DONEGAL WOMEN IN BUSINESS NETWORK

MEMBERS SURVEY REPORT 2018

DONEGAL WOMEN
IN BUSINESS NETWORK
Greasán Gnó Mhná Dhún na nGall

NOVEMBER 2018

The Donegal Women in Business Network Members Survey 2018 was written and compiled by

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Alannah McGhee provided analysis and reporting of the survey

The survey was conducted on behalf of the Donegal Women in Business Network Committee and all existing and future members the Network.

Table of Contents

Donegal Women in Business Network Committee 4

Donegal Women in Business Network 5

The Research 6

The Survey 7

Survey Design 7

Survey Questions 7

Distribution 8

The Results 9

Quotes 17

Conclusion 19

Donegal Women in Business Network Committee

Committee Member	Role
Deirdre McGlone	President
Trish McGinley	Secretary
Evelyn Mc Glynn	Public Relations Officer
Rachel Wasson	Treasurer
Maureen Walsh	Assistant Treasurer
Leah Fairman	Committee Member
Fiona O'Reilly	Committee Member
Dr Julie Szabo	Committee Member
Catherine Lyster	Committee Member
Stella McGroarty	Committee Member
Grace Gerry	Committee Member

Donegal Women in Business Network

The Donegal Women in Business Network, which is led by voluntary committee and is jointly funded by membership fees and financial support from the Local Enterprise Office, Donegal, is aimed at providing a forum for women in business in the county of Donegal to share their experiences, network and to discuss topical business issues affecting women.

The peer support group runs seminars/workshops throughout the year based on the identified needs of the members. The Network also runs a number of social events, which provides a welcome respite from daily business life, and are a great way to socialise while getting to know other members and doing business!

Donegal Women in Business Network is open to all women with an interest in business, regardless of industry, position, age or experience.

The annual membership fee is €50, which covers the cost of most of the regular events and workshops facilitated by the Network.

The Research

Primary research was undertaken through an online survey which received responses from a total of 74 members. This research was conducted on behalf of both the Network's committee and its members.

The survey included questions which collected both qualitative and quantitative answers, which gave richer results. This research and its findings will play a vital role in how the Network will be shaped in the coming year, in terms of events, schedules and other improvements that can be made.

The research analysed the topic areas members want to explore, when and where the events should be held and what direction they want to see the Network to move towards in the next 12 months.

A huge thank you to all who responded to the survey.

The Survey

Survey Design

Using Survey Monkey, the survey was compiled of nine questions. These questions addressed topics such as the logistical organisation of the Network's events and workshops, the benefits of the Network's membership and the upcoming 20th Anniversary celebrations.

Survey Questions

1. Which topics would you like covered in workshops/peer-led talks throughout the year?
2. Which time(s) of day suit you best to attend our networking events?
3. Which day(s) suit you best to attend events?
4. Have you used any of the following member benefits?
5. Is there something that the Donegal Women in Business Network could do differently?
6. What do you find positive about Donegal Women in Business Network?
7. Would you recommend/promote the Donegal Women in Business Network to other women in business?
8. Anything else? All suggestions and observations welcome!
9. 20th Anniversary Celebrations - everything depends on funding, but what would you like to see in your Donegal Women in Business Network group in 2019? #wishlist

