



**Identifiably Irish**  
Ireland's Domain Registry

**dot ie**

# Digital Health Index

**Q4 2017**



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# Foreword

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IE Domain Registry (IEDR) is pleased to present this latest edition of the dot ie Digital Health Index, that seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of the quantity and quality of digital assets owned by Irish SMEs, such as websites, web sales ability and social media profiles.

To date, we have completed seven waves of research, the latest in October 2017. Each wave has shared the same objective: to examine how Irish SMEs engage and interact with their online markets. Of the SMEs we surveyed, 86% were micro-businesses with fewer than ten employees. We also surveyed consumer attitudes to the digital marketplace and Irish SMEs' online efforts.

In this edition of the dot ie Digital Health Index, we record our highest ever score: 49.0. This was driven primarily by an increase in SMEs' use of certain digital assets, particularly social media platforms like Facebook and data analytics software. An increased confidence in the quality of their digital assets also helped to raise the bar; more SMEs recognise the positive contribution an online presence makes to their overall success.

SMEs with e-commerce capability remain in the minority (14%), but there are some noticeable improvements, particularly the number of businesses able to take sales orders through their website. However, we are far from being a European e-commerce powerhouse. The pan-European Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) ranked Ireland as eighth in Europe. However, the DESI does not include businesses with less than 10 employees<sup>1</sup>, and so excludes 92% of all enterprises in Ireland. While the value of Irish e-commerce is set to grow to €14 billion by 2021<sup>2</sup>, there is a real danger that the lion's share of this spend will continue to go abroad to foreign retailers with more developed online services.

After seven waves of research, it is clear that there will always be a cohort of SMEs in Ireland that will never have a website or any online presence whatsoever. In this report, 19%, almost 1 in 5, have no digital assets. These business owners claim that because the majority of their business is word-of-mouth, going online is not necessary. Consumers disagree: almost 70% find it frustrating or very frustrating if they can't find a business online, and nearly 30% don't even trust a business without a website.

For industry and government, the focus should be on helping those SMEs that do have an online presence to improve the quality of their existing digital assets and help more of them sell online with e-commerce. SMEs want e-commerce training and funding, and we should foster this entrepreneurial spirit as much as possible. Our recommendations for Ireland's digital economy are outlined in Chapter Eight.

At this year's Internet Day, IEDR called for the creation of a national Internet Policy Forum. Ireland is in a unique position: as a member state of the EU and as the operating base of many of the world's largest American tech multinationals, we are between the hammer and the anvil of two very different systems of data regulation and business practice. Decisions and agreements made by the US and EU will have real impacts on the Irish economy, including the day-to-day operations of Irish SMEs. A Forum will give all stakeholders the opportunity to have a say in policy formation and implementation.

We asked SMEs what they had done to prepare for GDPR, a far-reaching EU directive governing data protection that comes into force in May 2018. Nearly a third hadn't even heard of it and 17% hadn't started planning for it. Clearly, work needs to be done. An Internet Policy Forum that brings together businesses, industry bodies, government and citizens will help Ireland get to grips with these issues – and make sure that the progress small businesses are making online and in e-commerce is not unduly impacted.

*David Curtin.*

**David Curtin**  
Chief Executive, IEDR

December 2017

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<sup>1</sup> See our Q1 2017, Digital Health Index report, chapter 3.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Virgin Media Digital Insights Report 2016

# dot ie Digital Health Index

Q4 2017



Identifiably Irish  
Ireland's Domain Registry

The dot ie Digital Health Index has increased to

**49.0**

the highest ever score.



Almost **1 in 5** SMEs have no digital assets whatsoever.



**17%** have data analytics capability, up from

**7%**



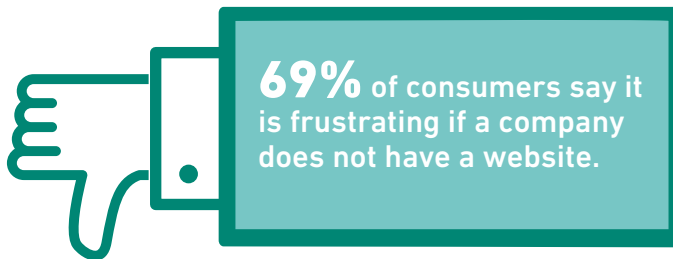
**18%** of offline SMEs can't go online because of poor internet infrastructure.



**62%** have a Facebook account, up from **50%**



**41%** of SMEs say that social media is less important than their website.



Only **40%** of SMEs with websites can take sales orders online.



**63%** of SMEs do not promote their services online.



**54%** would shop with a competitor if a business is not online.

Only **52%** of consumers believe their local shops are equipped for the digital age.



**32%** want e-commerce training.



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# Executive summary

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## The big picture

- ▶ The dot.ie Digital Health Index has risen to 49.0, the highest ever score. This has been driven by Irish SMEs' increased use of digital assets, particularly social media and data analytics.
- ▶ SMEs are also more confident in the quality of their digital assets, versus their competitors, and their contribution to business.
- ▶ Despite these improvements, most SMEs (60%) are still not engaging in e-commerce. This is at a time when Ireland's e-commerce industry is expected to grow to €14bn by 2021. Unfortunately, about 60% of this is going overseas.<sup>3</sup>

## Consumers and online business

- ▶ Irish consumers are not waiting for SMEs to digitise their sales offerings: more than half (54%) would shop with a competitor for the same product or service if their preferred retailer was offline.
- ▶ 69% say it is frustrating if a company does not have a website, and two-thirds say this makes a business look outdated.
- ▶ 59% of consumers said that if a business has no online presence, they would be less likely to use their services or do business with them offline or in-store.
- ▶ The majority (44%), are most likely to refer directly to a business's website for information, ahead of search engines like Google (40%).

## Irish SMEs' online presence

- ▶ Two-thirds of SMEs have websites, 62% have a Facebook account (up from 50%) and 17% have data analytics capability (up from 7%).
- ▶ Almost 1 in 5 SMEs have no digital assets whatsoever—neither website nor social media presence.
- ▶ However, micro-businesses with a website make on average an extra €26,825 a year.
- ▶ Only 34% of SMEs can take online payments and only 32% can accept an online reservation.
- ▶ 18% of offline SMEs can't go online because of poor internet infrastructure.

## Making positive changes

- ▶ To increase skill levels and digital self-sufficiency, IEDR recommends the rollout of a national digital skills campaign, with a range of physical and digital how-to guides for different industry sectors.
- ▶ Mentorship and resourcing: industry and government must work together to ensure that SMEs are receiving shoulder-to-shoulder guidance, and that the hardworking local agencies have the expertise and manpower to provide it.
- ▶ A quarter of SMEs in Connacht and Ulster rate their internet connection as 'poor' or 'very poor': the National Broadband Plan must be fast-tracked in these areas.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: Virgin Media Digital Insights Report 2016

# Chapter one

## What is the dot ie Digital Health Index?

The dot ie Digital Health Index provides a unique analysis of the number of digital assets owned by SMEs and the perceived quality of these assets.

### 1.1 What is the dot ie Digital Health Index?

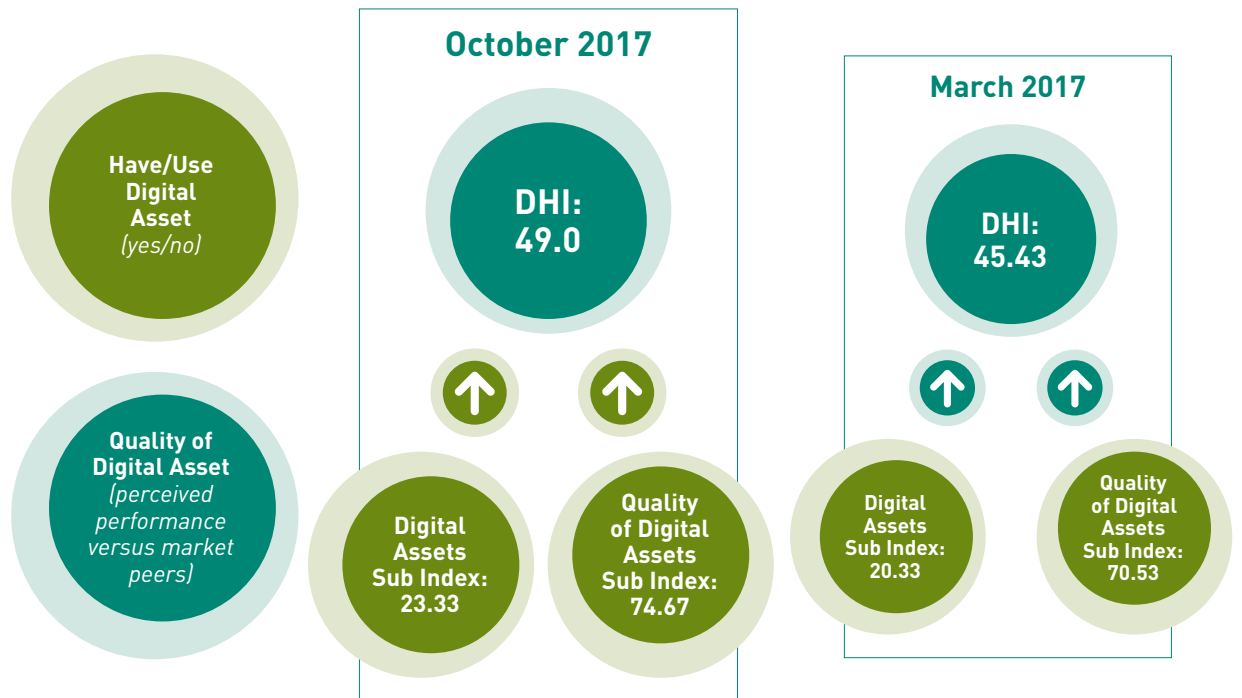
The dot ie Digital Health Index measures the 'digital health' of Ireland's SMEs.

From a baseline that was established with an initial wave of research in May 2014, the Index tracks the number and use of digital assets among Irish SMEs, along with SME opinions and perceptions about the importance and performance of their assets versus those of their competitors in their market niches.

This edition of the dot ie Digital Health Index focuses on a seventh wave of research conducted in October 2017, with previous waves conducted in March 2017, October 2016, April 2016, September 2015, December 2014 and May 2014.

### 1.2 Ireland's digital health – October 2017

As of October 2017, the dot ie Digital Health Index is **49.0**. This is the highest ever score, surpassing the previous high of 45.5 in April 2016 and the most recent score of 45.4 in March 2017.



More Irish SMEs are using digital assets than ever before, and their confidence in the perceived quality of these digital assets compared to those of their market peers has increased.

A greater proportion of SMEs are using social media channels, particularly Facebook (62%, up from 50% in the last wave), while more are gaining insights into their key markets and website traffic using data analytics (17%, up from just 7% in the previous wave).

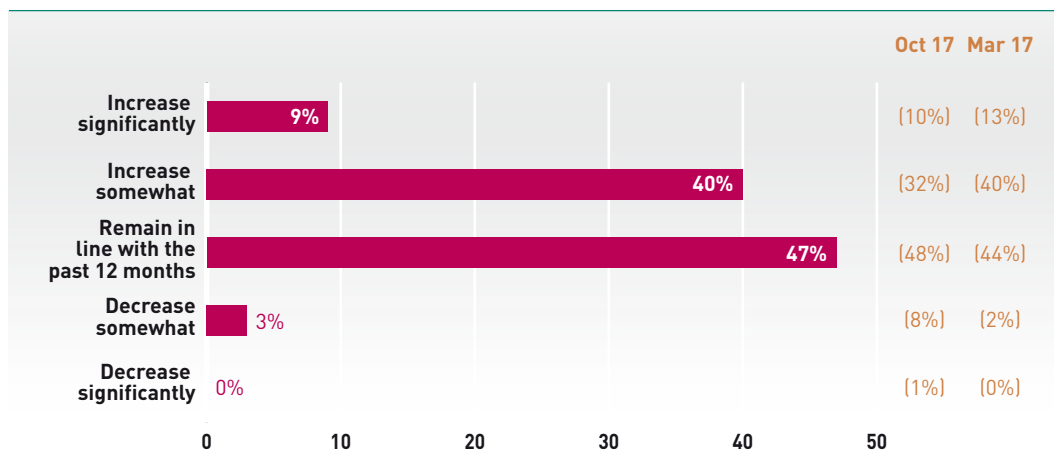
These trends are explained in full over the following chapters. For more information on how the dot ie Digital Health Index is constructed, and for historical Digital Health Index trends, please refer to Appendices One and Two.

### 1.3 General industry sentiment

Although the dot ie Digital Health Index is at a record high, business sentiment has dropped since the previous wave of research in March 2017. While the definitive cause of this is hard to determine, it could possibly be the result of a cautious Budget (Oct 2017) or the seemingly rudderless direction of UK-EU Brexit negotiations and the continued uncertainty surrounding future trading relationships.

#### SME sentiment regarding expected revenue generation over the next 12 months – total sample across all research waves

Thinking of the next 12 months, how do you expect revenue in your business to change compared to the previous 12 months?



Base: 3,513; All companies across seven research waves, 2014-2017 (October 2017 and March 2017 – 500 companies in each wave)

Compared to March 2017, when 53% expected their revenues to increase significantly or somewhat in the next twelve months, only 42% said the same in October.

48% said they expected them to remain in line with the past twelve months (up from 44%); while 9% said they expected their revenues to decrease either somewhat or significantly, compared to just 2% in the last wave of research.

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# Chapter two

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## What Irish consumers want from SMEs

Irish consumers are tech-savvy and patriotic: almost 80% of consumers expect a business to have at least a basic website, over half want to make purchases online, and nearly three-quarters feel it's important to buy Irish. But where do Ireland's SMEs stand?

Irish consumers are tech-savvy and well-accustomed to buying goods and services online. It's fast, convenient, and often more affordable than a visit to the shops. In fact, our appetite for internet shopping looks set to grow even more: today, Ireland's share of the European e-commerce marketplace is worth €9 billion, and by 2021, that is expected to rise to €14 billion.<sup>4</sup>

As we'll discover in Chapter Three, however, there's a real danger that future spend will increasingly go abroad to foreign retailers. Most Irish SMEs do not have e-commerce capability, and almost 1 in 5 have no online presence whatsoever. In the long term, these businesses will lose out on increased revenue and new customers.

Irish consumers have little sympathy for this 'non-digital' mindset. Almost 70% find it frustrating when a business has no website, two-thirds say a lack of an online presence makes a business look outdated, and nearly 30% don't even trust a business that doesn't have a website. With alternative retailers in Ireland, and many more abroad, consumers will simply vote with their wallets and take their business elsewhere.

### 2.1 Consumer attitudes to Irish SMEs' online presence

Consumers expect businesses to have modern, up-to-date websites that at the very least have basic details, like contact information and opening hours.

84% say it is frustrating or extremely frustrating if a company has incorrect information on their website. 69% say it is frustrating or extremely frustrating if a company does not have a website, while 67% are similarly annoyed if a company has no online presence whatsoever.

In keeping with the previous wave of research, less than a third (31%) of consumers are dissatisfied if an SME fails to engage on social channels.

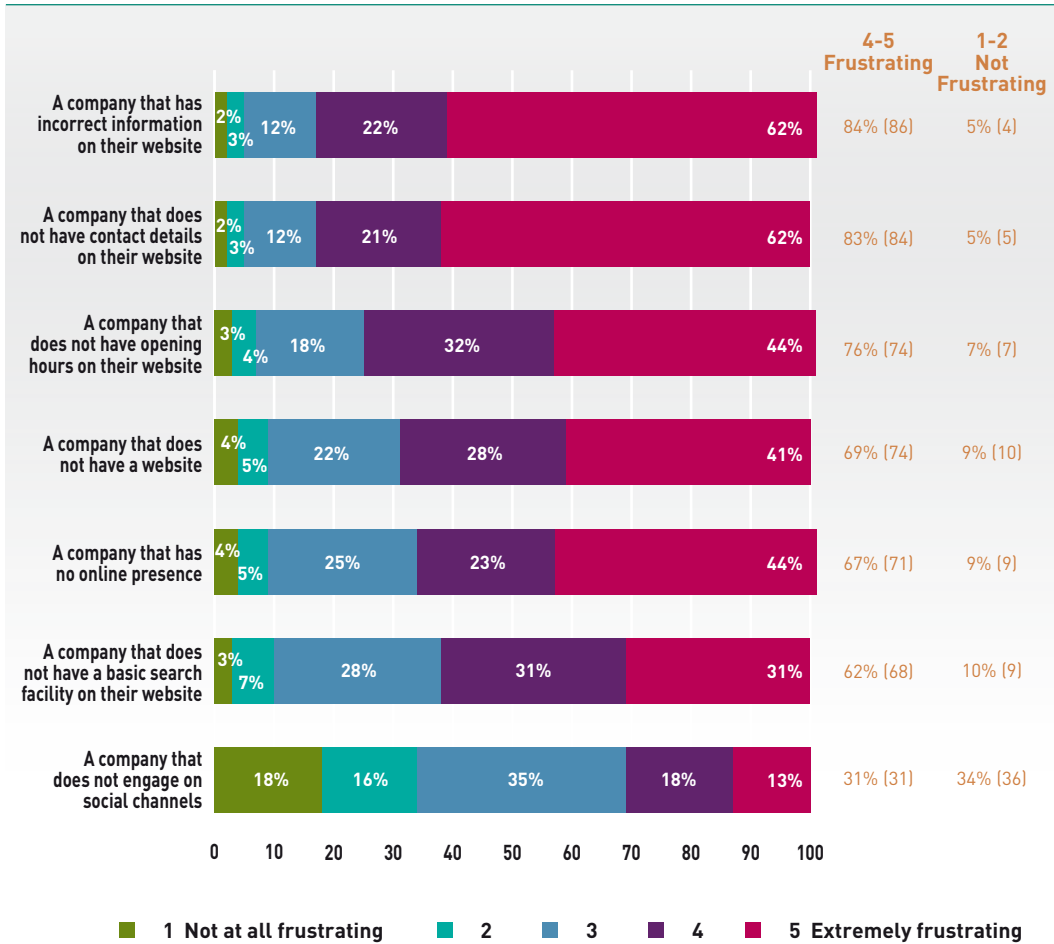
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<sup>4</sup> Source: Virgin Media Digital Insights Report 2016



### Consumer attitudes to researching local businesses online

Using a 5-point scale where 5 is extremely frustrating and 1 is not at all frustrating, please tell us how you feel about the following when looking for information on Irish SMEs/small businesses online.



