

*Protecting small business, promoting entrepreneurship*

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## Executive Summary

The world is going mobile, and America's entrepreneurs are fast-becoming major users of mobile applications (apps) to run their enterprises. Apps on mobile devices are helping small business owners save time; reduce costs; increase revenue and productivity; work more effectively; and better serve customers. In fact, there seems to be an app for almost every business need, and entrepreneurs are quickly tapping into these solutions made possible by rapid innovation in mobile technologies.

Looking ahead, the small business market is primed and well equipped to accelerate its adoption of mobile apps, as long as these tools meet specific needs and there's evidence such investments will save time and money. In this challenging and uncertain economic environment, entrepreneurs are searching for solutions and tools that will improve competitiveness.

“Saving Time and Money with Mobile Apps” looks at the stunning growth in mobile technologies and why small business owners are turning to mobile devices and apps to help solve key business challenges. The paper explains how small business owners are benefitting from mobile apps, and using results from an April 2011 “Mobile Apps Survey” conducted for SBE Council by TechnoMetrica<sup>1</sup>, offers data on the significant time savings that mobile apps are providing to small business owners and their employees. The authors estimate vast savings in both time and money that could be achieved by small businesses if they took advantage of mobile apps.

The key findings of “Saving Time and Money with Mobile Apps” include:

- **Strong mobile device migration:** Small businesses are accelerating their adoption of mobile technologies, with nearly half using smartphones, compared to well under a fifth of the general consumer market. Increasingly, small businesses are moving away from desktops and laptops and toward smartphones and tablets.
- **Mobile apps save small business owners significant time each week:** Of the small businesses that participated in the TechnoMetrica survey and use mobile apps, 78 percent believe their company's use of mobile apps saves

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<sup>11</sup> A nationwide telephone survey of small business owners with twenty employees or less was conducted by TechnoMetrica from the Small Business Insights Panel between April 21-27, 2011. A total of 304 surveys were completed with an overall margin of error of +/-5.7 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

time for the owner. *In fact, on a weekly basis, these small business owners estimate that they save an average of 5.6 hours (a median of 4.0 hours) due to their firm's use of mobile apps.*

Based upon the total number of U.S. small businesses with less than 20 employees (firms with 1-19 employees were polled for the survey), and the percentage of business owners in this cohort who report saving time by using mobile apps, an estimated 1.28 million small business owners are currently saving 372.8 million owner hours annually. An estimated 1.2 billion owner hours could be saved annually if owners took advantage of mobile apps.

- **Mobile apps are saving employee time:** In the TechnoMetrica survey, 75 percent of small businesses using mobile apps report saving employee time. *Small businesses estimate that an average of 11.33 employee hours – and a median of 5.0 hours – are saved on a weekly basis.*

Based on the percentage of businesses reporting employee time saved by using mobile apps, an estimated 1.23 million small firms are saving 725.3 million employee hours annually. An estimated 2.34 billion employee hours could be saved annually through wider app usage among small businesses.

Based on average pay for employees in small businesses, total current annual savings for small businesses from employee time saved are estimated conservatively at \$17.6 billion.

Finally, if all employer firms with fewer than 20 workers took advantage of mobile apps, the estimated 2.34 billion employee hours saved translates into an estimated \$56.9 billion in potential savings each year.

- **Mobile apps enable small businesses to focus on sales growth:** Small business owners are time-crunched, and would spend more time dealing with one of their toughest challenges – increasing sales and revenues – if they could save time on administrative functions. Nearly 50 percent of TechnoMetrica survey respondents believe they have been able to spend more time on growing business revenues due to their use of mobile apps. Fifty one percent of these small businesses say their firms are more competitive.

- **Small businesses see the “apportunity”:** Overwhelmingly, they view the Internet as their “most valuable business tool.” Small businesses that are currently using mobile apps plan to significantly increase usage. Rapid innovation and the dawn of the 4G network will speed adoption because of faster speeds, newer devices, and enhanced and more effective mobile apps.

**Karen Kerrigan, President & CEO**  
**Raymond J. Keating, Chief Economist**

*“Saving Time and Money With Mobile Apps” was made possible through the support of Chase Card Services*

## Introduction

The world is going mobile, and America's entrepreneurs are fast-becoming major users of mobile applications (apps) to run their enterprises. Apps on mobile devices are helping small business owners reduce costs, and increase revenue and productivity. Mobile apps are allowing small business owners and their employees to perform typical office or computer desk-top functions on a mobile basis thereby saving time by streamlining tasks that normally eat up hours each day. They are enabling business owners and their sales teams to find and land new customers more quickly, and service existing ones more effectively and efficiently. From brainstorming to number crunching, deploying crews to job quotes, invoicing to on-site sales, prospecting to communicating – indeed, and to borrow a phrase from Apple, “there’s an app for that.”

In fact, it seems there’s an app for almost every business need, and entrepreneurs are quickly tapping into these solutions made possible by rapid innovation in mobile technologies.

An AT&T Small Business Technology Poll released in March 2011 demonstrates how powerful a tool the mobile app is becoming for small firms.<sup>2</sup> According to the survey, 38 percent of business owners who use mobile apps reported their firms could not survive (or it would be a major challenge to survive) without them. With 96 percent of respondents in the survey reporting they currently use wireless technologies in their businesses, and with 40 percent saying all their employees use wireless devices or technologies to work away from the office (this number will grow to 50 percent by 2012), it is easy to see how mobile technologies will dominate day-to-day business in the not-too-distant future as many experts predict.

Katy Huberty, a Morgan Stanley analyst who follows the technology sector, believes “the mobile Internet will ramp faster than the desktop Internet and will be bigger than most people think.”<sup>3</sup> In fact, Huberty “would not be

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<sup>2</sup> Small Business Trends, “AT&T Survey Shows Mobile Apps Integral to Small Business Operations,” March 17, 2011. (<http://smallbiztrends.com/2011/03/att-survey-shows-mobile-apps-integral-to-small-business-operations.html>)

<sup>3</sup> Andy Patrizio, “Mobile Computing Trend: Tablets Will Supplant Netbooks by 2012,” June 9, 2010, (<http://www.enterprisemobiletoday.com/news/article.php/3886881/Mobile-Computing-Trend-Tablets-Will-Supplant-Netbooks-by-2012.htm>)

surprised to see tablet daily Internet usage exceed traditional PC Internet usage in the coming years,” as she wrote in a June 2010 research note.<sup>4</sup> The small business market certainly appears primed and well equipped to accelerate its adoption of mobile apps. First and foremost, more business owners are looking to the Internet for their business solutions. Seventy four percent of respondents surveyed in an April 2011 *Business Journals* “SMB Insights” report identified the Internet as “one of their most valuable business tools,” which is up from 65 percent the previous year.<sup>5</sup> Unquestionably, innovative tools made possible through broadband and wireless technologies have fostered a business technology culture where entrepreneurs are looking to technology first to resolve key business challenges.

Second, smartphone use among small business owners is much greater than among general consumers. According to a September 2010 Forrester Research study, 49 percent of small business owners use smartphones compared to 17 percent of the general consumer marketplace.<sup>6</sup> Tablet PCs are also popular for business use, which is growing among small business owners. An April 2011 SMB Mobility Adoption and Trends Report by Techaisle estimated that slightly over 50 percent of the tablets (8.87 million) purchased by consumers are being used for business. In addition, the SMB Insights survey reported that 9 percent of small business owners are using the iPad, while entrepreneurs in general are moving away from desktops and laptops and toward smartphones and tablets.<sup>7</sup>

In essence, many entrepreneurs are already equipped with the mobile devices they need to tap into mobile apps. The prevalence of these devices among small business owners, along with the fact that entrepreneurs have embraced technology to help identify opportunities and solve business challenges, are all setting the stage for accelerated adoption of mobile apps among small businesses.

An April 21-27, 2011 Mobile Apps survey conducted on behalf of the Small

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Portfolio.com, “SMB Insights 2011 Survey: A Shifting Small Business Landscape,” April 28, 2011, (<http://www.portfolio.com/interactive-features/2011/04/the-business-journals-small-business-survey-2011>).

