

# EXTENSIVE SURVEY UK MICRO BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2014  
SURVEY REPORT



# 1,500 MICRO BUSINESSES TELL US THEIR OUTLOOK FOR 2014

**The economy** is showing signs of life. Since December, Economists have revised forecasts upward and we've seen many positive key indicators for the UK economy. But it is in how confident entrepreneurs are to promote their businesses and invest in advertising spend that is a useful barometer at the grass roots level of business.

**printing.com** helps small businesses promote themselves. So, the relationship between advertising investment and economic growth is one that printing.com are well placed to shed some light. 1,500 micro businesses in the UK told us how they view doing business in 2014. These businesses are engaged across a multiplicity of industry sectors including property maintenance, IT, health and beauty, hotels/guest houses and various forms of consultancy.

**This survey**, the only nationwide business confidence survey focussed on firms employing 0 to 10 people, gives an insight into the varying levels of optimism at the difficult to track grass roots level of the UK economy.

printing.com's dense client base is representative of the UK micro business.

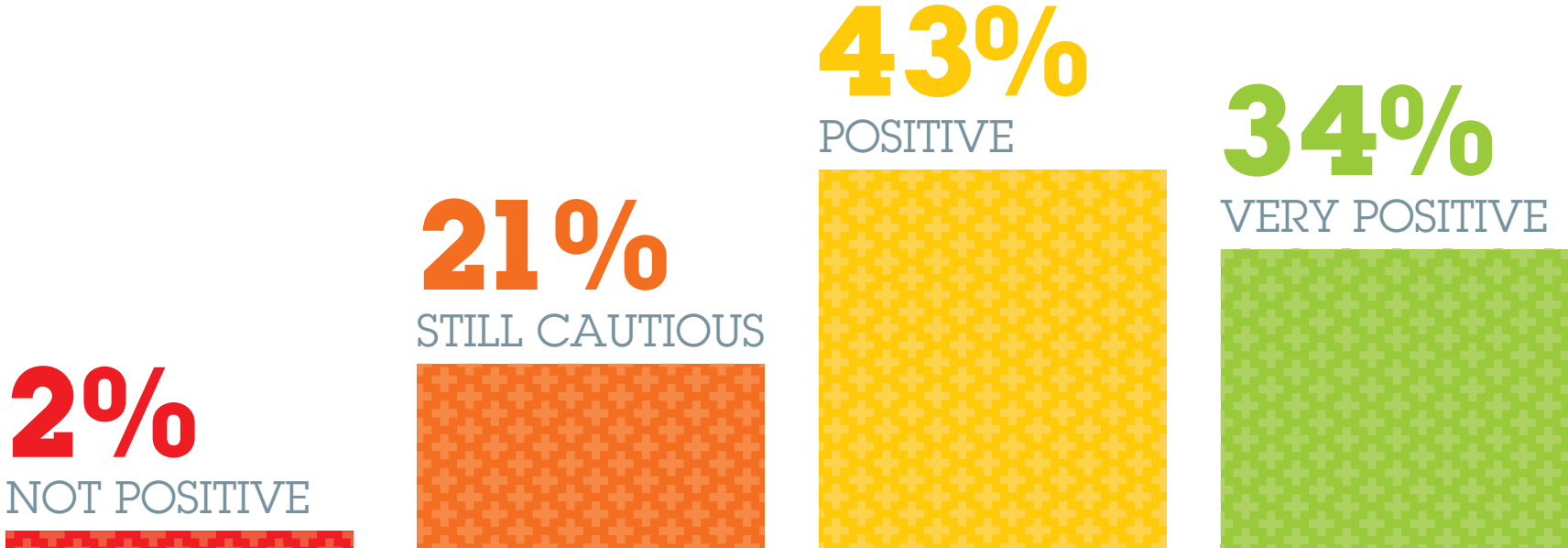
This survey was carried out online, canvassing the views of printing.com clients.

FOR ENQUIRIES CALL  
**0161 848 5700**

# HOW **POSITIVE** IS YOUR OUTLOOK FOR DOING BUSINESS IN 2014?

Companies are optimistic about doing business in the UK with 77% responding that they were positive or very positive.