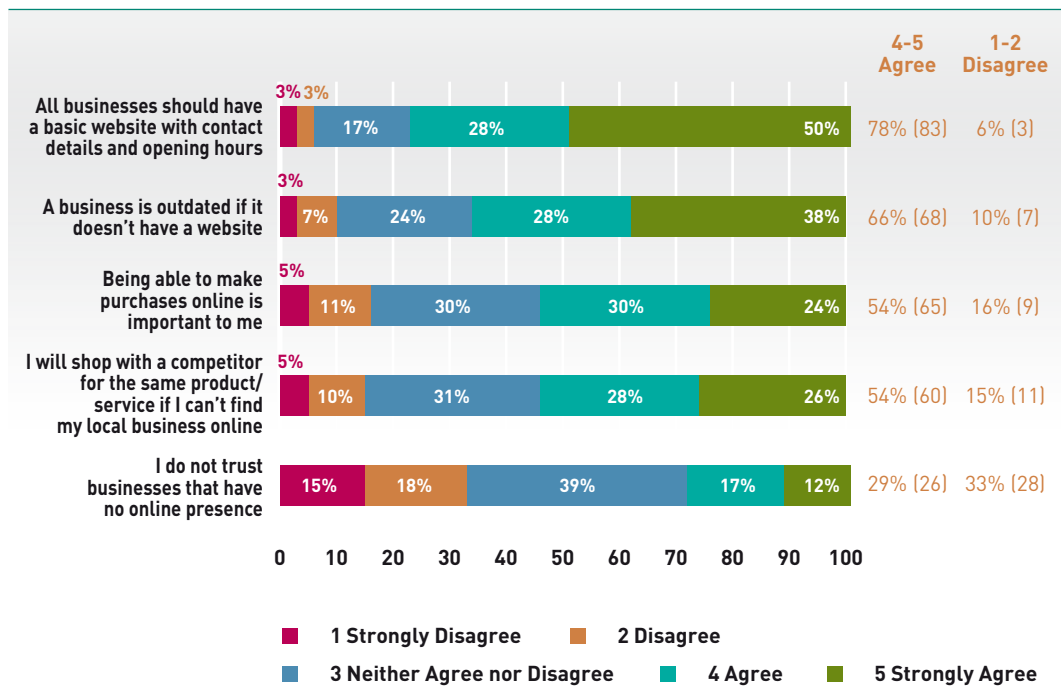
Base: All respondents: 1,000 - October 2017  
 () = March 2017

78% of consumers say that all Irish businesses should have, at the very least, a basic website with contact details and opening hours.

Two-thirds say a business is outdated if it doesn't have a website, over half (54%) say they would shop with a competitor for the same product/service if they couldn't find their preferred business online, while 29% say they do not trust a business that has no online presence, up slightly on the last wave of research.

### Consumer attitudes to SMEs' online presence

Using a 5-point scale where 5 is strongly agree and 1 is strongly disagree, please tell us how you feel about the following statements.



Base: All respondents: 1,000 - October 2017  
 () = March 2017

In an interesting new trend, the majority of people (44%, up from 28%) are most likely to refer to a business's website for information, ahead of search engines like Google (40%, down from 52%).

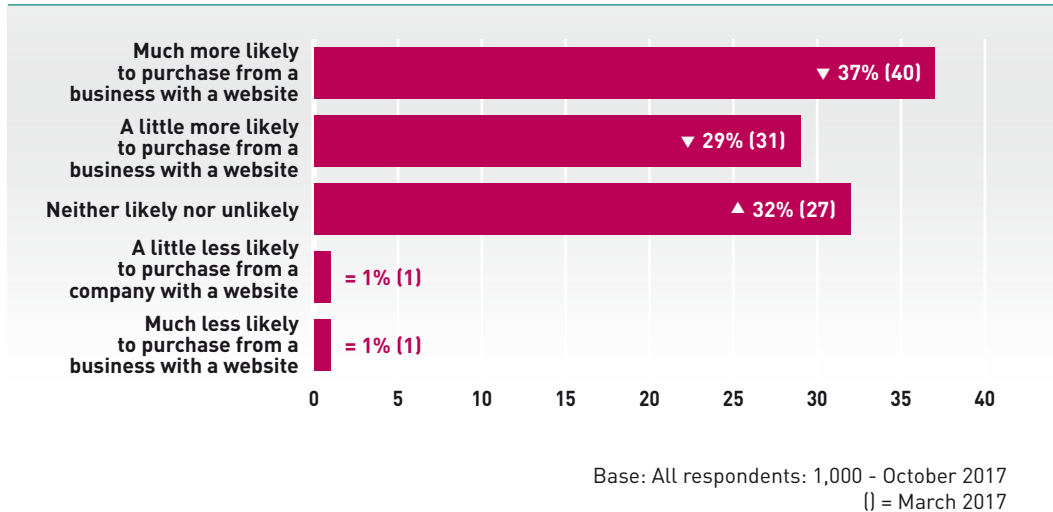
Furthermore, 59% of consumers said that if a business has no online presence, they would be less likely to use their services or do business with them offline/in-store. Interestingly, two-thirds said that if a business has a poor online presence, like a badly designed website, they would be less likely to use their services or do business with them, online or offline. Websites are virtual shop windows, and if it is a poor user experience, it can be worse for a business than not having one at all.

## 2.2 Consumer attitudes to online shopping

Two-thirds of consumers are more likely to purchase from a business that has a website. While this is the majority opinion, it is a 5 percentage point decrease on the previous wave of research. Almost a third (32%) said this would not impact their decision.

### How a website affects consumer purchasing decisions

How likely are you to purchase goods or services from a business that has a website?



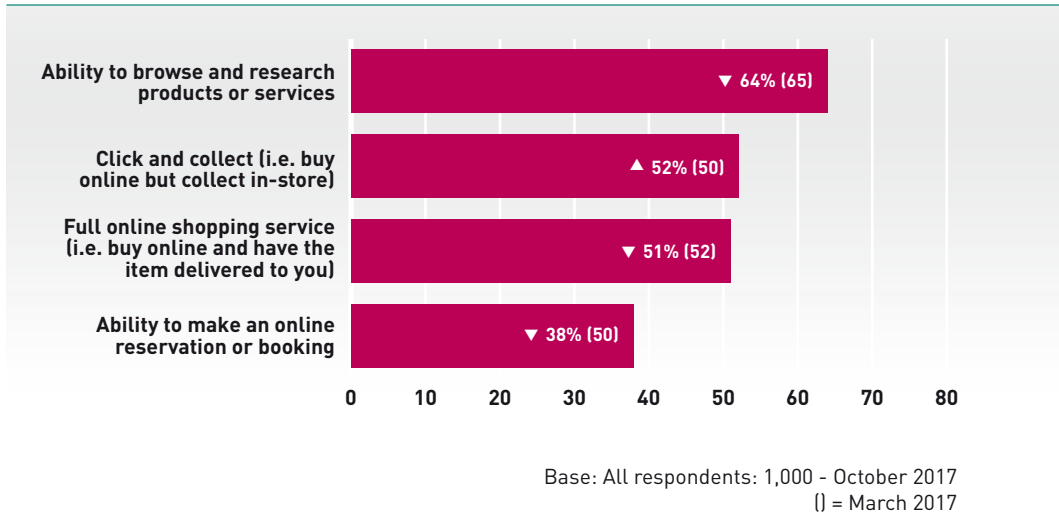
Only 52% of Irish consumers believe that their local shops are equipped for the digital age. However, while 66% of Irish businesses have a website, just 40% of them can take orders online, and fewer still can actually process transactions online. See Chapter Four for more information.

When consumers were asked what online services they would most like their local high street shops to offer, 64% said an ability to browse and research products or services. 52% said a click-and-collect service, while 51% said a full online shopping service (i.e. buy online and have the item delivered to your door).

The number demanding an ability to make an online reservation or booking dropped from half to 38%. While potentially a short-term trend, this may indicate that consumers' habits are changing, or that they prefer to use third-party apps.

### What consumers want from their local businesses

What online services would you most like your local high street stores and service providers to offer?



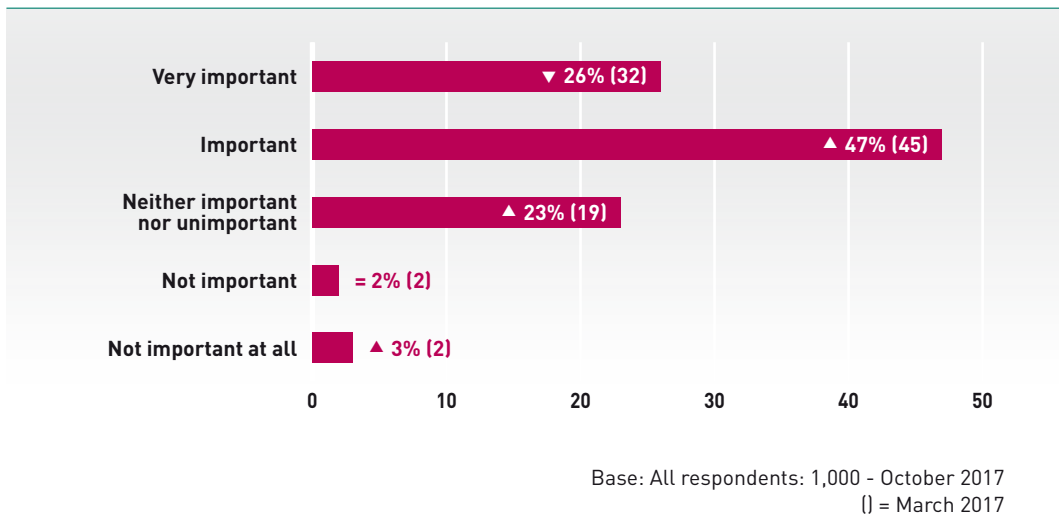
### 2.3 Buying Irish: does it matter to consumers?

Buying Irish is important to almost three-quarters (73%) of Irish shoppers. 23% said it is neither important nor unimportant, up slightly from 19% on the last wave of research. Just 5% feel no particular loyalty, and said it was not important or not important at all.

Those over the age of 35 were more likely to be patriotic and say that buying goods and services from Irish businesses is important to them.

#### Consumer attitudes to buying Irish

How important is buying Irish or supporting Irish business to you?



## 2.4 Consumer attitudes to Brexit

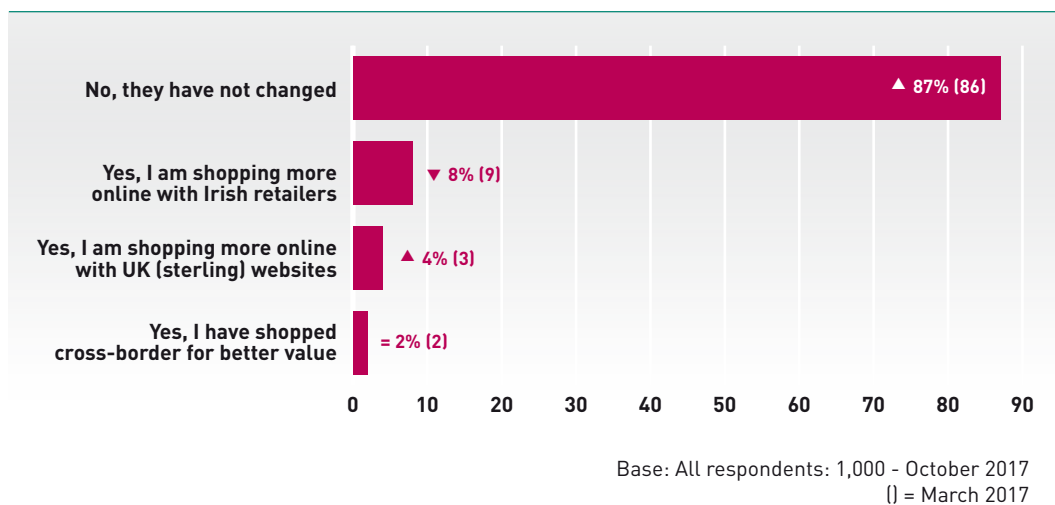
In keeping with the last report, the clear majority (87%) say that Brexit has not changed their shopping habits.

Among those who said it had, 8% said they are shopping more online with Irish retailers, 4% said they are shopping more online with British retailers (i.e. buying in sterling), and 2% said they have physically shopped cross-border.

While Irish SMEs can take some degree of comfort from these figures, a hard Brexit could further weaken the pound, encouraging more people to shop with British retailers or across the border in search of better value.

### Consumer attitudes to Brexit

Have your shopping habits changed since the UK voted to leave the EU?



## Chapter summary

- ▶ 84% say it is frustrating or extremely frustrating if a company has incorrect information on their website
- ▶ Over two-thirds (69%) say it is frustrating or extremely frustrating if a company does not have a website
- ▶ Two-thirds say a business is outdated if it doesn't have a website
- ▶ Over half (54%) say they would shop with a competitor for the same product/service if they couldn't find their preferred business online
- ▶ Buying Irish is important to nearly three-quarters (73%) of Irish shoppers.

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# Chapter three

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## What digital assets do SMEs own and use?

Ireland's digital health has improved to a record high, driven primarily by increased use of social media and data analytics tools. However, almost 1 in 5 (19%) have no digital assets – and therefore no online presence – whatsoever, and only 14% have web sales ability.

Digital assets, like websites and social media pages, are crucial to an SME's online strategy. A digital asset allows a business to reach out to new customers, grow existing relationships, sell goods and services, and analyse market trends.

### 3.1 Ireland's digital health at record high

The overall digital health of Ireland's SMEs has risen to 49.0, the highest since research began in 2014. This is also a significant climb on the last wave of research in March 2017, which scored 45.4.

Two-thirds of Irish SMEs have a website. Most SMEs understand the importance of having a website, even if they do not have one of their own. The number of SMEs with web sales processing ability has risen to 14%. Those with data analytics ability has jumped significantly, from 7% to 17%.

In terms of social media, 62% of businesses have a Facebook page, up from 50% in the last wave of research; 21% have a Twitter account, up from 17%.

Although not included in the overall dot ie Digital Health Index score, we also analysed SMEs' use of other social networking and messaging apps:

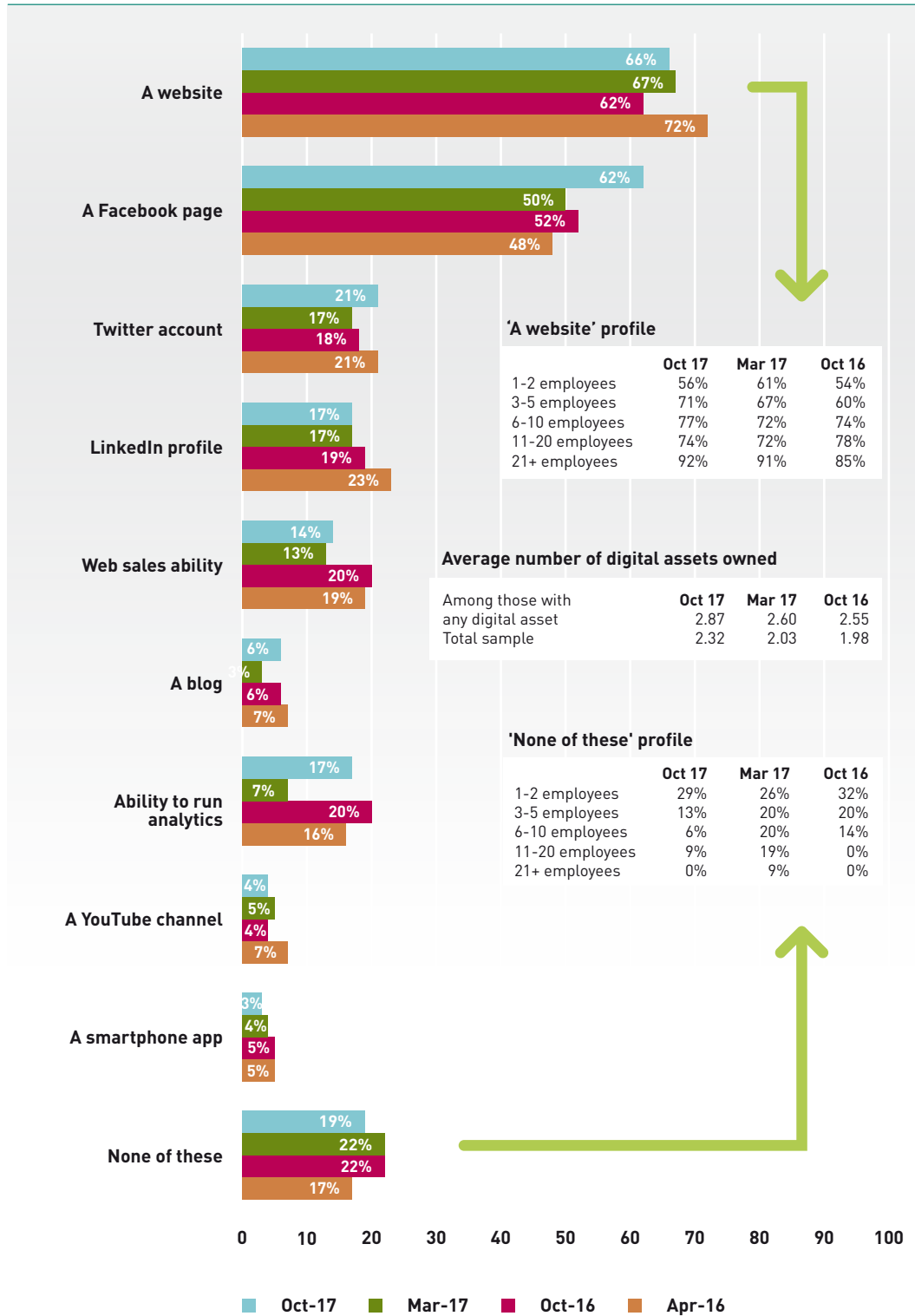
- ▶ 13% use Instagram, up from 9%
- ▶ 6% use Pinterest, up from 2%
- ▶ 5% use WhatsApp, up from 4%
- ▶ 5% use Snapchat, up from 2%

These new platforms are performing better than other, more established channels. The number of SMEs with a blog and a YouTube channel has dropped by a percentage point each, to 3% and 4% respectively.