<sup>6</sup> Erica Swallow, “49% of Small Business Owners Use Smartphones,” Mashable.com, October 21, 2010, (<http://mashable.com/2010/10/21/small-business-smartphones/>).

<sup>7</sup> Tamara Schweitzer Raben, “Half of All Tablet PCs Being Used for Business,” April 12, 2011, AoL Small Business, (<http://smallbusiness.aol.com/2011/04/12/half-of-all-tablet-pcs-being-used-for-business/>).

Business & Entrepreneurship Council (SBE Council) by TechnoMetrica found that 31 percent of small firms (20 employees or less) use mobile apps. With the expected uptick in smartphone and tablet use by small businesses – driven by the need to cut costs, improve operational efficiencies, and increase sales – we fully anticipate this percentage will increase significantly over the next few years.

Remember too, that the dawn of the 4G network is here, which means faster speeds, newer devices and enhanced mobile apps. With 4G, small business owners and their employees get to take their office with them. “Things that are very common sitting at the desk become very common in the mobile environment,” said Chris DeMaio, director of small business distribution at Verizon Wireless, in a January 2011 *FoxBusiness.com* article.<sup>8</sup>

## **Time is Money**

The Great Recession was a wakeup call for many small business owners who readily admit they put off leveraging technology to improve business operations. The depth and severity of the recession shook many from their complacent mindset. In their search for solutions to help them survive the recession’s immediate tumult, many small businesses invested in technology or turned to innovative tools made possible through broadband. During the full first year of the recession in 2008, small to midsize firms invested \$82 billion on technology, according to research firm IDC. That was a 6.2 percent increase from 2007.<sup>9</sup>

Small business owners will embrace new technologies as long as they meet specific needs and there’s evidence such investments will save time and money. Currently, small business owners are looking for solutions that will help them tame rising business costs and increase sales -- two major challenges that gnaw at them daily. These challenges are more acute given the tough economic climate, rising gas prices, tepid consumer confidence and ever-increasing health coverage costs.

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<sup>8</sup> Donna Fuscaldo, “The Era of 4G: What it Means for Small Business,” January 21, 2011, *FoxBusiness.com*, (<http://www.smallbusiness.foxbusiness.com/technology-web/2011/01/21/era-g-means-small-businesses/#ixzz1KpM8QOWR>).

<sup>9</sup> Edward Iwata, “Funds Shrink as Venture Capitalist Lose Their Nerve,” October 21, 2008, *Tucson Citizen*, (<http://tucsoncitizen.com/morgue/author/edward-iwata/>).

The *Business Journals's* “SMB Insights” report reveals the pervasiveness of small business concerns about the economy and rising costs.<sup>10</sup> According to the survey, 72 percent of small business owners are very concerned about rising health care and employee benefits costs, and an equal number remain concerned about the state of the U.S. economy. In addition, 57 percent are concerned about higher business costs. An Intuit survey released in late February 2011 reported that small business owners rate current economic conditions as subpar – 80 percent said the economy was either “just fair” or “poor.”<sup>11</sup>

Despite this, entrepreneurs remain an optimistic lot (57 percent believe their businesses will “grow a good deal over the next few years” according to the SMB Insights survey) because they have faith in themselves and remain encouraged by new technologies to help them improve operational efficiencies. Enhanced productivity means they can devote more time to sales generation, business growth and creating more value for customers.

Time, of course, is money. For every small business owner, getting more productivity from labor is critical to survival and growth. And, being able to direct more hours of human capital (including the entrepreneur’s own time) into growth producing areas – such as sales, marketing and innovation – is key to business sustainability in today’s competitive global marketplace.

An October 2010 ADP survey identified how small business owners would redeploy time saved if they spent less of it, for example, on administrative functions.<sup>12</sup> Fifty percent of small business owners said that time saved on administrative functions would be devoted to running the business (50 percent), or growth related activities (42 percent). “More than one-third believe that redeploying time spent on payroll to other activities would lead to an increase in company revenue,” according to the ADP survey.

Sales and revenue growth is where the rubber hits the road for small business owners. As recently as March 2011, business owners reported “weak sales” as their top problem, according to NFIB’s Index of Small

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<sup>10</sup> Op.Cit., Portfolio.com.

<sup>11</sup> Intuit press release, “Intuit Survey: Accounting Professional, Small Business Optimistic About Growth,” Intuit, February 23, 2011, (<http://investors.intuit.com/releasedetail.cfm?ReleaseID=551921>).

<sup>12</sup> ADP press release, “NEW ADP Survey of Small Business Owners Suggests Operational Efficiency Will Drive Growth in Year Ahead,” ADP, October 26, 2010, (<http://www.adp.com/media/press-releases/2010-news-releases/new-adp-survey-of-small-business-owners.aspx>).



Business Optimism.<sup>13</sup> Unfortunately, this problem has remained at the top of NFIB's list for many months. No doubt, small businesses would benefit from solutions that free up employee *and* owner time so more of it can be dedicated to generating revenues. Such "time savings" is the top reason why small business owners use mobile apps, according to AT&T's Small Business Technology Poll 2011.<sup>14</sup> The need to increase productivity and reduce costs are also important factors, according to the poll.

## **Mobile Apps are Saving Small Business Owners Significant Time and Money**

The no-nonsense entrepreneur remains leery of new business fads. That is why they turn to personal and business networks to help them flesh out reality from the hype. They want to hear first hand, from peers, about bottom-line results regarding a new investment or business solution. Especially during this challenging economic period, business owners do not have a lot of time or capital to waste. Entrepreneurs are asking many questions to help guide their decisions about making a purchase, or deploying new technologies.

For the resource-challenged small business owner, it really boils down to one simple question: Will it save me time and money? SBE Council's Mobile Apps survey found that the use of apps by small businesses saves both time and money. As a result, small business owners have been able to direct these savings to sales and revenue growth. A small percentage have even added new staff.

As noted earlier in this report, the survey found that one out of every three small businesses uses apps<sup>15</sup> on a mobile device, such as an iPhone, BlackBerry, Android or iPad to help operate or manage their businesses.

**Time Saved by the Business Owner:** Of firms reporting that they use mobile apps, 72 percent of the owners themselves use apps to manage their

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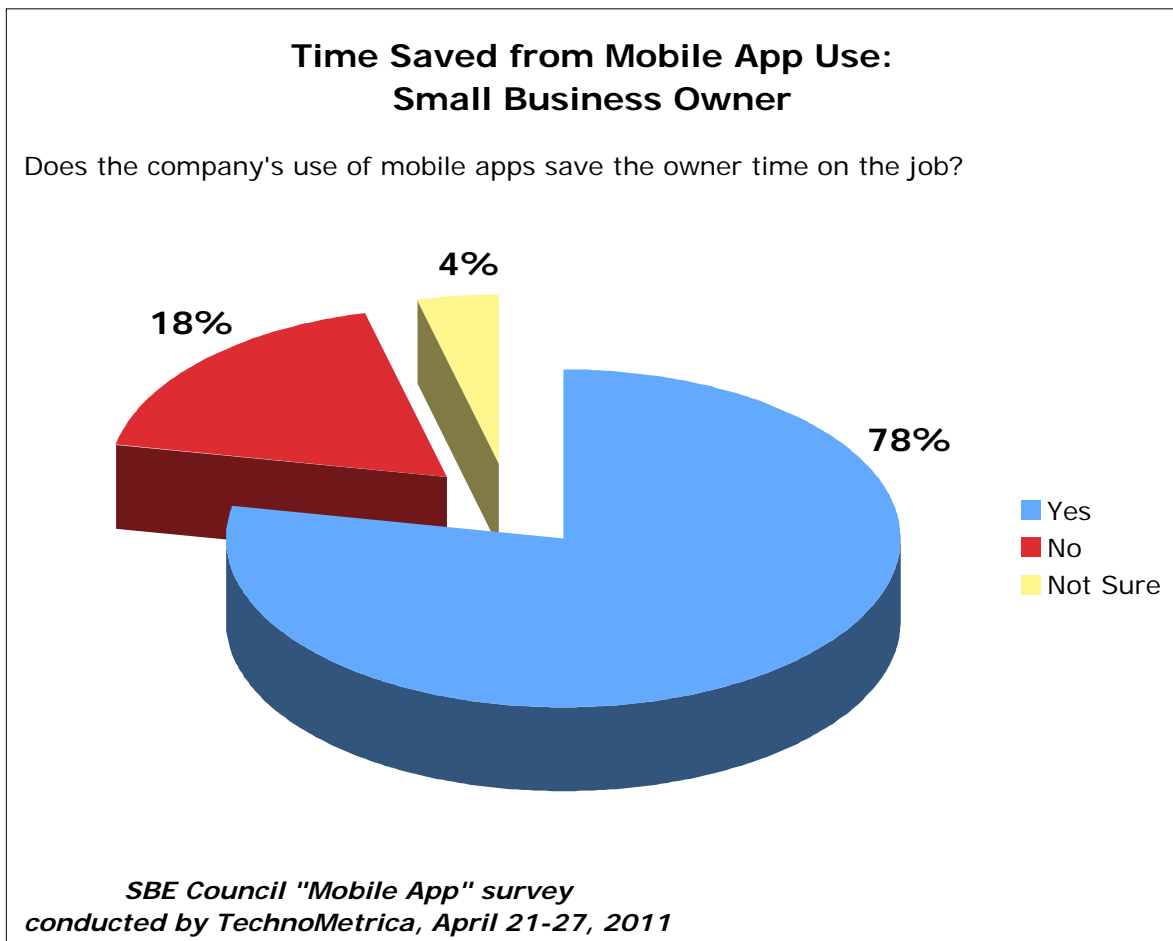
<sup>13</sup> Bill Dunkelberg, "Hiring Up, But Optimism Down in March: The Index of Small Business Optimism," National Federation of Independent Businesses, April 2011, (<http://www.nfib.com/research-foundation/surveys/small-business-economic-trends>).