Distribution

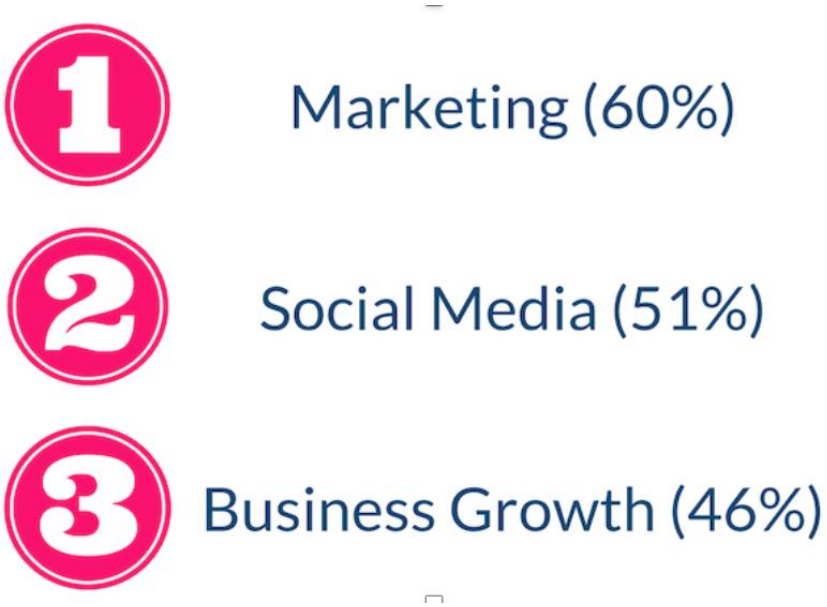
The survey was promoted and distributed between July 23rd and August 31st, using multiple channels including email marketing, Facebook and Twitter. The survey was completed by a total of 74 respondents during this period.

The results which were analysed using Survey Monkey and Excel, were then illustrated through this report with an overall infographic report, as well individual questions and quotes, which are distributed across social media and email.

The Results

1. Which topics would you like covered in workshops/peer-led talks throughout the year?

Over half of all respondents stated **Marketing (59%)** and **Social Media (51%)** as key areas for topics for the coming year. **Business Growth (45%)**, **Motivation (40%)** and **Stories from other Entrepreneurs (39%)** were also popular topics.



Legal Issues (38%) was one of the most common answers, **Employer Law (18%)** and **Business Law (17%)** and **Communications (17%)** were the least popular.

Some of the 'other' suggestions included the hot topic of **GDPR**, **LinkedIn** and **Customer Service**, which will all be taken into consideration.

2. What time(s) of the day suit you best to attend our networking events?

It is clear from the survey that the most popular times for events are **Evenings (63.51%)** followed by **Mornings (47.3%)**. Just **26% stated Afternoons** would work best.

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays are the most popular days. 63% said evenings work best.

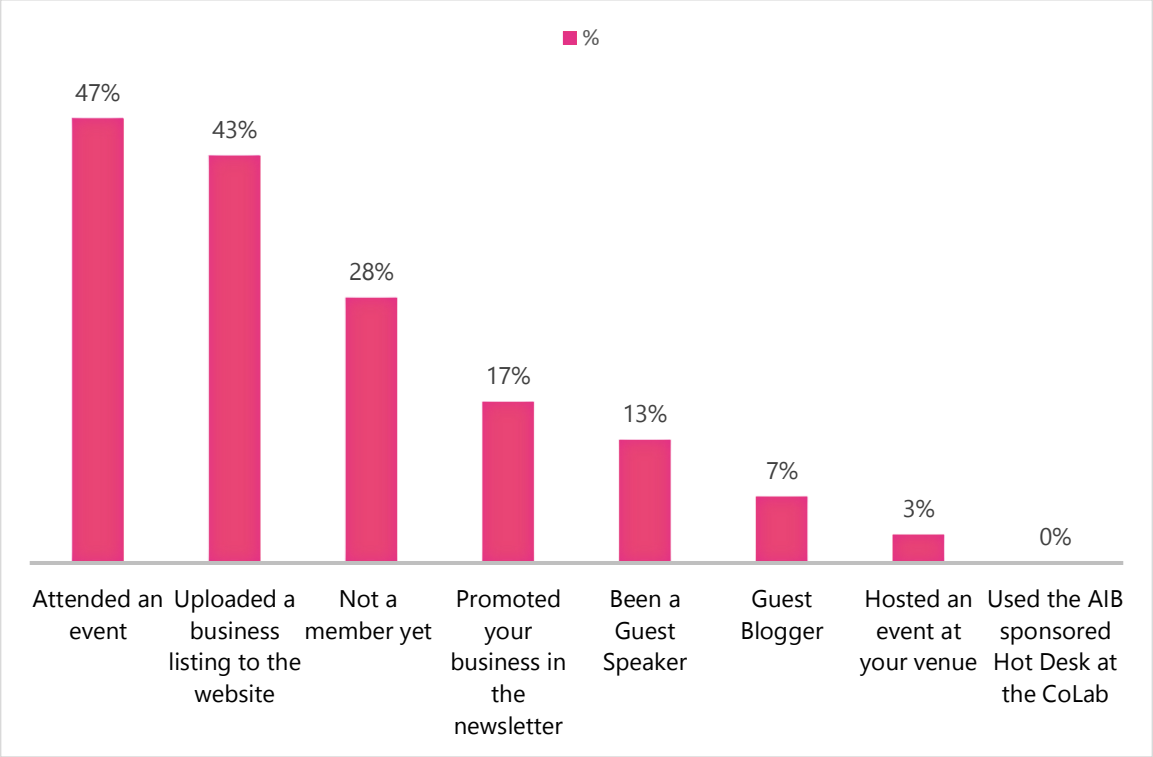
3. What day(s) suit you best to attend our networking events?