### 3.2 Digital assets owned

#### Breakdown of the digital assets owned by Irish SMEs

Which of the following does your business have?



Base 500: All participants - October 2017

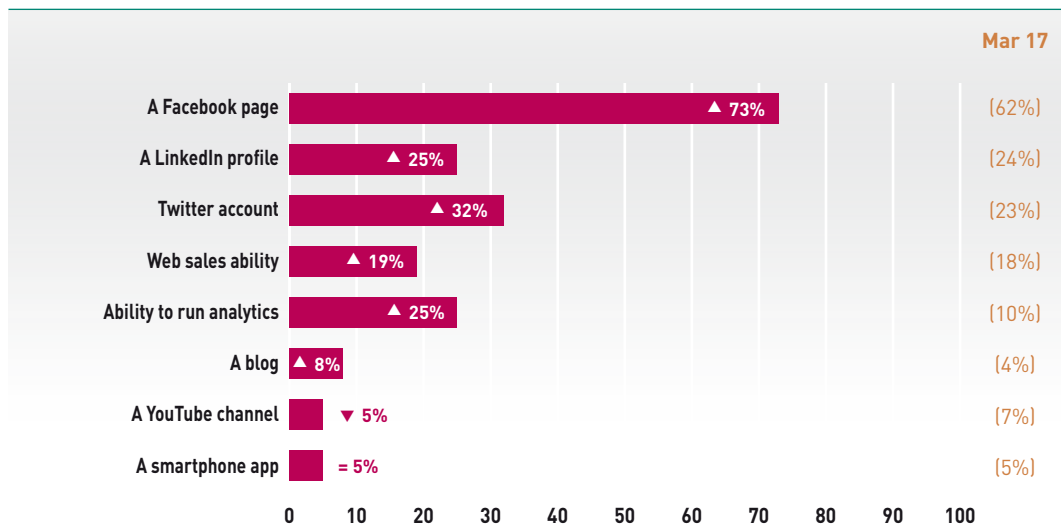
### 3.3 Digital assets owned – SMEs with multiple digital assets

Many SMEs have multiple digital assets. This indicates a level of appreciation for a comprehensive digital platform that gives business owners a place to target customers, sell goods and services, and fully engage with their target market.

Compared to the last wave of research, there has been a significant improvement in this area. 73% of SMEs with a website also have a Facebook page (up from 62%), 32% have a Twitter account (up from 23%) and 25% a LinkedIn profile. 19% have web sales ability, while 25% can run data analytics (up from 10%).

#### Breakdown of other digital assets owned by Irish SMEs that have a website

Which of the following does your business have?



Base 330: All companies with a website - October 2017

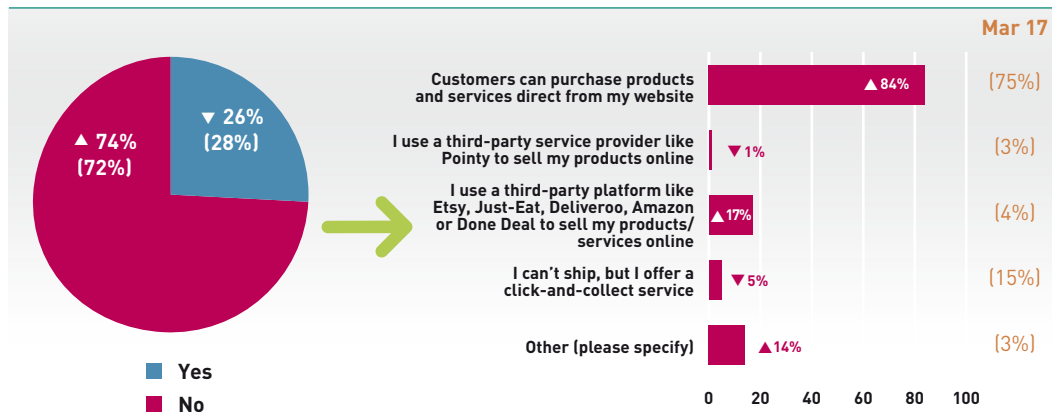


### 3.4 SMEs with digital assets and e-commerce

Irish SMEs that have digital assets and also engage in e-commerce are a minority: only 26% do, either directly, through their own website, or indirectly, through a third-party platform, like eBay, Done Deal or Just-Eat.

#### SMEs and selling online

Can consumers purchase your products/services online and if so, how?

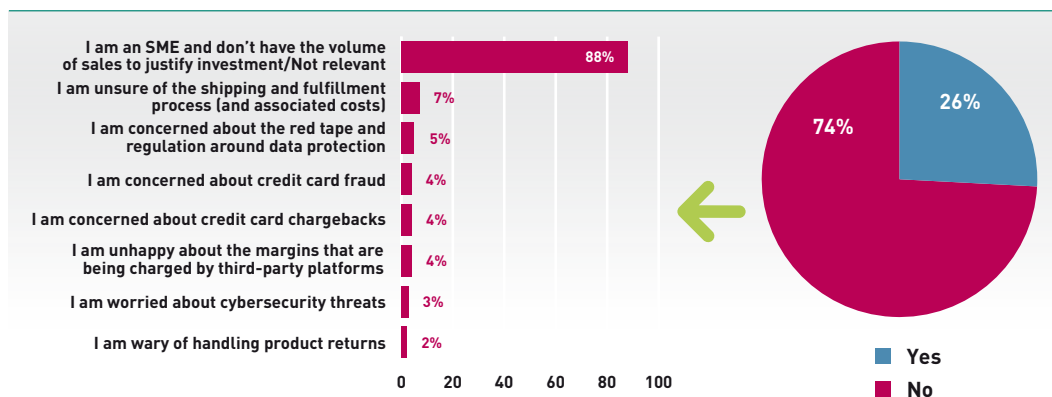


Base 405: All companies with digital assets - October 2017  
( ) = March 2017

For the almost three-quarters (74%) of digital Irish SMEs that don't engage in e-commerce, 88% said that this was because they felt it was either irrelevant to them, or they didn't have the volume of sales to justify it. Others were concerned with shipping, red tape and credit card fraud.

#### Why SMEs don't sell online

Why does your business not have e-commerce capabilities, e.g. ability to take sales orders online, process payments, take online bookings/reservations?



Base 300: All companies that don't have e-commerce facilities - October 2017  
( ) = March 2017

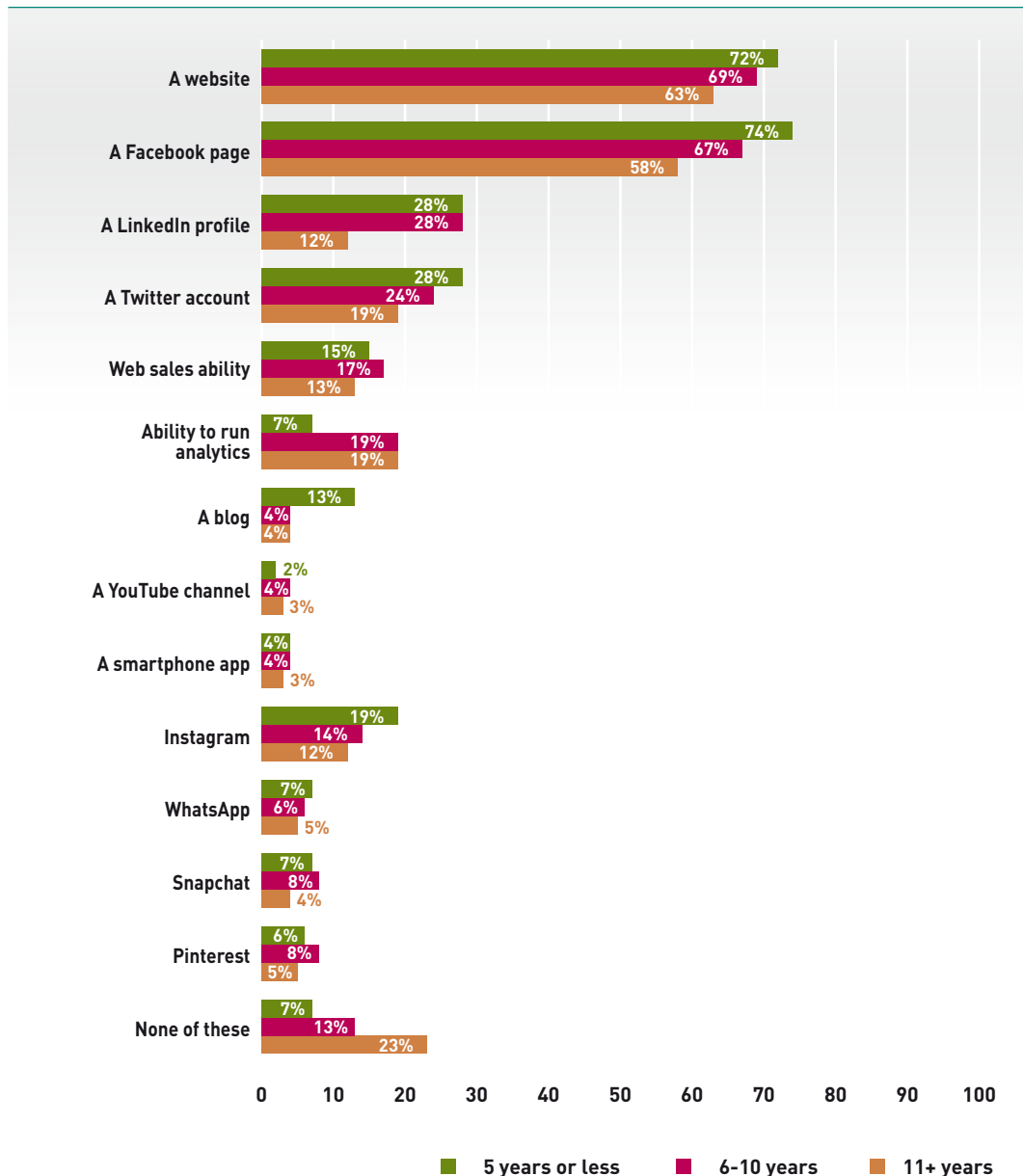
### 3.5 Old vs young: how the age of an SME affects digital asset ownership

Older businesses tend to be less digital. Nearly a quarter (23%) of businesses over ten years old reported having no digital assets, compared to 7% less than five years old. Just under two-thirds (63%) of businesses over ten years old have a website, compared to 72% of business less than five years old. Older businesses may feel that because they are more established and have a mature customer base, they don't require a permanent home on the web; younger businesses, in contrast, are more likely to be tech-savvy and have digital as a central pillar of their growth strategy.

Younger businesses are more likely to be social media-savvy too, but generally only for more established platforms, like Facebook and Twitter. When it comes to newer platforms, like Snapchat and WhatsApp, ownership is more or less equal across all SME age profiles. This is perhaps because the business case for these digital assets is still not fully established or widely understood.

#### Breakdown of the digital assets owned by Irish SMEs according to the length of time in business

Which of the following does your business have?



Base 500: All companies - October 2017

### 3.6 The offliners

Almost 1 in 5 Irish SMEs, or 19%, are completely offline – they have no digital assets whatsoever. While this is a small improvement on 22% in the last wave of research, Irish consumers have little patience. Two-thirds of consumers believe a business looks ‘outdated’ if it doesn’t have a website, while nearly 30% do not even trust a business that has no online presence.

We take a closer look at these ‘offliners’ in Chapter Five and explore the reasons they give for remaining ‘non-digital’ in a digital age.

### Chapter summary

- ▶ 66% of SMEs have websites
- ▶ Overall e-commerce ability is low: just 14% claim to be able to process web sales
- ▶ Social media usage has improved: 62% have a Facebook profile and 21% a Twitter account
- ▶ Companies that have been in business for 11+ years are using analytics, demonstrating they recognise the value of business data
- ▶ Almost 1 in 5 (19%) of SMEs have no digital assets whatsoever
- ▶ The older the business, the less likely it is to have digital assets: 23% of SMEs over ten years old have no digital assets, compared to 7% of SMEs five years old or younger.

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# Chapter four

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## How SMEs use their websites

A modern, well-designed website can help an SME to market its products and services, attract new customers and drive revenue growth. While two-thirds of Irish SMEs have websites, comparatively few use theirs to engage in e-commerce.

A website is the central hub of an SME's online activity: it gives customers an insight into what their business is about, where it is, and when it opens. An e-commerce-enabled website is a digital shopfront, allowing an SME to sell to new and existing customers at home and abroad, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

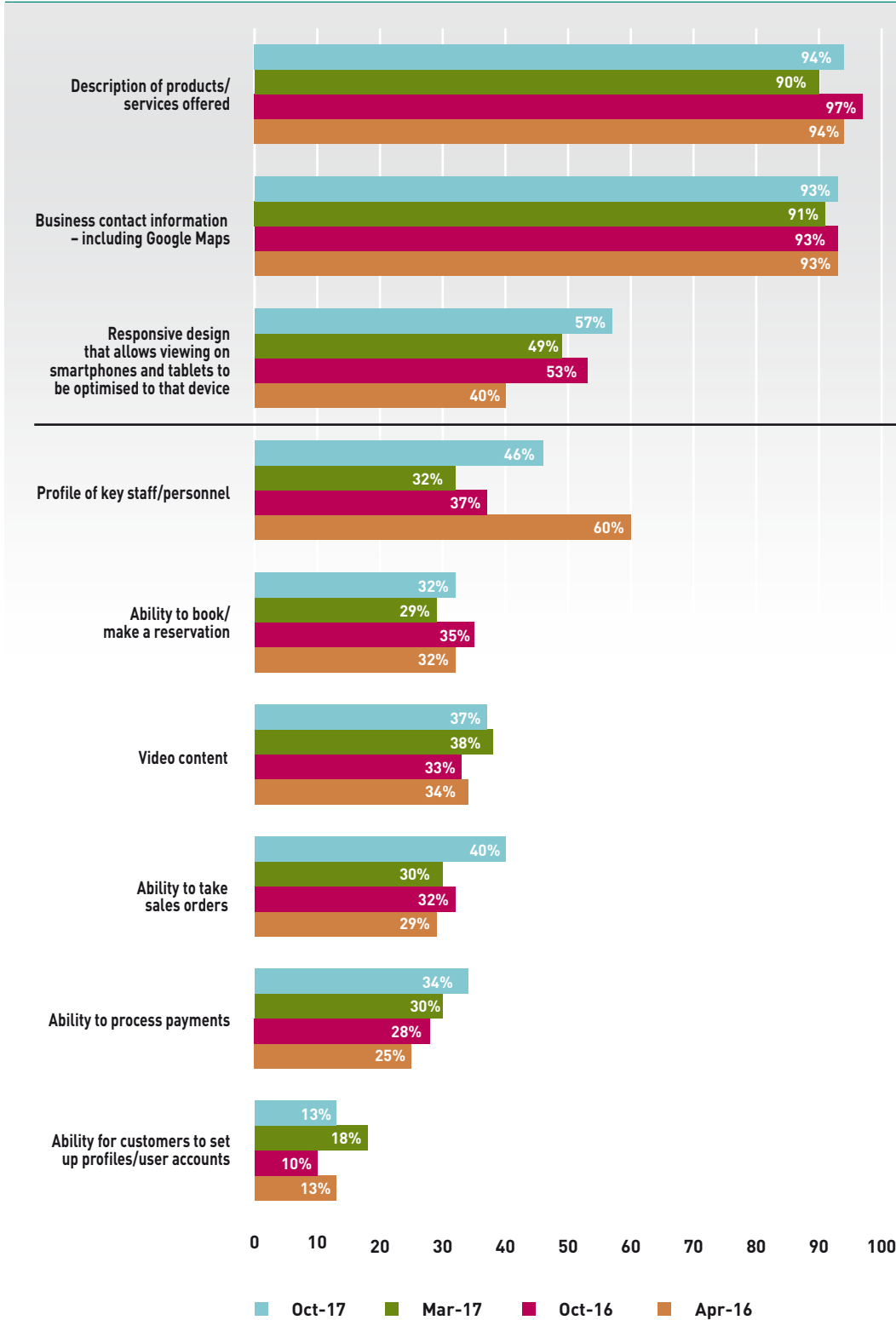
### 4.1 Website functionality – the 'postcard' website versus the e-commerce-enabled website

In previous editions of the dot ie Digital Health Index, we have made the distinction between e-commerce-enabled websites and static 'postcard' websites that just list basic information, like contact details and opening hours. The majority of SMEs fall into the latter category.