<sup>14</sup> Op.Cit., Small Business Trends.

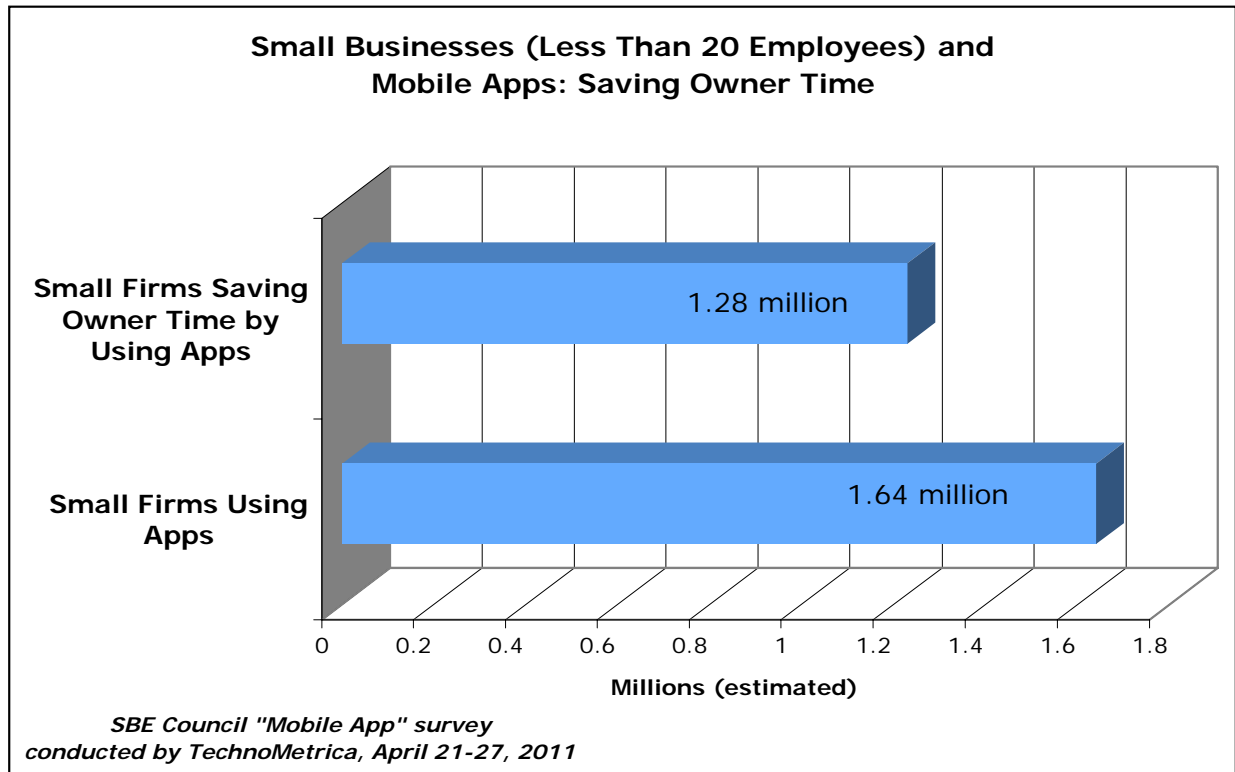
<sup>15</sup> The survey overwhelmingly covers firms with 20 or fewer employees, with 9 percent falling into the 21-25 employees range.

businesses. In terms of saving time, 78 percent of these small business owners believe that their company's use of mobile apps saves time for the owner. **On a weekly basis, these small business owners estimate that they save an average of 5.6 hours (a median of 4.0 hours) due to their firm's use of mobile apps.**

Interestingly, 100 percent of one-person businesses using apps agreed that they've saved time. Of firms with employees, 88 percent of owners with 2-5 employees agreed that they save time, while 65 percent with 6-10 workers, and 74 percent of those with 11 or more employees agreed that mobile apps are a time-saving tool for the owner.



Based upon the total number of U.S. small businesses whose firm size is less than 20 employees (1-19),<sup>16</sup> and the percentage of business owners in this cohort who report saving time using mobile apps, we estimate that **1.28 million owners** of small businesses are saving time due to their use of apps.



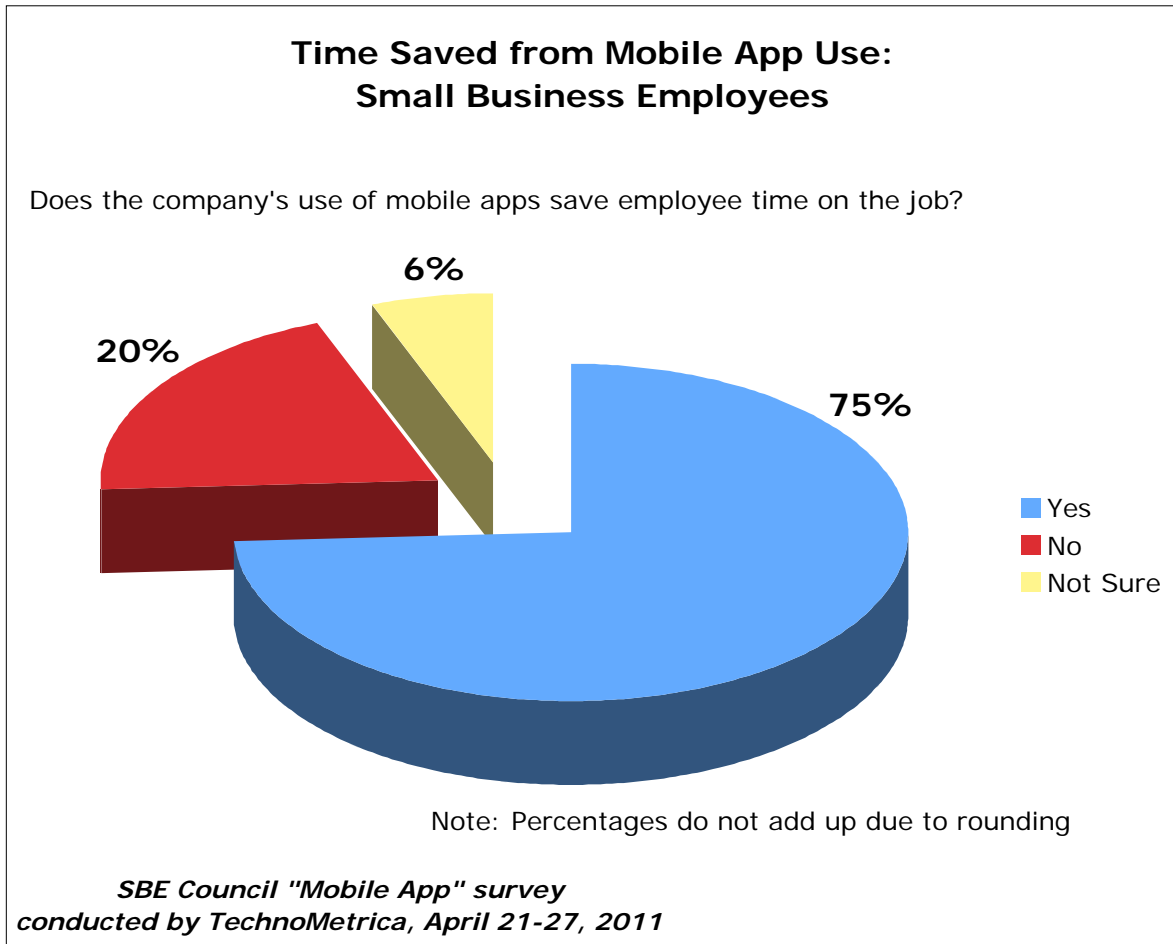
With owners reporting that, on average, they saved 5.6 owner hours per week using mobile apps, this translates into the following estimates:

