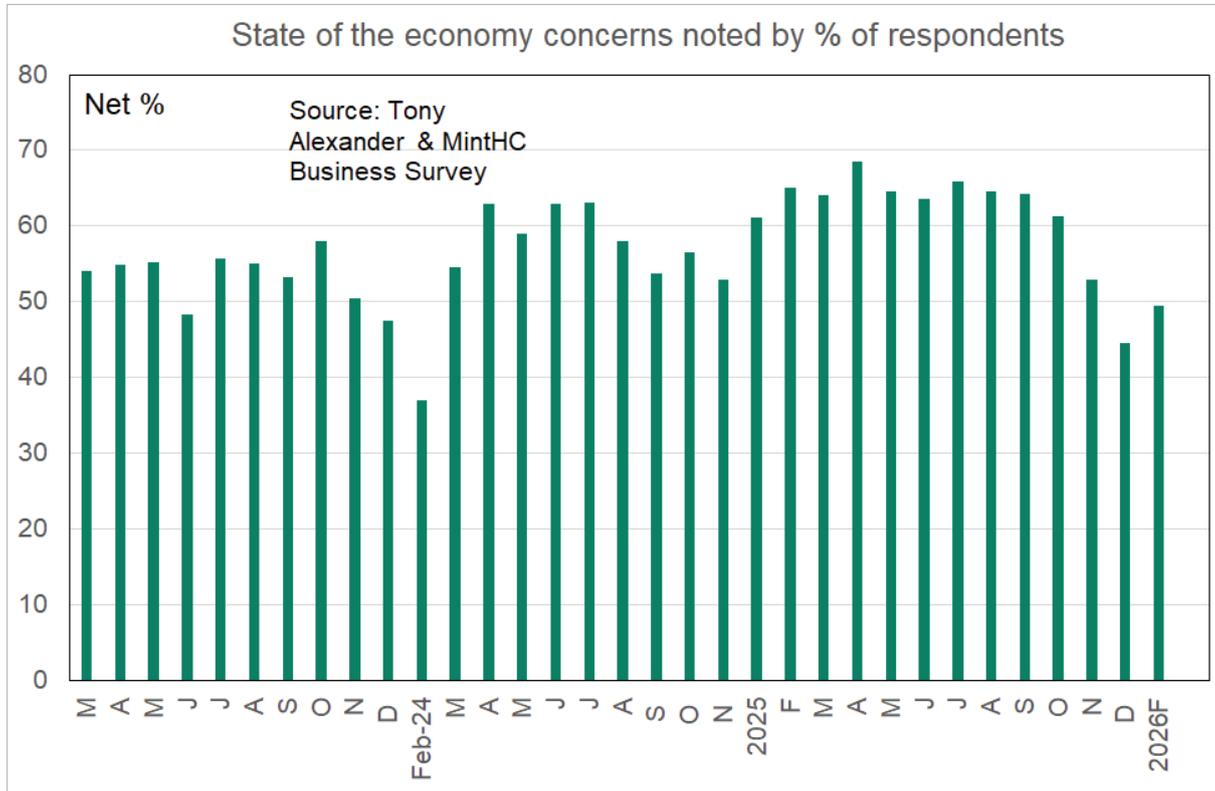


This graph shows the lesser ranked concerns.

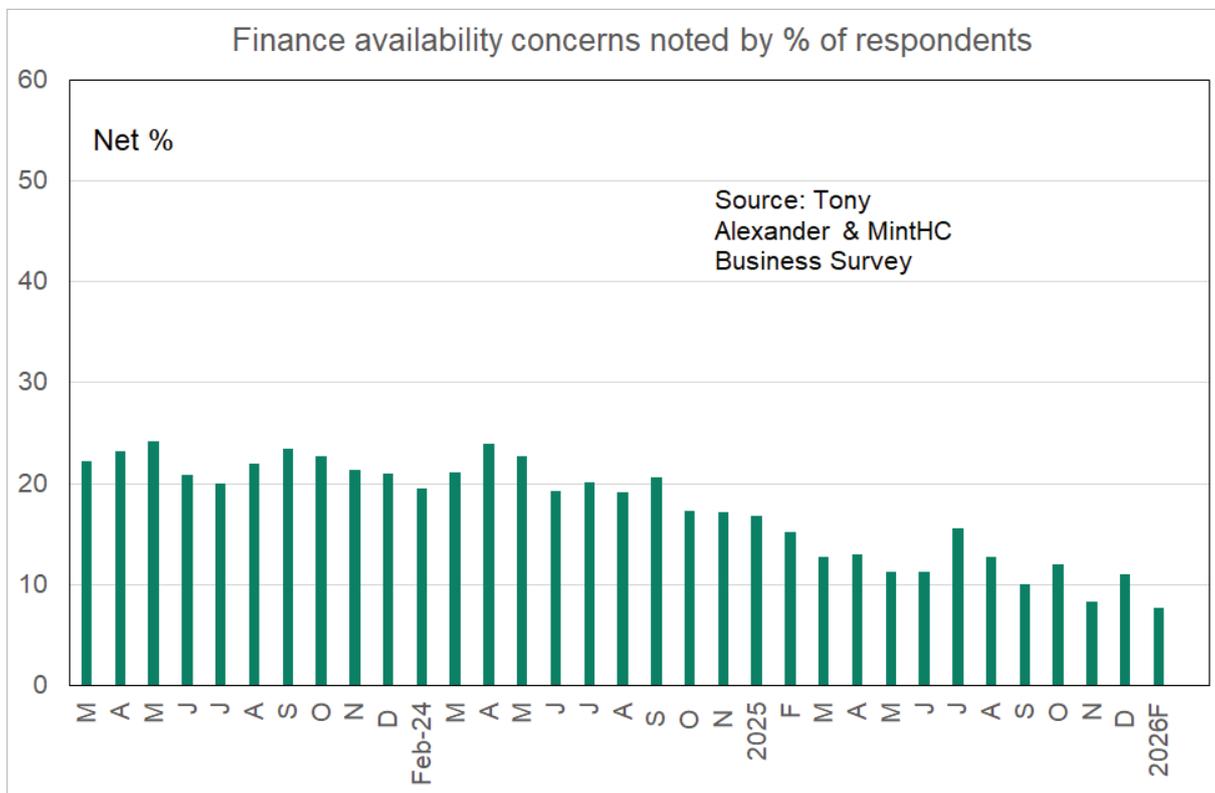
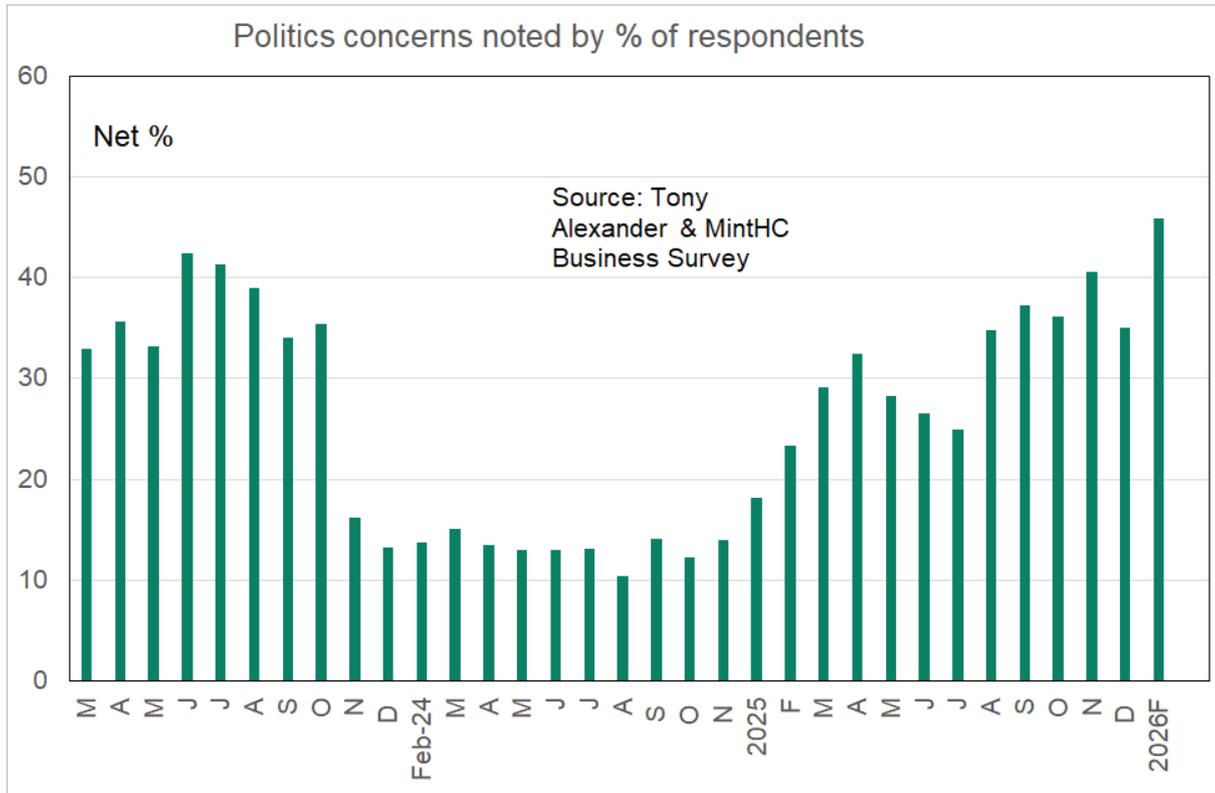


These next graphs look at changes in a selection of areas of concern for businesses since our survey started in March 2023.