**SURVEY OF MICRO BUSINESS\* CONFIDENCE IN THE UK**  
Survey Period – 2nd January to 7th February 2014  
Sampled from printing.com client base via online survey  
\*39% No employees, 29% 1-2 employees, 32% 3-10 employees  
Sample Size 1,543



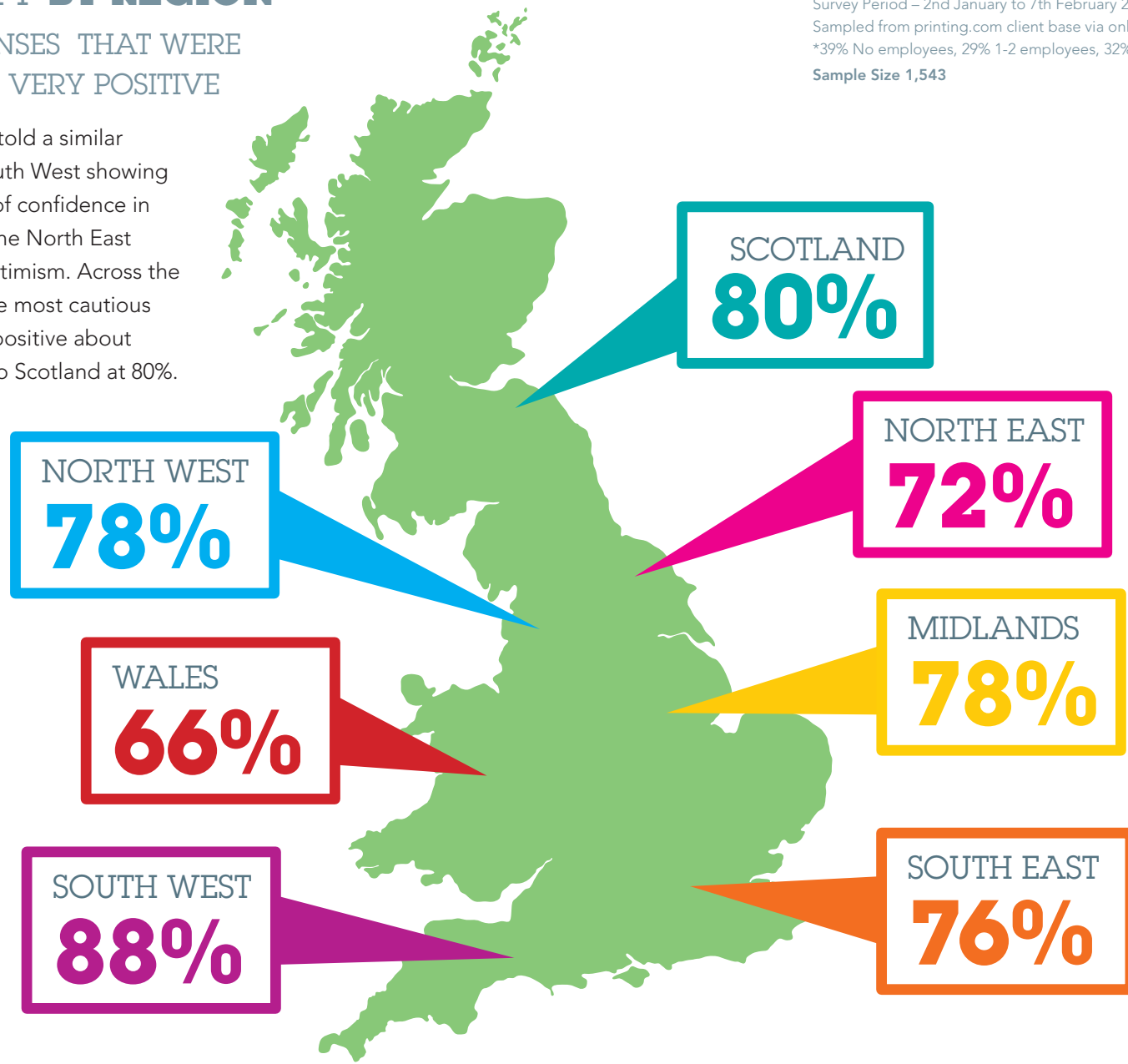
“I always wanted to set up my own business and I feel like 2014 is the year to do it. I’ve already had a positive reaction from suppliers, people are keen to get on board.” Emma Bailey, The Wedding Cafe, Leicester.