- **291 owner hours saved per year per small business;**
- **372.8 million owner hours saved annually for small businesses throughout the economy.**

Based on our estimates, if all employer firms with fewer than 20 workers were to take advantage of mobile apps, **an estimated 1.2 billion owner hours could be saved annually.**

<sup>16</sup> According to the latest data (2008) from the U.S. Census Bureau, there are 5,292,970 employer firms fewer than 20 employees.

**Employee Time Saved:** For small businesses using mobile apps, 75 percent report saving employee time. As for the number of employee hours saved per week, this, in part, depends on the number of employees within a firm. **Small business owners estimate that a median of 5.0 employee hours are saved on a weekly basis, with an average of 11.33 hour saved per week.**



Based upon the total number of U.S. small businesses whose firm size is less than 20 employees (between 1-19 employees), and the percentage of businesses in this cohort who report saving employee time by using mobile apps, as estimated **1.23 million small firms** are experiencing such time savings.

With small businesses reporting that, on average, firms saved 11.33 employee hours per week, this translates to the following estimates:

- **589 employee hours saved per year per small business;**
- **725.3 million employee hours saved annually for small businesses throughout the economy.**

Of course, time saved is money saved, i.e., resources that are made available for other undertakings in a business. **Based on average pay for employees in small businesses<sup>17</sup>, on a per firm basis, these time savings come out to an estimated:**

- **\$275 per week, and**
- **\$14,317 per year**

**In terms of total annual savings for small businesses, these time savings total \$17.6 billion annually.**

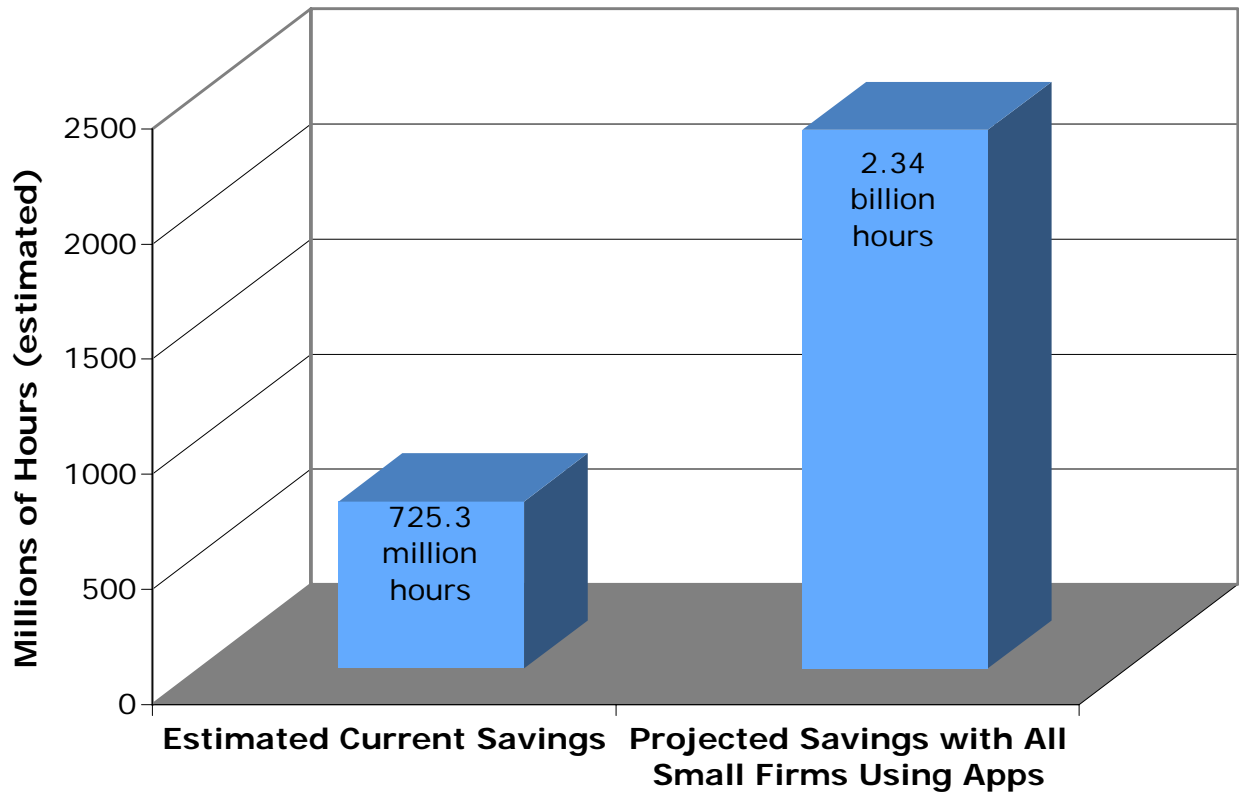
**Based on our estimates, if all employer firms with fewer than 20 workers were to take advantage of mobile apps, an estimated 2.34 billion employee hours could be saved annually.<sup>18</sup>**

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<sup>17</sup> \$24.30 per hour on average in firms with fewer than 20 employees based on “Intuit Small Business Employment Index Shows 0.2 Percent Job Growth for March,” Intuit Inc., March 29, 2011.