40% of Irish SMEs with websites can now take sales orders. While still a minority, it is a noteworthy improvement on just 30% in the last wave of research. 34% can process payments via their website, up from 30%; while 32% allow bookings and reservations via their website, up from 29%.

### Website functionality

Considering your business's website, which of the following does it have/do?

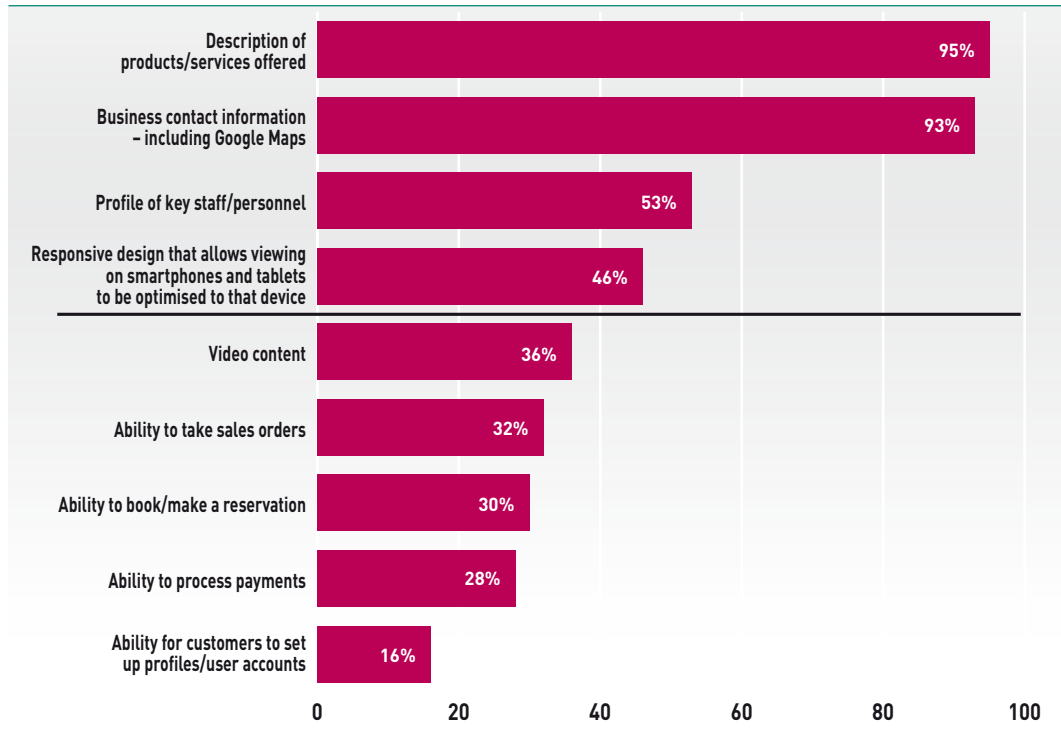


Base 330: All companies with a website - October 2017

Over the period since May 2014, seven waves of research have covered 3,513 SMEs. Of the 2,592 SMEs with websites, average e-commerce capability decreases on this wave: under a third (32%) can take sales orders, 30% can take bookings or reservations, and only 28% can process payments.

**Website functionality – total sample across all seven research waves**

Considering your business’s website, which of the following does it have/do?



Base 2,592: All companies with a website across seven waves of research

## 4.2 E-commerce-enabled websites

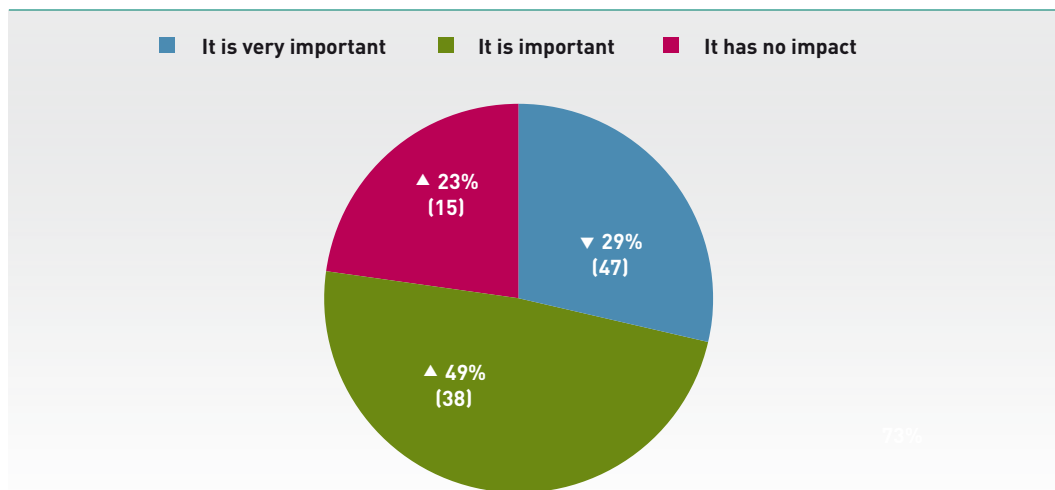
Consumers' rising appreciation for e-commerce correlates with SMEs' understanding of the importance of a website in generating new business and sales leads: 78% said their website was important or very important in this way. However, this is a decrease on the last wave of research.

23% believe their website has no impact on generating new business, up from 15%. The opposite is true, however. According to IEDR research, on average, an SME with a website receives an additional 25 jobs a year, each worth an average of €1,073 for a total additional revenue take of €26,825 a year.

Even if a website doesn't have e-commerce capability, as our research in Chapter Two shows, basic contact information and a description of products and services can often encourage consumers to enquire further or visit the business's shop.

### The role of the website in creating new business opportunities

What role does your website play in bringing in new business/sales?



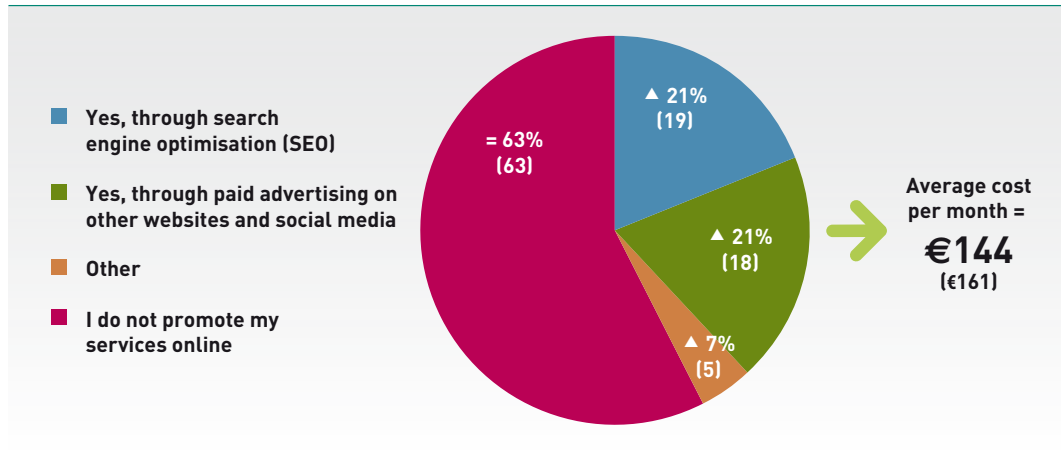
Base 330: All companies that have a website - October 2017  
 ( ) = March 2017

### 4.3 SMEs and online promotion

63% of Irish SMEs with websites do not promote their services online. Among those that do, 21% use search engine optimisation (SEO), while a further 21% pay for advertisements on other websites and social media. Irish SMEs spend an average of €144 per month promoting their business online, down from €161 in the last wave of research.

#### SMEs and online promotion

Do you promote your services online?



Base 330: All companies that have a website - October 2017  
 ( ) = March 2017

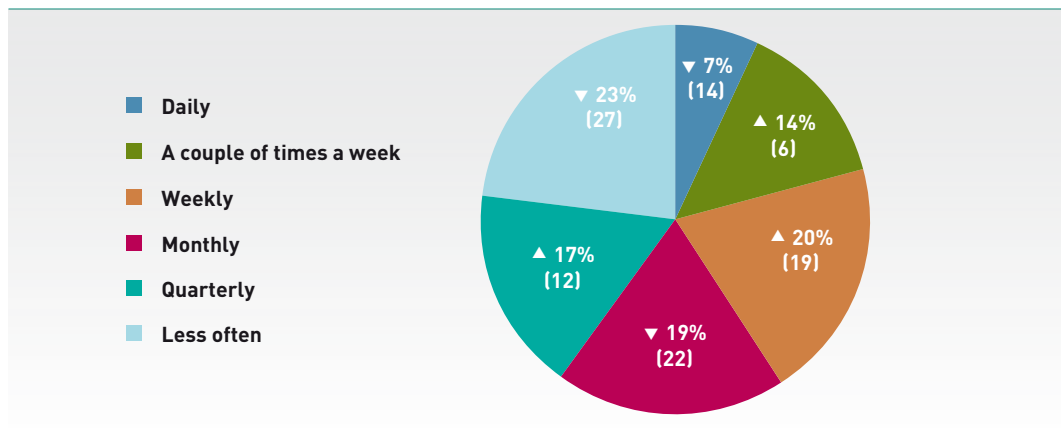
### 4.4 Updating the website

A frequently updated website shows customers that a business is active, and helps with search engine ranking.

14% of SMEs update their website a couple of times a week, up from 6% on the previous wave. 20% update weekly and 19% monthly. 23% of SMEs update their website less than quarterly, down from 26%.

#### Updating the website

How frequently do you update your website?



Base 330: All companies that have a website - October 2017  
 ( ) = March 2017



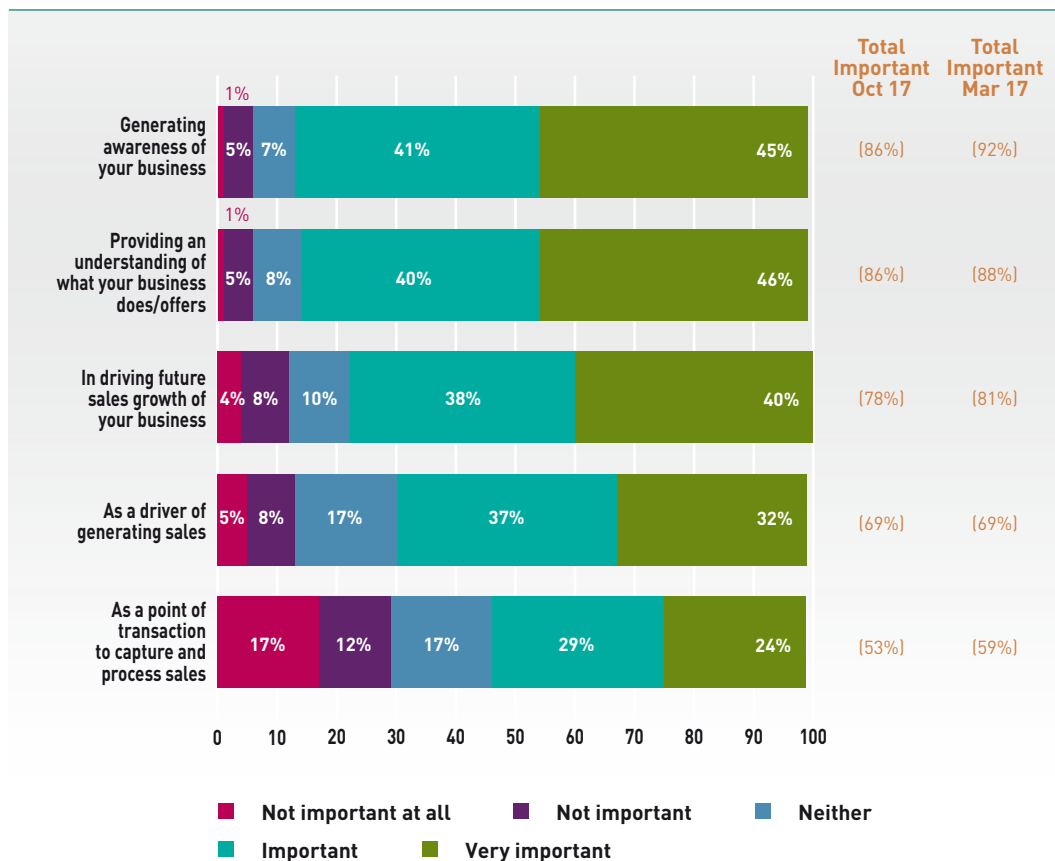
### 4.5 The importance of awareness versus action

While there have been small decreases on the last wave of research, in general, SMEs with a website agree that theirs plays an important role in driving future sales growth (78%), generating sales (69%) and as a point of transaction to capture and process sales (53%).

However, this positive sentiment does not match up with actual e-commerce capability: only 40% of SMEs with a website can take sales orders online and only 34% can process payments (Section 4.1).

#### The importance of websites

How important or not is your business's website for each of the following?



Base 330: All companies with a website - October 2017  
( ) = March 2017

### Chapter summary

- ▶ 40% of SMEs with websites can take sales orders, while just over a third (34%) can process payments – these are both increases on the previous wave of research
- ▶ 78% believe that their website helps to bring in new business and sales
- ▶ SMEs with a website earn, on average, an additional €26,825 a year
- ▶ Nearly two-thirds (63%) of Irish SMEs do not promote their services online.

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# Chapter five

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## The offliners

A stubborn cohort of SMEs remains offline. While some are hampered by poor broadband and a lack of time and know-how, most say there is 'no need' to be online in their industry. Is that really true?

Almost 1 in 5, or 19%, of Irish SMEs have no online presence whatsoever – not even a basic website or social media page. While a slight decrease on the last wave of research, this figure has remained more or less the same across all waves.

It could be argued that not every business needs a website, let alone e-commerce capability. What use does a local shop in rural Donegal have for an online presence if its customers are regulars and business has always been word of mouth? Traditionally, this argument had some validity, but not anymore.

We should not presume that things will always stay the same, particularly as Ireland's population of 'digital natives', consumers well accustomed to the convenience of the internet, grows. Our research shows that among all consumers, nearly 70% agree it is frustrating or extremely frustrating if a business does not have a basic website with contact information or opening hours, while 54% would shop with a competitor if their preferred retailer did not provide an option to buy online.

Intuitively, this makes sense. Someone searching for a once-off or occasional service, such as a plumber, is much more likely to book one that can be found on Google, on social media or via an app. An online presence not only provides useful information, it also lends an air of credibility and authenticity. While the offline plumber may still get business, there is a missed opportunity here. With a smartphone, the always-connected plumber could be answering email enquiries and taking bookings that have arrived via the website.