## POSITIVITY BY REGION

% OF RESPONSES THAT WERE POSITIVE OR VERY POSITIVE

Many UK regions told a similar story, with the South West showing the highest level of confidence in England against the North East reporting least optimism. Across the UK Wales were the most cautious with 66% feeling positive about 2014, compared to Scotland at 80%.

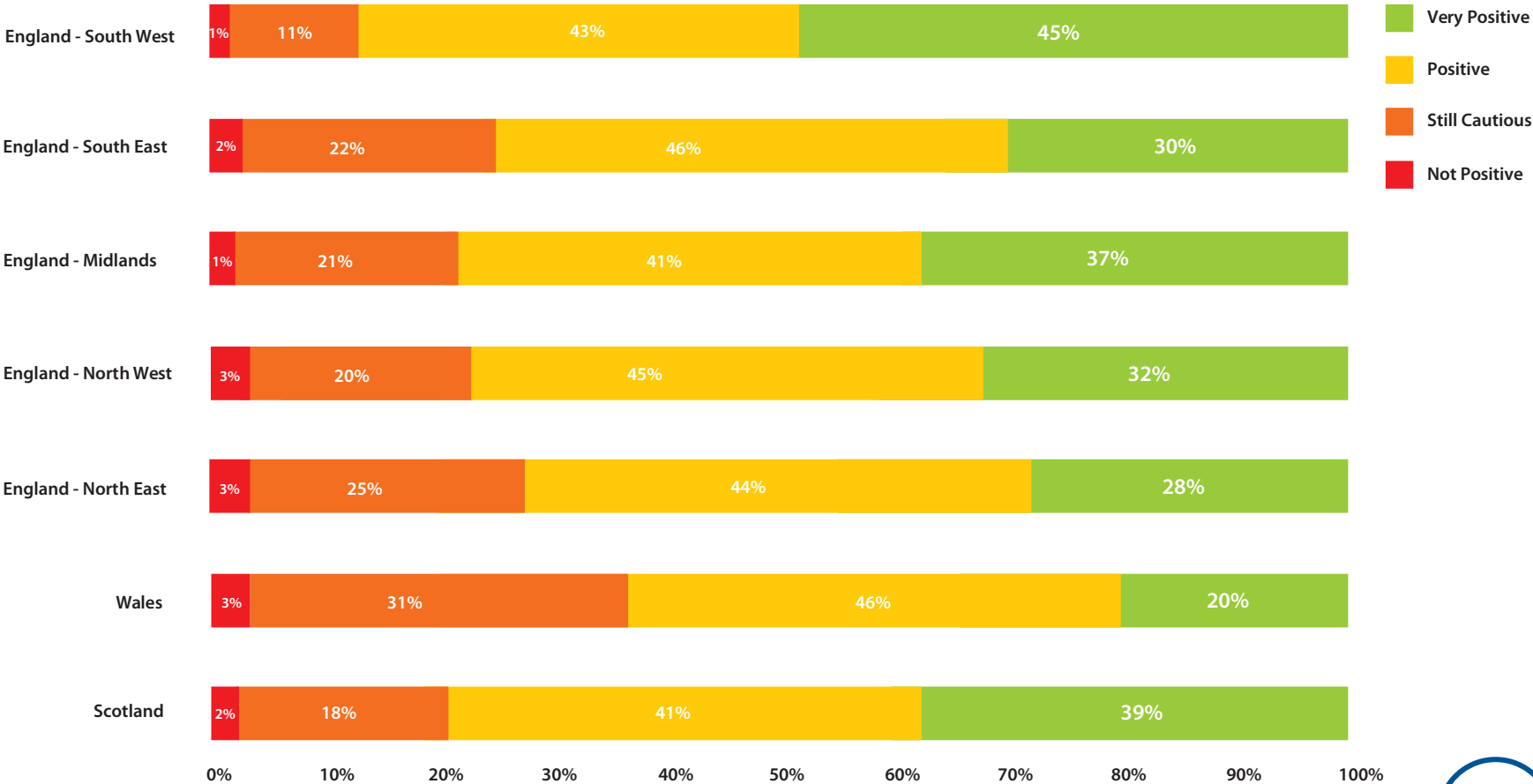