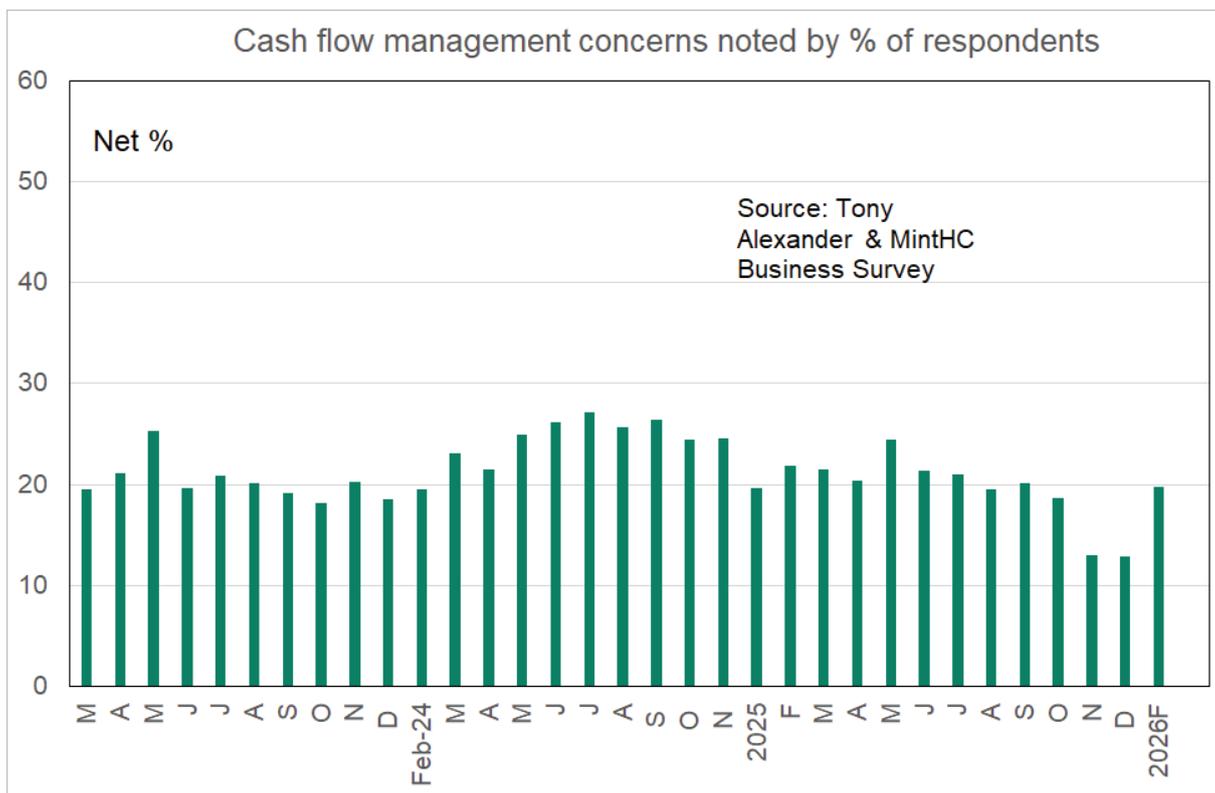
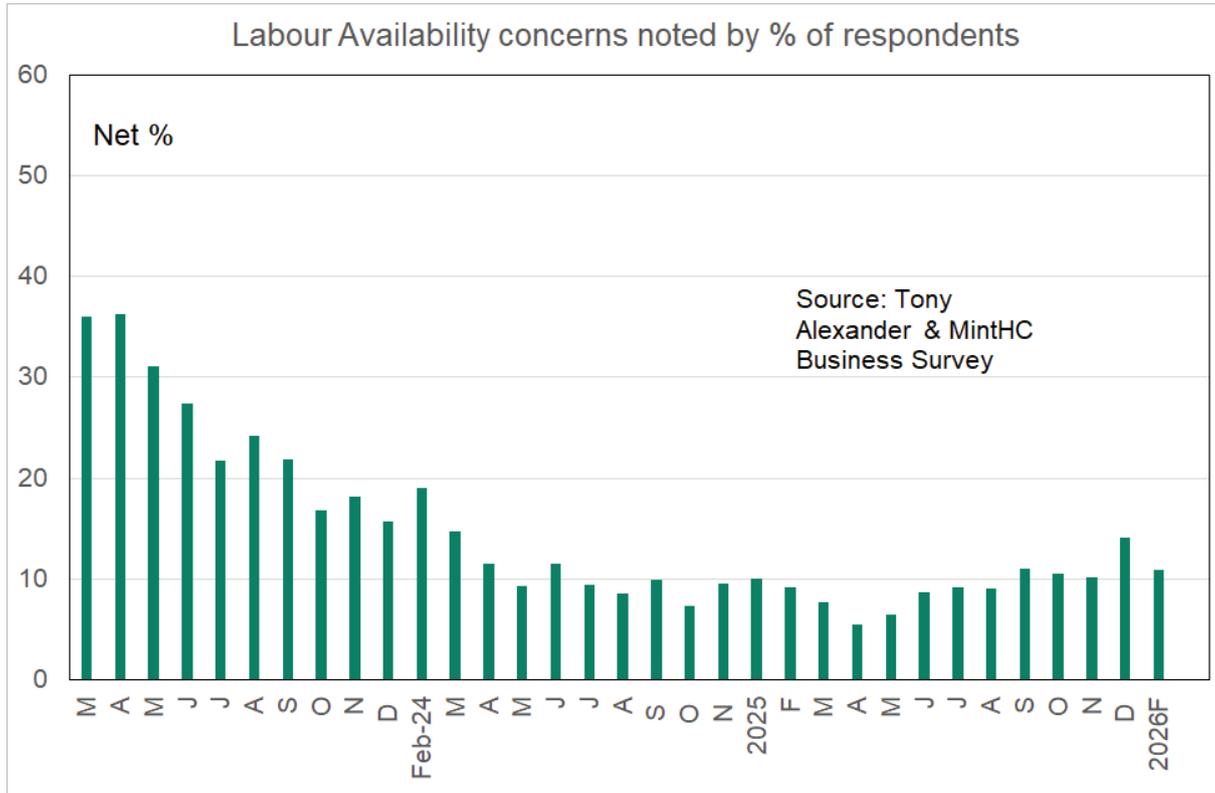
After a sizeable decline in worries about the economy two months ago businesses have returned to a level of worry more consistent with the improving trend which started in October. There has been a strong lift in concerns about where interest rates are headed. This change started in December.



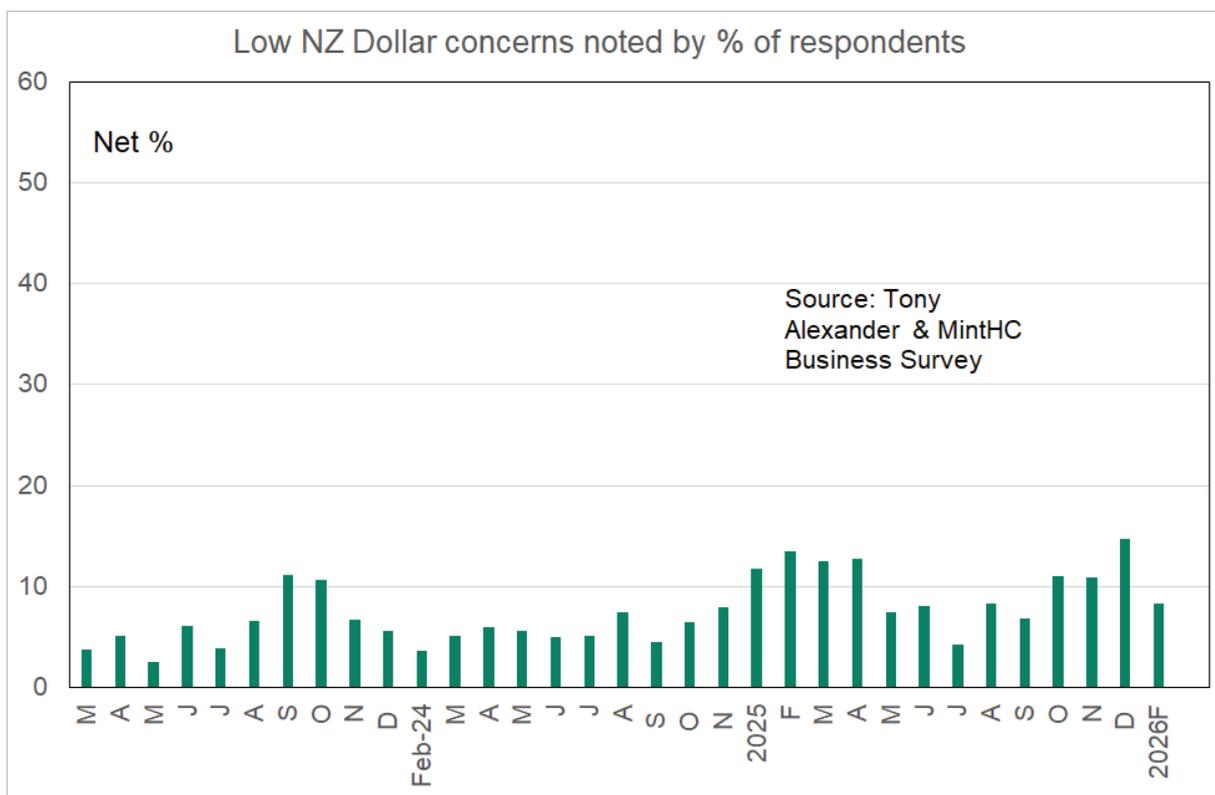
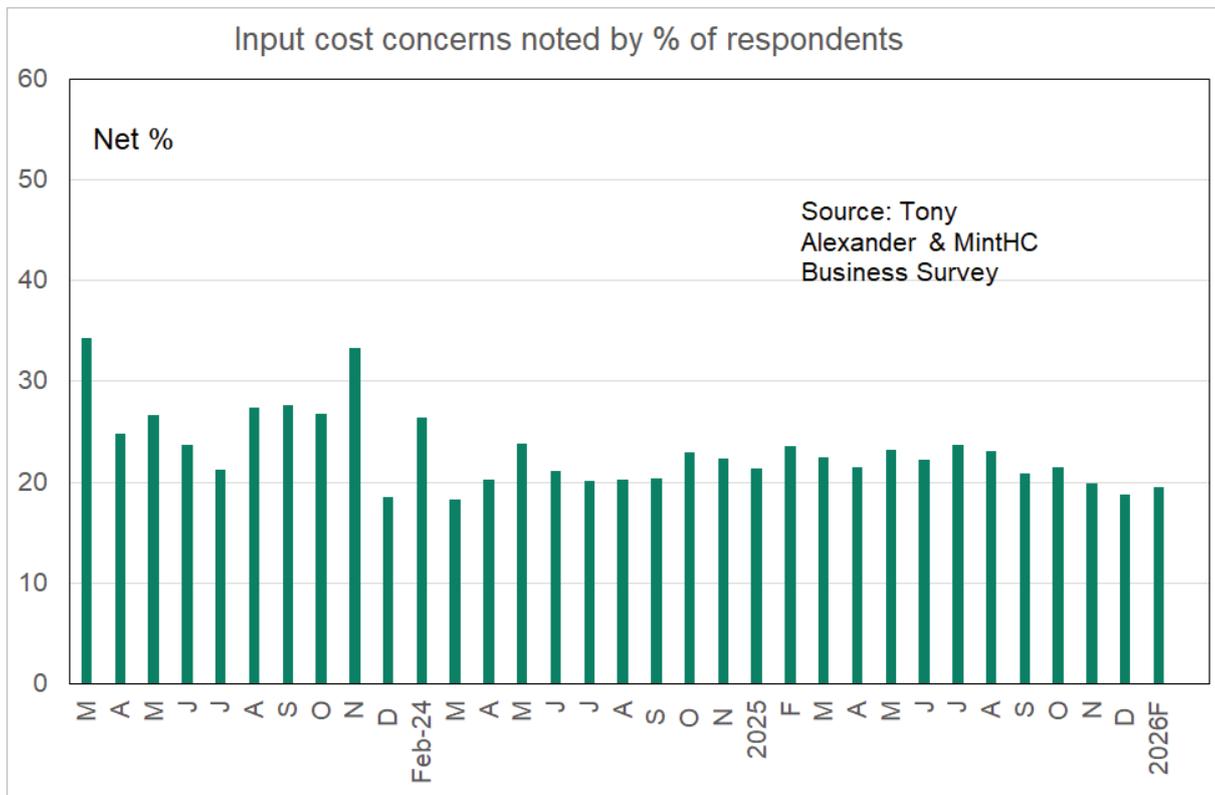
Since late-2024 businesses have grown increasingly concerned about the political situation in New Zealand. Finance availability does not rate as much of a constraint on the ability or willingness of businesses to grow.