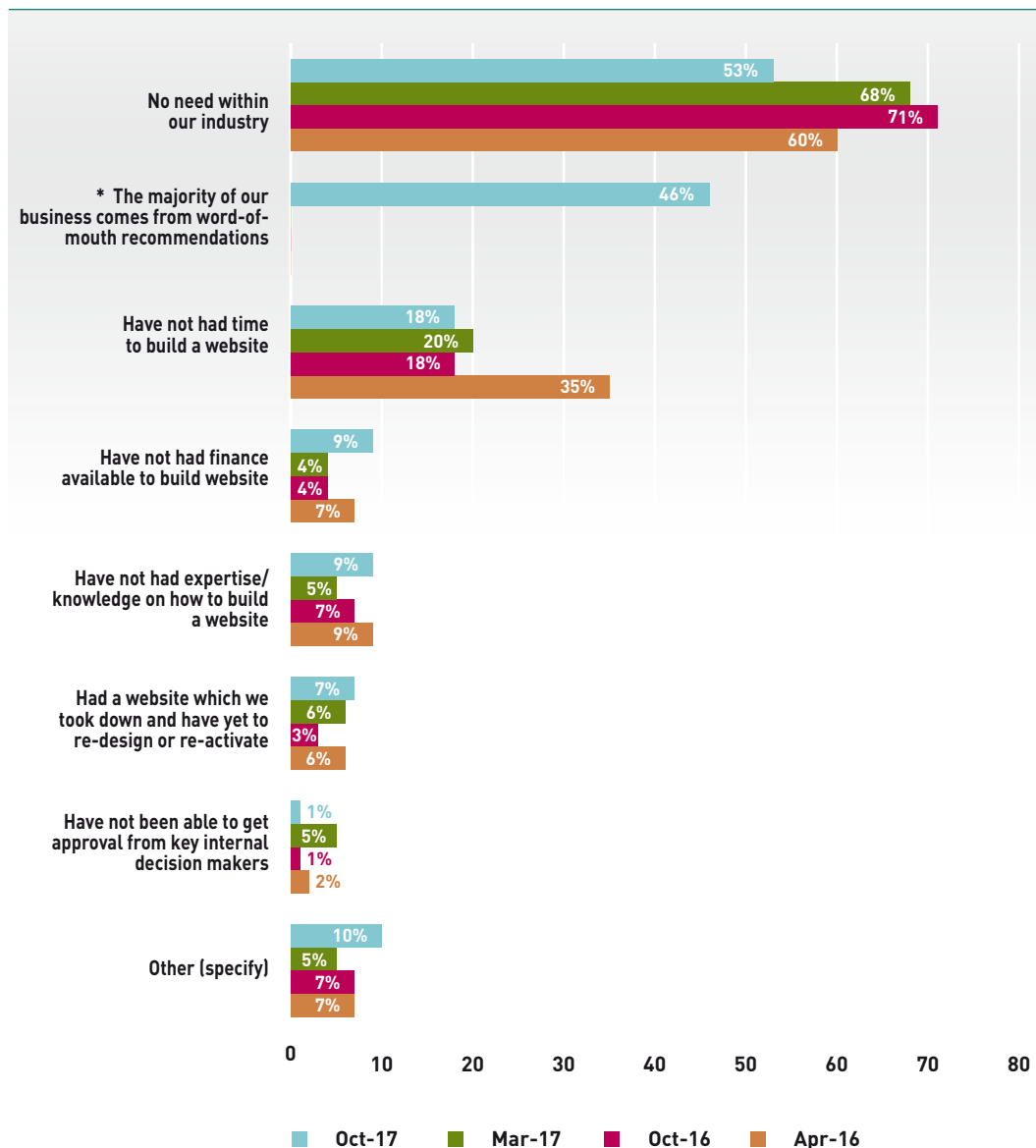
### 5.1 Despite the benefits, why do some SMEs not have websites?

Two-thirds of SMEs have a website, but one-third still do not, despite the benefits. This is the 'offliner conundrum': business owners who are online in a personal capacity but resolutely offline for business sales and promotion. When asked to explain why, 53% said there was 'no need' in their industry. This is a significant decrease on 68% in the last wave of research, though it is still high.

18% say they do not have time, down 2 percentage points. Smaller but still important factors include a lack of finance (9%, up from 4%) and a lack of expertise (9%, up from 5%).

#### Why SMEs do not have active websites

What are the main reasons your business does not have an active website currently?



Base 170: All companies without a website - October 2017

\* New response option added in October 2017

## 5.2 Why is there 'no need'?

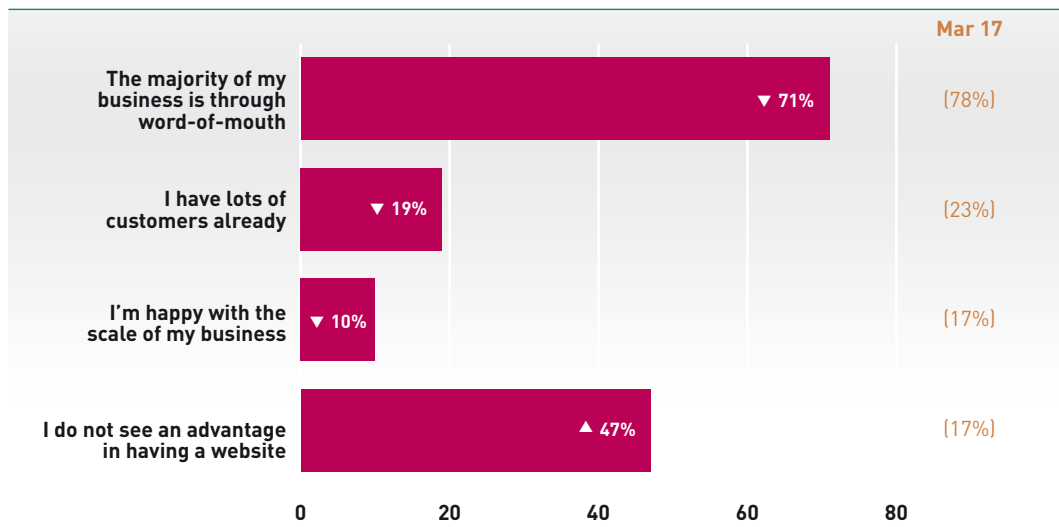
**Note: Small sample size**

Among those SMEs that said there is 'no need' to have a website in their industry, 71% said this is because the majority of their business is word of mouth; this is down from 78% in the last wave of research.

Those that said they do not see an advantage in having a website jumped dramatically, from 17% to 47%. Why this is the case is not clear, though it warrants further study in the future.

### Understanding why SMEs believe there is 'no need' to have a website

Why is there no need in your industry?



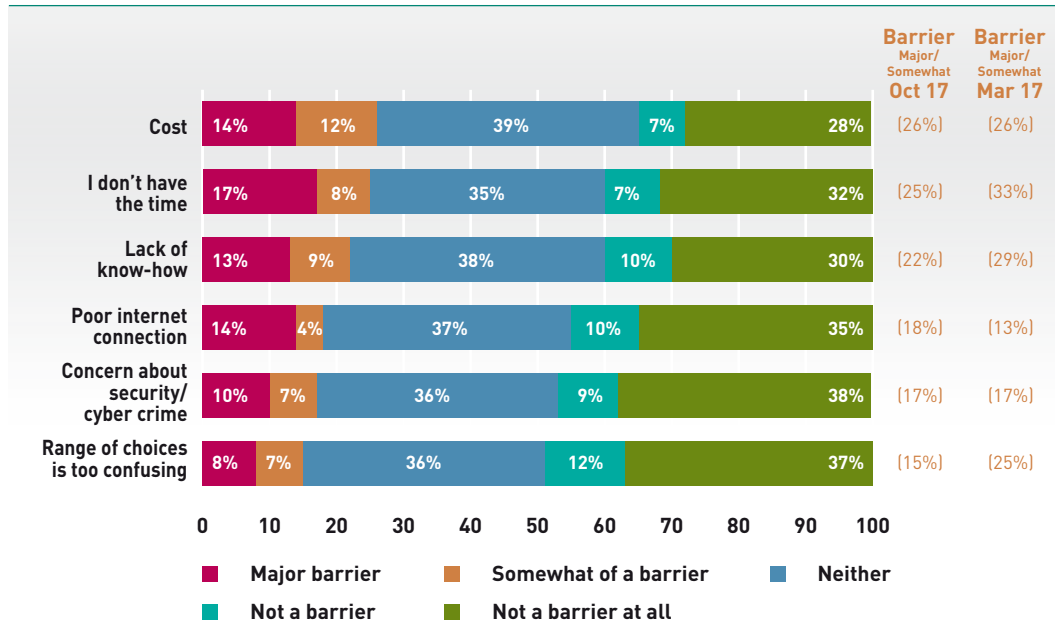
Base 90: All companies that feel there is no need to have a website within their industry - October 2017

### 5.3 Barriers to online activity

With a significant proportion of Irish SMEs still completely offline, it's important to understand what barriers are stopping them from becoming digital businesses.

#### Barriers to online activity

Using a scale of 1-5, where 5 is not a barrier and 1 is a major barrier, please rate each of the following statements on whether you believe them to be a barrier towards your business going online.



Base 170: All companies without a website - October 2017

The perceived cost of building and maintaining a website is the biggest barrier stopping SMEs going online. At 26%, this figure remains unchanged on the last wave of research. This is followed by a lack of time (25%, down from 33%) and a lack of know-how (22%, down from 29%).

18% said a poor internet connection is stopping them from going online. This is an increase on 13% in the last wave of research.

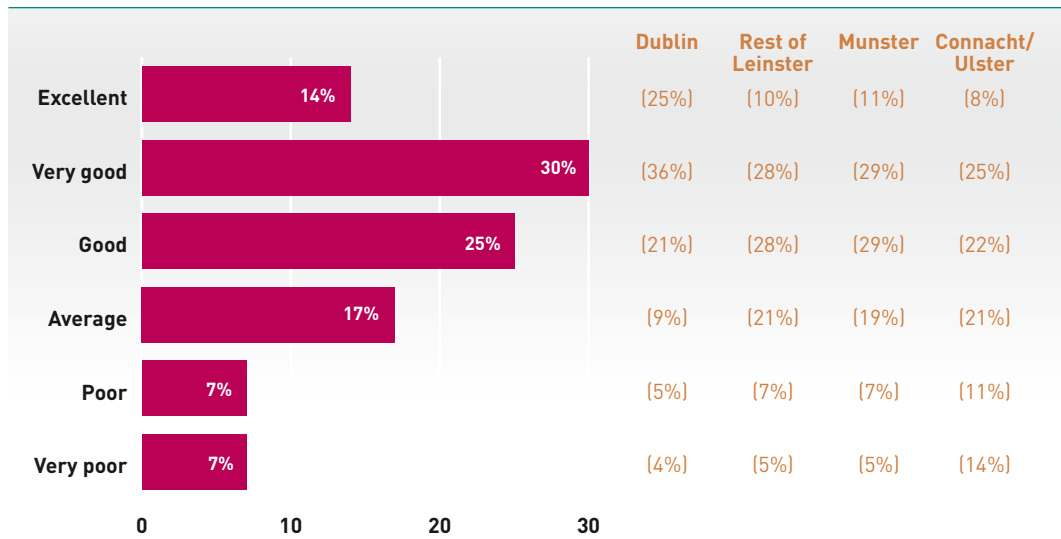
### 5.4 SMEs’ opinion of Ireland’s internet infrastructure

While broadband infrastructure has improved significantly in Ireland over the last decade, blackspots remain, particularly in rural areas.

44% of Irish SMEs surveyed said their internet connection was ‘excellent’ or ‘very good’. 17% said it was ‘average’, while 14% said it was ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’. The worst ratings came from businesses in Connacht/Ulster, with 25% grading their connections with the lowest scores, compared to 9% in Dublin and 12% in the rest of Leinster and Munster.

#### How SMEs rate Irish broadband speed and reliability

Rate the speed and reliability of internet infrastructure in your area.

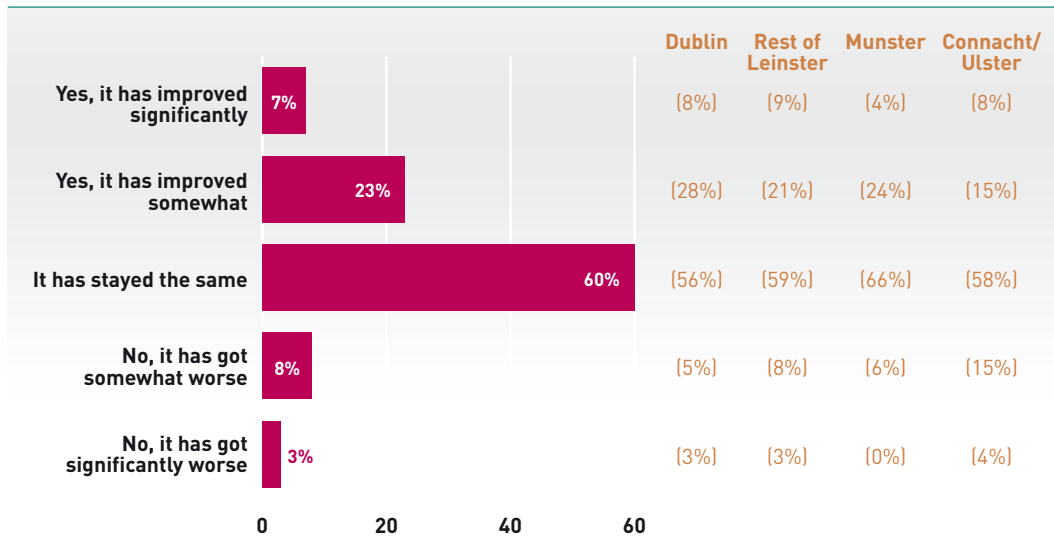


Base 500: All companies - October 2017

The majority, 60%, said that the speed and reliability of their internet infrastructure had stayed the same over the last twelve months; 30% said it had improved. However, 11% said their internet connection had actually deteriorated in quality. Again, those in Connacht/ULster were most likely to give this response: 19% said their connection had got worse either somewhat or significantly, compared to 8% in Dublin.

### SMEs on improvements to their internet infrastructure's speed and reliability

Do you believe that the speed and reliability of internet infrastructure in your area has improved in the past twelve months?



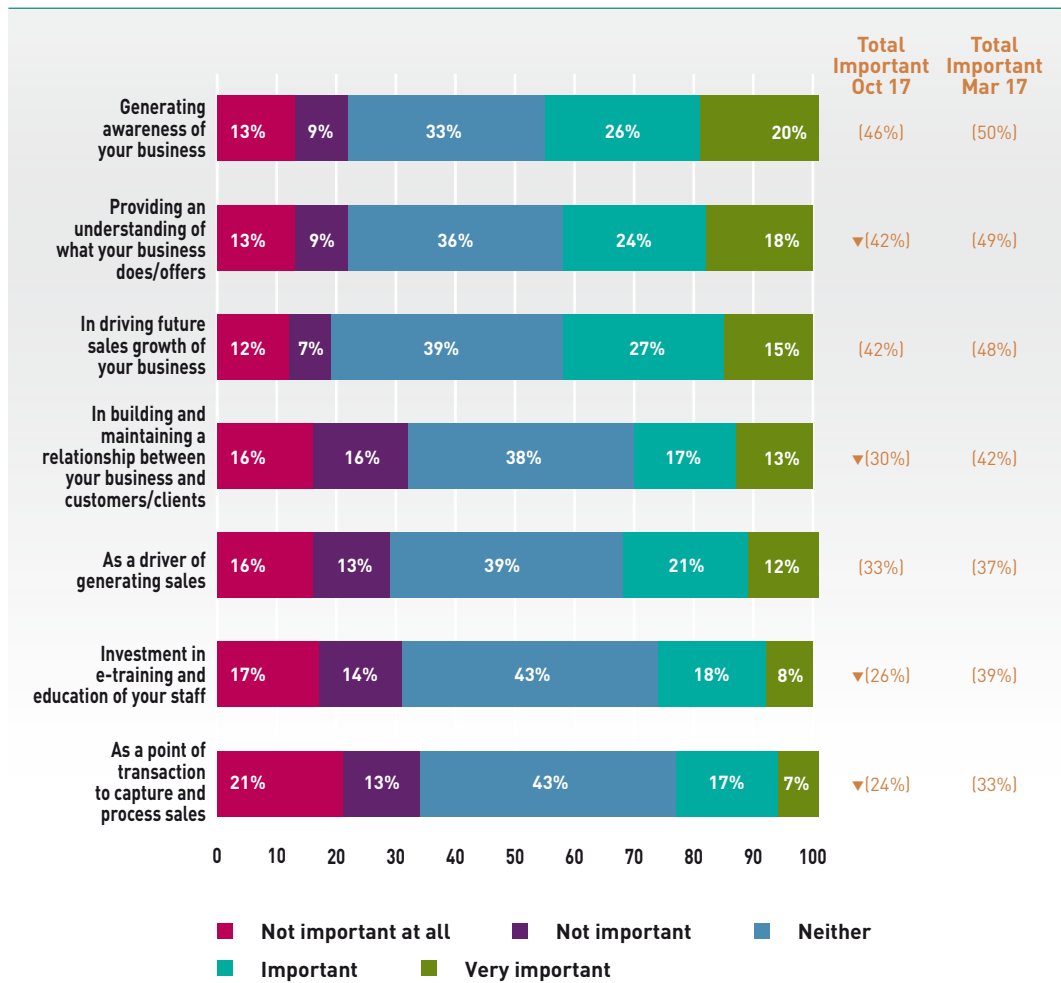
Base 500: All companies - October 2017

### 5.5 Cognitive dissonance: offline SMEs and the value of a website

Although lacking their own online presence, most offline SMEs acknowledge that a website is important for business.

#### Attitudes of offliner SMEs towards the importance of having a website

How important or not does your business feel that a website is for each of the following?



Base 170: All companies without a website - October 2017

While there have been a few small decreases in sentiment, offline Irish SMEs broadly appreciate that a website helps to generate awareness about a business, provides customers with an understanding of a business, and drives sales.

Many of these SMEs appear to be happy with the scale and scope of their offline business and customer base.