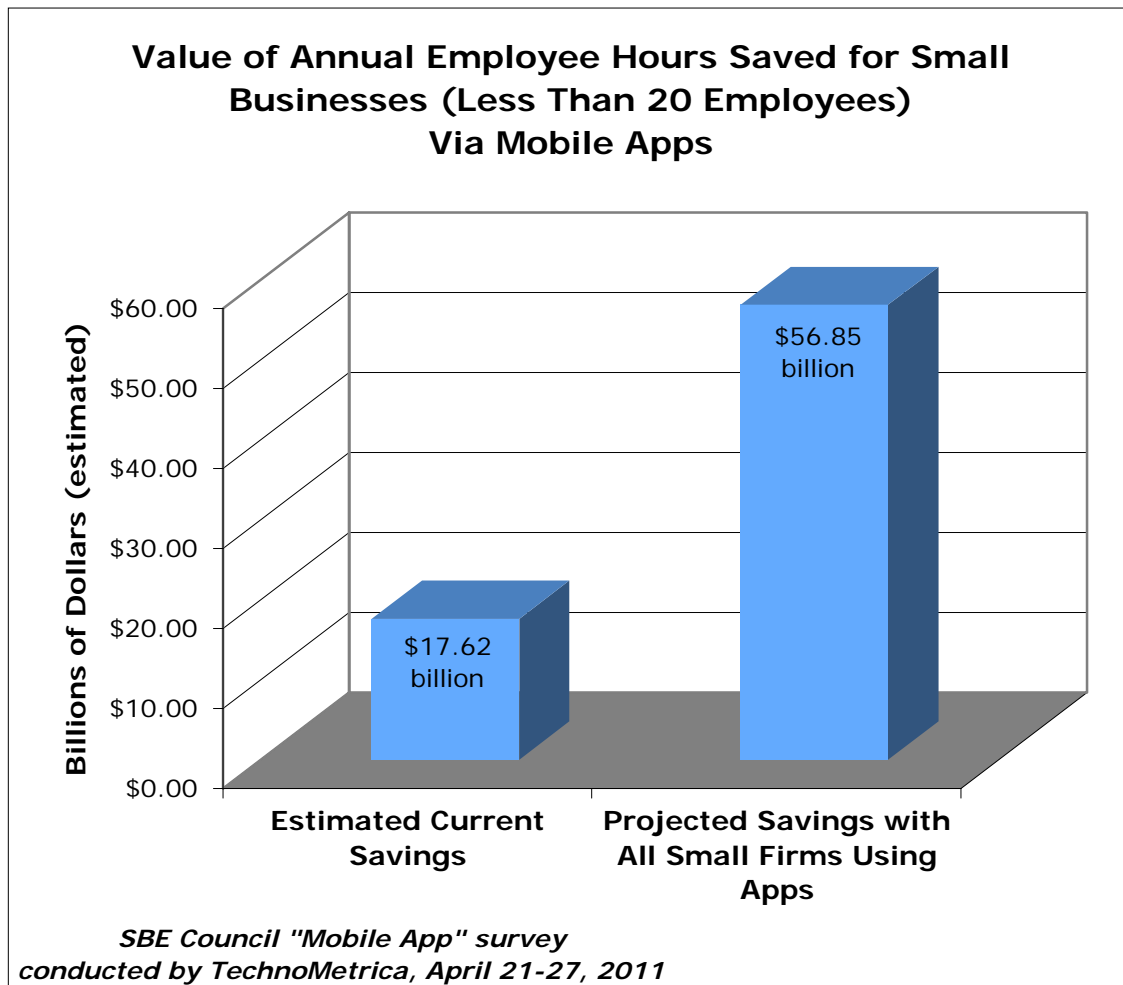
<sup>18</sup> Based on the survey’s finding that 75 percent of firms using mobile apps have experienced savings.

## Annual Employee Hours Saved for Small Businesses (Less Than 20 Employees) Via Mobile Apps



*SBE Council "Mobile App" survey  
conducted by TechnoMetrica, April 21-27, 2011*

**Value of Potential Employee Hours Saved:** If all employer firms with fewer than 20 workers took advantage of mobile apps, an estimated 2.34 billion employee hours saved translates into an estimated \$56.9 billion that could be saved each year.



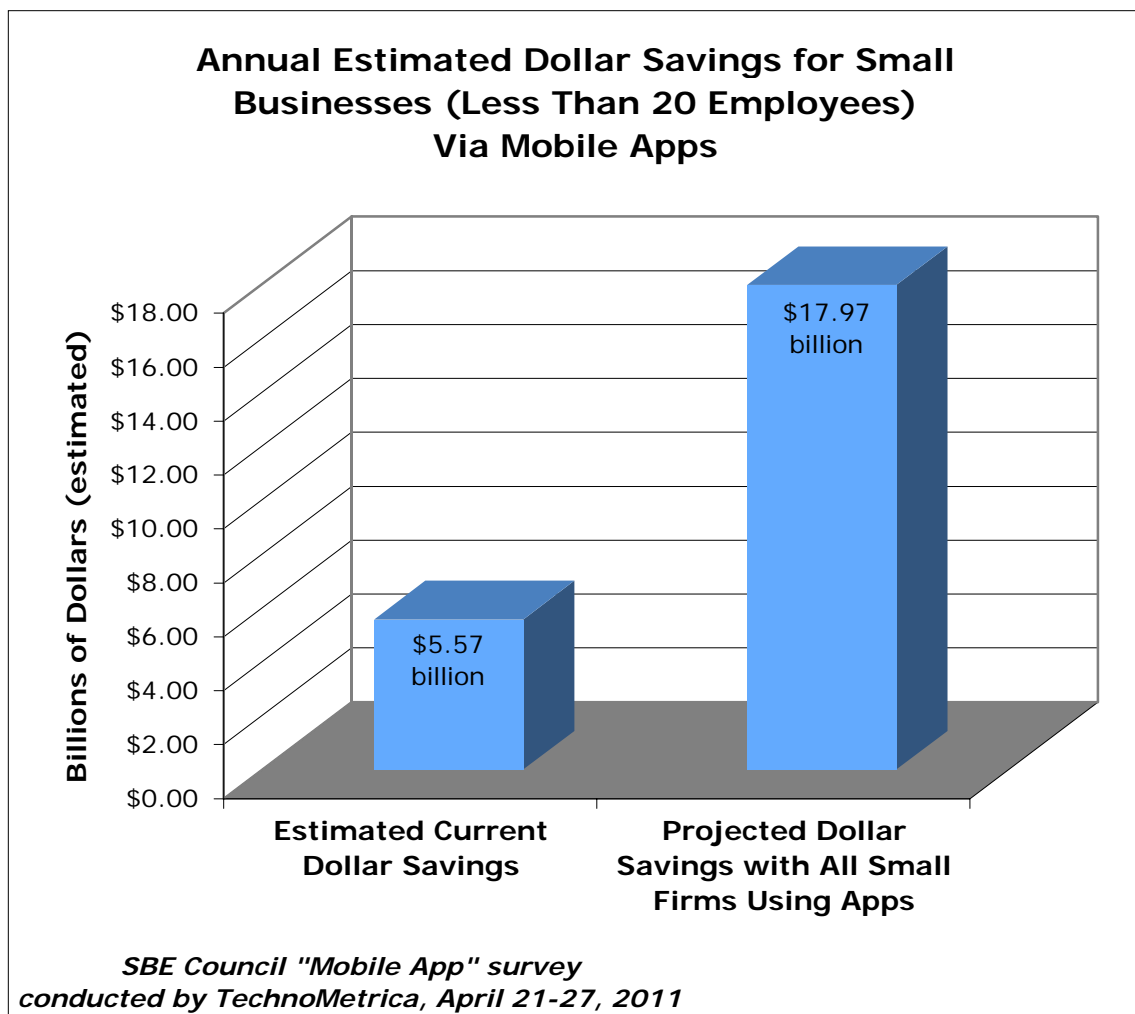
It is important to point out that all of these savings are very conservative estimates. First, these estimates are only applied to employer firms, eliminating nonemployer firms. According to the Census Bureau, there are 21.4 million nonemployer businesses in the U.S.<sup>19</sup> There is no doubt that many of these businesses are using, and experiencing time savings from mobile apps. However, we do not have data on average hours and earnings for such business owners. Second, larger but still small businesses – i.e.,

<sup>19</sup> 2008 is the latest data available.

those with 20 or more employees – also are not considered for these estimates.

Finally, small business owners were asked to quantify dollar savings on a monthly basis for their firms' use of mobile apps. The response was an average of \$377 per month, or \$4,524 per year. That translates into an estimated \$5.6 billion in savings for these small businesses on an annual basis.

