

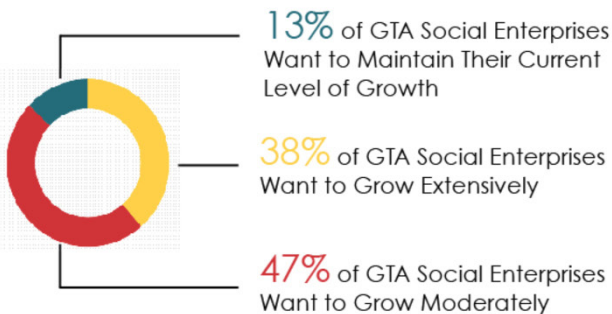
Executive Summary



Social Enterprise Toronto (SET) is an expanding network of non-profit social purpose enterprises and practitioners. SET's strategic plan for 2013 included the development of research of interest to SET members and to address the knowledge gap that exists in the sector. The overarching objective of the 2013 SET Social Enterprise Research was to respond to these needs and carry out an investigation of key strategic issues that would help operating social enterprises in the GTA. Specifically, the study focused on several issues relating to and affecting growth. The findings of the study were based on in-depth interviews with 32 social enterprises, and focus on three distinct areas:

- Marketing Practices and Needs
- Food-based Social Enterprises
- Start-up Stories

Growth Needs & Aspirations



- 88% of GTA Social Enterprises Want to Increase Sales
- 69% Want to Hire More Staff
- 63% Want to Open More Locations or Expand Current Location
- 56% Want to Diversify Their Products/Services
- 56% Want to Serve More Program Participants

MARKETING SUMMARY

Social Enterprise Toronto's research study takes a step away from academic, mission-based research, to delve into the operational aspects of Toronto enterprises. The research topics address questions and issues frequently raised by social enterprise practitioners. The findings are based on in-depth interviews with 32 social enterprises.

The marketing study examines the marketing practices of social businesses, particularly in relation to their growth aspirations. The studies show that 85% of participating enterprises wish to grow, specifically by increasing their sales. However, 50% of them do not have a marketing budget. In order for social enterprises to grow their businesses and their capacity to serve communities, this gap must be addressed.



50%
of enterprises
have no marketing
budgets

Who is responsible for marketing?

78%



Manager

Is their role dedicated to marketing?

77%



Said "No"

Number of hours spent on marketing activities

12



On ave. per week

Have you received any in-kind support for marketing?

52%



Have received support

FOOD-BASED SOCIAL ENTERPRISES

Our sample:
11 GTA food-based social enterprises
(10 nonprofit and 1 privately owned)

In 2012, non-profit food-based enterprises provided at least 86 jobs (22 full-time & 64 part-time).



Many organizations started a food-based social enterprise despite low profit margins because preparing food involved a lot of labour and thus created employment for target populations.



KEY FINDINGS

GROWTH

91% wanted to grow and increase sales. Most interviewed enterprises wanted to grow moderately.

COLLABORATION

82% expressed interest in collaborating with others by sharing clients and business leads. There was great interest in working together to increase sales.

MARKETING NEEDS

70% of those who wanted to increase sales did not have a dedicated marketing staff.

PRODUCTION CAPACITY

If we summed up the portions that could be prepared by the non-profit enterprises, their combined production capacity together would be near 2,500 meals for one event.