### 5.6 Plans for a website

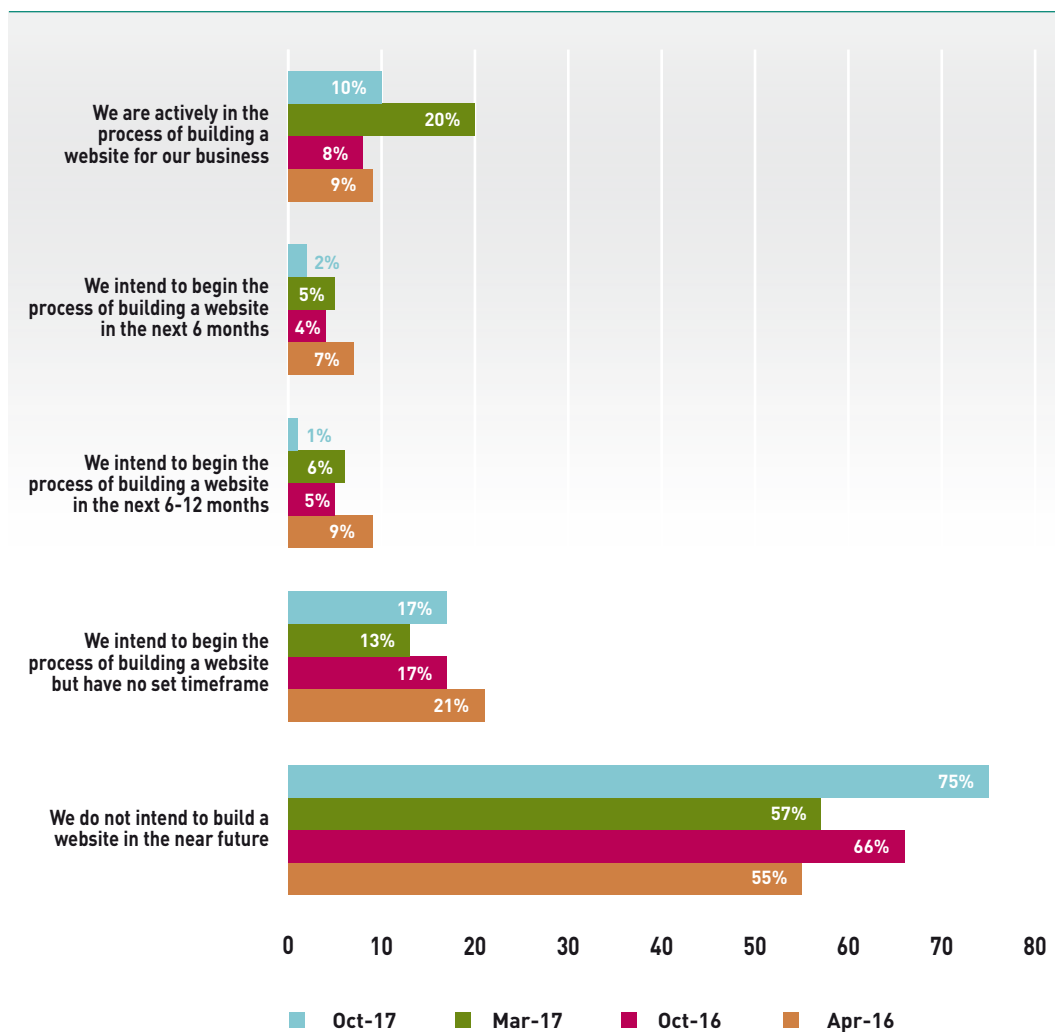
Though many offline SMEs acknowledge the usefulness of a website, just 10% are actively in the process of building their own, down from 20%.

Indeed, fewer SMEs claim to be building a website in the next twelve months, although the number saying they plan to but have no set timeline has increased from 13% to 17%.

Worryingly, the number of offline SMEs that say they have no intention to build a website in the near future has risen from 57% to 75%. This correlates with the rise in SMEs saying that they see no advantage in having a website.

#### Attitudes towards building a website

Which of the following best describes your business's current attitude/intentions towards having a website?



Base 170: All companies without a website - October 2017

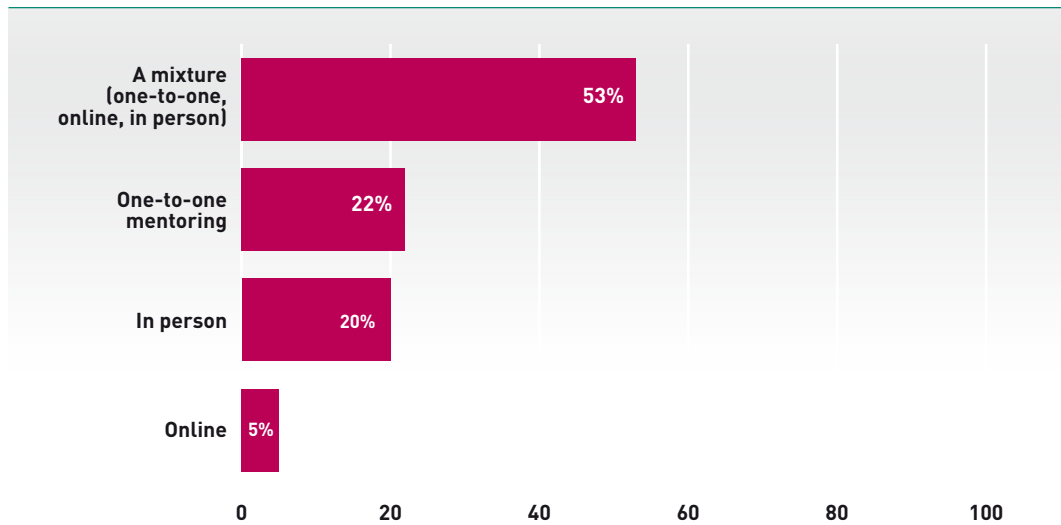
### 5.7 The knowledge gap and digital training

The vast majority of SMEs (90%), online and offline, have not received any form of digital or e-commerce training or funding. Almost a third (32%) said they would like to have some sort of digital/e-commerce training or funding (up from 30%).

When asked what kind of training they would prefer to receive, 22% said they would like one-to-one mentoring, 20% in-person training (in a classroom environment), while 5% would like online training. The majority, 53%, want a mixture of all three.

#### Preferred training styles

How would you prefer to receive e-commerce training?



Base 144: All companies that would like training - October 2017

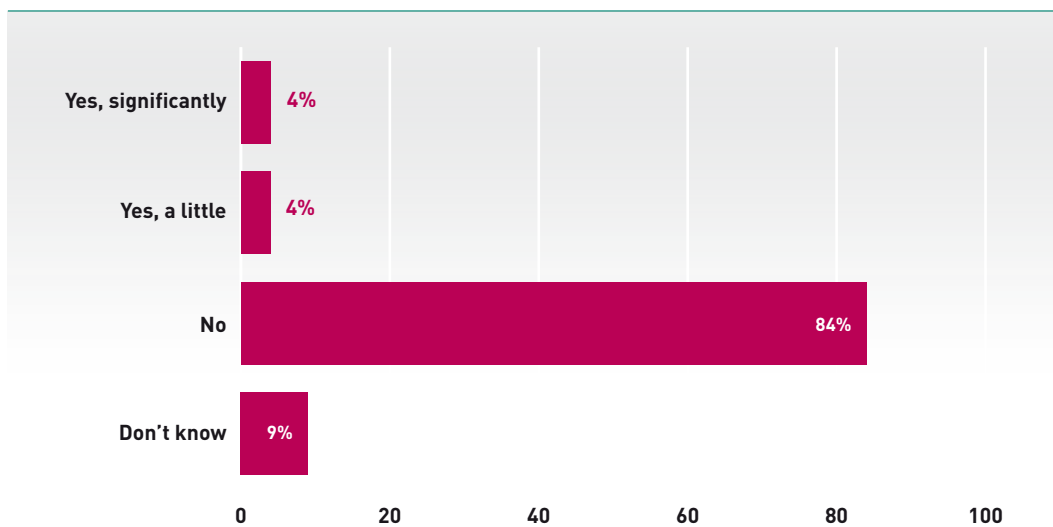
## 5.8 A Brexit effect?

Brexit will have profound effects on the Irish economy. Preparation for a worst-case scenario, like a hard Brexit with tariffs, trade regulations and border checks, is important. E-commerce will help Irish businesses offset some of these problems by allowing them to diversify their customer base and reach out to international markets.

However, like the Irish consumers referred to in Chapter Two, for most offline SMEs, Brexit is not a priority. When asked if the UK's vote to leave the EU had swayed them to build an e-commerce-enabled website in the near future, 84% said it had not; only 8% said it had.

### The impact of Brexit on offline SMEs

Has Brexit increased the likelihood of you building an e-commerce-enabled website in the near future?



Base 170: All companies without a website - October 2017

## Chapter summary

- ▶ Almost 1 in 5 (19%) of Irish SMEs have no online presence whatsoever
- ▶ 53% of SMEs without a website said there was 'no need' to have a website in their industry
- ▶ 47% of SMEs who said there was 'no need' said they do not see an advantage in having a website – this is an increase from 17% in the previous wave of research
- ▶ 18% have no online presence because of poor broadband: 14% rate their connection as poor or very poor, though this figure rises to 25% in Connacht and Ulster
- ▶ 32% of all SMEs want some form of e-commerce or digital training
- ▶ Only 8% of SMEs without a website said the Brexit vote would encourage them to build an e-commerce-enabled website.

# Chapter six

## Keeping up with the digital Joneses

As Irish SMEs put more digital assets to work, the confidence they have in these assets is growing, especially when compared to those of their competitors.

Irish SMEs tend to view their digital assets as performing better than those of their competitors. This latest result is in line with previous editions of the dot ie Digital Health Index.

In this wave of research, 71% of Irish SMEs said they believe their website is stronger than their competitors', up from 68% in March 2017.

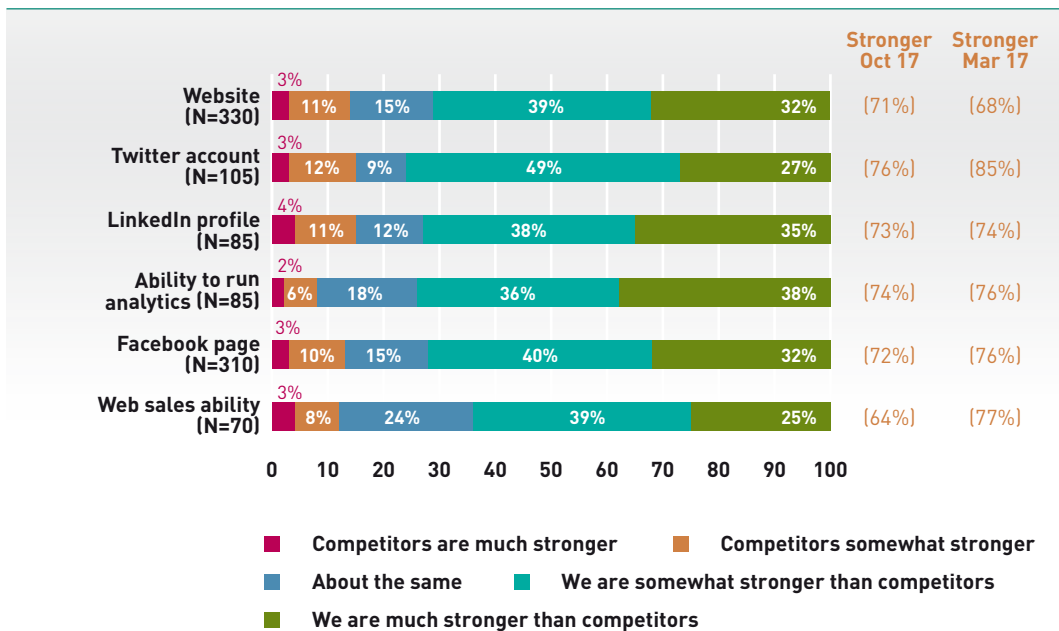
SMEs are confident in their other digital assets, as well, including social media. 76% said their Twitter account is stronger than their competitors'; 73% their LinkedIn account; and 72% their Facebook account. However, these assets have all experienced small decreases on the last wave of research.

64% said their business's web sales ability is stronger compared to their direct competitors. While this is still a majority, it marks a 13 percentage point decrease on the last wave of research (77%).

The number of SMEs that say their digital assets are 'much stronger' than their competitors has also increased since the last wave of research, from 25% to 32% for websites, from 30% to 35% for LinkedIn profiles, and from 30% to 32% for Facebook pages.

### How SMEs believe their digital assets perform against direct competitors

How well or poorly do you feel your business performs compared to your direct competitors in terms of the following digital assets?



Base: All companies with digital assets - October 2017

This edition of the dot ie Digital Health Index also reveals that, in line with the last wave of research, Irish SMEs generally slightly over-estimate how many digital assets their competitors have, typically by 2-5%.

### SMEs' perceptions of direct competitors with digital assets

What percentage of your direct competitors do you estimate have each of the following?

Assets	SMEs estimate that:					SMEs estimate that: Average	Assets owned (Section 3.2)
	0% of my competitors have	1%-20%	21%-50%	51%-70%	71%+ of my competitors have		
Website	20%	4%	14%	7%	56%	65%	66%
Facebook page	25%	6%	14%	8%	48%	57%	62%
LinkedIn profile	59%	11%	13%	3%	16%	23%	17%
Twitter account	58%	7%	17%	4%	14%	23%	21%
Web sales ability	65%	8%	13%	3%	12%	19%	14%
Ability to run analytics	65%	6%	11%	3%	15%	22%	17%
A blog	77%	14%	7%	0%	2%	7%	6%
A YouTube channel	82%	11%	4%	2%	2%	6%	4%
A smartphone app	83%	5%	5%	1%	6%	8%	3%

Base 500: All participants - October 2017

## Chapter summary

- ▶ 71% of Irish SMEs believe their website is stronger than their competitors', up from 68%
- ▶ SMEs also believe their social media profiles are stronger than their competitors
- ▶ SMEs typically slightly over-estimate the quantity of their competitors' digital assets.

# Chapter seven

## Use of social media by Irish SMEs

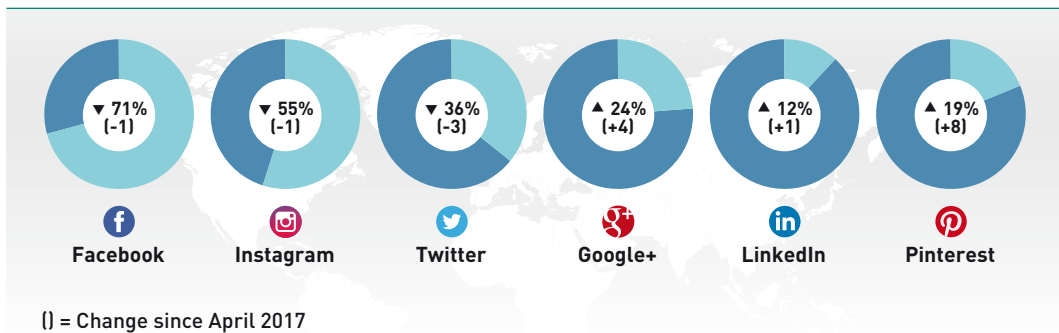
Irish people are avid users of social networks and messaging apps, and SMEs are increasingly using both to reach out to new and existing customers. But does social media beat a website when it comes to customer engagement and e-commerce?

### 7.1 Irish society and consumers have embraced social media

According to the most recent Ipsos MRBI Social Networking Tracker (August 2017), 64% of Irish people have a Facebook account (71% log in daily); 28% have a Twitter account (36% log in daily); and 27% have a LinkedIn account (12% log in daily).

The popularity of image- and video-based platforms, like Instagram, continues to rise. 27% of Irish people have an Instagram account and 55% of them log in daily. Pinterest, too, is popular with Irish users: 19% have an account, with 19% using it daily.

#### Of those who have an account with the social networks below, what percentage use them daily?



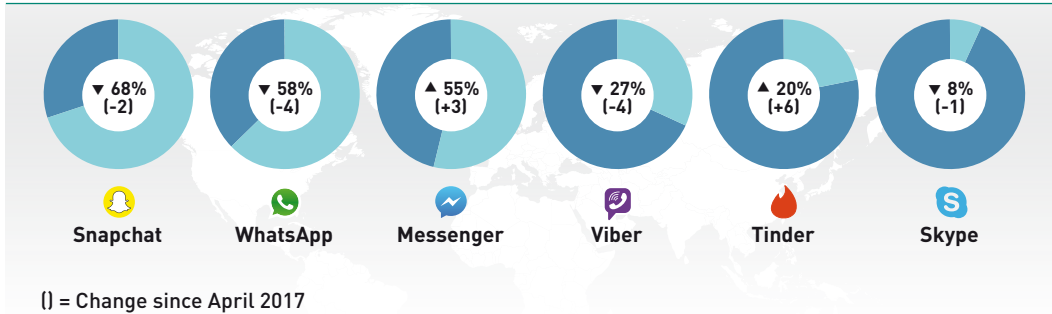
Source: Ipsos MRBI Social Networking Tracker - August 2017

Social messaging software, like Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp and Snapchat, is also popular with Irish users. According to the most recent Ipsos MRBI Social Messaging Tracker (August 2017), of all Irish people over the age of 15:

- ▶ 58% have WhatsApp
- ▶ 54% have Facebook Messenger
- ▶ 36% have Skype
- ▶ 34% have Viber
- ▶ 30% have Snapchat

WhatsApp has overtaken Facebook Messenger as Ireland’s preferred social messaging app, both in terms of user base (58% vs 54%) and daily usage (58% vs 55%). Skype, despite having the third largest userbase, has the smallest number of daily users – only 8% of users log in every day. Despite its small user base, Snapchat’s is the most active. 68% of users log in on a daily basis.

**Of those who have an account with the social messaging platforms below, what percentage of them use them daily?**



Source: Ipsos MRBI Social Messaging Tracker - August 2017

Platforms like Facebook and Twitter provide Irish SMEs with instant access to a massive audience of potential followers and customers. However, caution is needed: SMEs do not own their social media presence and the platform can, at any time, limit, restrict access or charge for services.