Weekdays were the most popular time to hold workshops, with **Thursday (63%)** or **Wednesday (55%)** being the most common answer. Unsurprisingly the **Saturday (22%)** and **Sunday (14%)** were the least popular days.

4. Have you used any of the following member benefits?

Of those who responded **just under half had attended an event** – the Network believe that by ensuring that the times, topics and locations of the events suit all members as per the results, this number will increase in the coming months.

Similarly, only **43% have uploaded their business listing** to the site. The Committee will look at ways to provide additional technical sustenance to ensure all members' listings are represented on the website.



Not one respondent had made use of the free hot desk in the CoLab at the time of the survey. This service is available to all members and the Network will be promoting it throughout the year, to ensure this service is made use of.

Only **two members (3%) had held an event in their venue** – the Committee will be encouraging members to volunteer to host events in their venue. If this is something you would be interested in doing please let us know.

Likewise, with regards to other benefits like **guest blogging** and the **fortnightly newsletters** please get in touch to make sure you get the full benefits of the Network's services.

Around **a third of respondents were not yet members** – we look forward to welcoming them in the coming months.

5. Is there something that the Donegal Women in Business Network could do differently?

15%

Would prefer the events to be held outside of work hours.

The main changes which were suggested included **holding the events in more varied locations across Donegal**, with less of focus on the Letterkenny or Ballybofey areas (31%). The timing of the events should be reconsidered based on the earlier findings, as **schedules are an issue for 15%** of respondents.

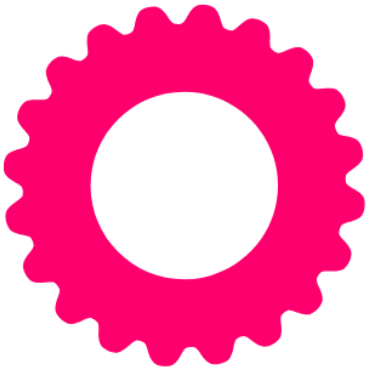
31%

Want events to be held in more **varied locations**.

Almost a fifth said that they would like to see more varied topics covered in the workshops. The Committee will use the findings from the early topic questions to create a more varied event series.

19%

Would like more **varied event topics and formats.**



15%

Would like more **technical support.**

15% said they would benefit from more technical support. This is most likely in terms of adding business listings to the website. As discussed, the Committee are looking at ways to assist members in this area.

Almost **1 in 10 said they would like more opportunities to speak** at the events. If you would like to contribute or present at one of the events, please get in touch.