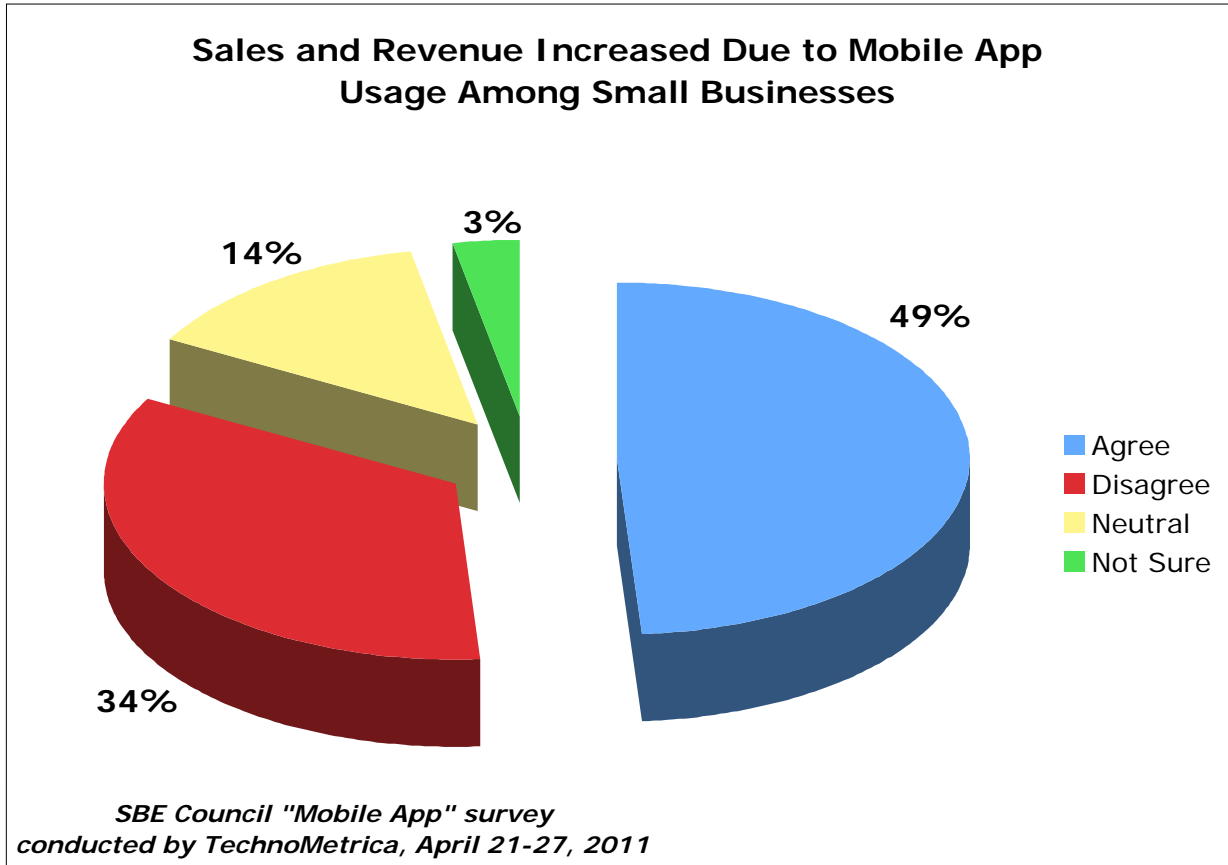
Again, if all small businesses with fewer than 20 employees were to use mobile apps, the annual dollar savings would reach an estimated \$18 billion.



As illustrated by the enormous time savings accrued, small businesses experience varied benefits from the use of mobile apps. The SBE Council survey asked business owners about a variety of the potential benefits.

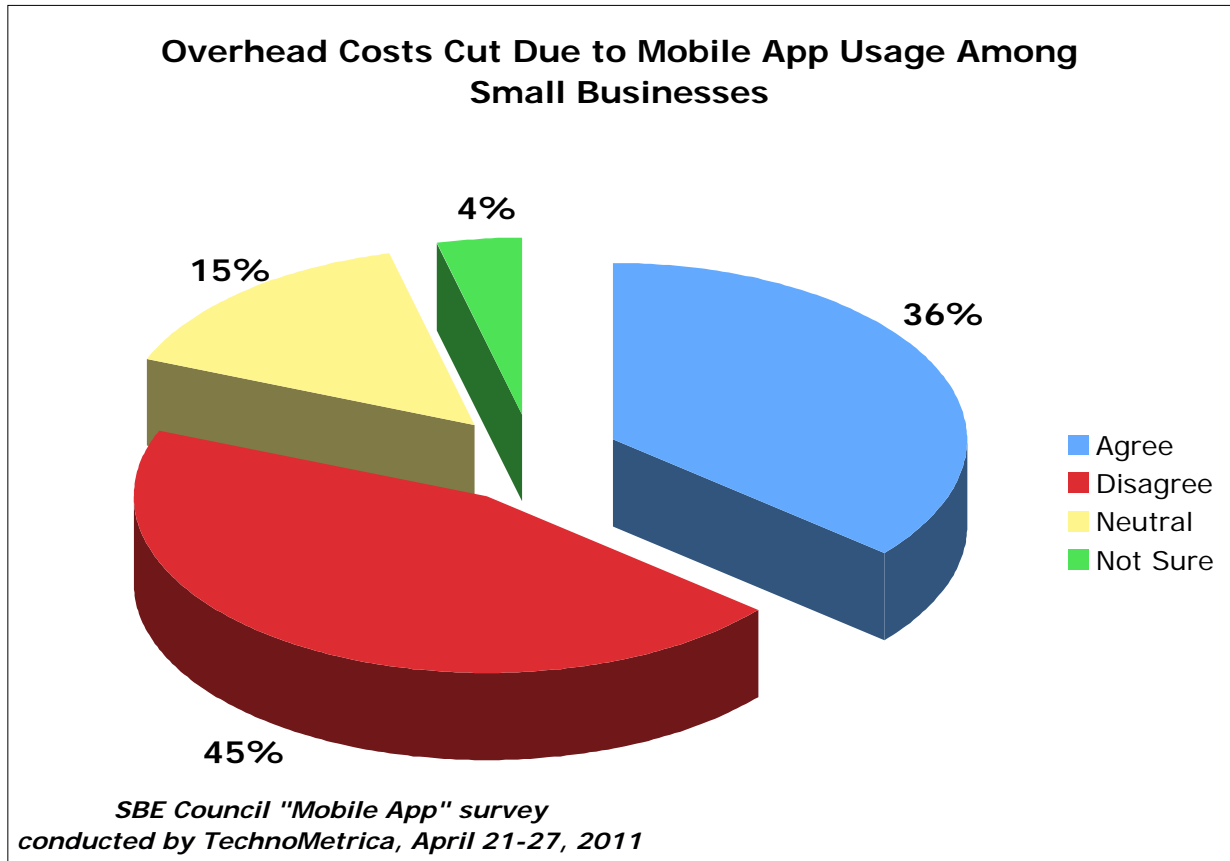


Small businesses were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement: “My employees and I have been able to spend more time on increasing sales and generating new business revenue.” **A solid 49 percent agreed to varying degrees, with 34 percent disagreeing to varying degrees.**



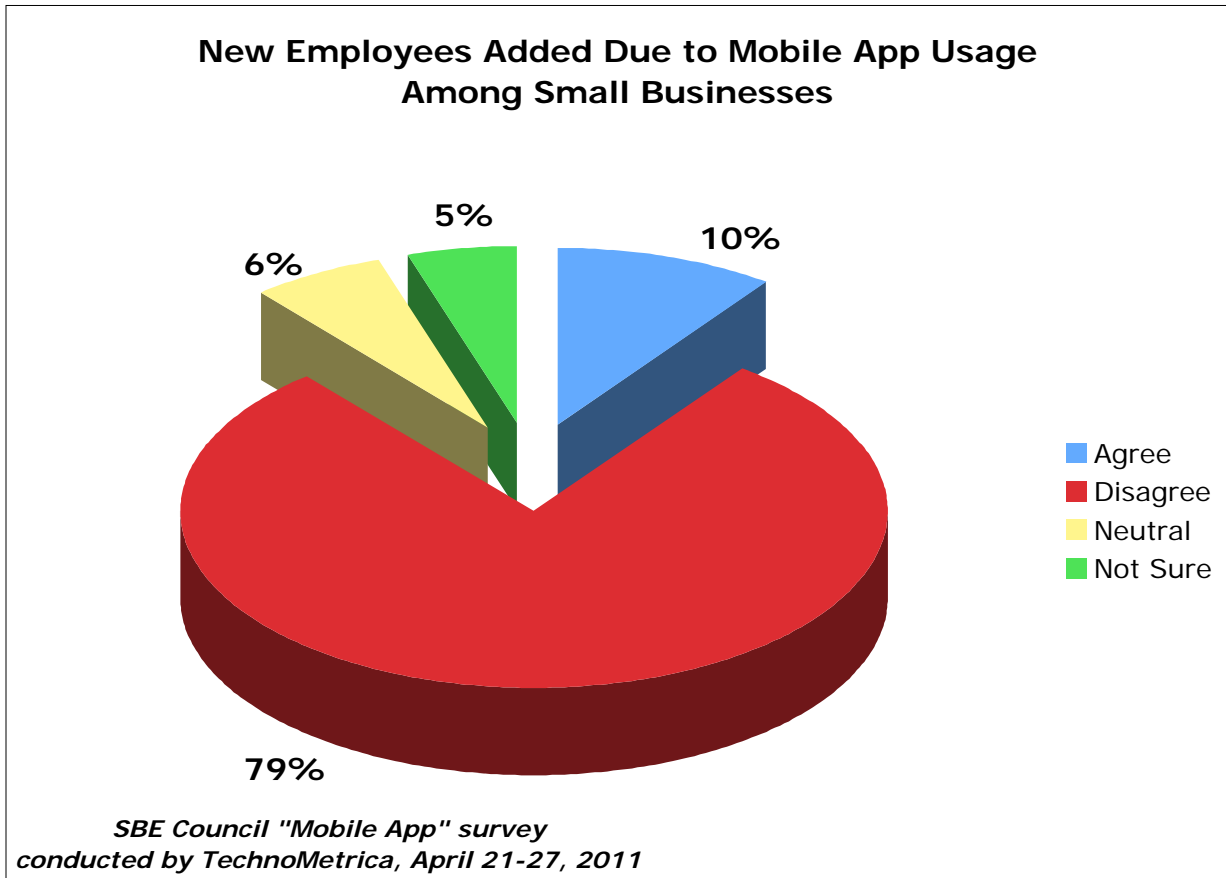
Agree/ Disagree	Rating	Percent
Agree	Rating 7	17%
	Rating 6	6%
	Rating 5	26%
Neutral	Rating 4	14%
Disagree	Rating 3	6%
	Rating 2	12%
	Rating 1	16%