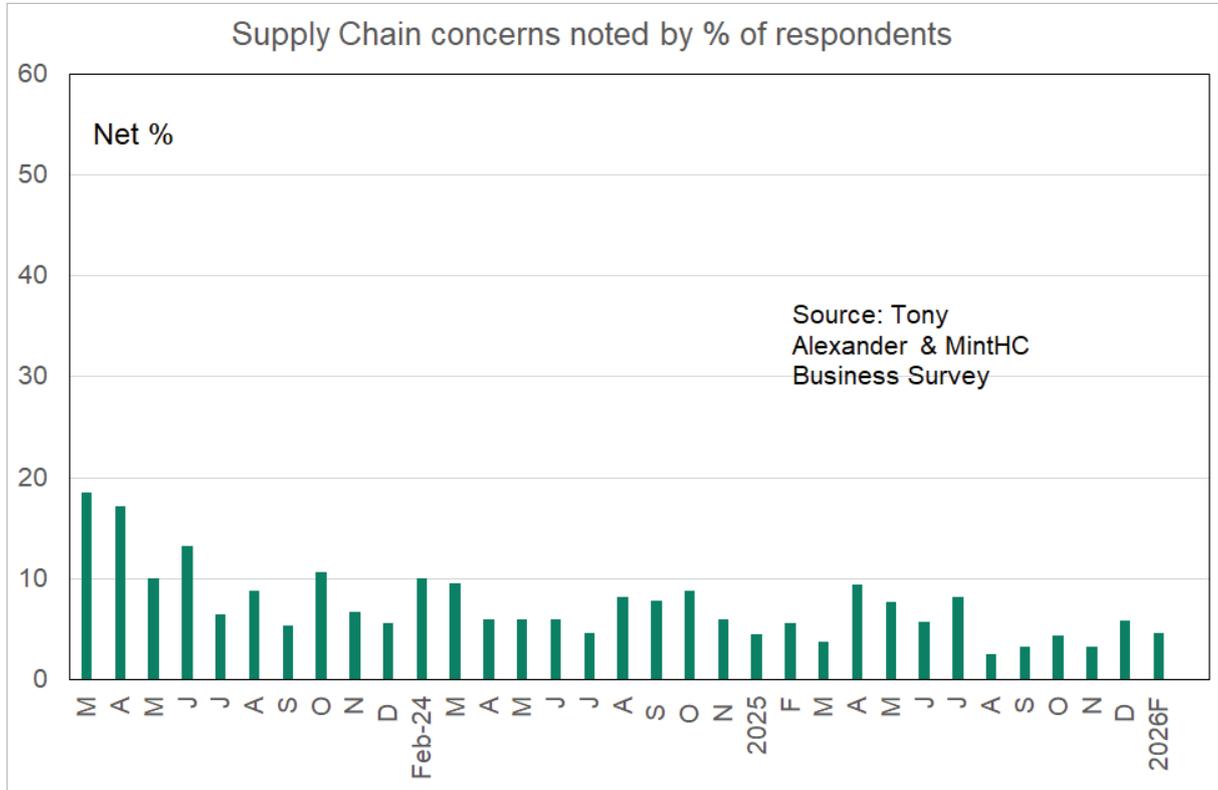
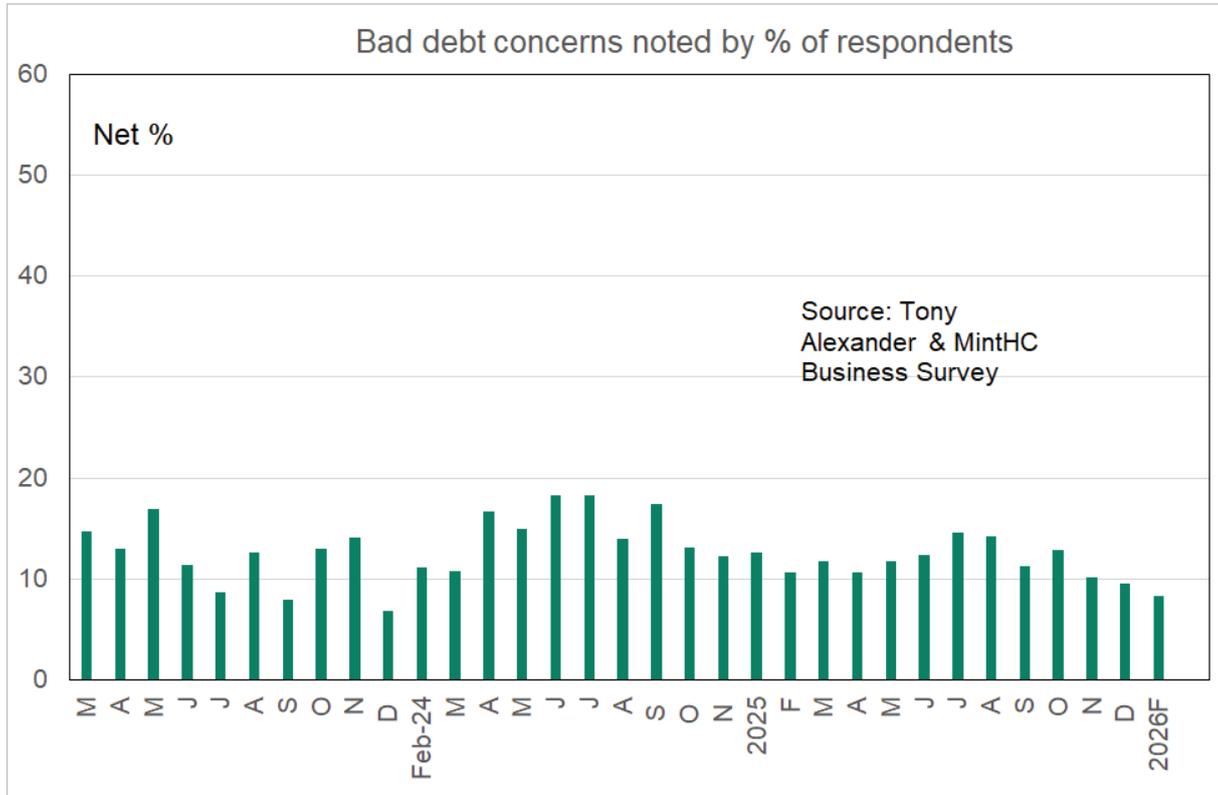
There is an upward trend underway in business concerns about the availability of labour. However these concerns have returned to a perhaps more realistic level this month after an unusual surge in our last survey two months ago. Consistent with most other measures pulling back from growth-focussed optimism in December, there has been a lift this month in business concerns about their cashflows.



Although businesses are indicating that they intend raising their prices in greater numbers, there is no fresh surge in input costs apparent at this early stage of the economic upturn. Concerns about the level of the NZ dollar being too low have pulled back this month after an unusual surge in December.

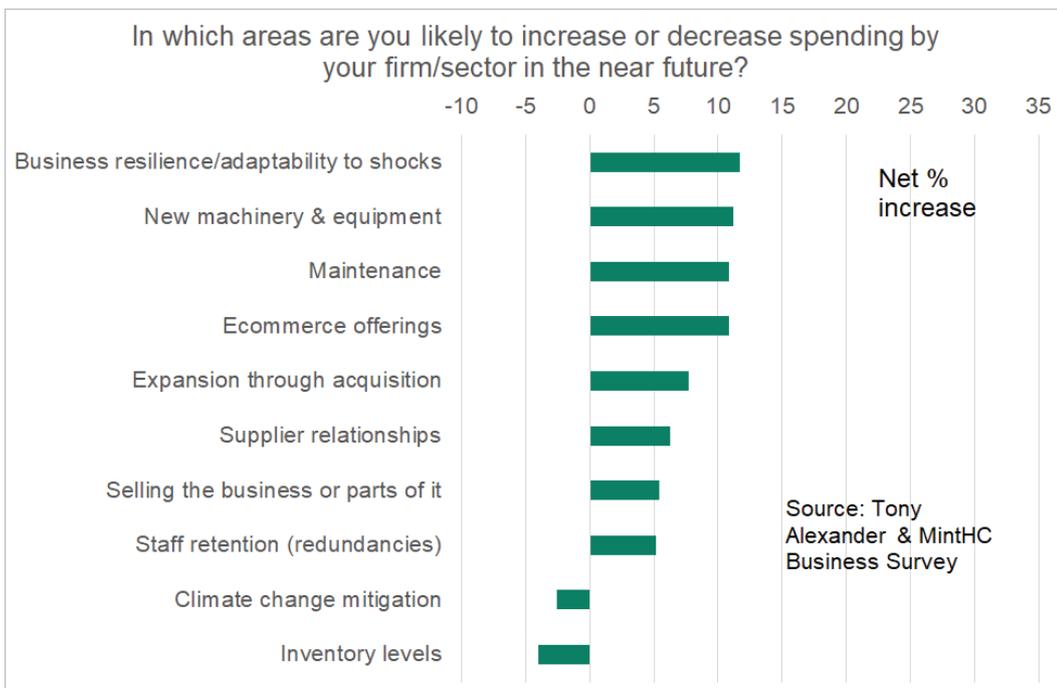
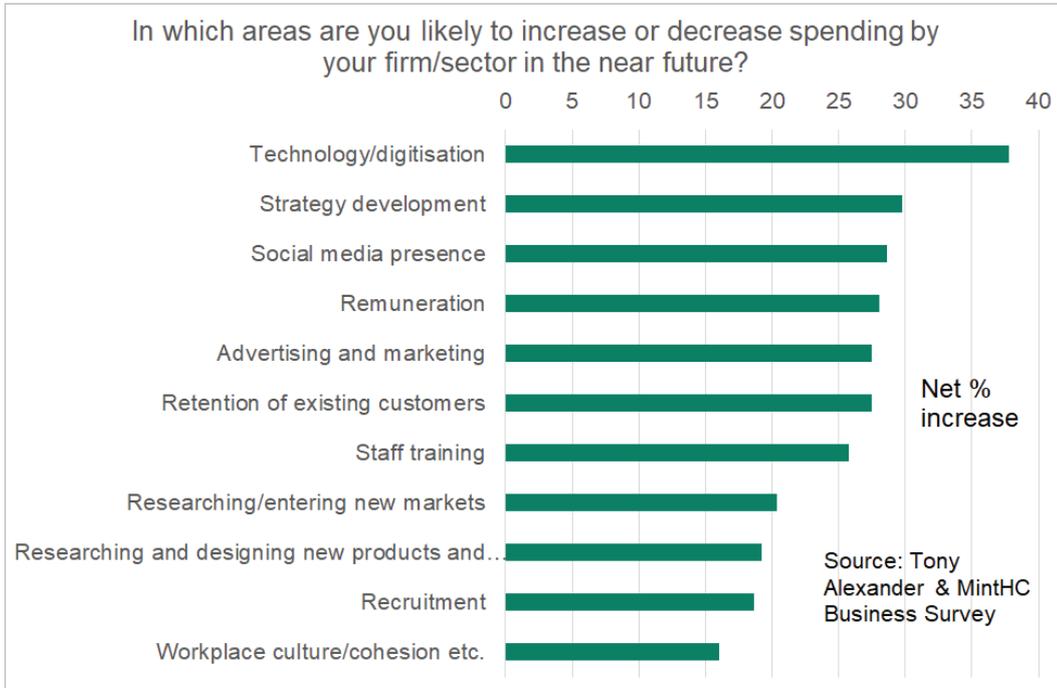


Few businesses are concerned about their bad debt levels and supply chain worries remain low.



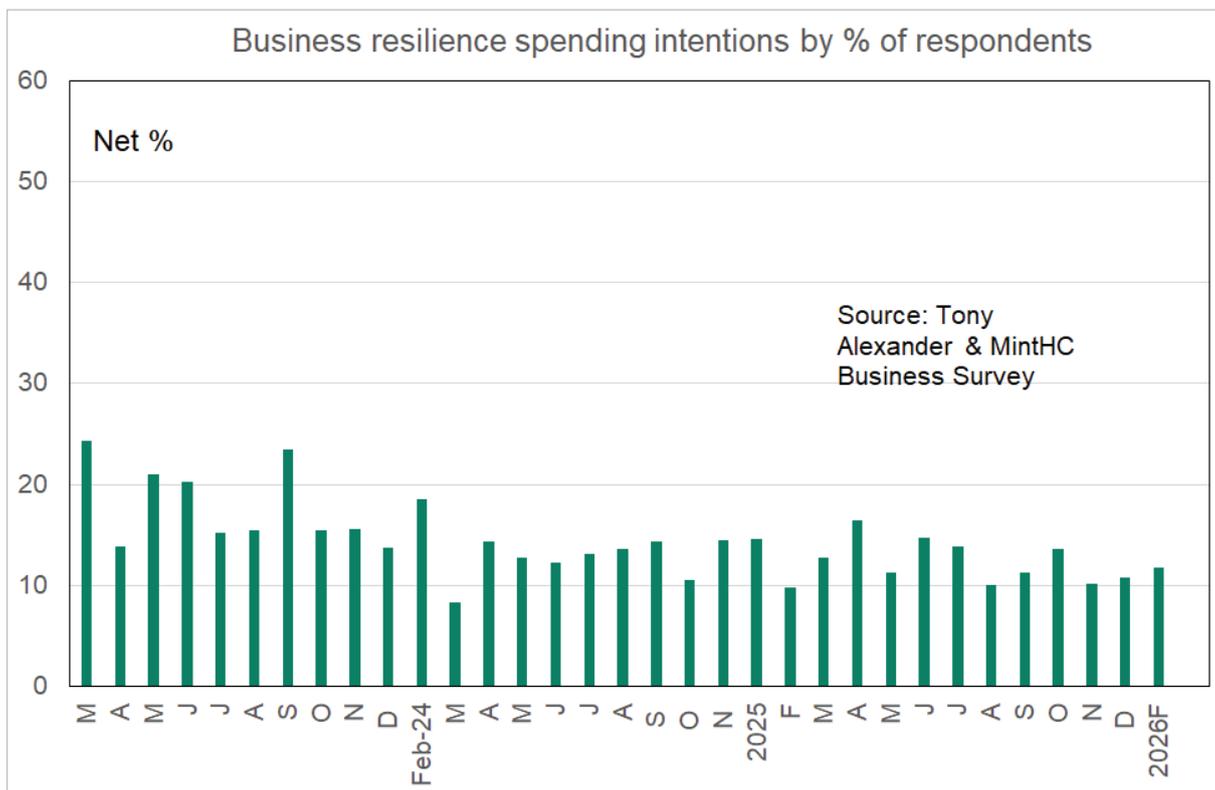
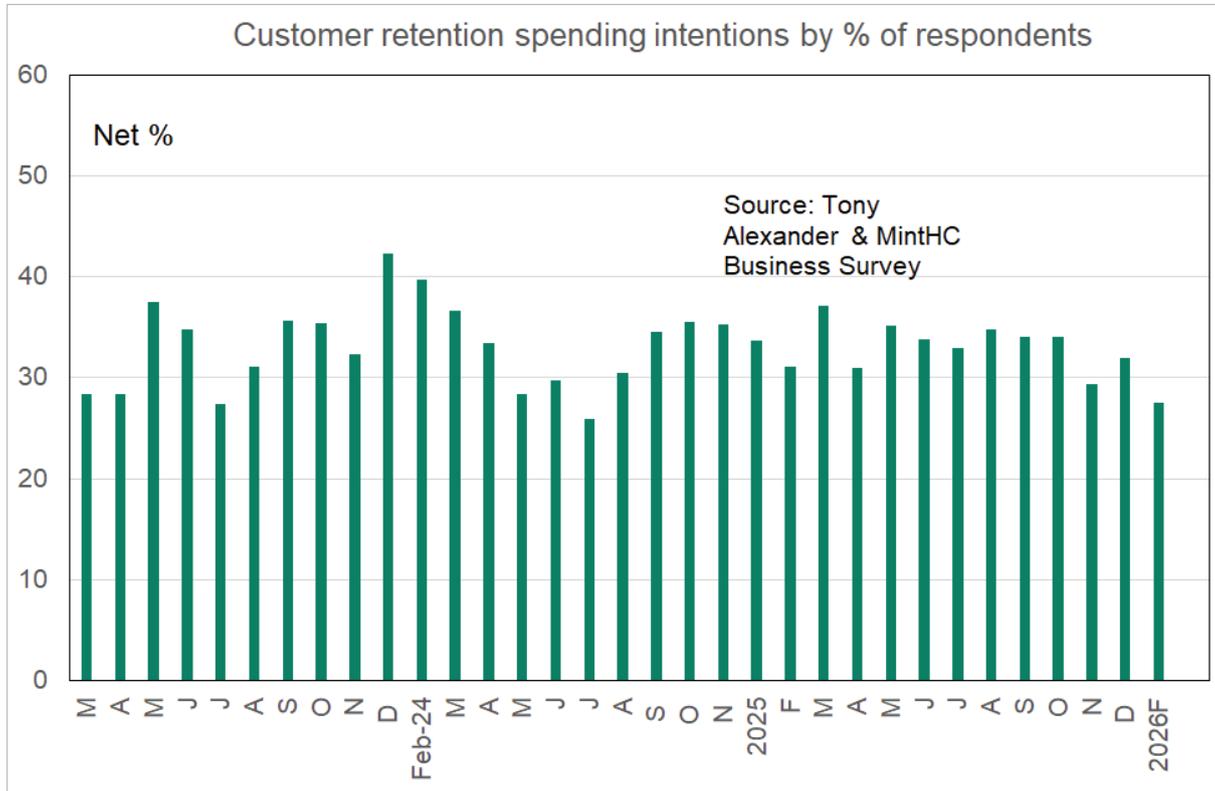
In which areas are you likely to increase or decrease spending by your firm/sector in the near future?