6. What do you find positive about the Donegal Women in Business Network?

This question collected a lot of varied and unique answers. Some of the stand out quotes are listed in the next section of the report; however, the following word cloud is made up from the most commonly used words from the results, with the biggest words being the most common.

7. **Would you recommend the Donegal Women in Business Network to other women in business?**

100%

Said **yes**, thank you!

8. **Anything else? All suggestions and observations welcome!**

As an open-ended question, this question received a wide variety of results including the introduction of **mentorship programmes**, a focus on **non-marketing business event topics** i.e. law, finance etc.

Other suggestions included **additional online resources**, a **spotlight on feminism** as well as more varied event formats such as **panel discussions** and **exhibitions**.

9. 20th Anniversary celebrations - what would you like to see in your Donegal Women in Business Network group in 2019?

Again, this open-end question received many and varied suggestions. The results have been grouped and listed as follows:

- **Endorsements** from powerful female figures
- **Training** and networking event
- A celebration event for the **Donegal Diaspora**
- Events to inspire **young business women**
- **Team-building** events
- More **hot desks** in co-working hubs across Donegal
- Celebratory **souvenir directory**
- Donegal Women in Business Network **Showcase Exhibition**
- Increased **media coverage**
- **20 county wide events** each with different business focuses
- **Mentoring** programmes
- **Networking** events with established business people
- **Gala event**
- More **Irish language** events
- One-day **Facebook course**

Quotes

This question (6) collected a lot of varied and unique answers. Below are some of the highlights.

"**Friendship**, **networking**, **encouragement**, and **support**."

"Great bunch of women**,** **very supportive** and **inclusive**, love the informal**,** **friendly**, **welcoming environment**. A wide range of skills and experience, openness, great opportunities"

"Seems to be a very **encouraging**, **supporting**, **non-competitive** network and I'm looking forward to joining!"

Very **social** and always an opportunity to **network**."

"The Committee promote a positive attitude and atmosphere - when the going gets tough, **the support of The Donegal Women in Business Network helps me keep going**. Members I have met at events are friendly, positive and encouraging. **I get support from the Network I can't get anywhere else**. *It* gives **opportunities** for a wind ranging cross section of the women in business community - as my business by its nature requires solitary activity, **the Network is a lifeline to keep in touch**. A big thank you to the committee for their work."

"To be able to **connect with like-minded ladies**. There is something **magic about women coming together** and sharing want they do and how they do it. Very **inspiring** and **empowering**. I know it pushes me to do the same."

"It's such a **positive**, **encouraging community** providing amazing **opportunities to grow** and develop your business and meet some **inspiring women** right here in our locality."

"The group is very **supportive**, **friendly** and **welcoming**."

"Speaking to and **learning from driven women** who are happy to **build each other up** and help one another.

"Atmosphere of **sisterhood**!"

"It is so **inspirational** and a **hub of knowledge** to gain from. I am so glad I have joined even for the **social aspect** where you meet so many other women. It is a **powerful group** to be part of."

"I am a very new member so have yet to find out. So far, I have found following the Facebook page useful for local events and links to like-minded groups. For my first meeting, I did get a **great sense of energy** and everyone supporting each other and **willing members to succeed**."

"The **support** from the committee members and the ability to network with other business. Regular updates on what's happening within the Network and of **opportunities** that might be beneficial to us."

"The **wonderful camaraderie** in the group."

"Like-minded women with busy lives **making an impact in business in Donegal**

Conclusion

The overall feedback from the survey was positive, with some areas for improvement.

The Committee will review and improve on the following key areas:

1. Locations and timings of events
2. A variation on topics and speakers
3. Additional technical support is required
4. Ensuring that members know about, and how to make use of all the services available to them (i.e. hot desk, guest blogging etc)

We are delighted to know that members feel that the Donegal Women in Business Network is a place they can get support, be inspired, network and make a friend. We are particularly proud of the fact all members would recommend us to other women in business.

We look forward to learning from this survey, making improvements and celebrating our 20th Anniversary in style with you in the coming year.

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