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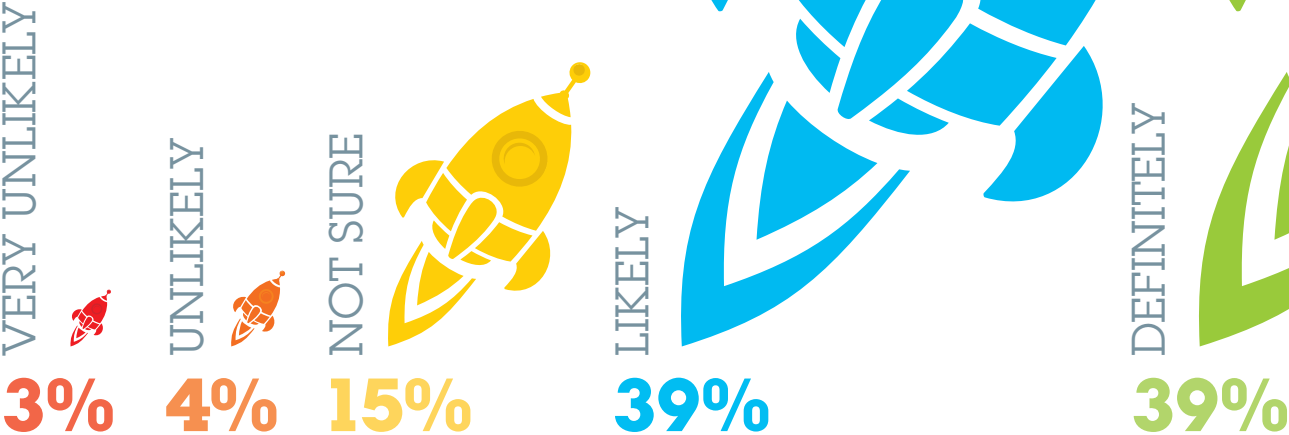
## REGIONAL COMPARISON



# HOW LIKELY IS IT THAT YOU'LL BE LAUNCHING NEW SERVICES OR INITIATIVES DURING 2014?

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Business confidence is on the up, with 78% 'definitely' or 'likely to' launch new services and initiatives and in turn create new jobs.