Our second main question is addressed at identifying where businesses are going to allocate their scarce funds in the coming year. Technology, strategy, and social media presence rank as greatest areas of spending intentions. Inventory plans have shifted back to the negative again and spending on climate change plans are weak.

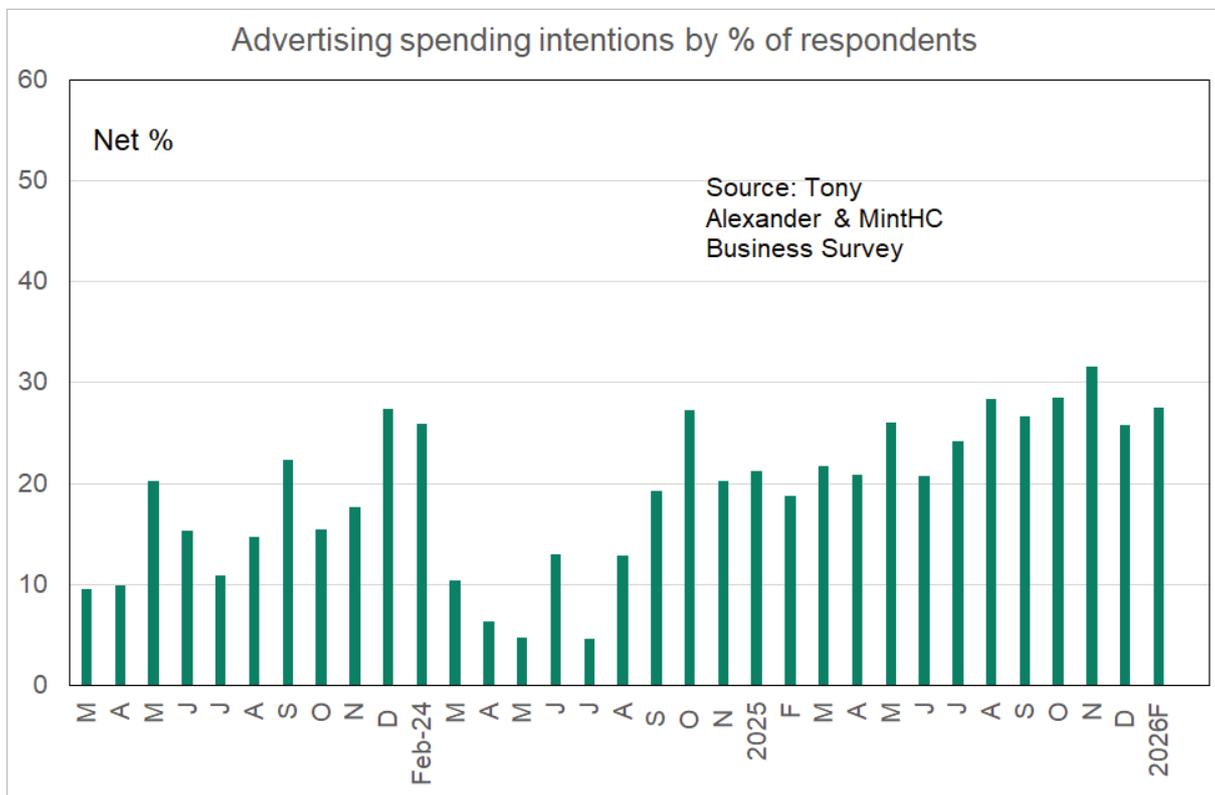
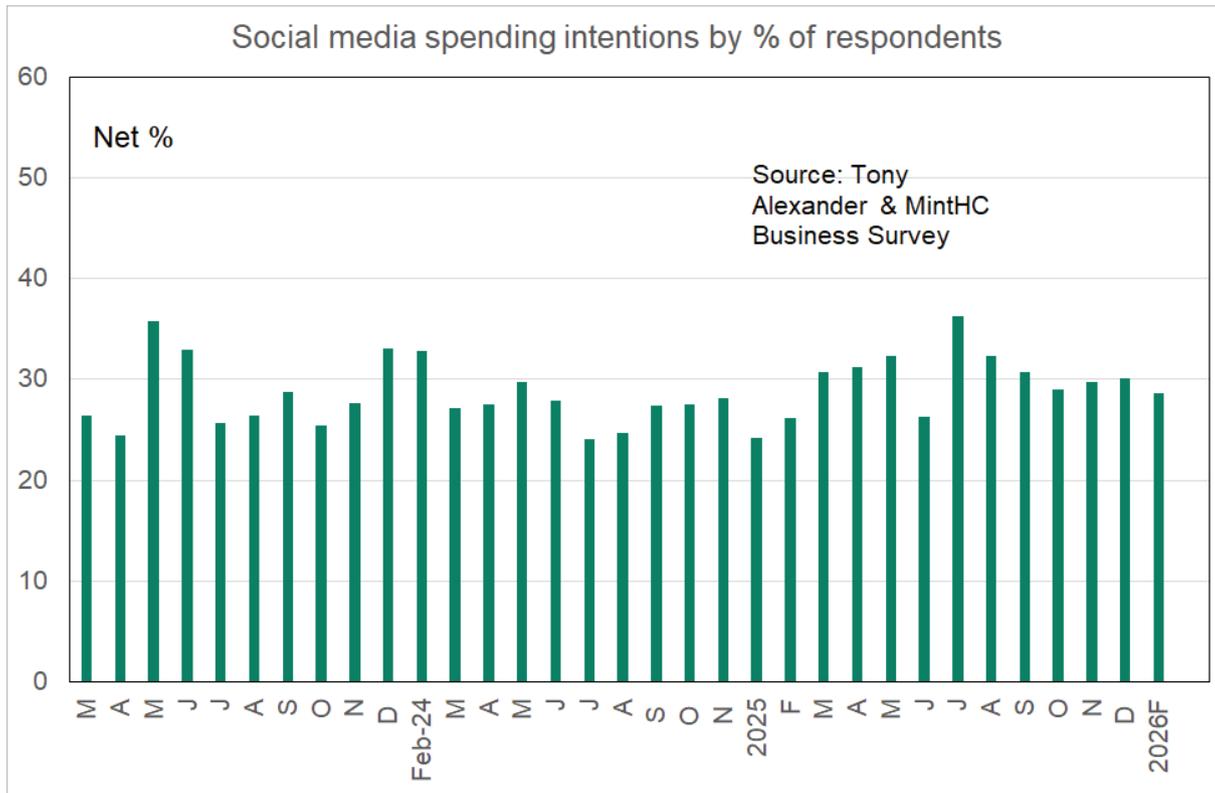


These next graphs look at how planned areas of spending change have been tracking since our survey started in March 2023.

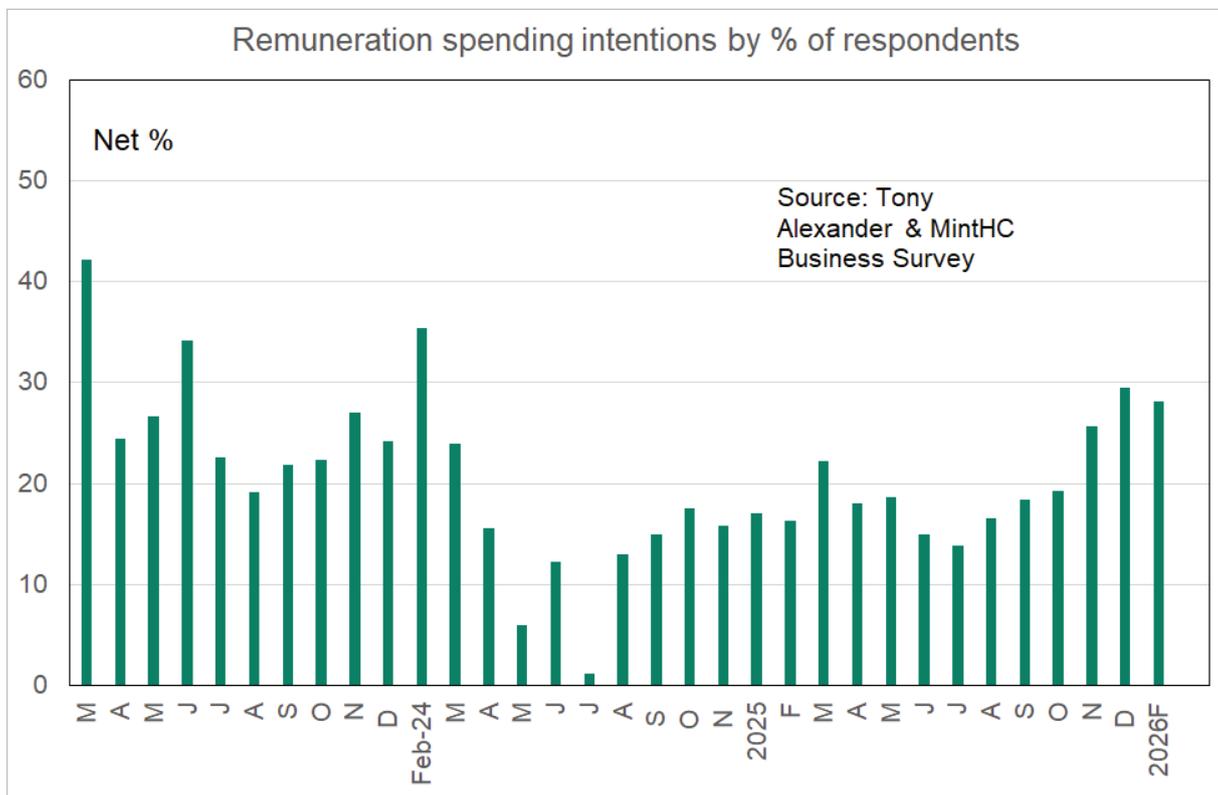
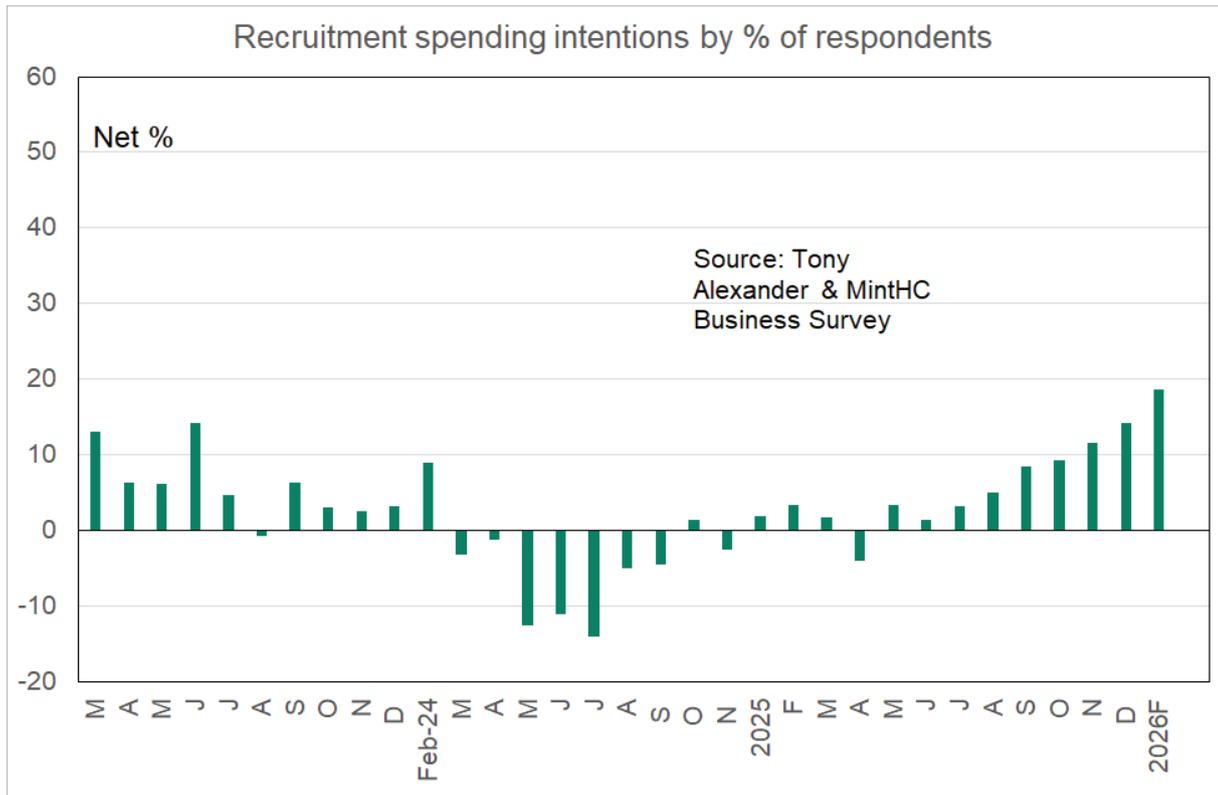
Perhaps in anticipation of better customers flows as the economy improves, businesses are slowly pulling back on their plans to spend more on retaining existing customer. No clear trend is apparent in business spending plans for resilience – perhaps in the absence of a very recent fresh shock to revenue flows or costs.



