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## Grow or Sell?

### What's the next move for your business?

BY STEVE CLARK AND JOHN CHURCHILL

THE PAST YEAR'S unpredictability has business owners large and small deciding what their next step should be, including whether now is an optimal time to grow or sell their business.

While low interest rates make expanding appealing, the idea of selling and starting fresh may also be on owners' minds – especially those in hard hit industries – as recovery continues and various repayments loom. Additionally, some business owners are in an unusually advantageous position to sell, making now the right time to seriously consider leveraging their success and resilience narrative with potential buyers.

While there is no right or wrong answer whether business owners should grow or sell now, there are some key questions they can ask to determine the right path forward.

#### What is my industry's rebound rate?

Owners should take a holistic look at their industry and ask, "has my industry begun to rebound, or have the shifts been too significant for my business to fully recover?" Many industries continue to be impacted post-pandemic by changes to consumer behaviors, some bringing good opportunity while others offer less.

Priorities and spending habits have changed drastically, directly impacting consumer businesses and making it imperative that owners know what these new spending habits and preferences are, and how to meet consumers' needs.

Ask yourself, "can my business adapt to these trends and what will I need? What else do I need to consider, such as changes to my supply network?"

#### Can low interest rates help me expand?

Owners should also consider taking advantage of low interest rates to put expansion plans into motion.

Rates saw all-time lows in 2020, enticing businesses to rethink or inspire expansion, such as purchasing the business' current property, looking for property to invest in long-term, or investing in new equipment and more staff to sustain growth. A trusted financial partner, CPA or real estate broker can help determine whether low rates can work in your favor, especially when considering pivots made during the pandemic and their long-term benefits. Your financial partner can help determine the best way to accelerate growth through newly discovered opportunities and how to finance them.

A variety of financial tools to improve efficiencies and accelerate growth are at your disposal, including cash management and forecasting, smart safes, armored carrier management, and merchant services.

#### Is my industry in high demand for investors?

Business owners should assess if their industry is in high demand for buyers and investors, and if selling their business could help them cut losses and use the influx of money to take the next step in their future. While some industries were negatively impacted by COVID-19, others are increasingly attractive to investors.

Look for improvements to your business, making it more attractive to buyers or investors. Consult an accountant to understand the company's value. Evaluate investment possibilities and demand that exists within your category to decipher if now is an ideal time to sell and pursue other ventures.

Whether buying, growing, or selling, identifying a path forward is critical. Use your trusted financial partners to determine what makes the most sense for your business' next stage. ■



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