Consider Facebook. Initially, a business page could reach 100% of its followers, but changes to the platform’s algorithm mean that today, a post rarely reaches even 10% organically<sup>5</sup>. This may decline further in the future.

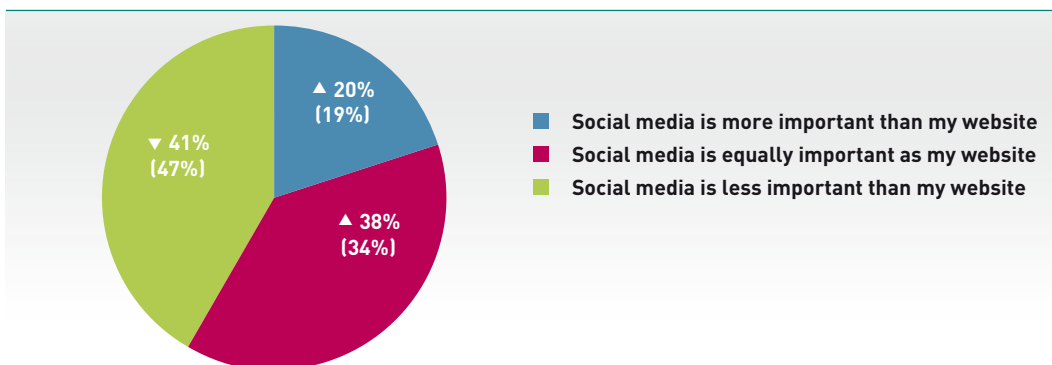
**7.2 Social media versus websites**

While a two-pronged approach to an online presence – having a website and a social media channel – is important to reach as many customers as possible, some SMEs value one over the other.

20% said social media is more important than their website (up from 19%), 38% said it was equally important (up from 34%), while 41% said it was less important (down from 47%).

**Social media versus websites**

How important is social media in relation to your website?



Base 304: All companies that use social media and have a website - October 2017  
( ) = March 2017

5 Source: Allister Frost, Digital Marketing Expert and Founder of Wild Orange Media, [www.iedr.ie/blog/better-website-facebook-page](http://www.iedr.ie/blog/better-website-facebook-page)

When SMEs that said their website was more important were asked why they believed this, 57% said it was because their customers expected them to have one. This is consistent with the findings of our research in Chapter Two.

Almost half said that their website is the centre of their online activity, and that they use social media to drive visits to it; and nearly a quarter said that a website allows them to sell their product better.

### Why a website is important

Why is your website more important than social media?



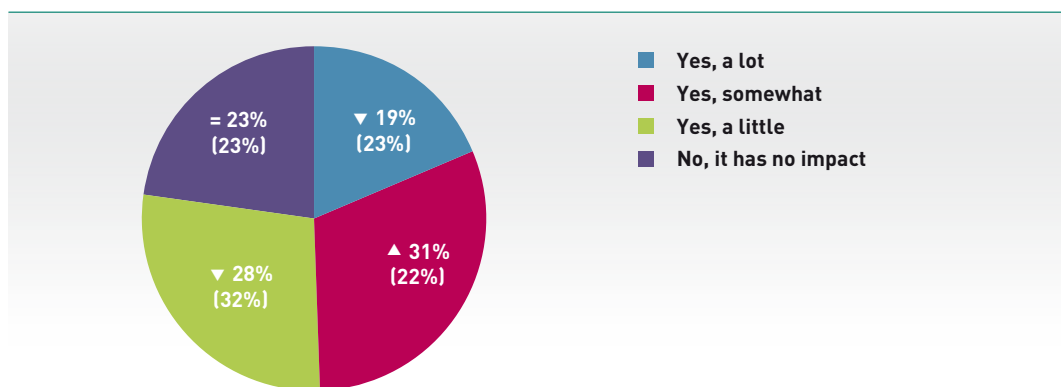
Base 125: All companies that believe their website is more important than social media - October 2017

## 7.3 Social media and business growth

SMEs are confident in their social media channels' contribution to business growth. 78% said it had an impact, up slightly on the last wave of research; 23% said otherwise.

### Perceived value of social media to business growth

Has social media, such as Facebook or Twitter, contributed to your business growth?



Base 320: All companies that use social media - October 2017  
 ( ) = March 2017



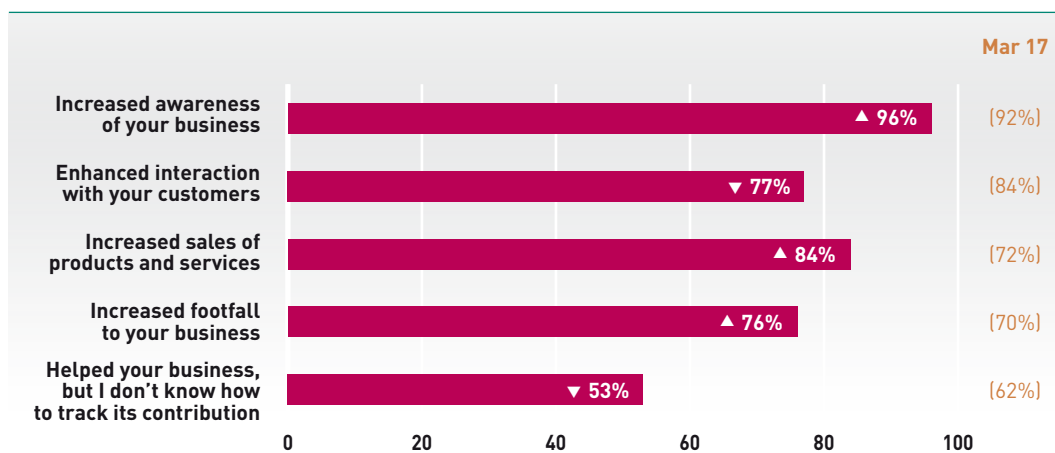
## 7.4 Social media and business benefits

When this contribution to business growth was examined further, 96% said it had increased awareness of their business; 84% said it had increased sales; and 76% said it had increased footfall to their business.

Interestingly, the number of SMEs that said social media had enhanced customer interaction dropped from 84% in the previous wave to 77%. This could indicate that businesses are struggling with their social media strategy. Another factor could be that platform algorithms are increasingly impacting interaction with their audience.

### Business benefits: breakdown of valuable outcomes as a result of SMEs using social media

Has social media...



Base 250: All companies that believe social media has had an impact on their business - October 2017

## Chapter summary

- ▶ 41% of SMEs say that social media is less important than their website; 20% say it is more important
- ▶ Among those that say their website is more important, 57% say this is because their customers expect them to have a website
- ▶ Of the SMEs that use social media, 78% say it has had a positive impact on their business growth
- ▶ Of these, 96% said social media had increased awareness of their business and 84% said it had increased sales.

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# Chapter eight

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## Recommendations

Ireland's digital health has improved significantly. SMEs are using more digital assets, like social media and data analytics, and are increasingly confident in the contribution of digital assets to their business.

For the first time since IEDR began tracking the digital performance of Irish SMEs in 2014, of those that have a website, 40% claim to be taking sales orders via their website. While this number is still small, it is a notable improvement on the last wave of research. This is a positive sign for Ireland's e-commerce industry and indicates that many more businesses understand that selling online can lead to increased revenue, a larger market, and repeat customers.

However, we cannot grow complacent. Ireland's share of the European e-commerce market is €9 billion, and is expected to grow to €14 billion by 2021.<sup>6</sup> If more Irish SMEs don't sell online, then most of our national consumer spend will go abroad to foreign retailers. Considering that Irish consumers are generally patriotic and would prefer to 'buy Irish', this is a wasted opportunity. Even for a village shop with a familiar, local customer base, e-commerce has a role. The shop could provide a "click-and-collect" system that allows customers to order their weekly groceries in advance via their phone or computer and pick them up when they next visit.

To the technophobe, this can sound intimidating and complicated. But the reality is that it has never been easier to own, build and develop a website. With easy-to-use, often free tools, SMEs can get online within a few hours, without any technical capability, and start communicating with and selling to their customers.

Some SMEs simply cannot go online, especially in rural provinces like Connacht and Ulster. Our research shows that many small businesses have a poor internet connection, and in some instances, it has actually worsened over the last twelve months. To ensure that Ireland's digital economy does not develop unevenly, high-speed, reliable internet access must be prioritised in these areas.

Of course, there will always be a cohort of SMEs that remains offline and it is unlikely we can convince them otherwise. However, we should not forget that there are plenty of online SMEs with functioning websites and social media channels that want to do more, like sell online. Industry and government need to ensure that these businesses have access to resources, either through training initiatives or investment schemes.

Ireland's digital infrastructure has problems that are complex and will take time to address. In addition, the roll-out of the Digital Single Market is leading to a host of new EU regulations, and related national legislation. Small businesses are struggling to interpret EU and national policymakers' intentions and therefore struggle to become compliant in the implementation of those policies. GDPR and NIS are the most recent examples. That is why IEDR believes it is important that there is a platform for government, industry bodies, business associations, SMEs, and citizens to come together to discuss policy formulation and plan for policy implementation. To that end, IEDR is calling for the creation of a national Internet Policy Forum to give every stakeholder a voice.

IEDR's five recommendations for a stronger, more diverse digital economy are built on two fundamental pillars: mentorship and infrastructure.

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<sup>6</sup> Source: Virgin Media Digital Insights Report 2016

## IEDR's five recommendations

## Pillar one: mentorship

(1)  
Implement a national digital skills campaign



Implement a nationwide programme to develop the digital skills of micro-businesses, with the aim of promoting digital business and selling online. The campaign would be targeted at small and micro-businesses, with a comprehensive range of 'how-to' videos and physical guides customised for specific sectors to ensure relevance and cut-through.

(2)  
One-to-one mentorship



Our research shows that SMEs want e-commerce training, and many would prefer one-to-one mentorship from successful e-commerce businesses. We recommend the creation of a "buddy system", facilitated by Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs), that allows older, less tech-savvy SMEs to pair up with industry experts for training and advice.

(3)  
Increase and improve online supports for SMEs



The Government's Trading Online Voucher Scheme has been poorly adopted. A new approach is needed. IEDR recommends an increase in State funding for new online supports, but routing these through the LEOs, employer organisations and industry groups that have an intimate understanding of the digital needs of business owners.

## Pillar two: infrastructure

(4)  
Provide reliable, high-speed broadband to all parts of Ireland



For 18% of offline SMEs, a poor internet connection is still the main barrier for getting their business online. This is a significant problem in provinces like Connacht and Ulster where as many as 25% complain of poor or very poor speeds. These areas must be prioritised as the Government rolls out the National Broadband Plan.

(5)  
Resource relevant State agencies



Government must ensure that LEOs, particularly those outside urban areas, have the manpower, expertise and resources available to proactively reach out to offline micro-businesses with fewer than ten employees and help them make the transition to digitise their sales process. This is particularly relevant for B2B micro-businesses.

# Appendix one

## Survey methodology

The dot ie Digital Health Index was conducted on behalf of IEDR by Ignite Research among 3,513 Irish SMEs across seven waves of research, with 500 respondents in each wave. These waves of fieldwork were carried out in October 2017, March 2017, October 2016, April 2016, September 2015, December 2014 and May 2014.

Of those surveyed in the October 2017 wave, 86% were micro-businesses with 1-10 employees. This is in line with the latest CSO business demography, which reports that SMEs account for 99.8% of the total enterprise population. 92% of all Irish businesses are micro-businesses.<sup>7</sup>

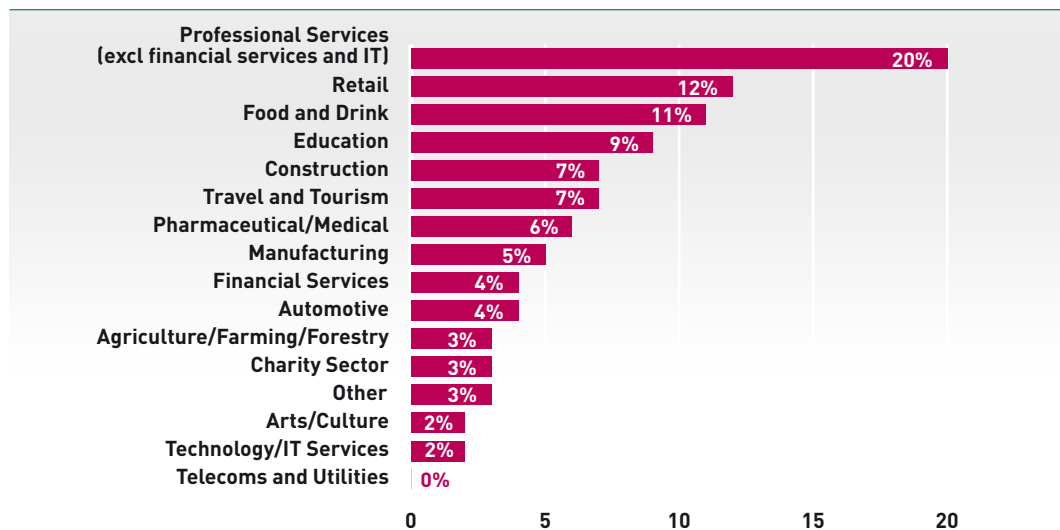
### A1.1 SME survey sample

#### Breakdown of overall sample by employee size

Number of employees		Number of employees	Sample size
1-10 employees	86% of Sample	1-2 employees	221 (44%)
		3-5 employees	133 (27%)
		6-10 employees	76 (15%)
		11-15 employees	29 (6%)
11+ employees	14% of Sample	16-20 employees	17 (3%)
		21-50 employees	25 (5%)
		<b>Total</b>	<b>501</b>

### A1.2 Demographics by sector

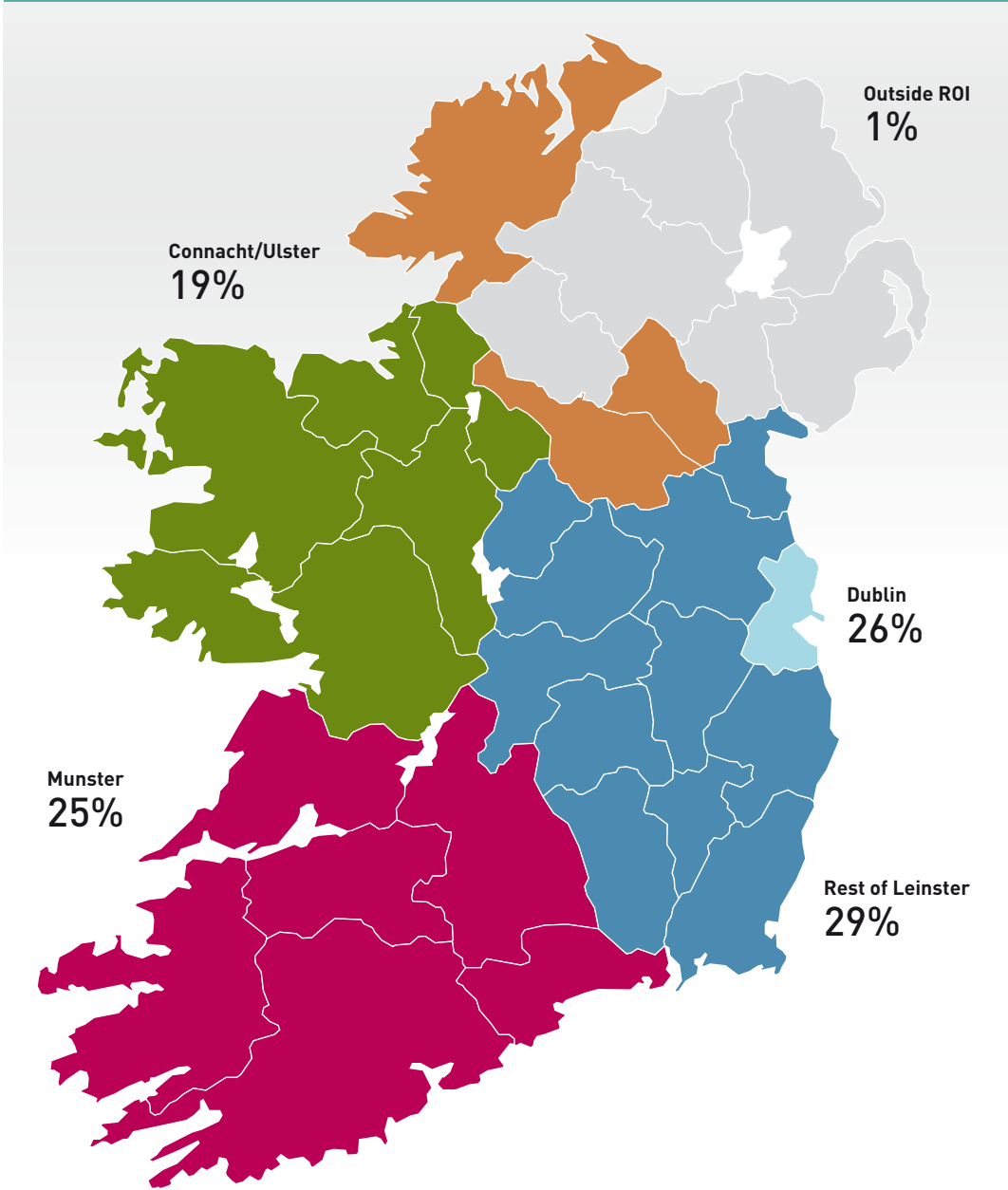
#### Breakdown of SME sample by sector



<sup>7</sup> Source: CSO Business Demography 2015, Fig. 8: Distribution of Enterprises and Persons Engaged by Size Class 2015: <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/er/bd/businessdemography2015>

### A1.3 Demographics by geography

Breakdown of SME sample by location



### A1.4 Construction of the dot ie Digital Health Index

The dot ie Digital Health Index provides a unique insight into the health of Ireland’s digital economy through in-depth analysis of the digital assets owned by Irish SMEs and their perceived quality.