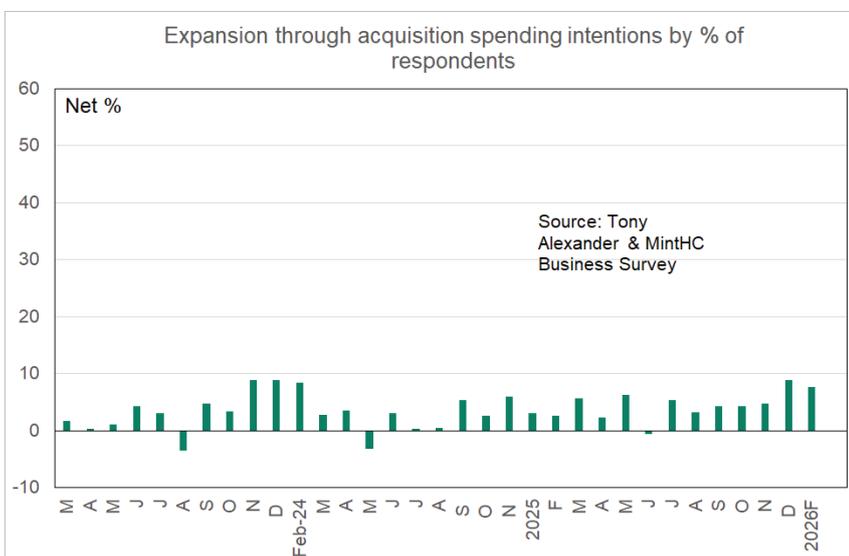
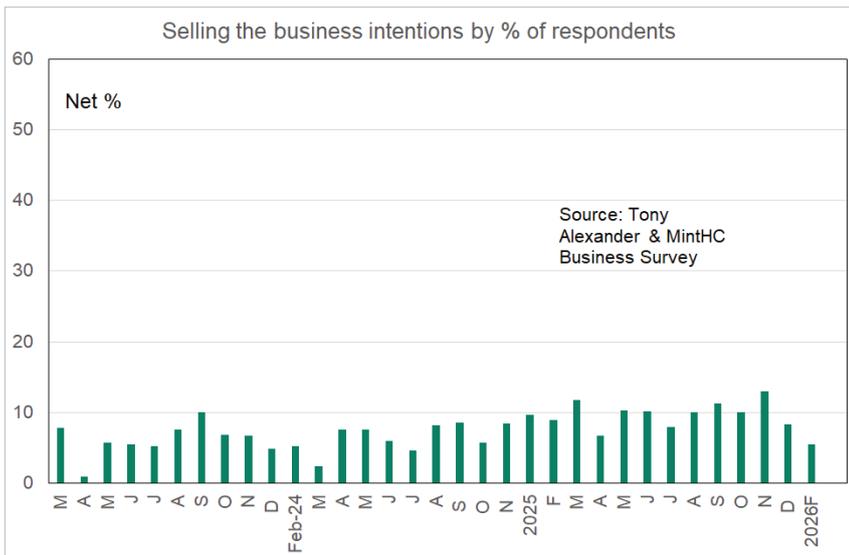
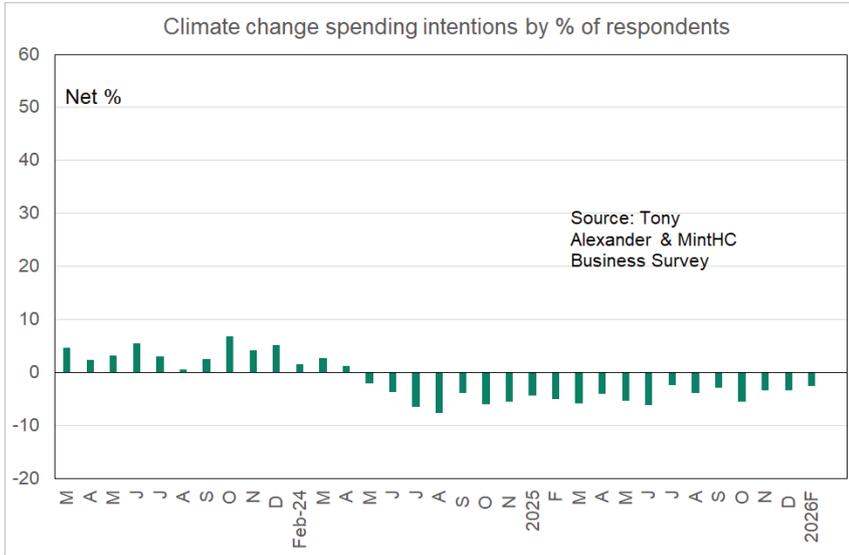
Spending on social media continues to track high as an area of attention. No wonder the large international social media businesses are thriving! There is a slow upward trend underway in the broad category of “advertising” which most businesses are likely to interpret as more traditional areas like print, radio, and perhaps television.



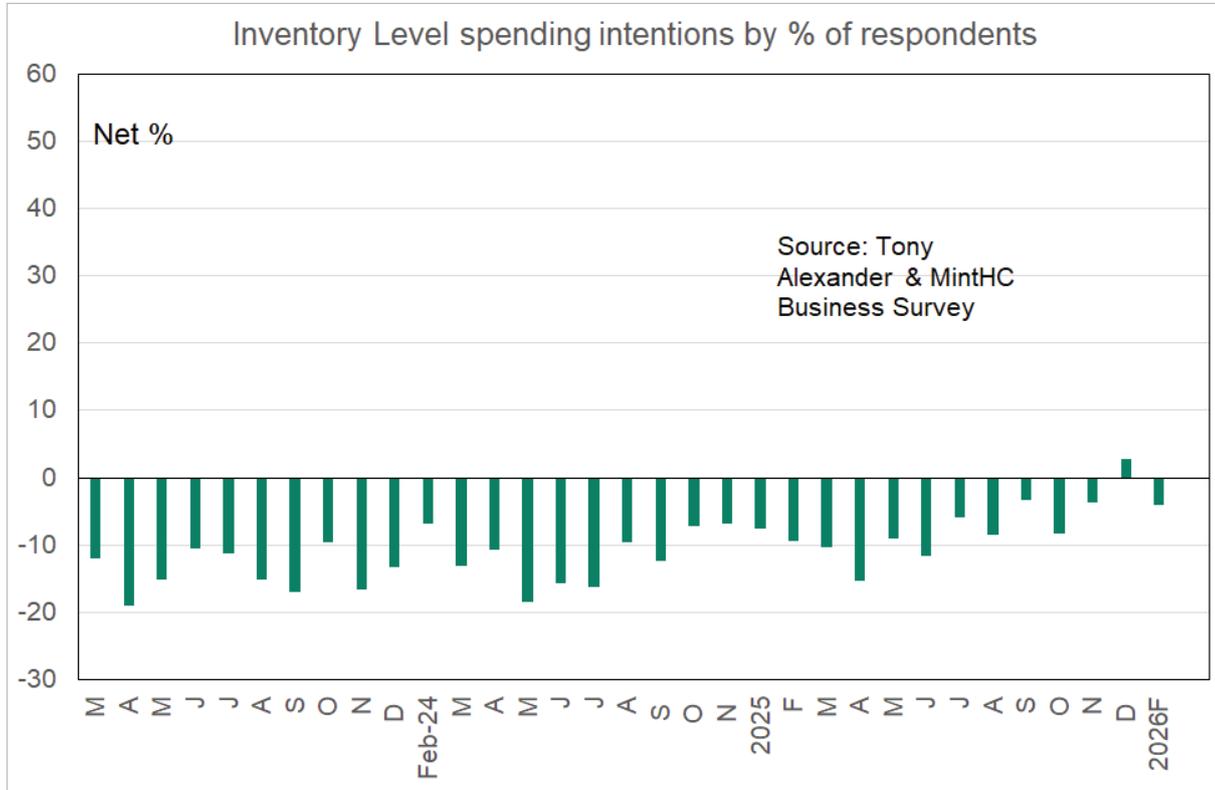
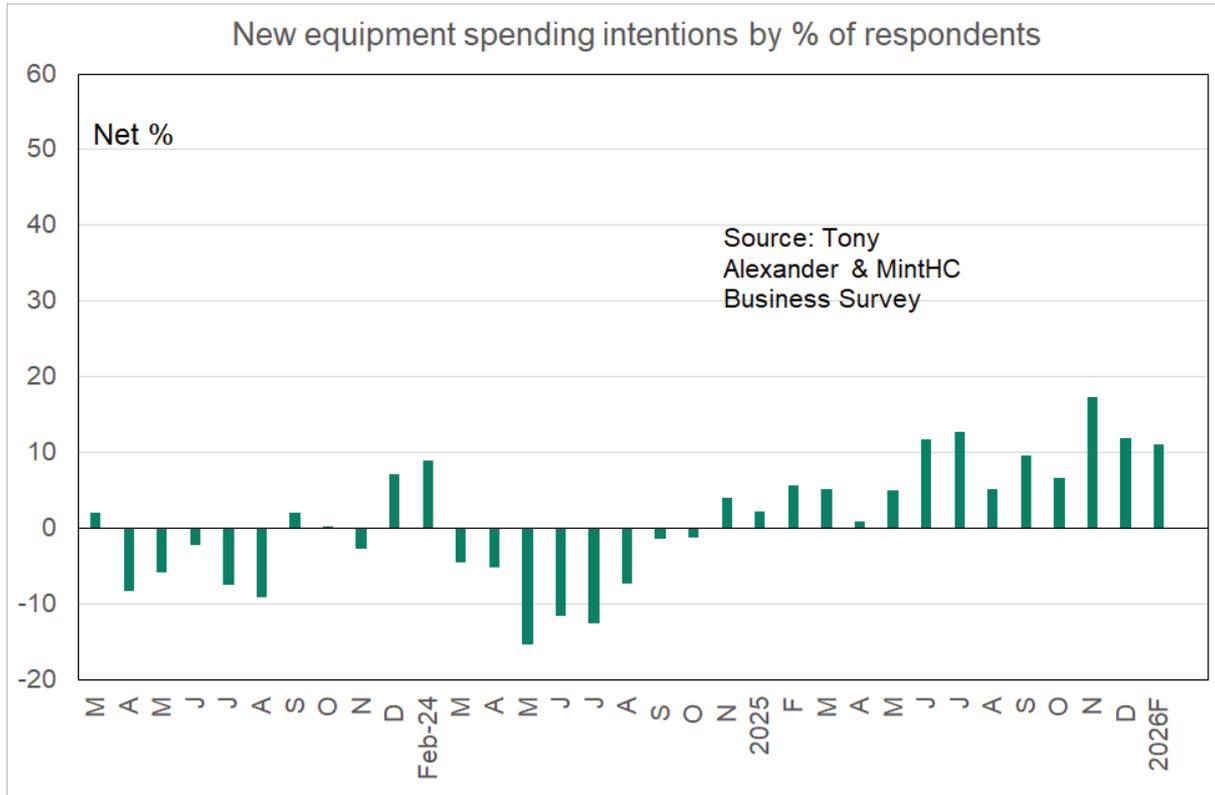
The strongest upward trend in plans for spending more comes in the area of recruitment. Businesses are aware of their dependence on employees and anticipation of better economic conditions is likely driving this surge. The trend is less clear for spending on remuneration.