Small business owners also were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement: “*My business has been able to cut overhead costs, providing more cash flow flexibility.*” **Interestingly, 36 percent agreed to varying degrees, with 45 percent disagreeing to varying degrees.**



Agree/ Disagree	Rating	Percent
Agree	Rating 7	16%
	Rating 6	7%
	Rating 5	13%
Neutral	Rating 4	15%
Disagree	Rating 3	9%
	Rating 2	14%
	Rating 1	22%

In addition, small business owners were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement: “*We have added a new employee or employees because of cost savings, new revenue generation, or both.*” While far from overwhelming, **it is worth noting 10 percent agreed to varying degrees, while 79 percent disagreed to varying degrees. Especially in this tough economy, one in ten businesses adding to their payrolls is noteworthy.** It also points to added jobs at larger firms.

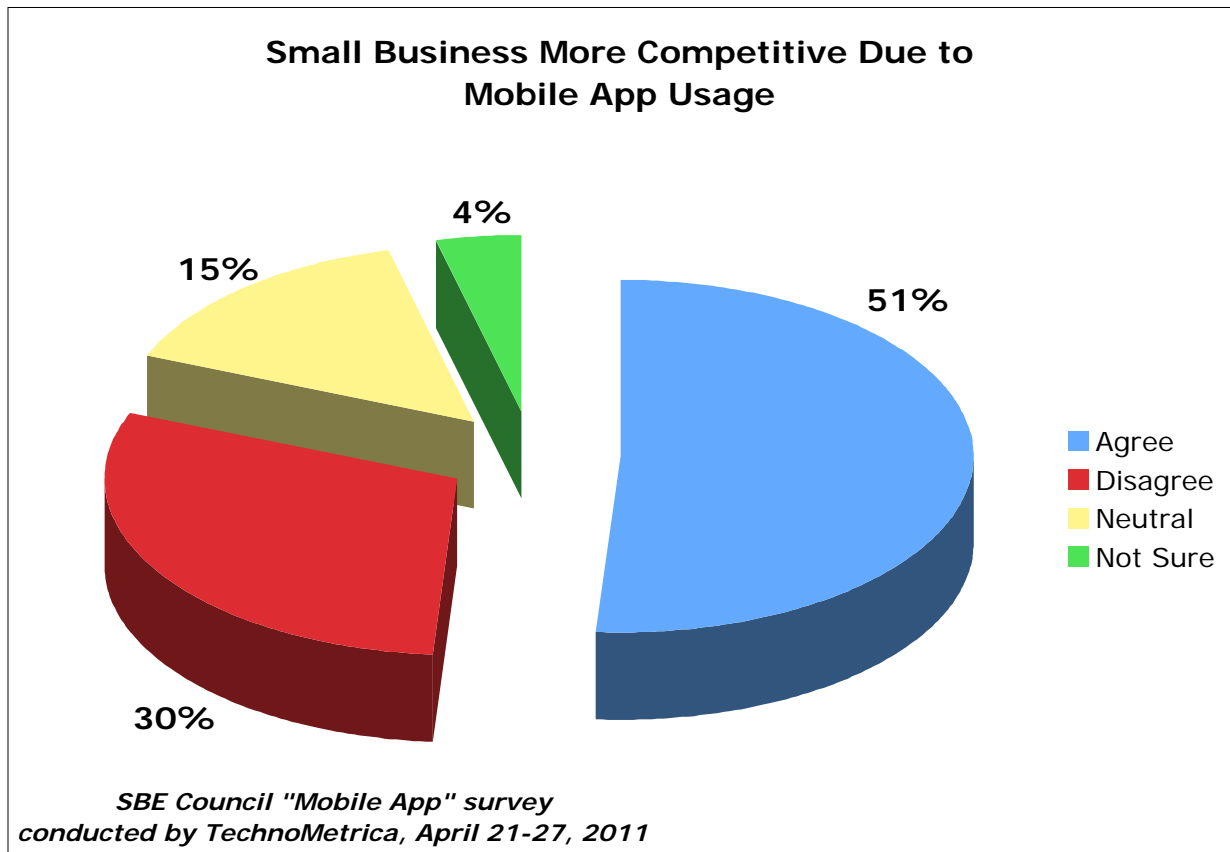


Agree/ Disagree	Rating	Percent
Agree	Rating 7	6%
	Rating 6	-
	Rating 5	3%
Neutral	Rating 4	6%
Disagree	Rating 3	4%
	Rating 2	9%
	Rating 1	66%

Note: Percentages do not add up due to rounding

Small business owners also were asked to what extent they agreed with the statement: “*We have become more competitive and better able to maneuver thru the uncertain economic period.*”

**An impressive 51 percent agreed to varying degrees, with 30 percent disagreeing to varying degrees.**



Agree/ Disagree	Rating	Percent
Agree	Rating 7	18%
	Rating 6	14%
	Rating 5	19%
Neutral	Rating 4	15%
Disagree	Rating 3	11%
	Rating 2	4%
	Rating 1	15%

After experiencing one of the deepest recessions since the Great Depression, and now laboring through an under-performing recovery, the fact that mobile apps are boosting competitiveness for many small businesses is a welcome economic positive.

Clearly, mobile apps are providing tremendous savings for small businesses, and as their usage spreads, so will the time savings; and gains in terms of business opportunities and revenues, costs savings, competitiveness and jobs.

In turn, the benefits will spread throughout the economy, given that small businesses serve as a wellspring for economic growth, job creation and innovation.

### **The Small Business “App”portunity**

Given their concerns about rising costs and economic uncertainty, small business owners will continue to work towards improving operational efficiencies. With access to capital and credit still a challenge, and sales growth remaining weak for many, entrepreneurs want solutions that will help them grow – not just survive.