The nine digital assets scored are:

- ▶ Website
- ▶ Facebook
- ▶ Twitter
- ▶ LinkedIn
- ▶ YouTube
- ▶ Blog or content marketing
- ▶ Mobile or tablet app
- ▶ Web sales ability
- ▶ Data analytics from online assets

Two key question sets are asked of each SME to determine the overall index score:

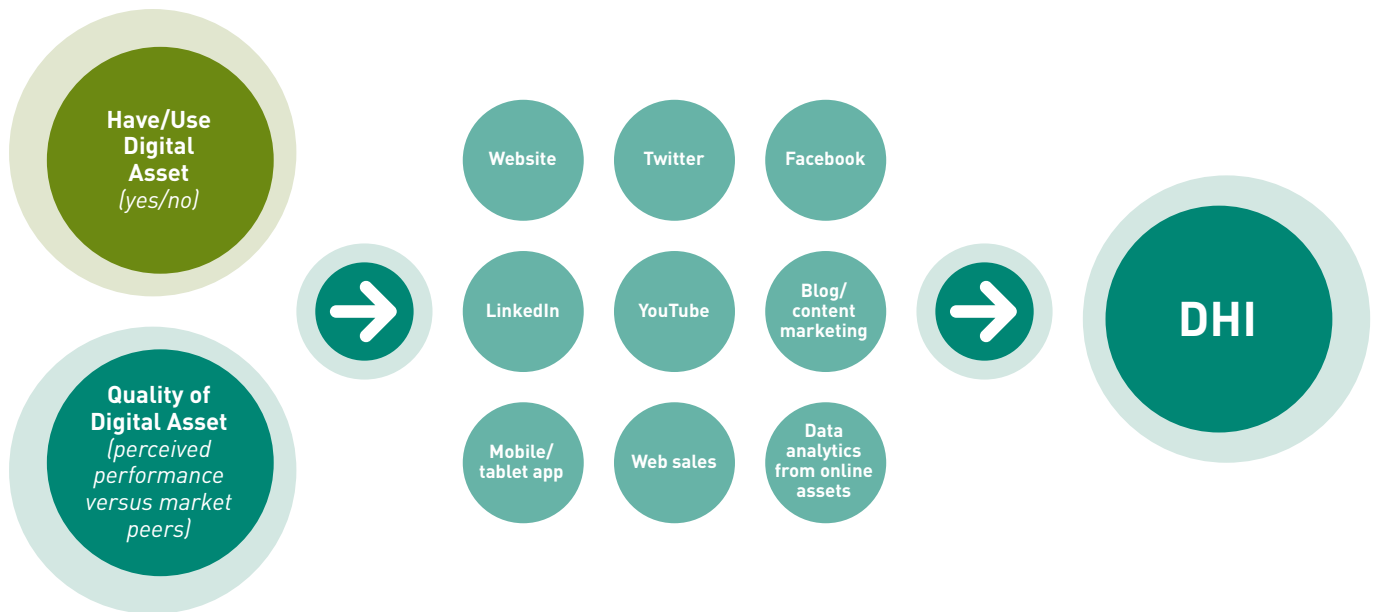
1. From the range of nine digital assets and activities, have you or do you use the digital asset?
2. What is your perceived quality of the digital asset used?

Equal weighting of each of the two question sets and each of the nine categories then feed into a composite index score of digital health.

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#### Creating the dot ie Digital Health Index – the methodology

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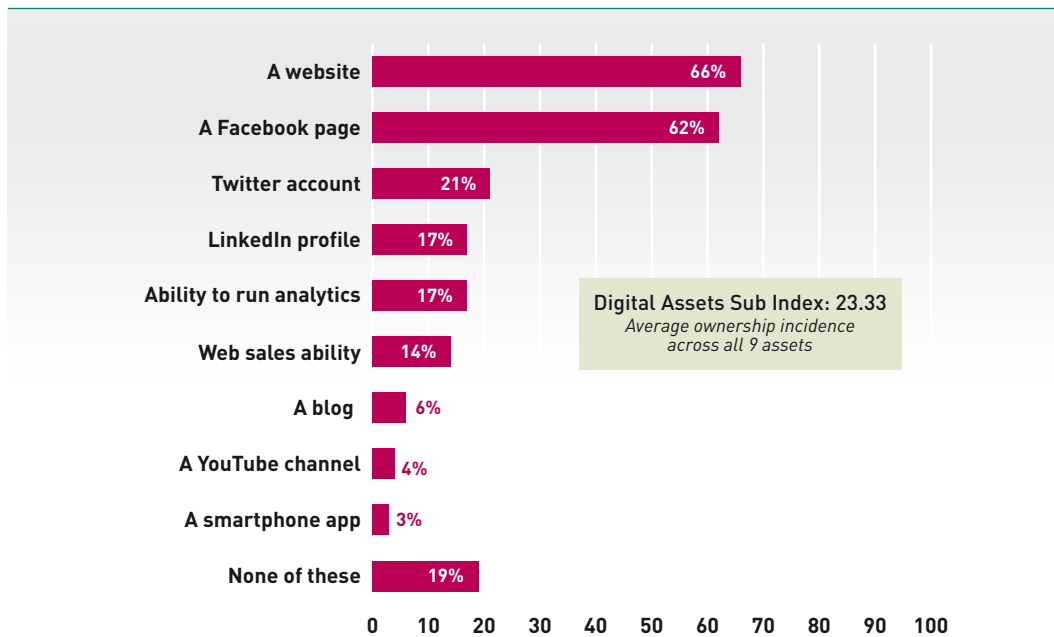
# Appendix two

## Sub-index construction and historical trends

### A2.1 Digital assets owned

Nine digital assets contribute to the sub-index

October 2017

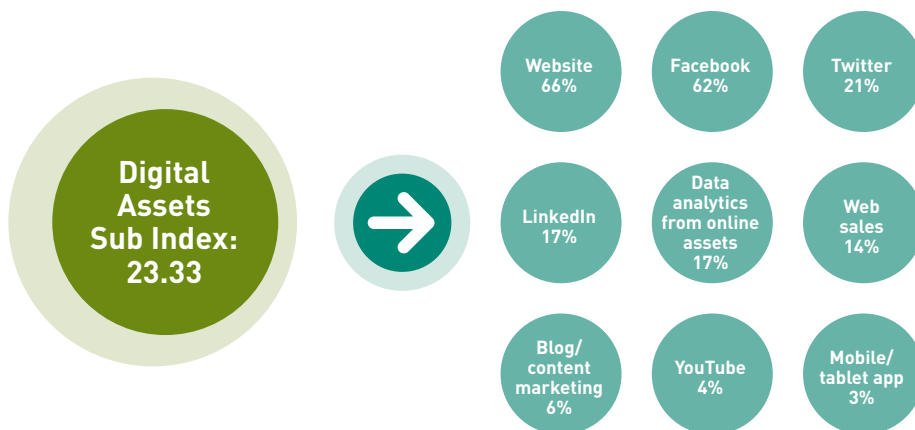


Base 500: All participants - October 2017

### A2.2 Digital assets owned

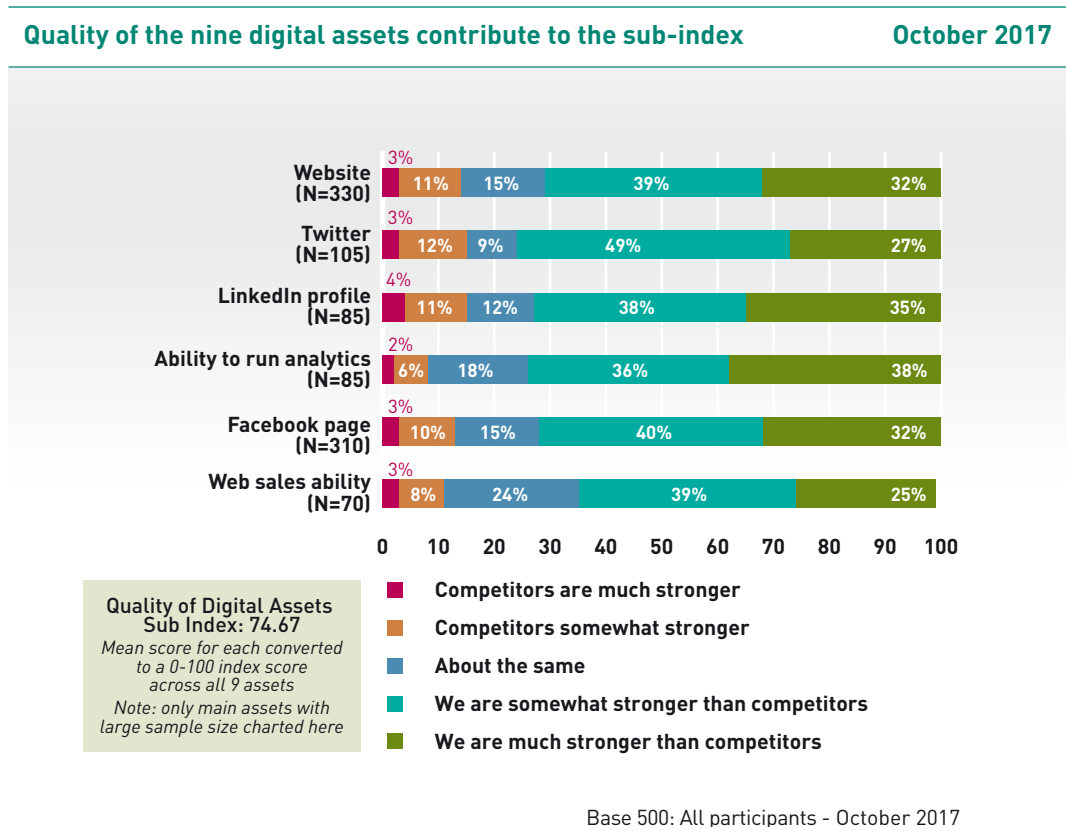
Construction of the digital assets sub-index

October 2017

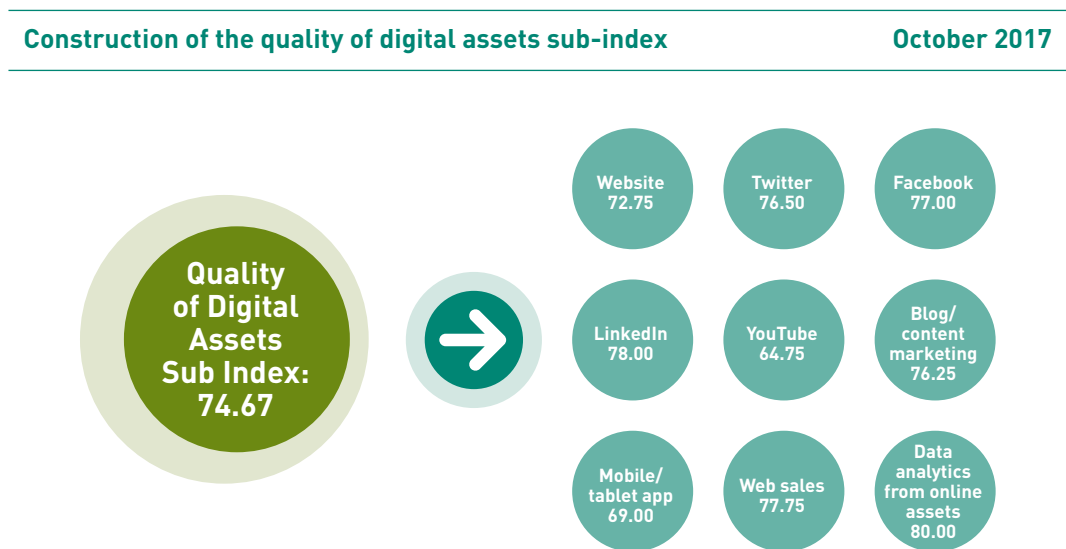


The digital assets sub-index is calculated from the average ownership incidence across all nine digital assets.

### A2.3 Quality of digital assets owned



### A2.4 Quality of digital assets owned



The quality of the digital assets owned is the mean score for the question comparing how businesses evaluate their digital assets compared to their competitors, converted to a 1-100 index score across all nine digital assets.



## A2.5 Sub-index: trends over seven waves of research

### Overview of the dot.ie Digital Health Index (including sub-indexes)

	May 14	Dec 14	Sep 15	Apr 16	Oct 16	Mar 17	Oct 17
Digital assets – sub-index	13.0	16.1	19.7	24.2	22.1	20.33	23.33
Quality of digital assets – sub-index	61.7	67.8	67.3	66.8	61.4	70.53	74.67
<b>DHI (Digital Health Index)</b>	<b>37.4</b>	<b>42.0</b>	<b>43.4</b>	<b>45.5</b>	<b>41.8</b>	<b>45.4</b>	<b>49.0</b>

### Digital assets – sub-index

Average ownership incidence across all nine digital assets

	May 14	Dec 14	Sep 15	Apr 16	Oct 16	Mar 17	Oct 17
Website	63%	63%	65%	72%	62%	67%	66%
Twitter	8%	15%	22%	21%	18%	17%	21%
Facebook	34%	44%	51%	48%	52%	50%	62%
LinkedIn	7%	8%	16%	23%	19%	17%	17%
YouTube	1%	3%	3%	7%	4%	5%	4%
Blog/content marketing	2%	3%	4%	7%	6%	3%	6%
Mobile/tablet app	0%	0%	3%	5%	5%	4%	3%
Web sales	1%	6%	8%	19%	20%	13%	14%
Data analytics	1%	3%	5%	16%	13%	7%	17%
None of these	28%	26%	25%	17%	22%	22%	19%
<b>Number of digital assets – sub-index</b>	<b>13.0</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>20.3</b>	<b>23.33</b>

### Quality of digital assets – sub-index

Respondents' perceived quality of their digital assets in direct evaluation against those of their competitors.

	May 14	Dec 14	Sep 15	Apr 16	Oct 16	Mar 17	Oct 17
Website	65	71.2	64.5	71.5	70.5	67.5	72.75
Twitter	63	71	71	64.25	62.5	75.5	76.5
Facebook	67.5	65.5	58	69	67.25	70.5	77
LinkedIn	61	58.2	57	68.75	66.25	72	78
YouTube	62.5	64.7	75	60	49.5	74	64.75
Blog/content marketing	60	67.2	72.5	72.25	49.5	63.5	76.25
Mobile/tablet app	62.5	87.5	75	60	56.5	68	69
Web sales	57.75	62.5	69.75	60.5	59.5	72.5	77.75
Data analytics	56.25	62.5	64.75	74.75	71.25	71.25	80
<b>Quality of digital assets – sub-index</b>	<b>61.7</b>	<b>67.8</b>	<b>67.3</b>	<b>66.8</b>	<b>61.4</b>	<b>70.5</b>	<b>74.67</b>

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# Appendix three

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## About IE Domain Registry

IE Domain Registry (IEDR) is the official registry for .ie domain names, and maintains the database of registered .ie domain names. IEDR originated as a spinout from University College Dublin, becoming an independent, separate limited company in July 2000.

IEDR is responsible for the management and administration of Ireland's official internet domain, .ie, in the interest of the Irish and global internet communities. It operates the domain name system (DNS) for the .ie namespace, facilitates an independent dispute resolution service with WIPO and operates a public Whois lookup service for .ie domains.

IEDR's mission is to provide unique, identifiably Irish domain names, along with registry and related services to the local and international internet community.

IEDR is a managed registry, which means that there are policies and procedures governing the registration of .ie domain names. New applications are reviewed to ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of registrations. This contrasts with .com and .eu where there is no manual review and the domain applied for will be automatically registered once the name is available.

Only IEDR can administer and manage the .ie namespace. These roles and responsibilities are undertaken as a public service. IEDR liaises with Government departments, governing bodies, trade associations, and abides by internet best practice principles while still operating as an independent public company.

## Why choose a .ie domain name?

A .ie domain name has a number of distinct advantages when compared against alternatives:

- ▶ A .ie web address tells the global community that you are Irish and the Irish community that you are local.
- ▶ It gives consumers a greater sense of security, particularly when buying online from a known local business.
- ▶ There is more choice of domain names, as a .ie is more likely to be available than a similar .com.
- ▶ .ie is the only domain reserved for anyone with a connection to Ireland and helps to connect Irish businesses to local and global markets online.

Visit [www.iedr.ie](http://www.iedr.ie) to register your .ie domain name.

## About Ignite Research

Ignite Research has been operating in Ireland since 2005. We are a team of researchers, analysts and strategists who are focused on delivering best-in-class solutions to our clients. Ignite is a forward-thinking and tech-adopting research agency with many examples of innovative tech tools combined with creative and commercial thinking in our repertoire, all of which delivers impactful research for our clients.





**Identifiably Irish**  
Ireland's Domain Registry

**IE Domain Registry CLG**

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