Intentions of spending on climate change issues turned net negative in the middle of 2024 and remain that way. One interesting development in this month's survey is a firm decline in the net proportion of businesses planning to sell their operation. At the same time the past two surveys have shown a lift in intentions to acquire another business. This spells good news for business brokers perhaps.



Businesses plan spending more on capital equipment however have pulled back on their intentions of raising inventory levels.

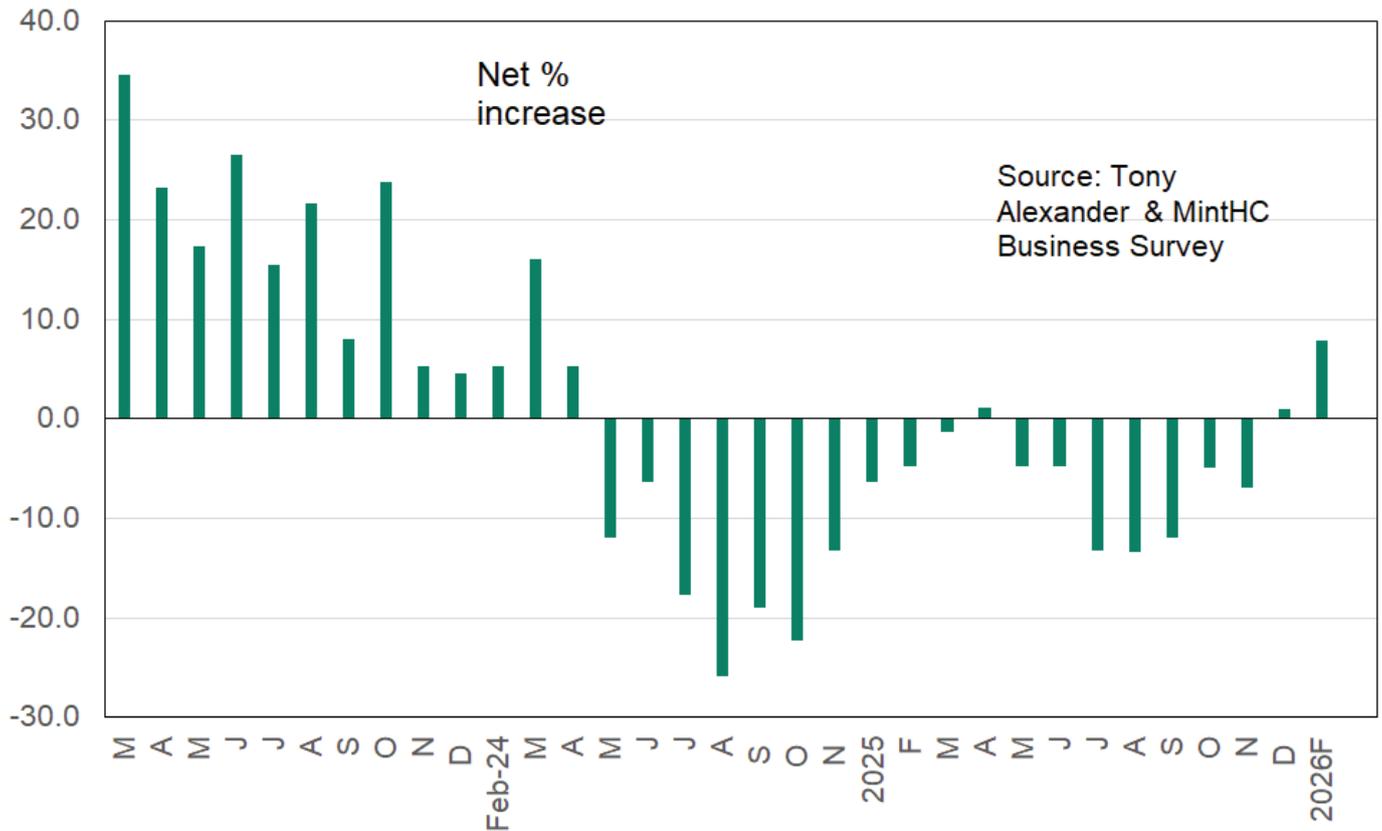


Are you planning on increasing your prices for any of your products or services this year?

Business plans for raising their selling prices have been trending up since September last year and this month a net 8% have said they plan boosting price over the coming 12 months. This is the highest result since March 2024 and well away from the net 26% who in August 2024 said they would cut prices. The strong change back then illustrates how much the 2024 recession hit business planning.

For now it is hard to gauge the extent to which businesses will follow through on their pricing plans. But in conjunction with the upward trend measured in the ANZ's business pricing measure this suggests rising inflation risks as we advance through 2026.

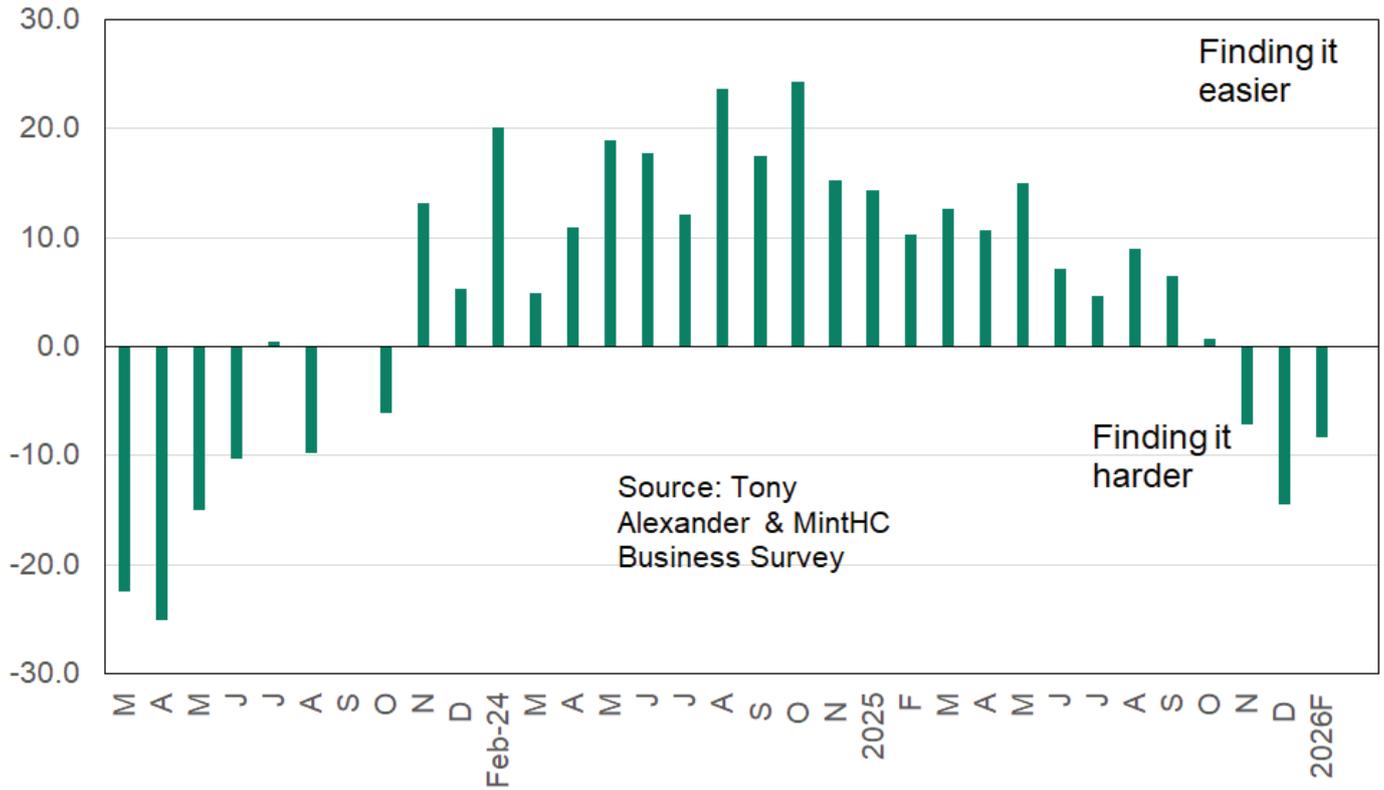
Plans to raise prices in the coming year



Have you noticed any change in the availability of good staff recently?

A net 8% of businesses in our first survey for 2026 have reported that they are having difficulty sourcing the staff they want. This is an improvement from a net 15% reporting issues two months ago but still indicates to us that the labour market has entered a tightening up phase.

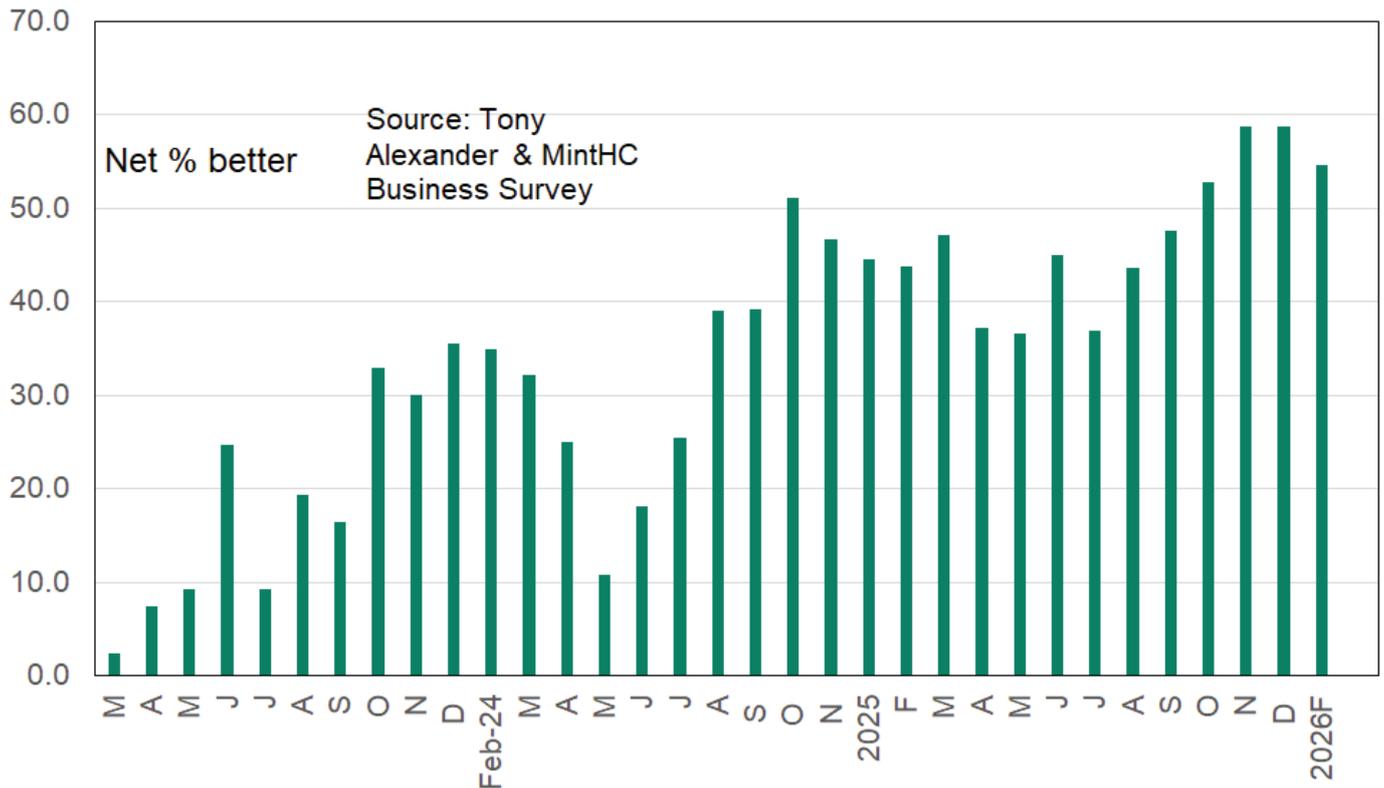
Have you noticed any change in the availability of good staff recently?