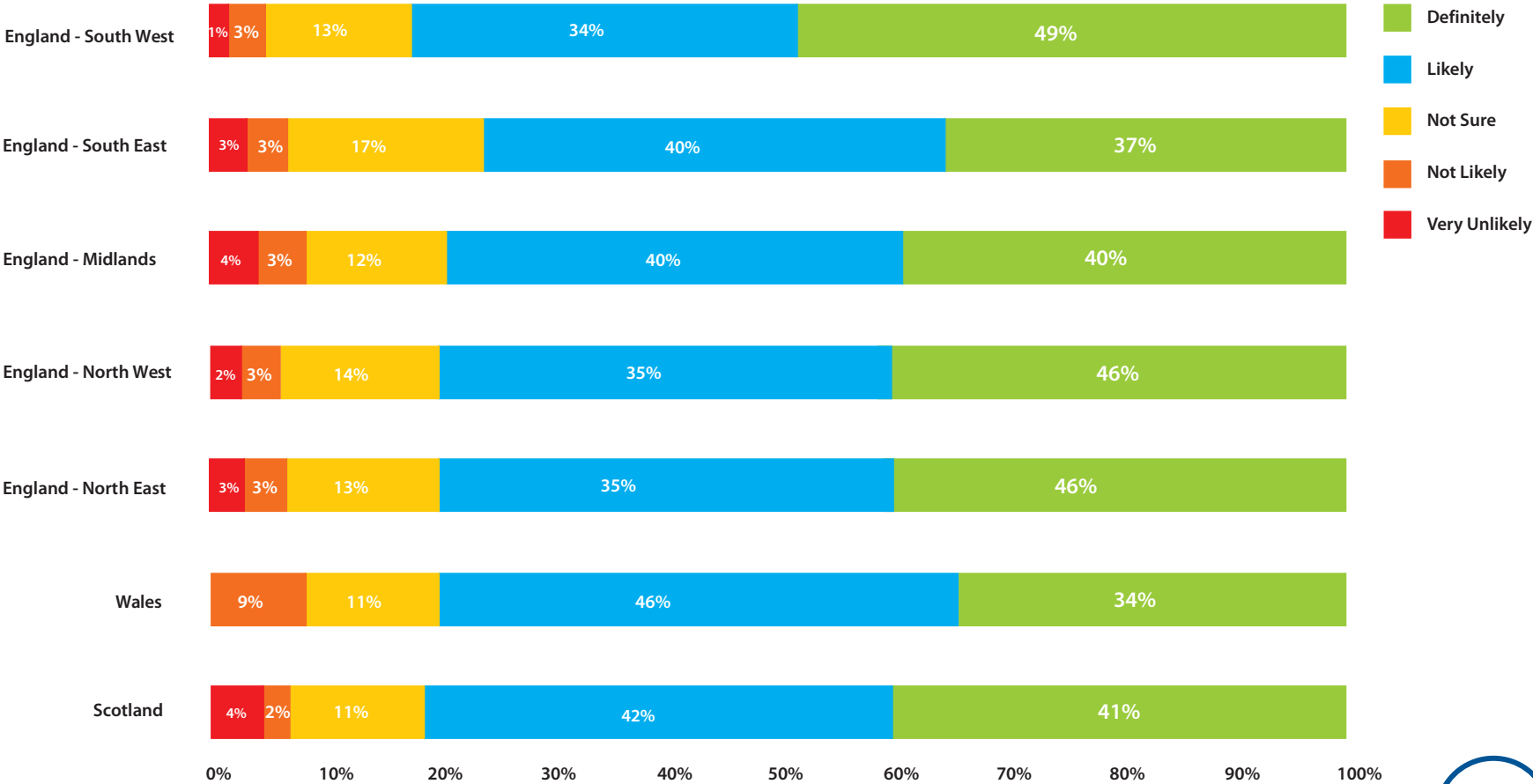
“We are investing in new equipment to further enhance our range of services & offer our clients a comprehensive, professional & reliable end product.”  
Ian Weir, IWEC Electrical Contractors, Newark.



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## REGIONAL COMPARISON



# HOW **CONFIDENT** DO YOU FEEL ABOUT DOING BUSINESS IN THE UK **COMPARED TO THIS TIME LAST YEAR?**

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Businesses are poised to tackle 2014 head on. 67% indicated a more confident outlook compared to 2013 with 3% being less confident – 30% indicated 'about the same'.



“We will be taking on a new full-time employee this year to cope with the growth in business, I feel more confident than ever to invest in advertising.”  
Laura Calder, Pilates Plus Physio, Edinburgh.

