

# BUSINESS OWNERS ARE LIVING TO WORK WHEN THEY COULD BE WORKING TO LIVE

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Business owners are notorious smartphone addicts and night-owls, working all hours and living for their business. This level of dedication is admirable and even desirable to an extent, though the stress of constantly being “on” must really take its toll when you’re not getting enough time away. It’s a well-known fact that you work better when you take a break. A recent survey from The Alternative Board asked business owners how many hours they work a week, with a staggering 49% saying they work fifty or more hours a week. Only 19% of business owners said they work less than the standard working week of 40 hours.

When one of the most frequently cited reasons for starting your own business is freeing yourself to choose how you spend your time, that 49% of the UK’s entrepreneurs are spending it locked in their work should be surprising. Of course, it isn’t.

## Workaholics

Back in 2007, BlackBerry made it impossible to just leave work at your desk. Ever since, we’ve been carrying it around with us in our back pockets, taking our emails to personal lunches and pausing conversations with friends and family to send a quick business text.

For many business owners, this is desirable. It means you can really keep on top of your business because you have it with you all the time. You can go on holiday and know the office won’t collapse without you, or take a day away from your desk but be on call should anyone need you.

19% of us claim to be working over sixty hours a week, but only 1% of those surveyed said they felt this was desirable (no surprise there either). 56% would like to work fewer than thirty-nine hours a week, reflecting the pull of flexibility and control over the way you spend your life.

## Outsourcing

The article lists outsourcing as a solution to over-worked business owners. But while 56% of business owners said they are likely to consider outsourcing as a means of lightening their work load, 44% said they were unlikely to consider it.

While 19% of those who said they were unlikely to outsource cited cost as the main deterrent, the biggest barrier to outsourcing seems to be a lack of trust. There is a stigma associated with outsourcing, both from within businesses and perceived by customers.

It is crucial that when you outsource some of your workload, that you are guaranteed a professional and reliable service that adds credibility to your business, rather than detracting from your image. Business owners unlikely to outsource would first need convincing by an individual service supplier of their expertise and dependability.

## What can outsourcing service providers do to debunk these myths?

Making the decision to outsource a chosen service such as your accounting, your marketing and social media management or your telephone answering is just like any other business decision. You should thoroughly research the company you are considering partnering with and fully understand the benefits and the costs.

Outsourcing companies can only take on these assumptions one at a time, by providing the highest quality service to their customers, securing a great reputation and constantly working to improve their performance. More and more businesses are turning to outsourcing and this stigma will disappear.

## Means to an end

Business owners will start to see outsourcing as an avenue to more free time which they can use to either optimise the way they run their company or spend more time out the office. Customers in turn will cease to see outsourced workloads as a sign that a firm is unable to cope with the amount of incoming business.

Outsourcing is becoming increasingly normalised and is more frequently being perceived as a cost-effective and common sense solution, in particular for small businesses who cannot afford to take on and train the staff to do the work in question.

Over half of those asked confirmed that they were likely to consider outsourcing. It is likely that this figure will continue to increase as more UK businesses are born online and their owners seek to capitalise on an opportunity for more freedom and spare time.