In 12 months from now, are you expecting your business revenue to be better, worse or stay the same?

Ever since August 2024 when the Reserve Bank started easing monetary policy a high net positive proportion of businesses have said they expect higher revenues in a year's time. This measure eased back slightly towards the middle of last year as the economy turned out to be less strong than expected. But since then optimism has recovered to a net 55% expecting higher receipts.

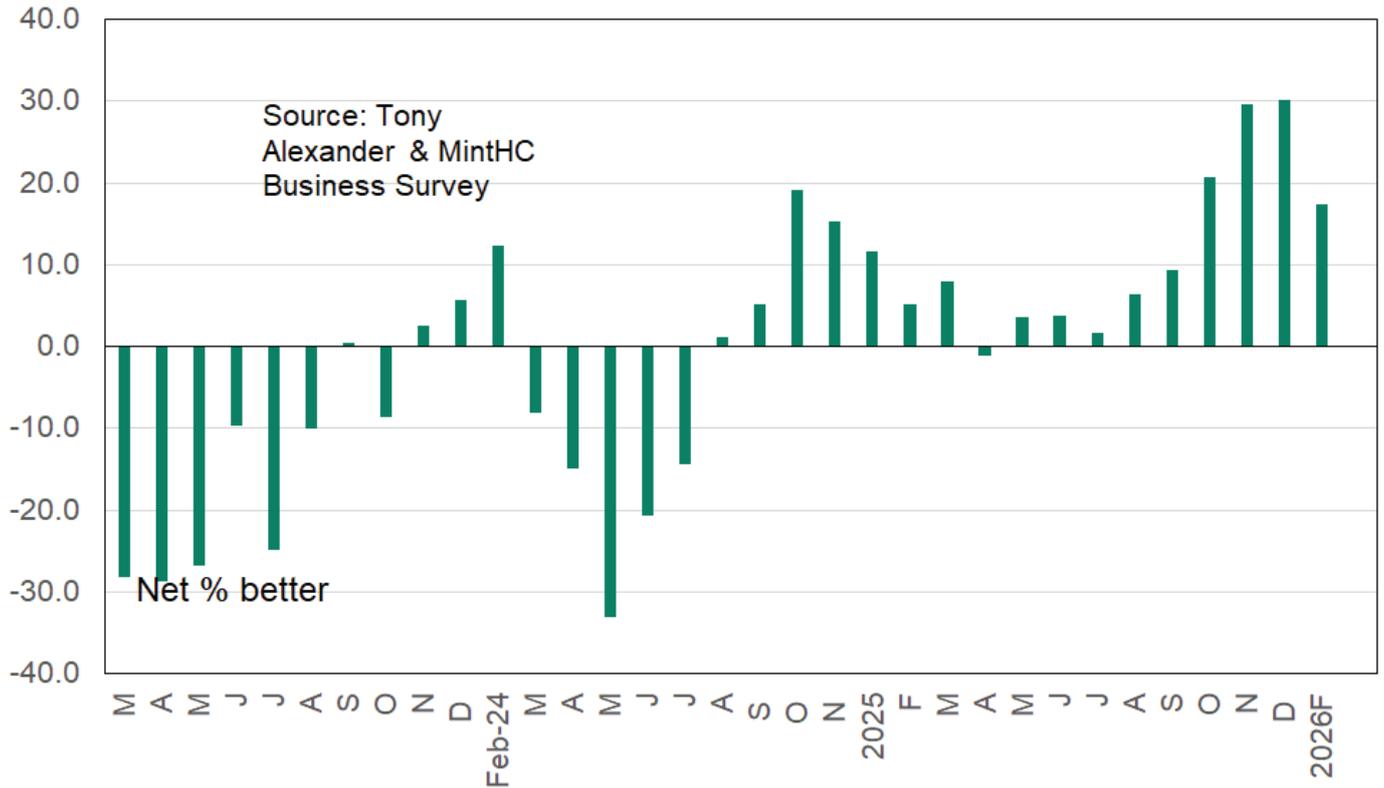
In 12 months from now, are you expecting your business revenue to be better, worse or stay the same?



Do you think the coming year will see an improvement or deterioration in your staff's morale and mental health?

Consistent with a slight deterioration in other measures since the strong optimism of December we have also seen a small decline in business expectations for workplace morale in a year's time. Just 17% expect improvement now compared with a strong 30% in both December and November last year.

Do you think the coming year will see an improvement or deterioration in your staff's morale and mental health?



Respondent Insights

Following are most of the comments submitted by survey respondents, grouped by the industry they allocated themselves to from a list of over 30 sectors. These are the tidied up comments of the respondents.

Main points which we are able to glean from these responses include the following.

- Uncertainty and concern about the outcome of November's general election is causing some businesses to already put investment plans on hold.
- High caution remains about how strong the economic recovery will be with some easing off of the high optimism expressed at the end of last year.

Accounting & business advisory services incl. business broking

- Still seems very patchy and location dependent
- Overall still busy. Market doing ok.
- Some of our clients are really struggling and others continue to increase profits
- Small CA AK: We are very busy and turning away work of low quality and shedding similar clients. Steady stream of good quality clients coming on board.
- Never increasing compliance costs both within the professional body and external
- Clients struggling with cashflow in their business
- Small business clients still struggling with no sales growth, cost increases and consequently managing their cashflow.
- Getting good quality staff
- More optimism – it is contagious – almost everyone we deal with is expecting a better year.
- Pressure from lack of staff.
- We are seeing as business brokers strong investor demand for good businesses. Pent up. Businesses are recovering. Historic financials mostly grim.

Advertising & marketing

- We are still struggling to get confidence from businesses to commit to spending on marketing, advertising and new AI technology. They are taking a wait and see approach, and I don't think it being an election year will help. We need an upturn in sales after 5 very flat and negative growth years.
- AI is changing everything, and everything is speeding up. We are investing heavily to stay on top of the AI wave.

- Customers slow to pay. Customer confidence is waning following an improvement at the end of 2025.
- There's a feeling of stagnation/inertia creating little appetite for spending more on advertising for market grab due to margins are being squeezed and there's a fear of other costs (particularly wages) continuing to climb, while import costs are exacerbated by low NZD. Marketing efforts are entirely focussed on customer retention, not acquisition or sale-specials.
- Clientele mood is changing – from pessimism and survival to opportunities and growth. Not a raging spends and invest but tentative steps being taken in that direction.

Banking and Finance

- As a business to business lender it has been great to see that customers are increasingly looking to invest into their businesses.
- Higher demand for alternative finance solutions from large t/o businesses
- Interest rate increases will slow business

Cafes, bars, and restaurants

- Business picking up, and new food offers opening, showing confidence in the economy.
- Business is continuing in the same pattern as last year. Completely inconsistent day to day but the weekly turnover is roughly the same. Not seeing any growth yet. Not sure if we will but we're still making a profit. Got a new espresso machine from our supplier, coffee tastes better and the power bill has gone down by \$3 a day. Good to keep up with the latest technology.

Civil construction/infrastructure

- Slow customer engagement although it has picked up slightly.
- The economy seems to have turned a corner. That now needs to translate into actionable infrastructure projects – investment of funds and resources
- Lots more competition and people still undercutting for work
- Civil construction in Auckland doesn't have a steady workflow and contractors are pricing a lot of jobs at cost, this is unsustainable
- Working in the ready mix industry I see builders and concreting contractors on a daily basis and they all pretty much say the same thing and that is that it's tough out there and the phones aren't ringing as much anymore nobody is expecting things to improve a hell of a lot in 26 we are all hoping things start to turn around in 2027. It also doesn't help when you have competitors dropping their rates to the point it is not worth doing the job.
- It's a grind still. Much like the 1990's. We think it will get better only because it couldn't get worse.

Commercial construction

- Electrical Contractor: Outside of Auckland forward work has increased dramatically, now we cannot meet demand. Labour availability already a problem.
- In the industrial sector there is more availability of warehouses, and the cost of construction is rising again mainly due to compliance and rule changes that in particular councils arbitrarily add or say they require because of some new rule they invented to extract more money from businesses to fund the bloated bureaucracy
- Looked to be starting to pick up and improve, but election campaigning has put a dampness on it. Just as happens every election year, but this one couldn't have come at a worse time, just as everything seemed to start to turn and improve.
- General increase in confidence
- The construction industry feels positive about this year in general (across the country)
- Nothing is getting better and if anything it's getting tougher to makes things stack up
- Lack of commercial contracts to tender for – also lack of work in general
- Continued closure of retail, businesses downsizing commercial space to increase profitability, using technology to replace people hence increasing profitability

Commercial real estate

- Commercial leasing: Demand for commercial rental property in Silverdale continues to be depressed.
- A lot of vacant first floor office space is available and few new businesses looking for office space in the code.
- Signs of improvement with increased leasing inquiry in 2026 and generally a more optimistic feel albeit off a low base
- Commercial leasing enquiry is improving but still very sensitive to negative economic news stories.
- A positive lift in inquiry from purchasers and tenants across all commercial property asset types
- Slow forward progress, unsure if it is the right direction yet or with the right foundations beneath the progress, time will tell.
- Tenant availability is low. Need more confidence in the market. This is slowly improving.
- Staff easier to find

Education and training

- The increased costs of running seminars makes it harder for my clients to afford them
- Lots of enquiries for our services now. Busiest we've been since Covid lockdowns.
- Increase in tertiary enrolments due to lack of availability of jobs
- Tough retail side to the business. Weather having its impacts too

Engineering

- Demand for services seems to be quite stop-start
- A lot of focus on cheapest price wins in the construction industry over existing relationships and past performance. It's damn hard to predict future workload as very random on where work is going to come from.
- Jobs dried out and not much in the pipeline.
- Workloads continue to be variable between service lines, but overall a lot lower than we need to make any profit. Very much still in survival mode.
- As an importer/wholesaler we are getting hit with a change in export incentives out of China leading to a 10% increase in costs which will be passed on to our customers in some form but otherwise there seems to be a general pick up in business around the country with the reps reporting most business they call on are much more positive than they have been over the last couple of years.

Farming & farming services

- Raw wool prices are up 30%+ over the last 2 months! A long time Between drinks!
- In the current trading environment/cycle, finding ways to improve/lift productivity remains a key business focus for us.
- Although the future looks positive there is uncertainty everywhere. Government, environmental, overseas markets, foreign country conflicts.
- Arable industry is struggling with profitability, competition from cheap imports, weather and high input costs and replacing machinery, technology that are so expensive now. Farms are being leased or sold, which does not allow the younger generation to come through.
- Good demand for services so far this year and thankfully the weather is playing its part.
- Avocado growing is a tough gig at the moment. Most growers I know will make a loss this season. International competition is huge into the markets we supply. Growers who are trying to or have exited the industry have mostly sold to kiwifruit growers who are converting the orchards over. But they are only wanting to pay less than market value.
- Concern about politics and global uncertainties
- Compliance costs from the regional council and local authority rates.

Financial advice/wealth management

- An increase in demand for my services as Baby Boomers retire and look for investment or income options, especially with bank term deposits so low
- Funds Management: People are preoccupied with the potential outcome of this year's election creating a hiatus in their decision making and adding to a sense of inertia in their economy.

