

Kiwi businesses shift focus to customer according to PricewaterhouseCoopers study

Kiwi businesses are putting customers first in order to generate revenue growth, according to the first edition of the quarterly PricewaterhouseCoopers Clever Companies Insight.

The new “snapshot” survey of 620 New Zealanders in business, released today, shows that 44 percent of respondents are planning to grow revenue over the next 12 months through better customer focus. A total of 35 percent plan to grow through new markets and 23 percent plan to focus primarily on cutting operating costs.

PricewaterhouseCoopers Partner Robbie Gimblett says the survey highlights a shift in attitude among business leaders. “Eight months ago, cost control was easily top of mind when we spoke to our clients - and the focus was mainly about short term survival,” he says.

“Today our clients are asking us how to structure their businesses for the long-term, focussing on customers that are changing what they value, what they buy and how they buy it. Scenario planning for these changing customer demands has become high priority in strategic planning.”

Robbie says the results show that there is increasing awareness among businesses that growing revenue involves a host of factors – but ultimately customer demands should guide their growth strategies.

“We’ve been working with our clients over the last year to ensure that their processes are in order and unnecessary costs have been cut. An internal focus has been critical to navigate the short term challenges. However, clever companies are making the necessary internal changes without jeopardising a customer-first focus within the organisation”.

Other key findings:

The survey also revealed that the biggest positive impact on performance over the last year was gained through better customer focus (32% of businesses), followed by technology improvements (23%) and improving staff capability through recruitment and training (21%).