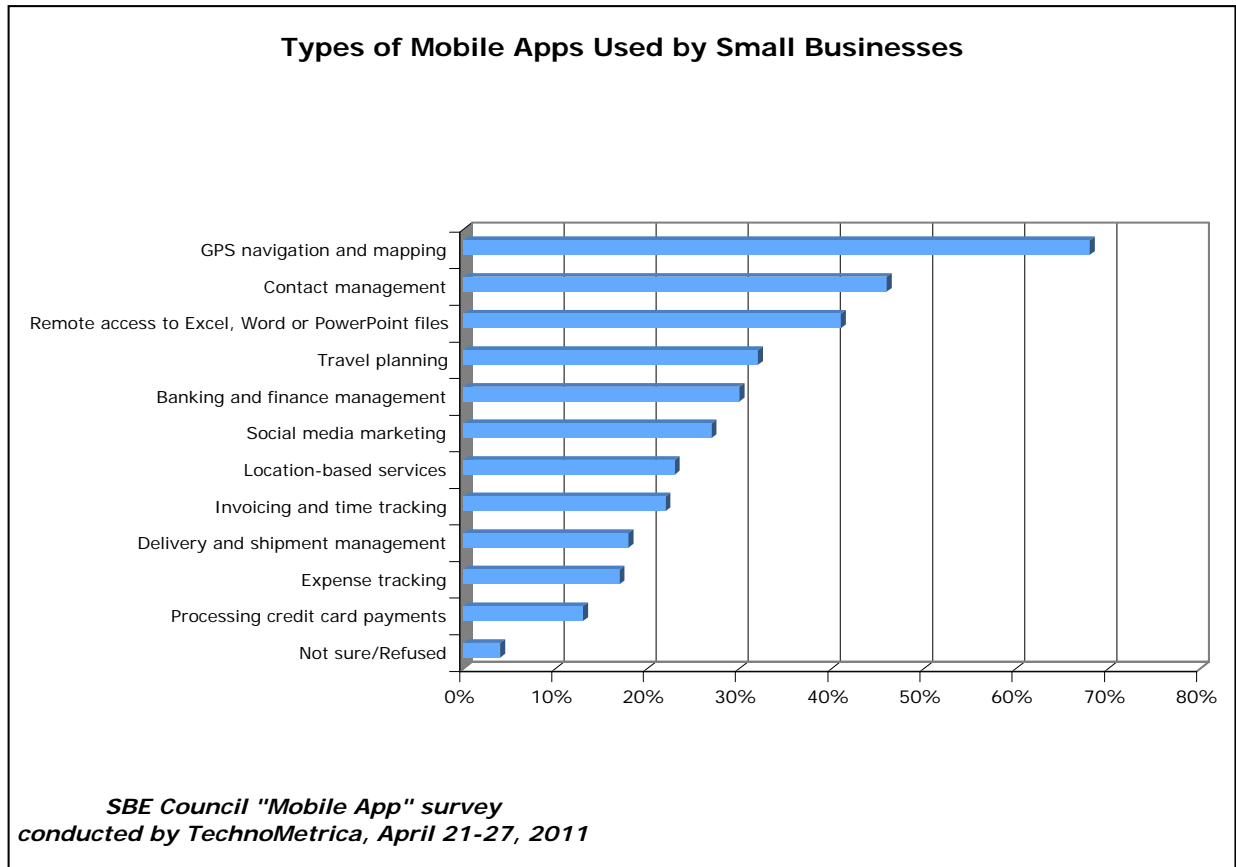
“That reality, combined with ever-growing time pressures, means small business owners are looking to spend more time growing their businesses and less time on the administrative burdens of running them,” said Regina Lee, President of ADP’s Small Business Services and Major Account Services in conjunction with the release of ADP’s survey that was previously cited in this report.

Mobile apps provide that opportunity.

The proliferation of mobile apps, however, is quite daunting. There are hundreds of thousands of apps available to download on mobile devices, and thousands available to small business owners.

So which mobile apps are small business owners using? According to SBE Council’s Mobile Apps survey, GPS navigation and mapping apps (68 percent) is the most popular, followed by apps for contact management (46 percent) and remote document access (41 percent). This was followed by

travel planning (32 percent), banking and finance management (30 percent), social media marketing (27 percent), location-based services (23 percent), invoicing and time tracking (22 percent), delivery and shipment management (18 percent), expense tracking (17 percent) and processing credit card payments (13 percent).



Here are some examples of how small business owners are deploying some of these more popular mobile apps in their businesses:

**Mobile credit card processing:** Mobile apps and payment systems are making it easier for small businesses to accept purchases on a mobile basis. In Minot, North Dakota, Tricia Allen, owner of Tricia’s Bakery uses a free app on her smartphone along with a card reader to accept credit card purchases anywhere, at any time.<sup>20</sup> Allen turned to the tool to help her lower

<sup>20</sup> Allison Hesford, “Tech Talk: Business Owner Uses Mobile Payment Program,” KUMV-TV News Stories, 4/21/2011, ([http://www.kumv.com/News\\_Stories.asp?news=48294](http://www.kumv.com/News_Stories.asp?news=48294)).

costs and keep her business mobile. According to a story posted on KFYZ-TV's website "Allen simply swipes the card and enters the amount and the customer signs right on the smartphone. The app then e-mails confirmation and can provide a receipt via email or text, or Allen can print one off." The app Allen uses called Square "stresses security and that no credit card information is stored on client devices." The response from customers has been overwhelmingly positive, according to Allen, with some asking how to purchase and access these tools themselves "because they may have a side business that they'd like to accept credit cards too."

**Office functions go mobile:** Infrasafe is a small global security technology integrator whose clients have stringent security needs. Its President & CEO Todd Flemming uses mobile technology solutions in many areas of the business, including GPS to locate and route service trucks to ensure quick service for clients and efficient use of his company's resources. Flemming's service teams record services performed, and report inventory used -- all on their mobile devices. The information helps managers track time and inventory, which also helps to keep the service trucks replenished with the inventory these teams need to do their jobs.

Security is an important issue for Flemming. He uses apps that control what employees can or can't do on company-owned devices. Knowing that any sort of mobile device is an appealing item for theft, Infrasafe has a strict passcode policy, which quickly locks the device following a very short period of nonuse. The company can wipe information clean from these devices at a moment's notice, and locate them if they are stolen.

Salespeople, managers and staff use GoodReader, Dropbox and Salesforce for their multifaceted needs (viewing, editing and storing documents and data, reviewing and updating customer information). Infrasafe is piloting the use of tablets to see whether it makes sense to replace laptops with the mobile device. Flemming is also developing an app for salespeople so they can do an on-the-spot quote using their mobile devices.

**Driving Time Cut in Half:** Landscaping company owner Chip Galloway was able to reduce weekly travel time by hours using a low-cost multimedia conferencing app, as reported by *CNNMoney.com*.<sup>21</sup> Rather than having to

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<sup>21</sup> Jennifer Alsever, "A \$10 app saves hours of commuting," *CNNMoney.com*, May 3, 2010, (<http://www.switchfast.com/switchfast-blog/2010/5/4/saving-time-and-money-with-mobile-apps.aspx>)

spend many hours a day traveling to worksites to manage projects, Galloway receives and sends detailed multimedia e-mail messages which helps him make decisions as if he were on site. His teams can “shoot video and photos and describe them in a voiceover, and motion with a mouse to highlight key points in architectural drawings and spreadsheets. Project managers in the field often take snapshots of what they're working on and send them to Galloway along with their comments. Because of the technology, Galloway says C&C Landscaping has reduced mistakes in the field by 75 percent, slashed his driving time in half, cut overhead by about 6 percent and kept the company's \$4 million in annual sales steady despite the economic downturn.” The yearly cost of the app was \$720.00.

## **Conclusion**

Not surprisingly, as business owners share their successes and best practices in leveraging technology to improve operations and sales; this is encouraging fellow entrepreneurs to adopt technologies across business operations. The integration of mobile technologies into business operations has caught fire, and will play an important role in helping business owners and their employees save time, trim costs, and increase sales.

The success that small businesses are experiencing with mobile apps has only heightened their interest in using more of these tools. The TechnoMetrica “Mobile Apps” survey, for example, found that 50 percent of small-business mobile app users plan to increase their app exposure within the next six months by either getting more apps, using their current apps more or both.

The entrepreneur’s time is certainly their firm’s most precious resource. The time of their employees is most valuable as well, and managing this resource effectively is often what separates the successful firms from those that are barely hanging on. Time freed from administrative or redundant tasks, means more time for high value work such as customer engagement, research, sales and marketing or collaborative projects. In order to grow, business owners need to focus on new sales and revenue streams and create more value for existing customers.



What small business owner would not want to add two, three, four or more hours of time to each week? Mobile apps are providing entrepreneurs and their employees with more time, which means they can lead and grow their businesses.

As demonstrated in this report, mobile apps can free up billions of hours of time and resources for entrepreneurs and their employees if they look to technology – specifically mobile apps – to more efficiently run their businesses.

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