Health

- Nervous about the lack of planning from the govt and ad hoc decisions
- Uncertainty across the board
- Legislative change is moving quickly, often without clear thought of the wider outcomes and unanticipated outcomes.
- Recently sold vet clinic after 29 years. Contractor rate now, increased a bit.

Information technology

- Customers still hesitant to commit to IT projects
- The end of last year was looking good going into 2026. Two months in and confidence with clients still isn't there. I'm hoping it changes but election worries are building.
- Looking to grow business but the level of challenge in the world is a concern
- The skills needed to be impactful are changing. Influenced by automation and AI.
- We are an IT Managed Services Provider. Things remain slow, not a huge amount of new business, and is pipeline week. Not expecting much improvement until mid-late 2026. There is increased activity among existing customers looking to uplift and spend more on cyber security and technology improvement projects.
- Ever-increasing direct input costs are putting pressure on our selling points, which then puts pressure on retaining our customers (since our larger customers are very price sensitive and can easily move on to competitors).
- Business in Christchurch is looking good.
- The last 10 months have been really good after a very tough 2 years prior, and expect the increased demand to continue for the foreseeable future, thanks to a more positive wider economy. The causes for concern are the election year delaying commercial decision making and severe supply shortages here and worsening (thanks to AI datacentre building sprees) which is going to force price increases on most tech products.
- Uncertainty due to being an election year; so customer spend is a little dicey. Trying to find a way to keep team morale up – whilst they are dealing with external cost pressures due to cost of level and worries about NZ “in general

Insurance

- Excess global capacity driving pricing downwards
- The insurance industry is blamed for increased premiums but much of the premium growth is as a result of a) increased government levies; b) significant increases in construction costs over past few years (H&S requirements, materials inflation, consent fees etc); c) climate change causing more severe and frequent weather events.

Legal

- Concern about election year and world events
- Legal provincial NZ – Property market is slow with low volume and has been for some time. Still waiting for the recovery to come
- Economic momentum and rebuilding profit margins.

Manufacturing (all categories)

- Positivity increasing but reality not matching it just yet
- A major problem is market uncertainty caused by random changes in US tariffs.
- Definite improvements in customer demand, but the election is a worry and often affects demand.
- High brand & quality products are easy to sell; mid market is a shambles
- Drop in Sales. Cheap imported product that competes with our manufactured product.
- General improvement in sentiment is not showing through in sales data or pricing power. Still in the doldrums.
- Commercial construction and reduced infrastructure spending is impacting many manufacturing businesses revenue. This also means less money in employee's pockets so less spending which results in even lower revenue.
- Sales have been improving marginally but still slow.
- Poor sales. Retail is extremely quiet for consumer durable goods of a large dollar value!
- Continued decline in consumer demand for premium branded/priced products squeezing margins and reducing revenue while competition in the lower priced end of the market is increasing squeezing ability to grow volumes
- People still unsure plans put on hold, confidence at average levels
- Those with money are not spending. Those without money do not want to borrow.
- Consumer demand is faltering, feels like the recent inflation number and mortgage rate changes are making people a bit more cautious than at the end of last year.
- Slow start to the year but hopeful things will improve.
- Customer demand is fickle. After hitting budgeted Revenues in November and December 2025, January 2026 proved to be a disappointment! We need Joe and Jane Bloggs to open their wallets and start spending money on furniture, kitchens, bathrooms, decks, fences, DIY projects, etc.
- Customer demand has not started strong in 2026 and is not where we had hoped. Recruiting skilled staff is proving difficult and not likely to improve. We acknowledge that it is partially due to our location.

- Manufacturing and distribution: We are manufacturer/direct suppliers to the construction market; we are a national (& now international) company and hold the premier position in our unique sector. After a tough year and as leaders in our sector, we have seen our customers remain quite hesitant around whether to spend, or hold back in the construction sector (new homes/complex/retirement/commercial/industrial builds). It has been suggested by suppliers across the country that more business is coming online, on the back of strong quoting last year, and there is more new home demand, retirement villages, which were previously delayed, are now coming online and generally demand is up. Our January numbers reflect this. While margins are tight, we cannot just raise prices as there are competitors and in these market times, & end user customers will generally take a punt, (on an inferior product), if they believe they can get away with it! A market that wants to move, but is stuttering and hesitant in the same breath!
- Inconsistent, positive, yet adverse!

Miscellaneous

- Artist: More interest in my work from interior designers who are working on new projects and refurbishments.
- Biotech startup: Tax is too high for the startup sector. Otherwise, steady as she goes expecting slow growth.
- Childcare: Wages aren't growing fast enough, so those seeking child-care often find it net-net not worth going back to work unless they have a very high paying job.
- Commercial & residential property services: The last 24 months have been extremely challenging. Improvement is slow – generally just talk at present, but the economic mood is improving.
- Distributor/Importer: It's not firing, it remains steady. Desperate to see an uptick!
- Drycleaning: Really hard for our small business, less disposable income. We will likely have to close within the next 6 months
- Equipment Hire: More work in civil and building will result in more business for us
- Forestry: Increasing prices internationally is mainly just adjusting to the currency, and domestically because we've either dropped or maintained prices for a long time now. Things are starting to pick up
- Gardening services: This is a fairly new business so expecting income to increase with more clients coming on board
- Not for profit: Decreased giving is constraining budgets as we've run through our reserves; worker morale is low as workloads shift into areas that aren't their natural gifting due to staff unavailability.
- Printing & packaging: No confidence displayed by customers
- Professional Property Services: Steady property development, but at muted levels. Enough work for us. Property development law reform & possible territorial authority changes will need attention.
- Urban development: Cost and time delays of get development projects approved and under way

Mortgage broking/advisory

- Increased number of new Advisers
- Still too much red tape, bank funding is stifled by risk adverse bank who aren't using their RBNZ limits
- Cost of compliance is crippling and the slowness of the banks to respond affects our ability to provide for our clients in a timely way.

Motor vehicle sales/parts

- Automotive repair: Lower spend per customer due to higher living costs.
- Competition from new players is going to impact.
- We are seeing green shoots since Nov
- Harder to find quality staff. Continuation of new entrants into the motoring sector (mainly Chinese) diluting the market in the short term. Hard market currently
- People are willing to spend on maintenance now, or on the things that they have put up with. People are now wanting those faults repaired. There is more confidence out there.

Recruitment

- Still waiting for what we thought would be an uptick in activity in the New Year
- On the improve as are margins
- The year started way slower than expected with clients significantly down in revenues (circa 25%. Not the hiss and roar we were hoping for!
- We're seeing a rise in recruitment demand from our SME clients but still have a few clients going through redundancy rounds. Overall, more growth than decline of headcount.

Residential construction incl. section development

- Sales are slow.
- We supply to residential construction in Wellington. Last 5 months have been steady with a good volume of work. Start of 2026 has been very strong, a lot of KO jobs seem to have been approved which has boosted our orders. Pipeline is looking strong for 2026 but given last 2 years will believe it only after another 5 months or so of orders matching or exceeding forecast. Will be very reluctant to hire until unless we are completely overwhelmed with work.
- Strong sales this quarter on the back of strong enquiry at the end of last year. However lower levels of new enquiry this year. Still hesitation among customers to commit. Nervousness around job security reducing but still evident. Caution with an election at the end of year and talk of interest rates going up.
- Regulations and lack of material supplier competition mean building costs keep rising
- Competitors slashing their margins and rates to win work
- The residential construction upturn towards the end of last year now seems to be a dead cat bounce. This is far worse than the normal post-holiday hangover.

- Positivity with a bit of substance as opposed to blind hope of improvement for the last couple of years
- Still under pressure from the huge demand for house designs
- Residential development is very difficult with a lack of supply of suitable land at an economically affordable price coupled with increasing compliance costs and Council fees. An uncertain economic outlook means a lack of ability to count on pre-sales and a market for housing to be available looking 2 – 3 years ahead post subdivision development (with large upfront capital costs).
- Pick up in enquiry for new residential builds, conversion still slow
- Uncertainty and lack of momentum.
- Lack of demand due to general reluctance to commit and move forward with projects.
- First half of the year looking busy
- Improved customer demand, concern about continued profitability of projects
- We have seen slight improvement in the residential construction sector, hopefully this improved flow is maintained throughout the year.
- Increased enquiry, especially for our 70m2 (or smaller) homes, but haven't seen conversion rate increase yet in relation to enquiry.

Residential real estate

- Uncertainty about interest rates going forward and unemployment job security affects people's ability to buy real estate
- The three months before the election will quieten up the buyer activity.
- There is more optimism in the property market. Vendors are keen to sell and move on, and buyers have sold and are looking hard for their next home.
- No change study as you go, but words of no confidence popping up amongst friends in business
- We deal with people from a multitude of business sectors, both business owners and employees and the message is pretty much the same across the board – it's tough out there, we are simply living day to day as there is nothing spare.
- Housing market in general improving in the Waikato. Multiple groups coming to open homes now versus none/little a year ago.
- Slight improvement in optimism, need bank support to grow
- Boomers and Investors selling. Their rentals have done their job, and returns are no longer there so they are cashing up and enjoying their later years.
- The 'tide is again coming in' with additional stock, more new Salespeople and the usual desire by the Real Estate companies to place more 'bums on seats' – to hell with the main stayers who have carried them through the rocky times!

- Buyers and vendors want to do deals and move on with life
- Money is still tight
- Open home numbers are increasing. Intent in the market but sellers and buyers still have different views on price

Residential rentals/Investment

- Residential flats are very hard to rent in Wellington if they are not one or two bedrooms. Anything over 3+ bedrooms is extremely difficult to rent.
- Hopefully finding new tenants will become easier and rents can increase to pay for increased costs.
- Am seeing quality modern tidy rental property rent quickly. Old, tired properties are struggling. It's all part of the cycle.
- Less demand for rentals, Huge number of new builds, Tenants don't want to mow lawns and look after properties.
- I'm a house flipper. Competition to purchase houses in need of renovation has increased along with costs. This affects the overall revenue.
- Cost of electricity and gas, Insurances
- Property investors reducing numbers of rentals in preparation for govt change/ tougher regulations
- good solid bookings over the summer months as our exchange rate is very good for people visiting from overseas
- Property value slump and reduced rentals making long term investment less viable. Perhaps our biggest fear is a change in government and a return to the unfair and untenable treatment of mum and dad rental property investors.

Retailing

- Lack of sales
- Retail still very flat
- We are located in a region – and seem to be doing well compared to the cities. The economy is still in a go slow. It's stopped going backwards though. Our customers are still coming back. Just don't have a lot of new ones
- Having an increasing number of hopeful conversations where businesses are planning for the future rather than just surviving – reflected in capital spending. Still finding market overly competitive with some crazy prices, incentives and fierce tactics which are unsustainable.
- Increased competition driving the selling prices down. Margins being squeezed. Ability for customers/end users to import product directly themselves seems to be increasing. Customer purchasing habits appear to be based more on price and not quality. Everyone looking for a bargain.
- More retail outlets working as a collective to reduce staffing costs and other overheads like rent and point of sale costs, reaching new markets by advertising collectively even though each small business may be quite different
- Stronger demand, less window shoppers and more customers deciding and purchasing on the spot

- An increasing use of Buy Now Pay Later payment options by customers. And for relatively small amounts (e.g. sub-\$50 purchases). Fingers crossed that customers are using these tools wisely, not just racking up more debt.
- Looks like a good start to the year but we hold concerns later this year with the election and what this might do for consumer confidence.
- Customers holding their purses. Overall confidence in the long term seems positive but its not changing spending just yet. Election year will throw in more uncertainty so don't expect much uplift until after that
- Lack of direction in the broader economy and infrastructure failure.
- Interest rates. Poor supplier performance.
- Customers are cautious spenders. Often opting for a cheaper product.

Shipping, transport, storage & distribution

- Uncertainty across the direction of central government policy as we head into the election

Tourism & accommodation

- Uncertainty about the future, lower revenues, higher costs.
- There seems to be a firm up in demand particularly in overseas visitors with local demand still well down on two years ago.
- Hoping for a general lift in the Auckland hospitality and events sector

Wholesale

- Trade Distribution still no noticeable uptick in sales trends, markets remain lumpy but inquiry levels increasing.
- Importation and distribution of commercial kitchen equipment and plumbing products: Slow Improvement in demand levels but still very price conscious. Repairing equipment rather than replacing still preferred tactic currently but eventually old equipment requires replacing.
- Importing/wholesaling: Some smaller players are struggling, but there are definite opportunities for growth in the industry, some of which we're taking advantage of.

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