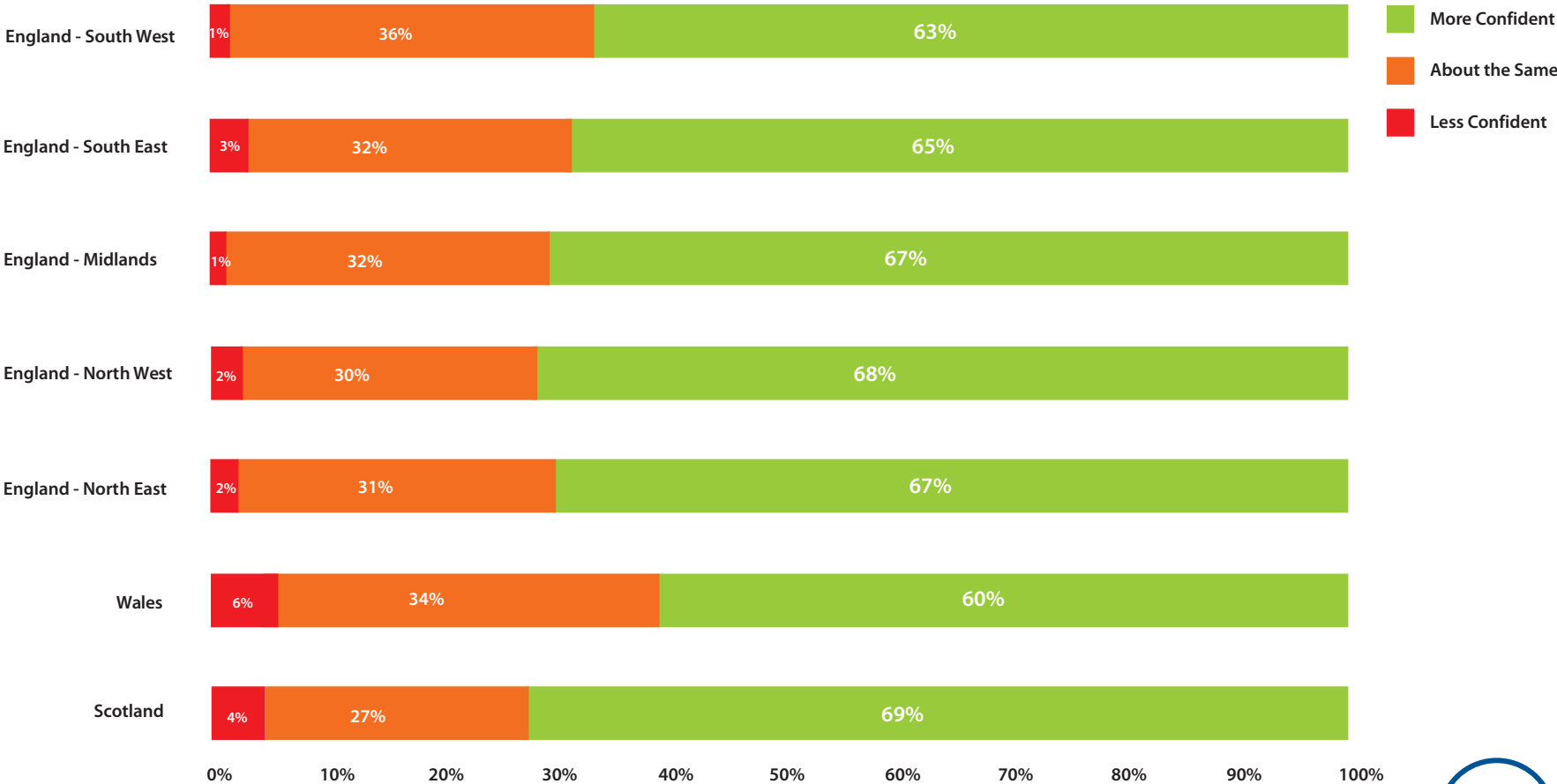


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### REGIONAL COMPARISON



## POSITIVE OUTLOOK STORIES

Businesses shared their personal 2014 Positive Outlook stories...

“We’re still small, but growing fast. We expect to take on another full-time member of staff this summer. We feel very upbeat about our prospects in 2014. As a result, we’re increasing our already wide range of Posh Pop flavours from 8 to 10.”

Breckland Orchard,  
Cambridge.

“My business is now two years old, so has started in tough times. I have a positive outlook that things will get better. This year I’ll be launching exciting and completely new types of products with my designs, to go alongside my existing t-shirts and accessories.”

Cakes with Faces, Coventry



“We have seen steady growth in sales through the summer of 2013 but we expected a bit of a slowdown during December and January. Far from it; sales have exceeded even our ‘best case’ forecast.”

Ebike Electric Cycle Centres Ltd, Leicester

“I opened my new clinic in September last year, it’s been a really positive start so far. I am hoping to expand the business further this year. I would like to be able to take on a full time receptionist and create a job opportunity for someone else.”

Hands On Health Clinic,  
Birmingham

“We have more pre-bookings for weddings than we have had in the last 4 years and January has had a massive start too- 2014 is set to be our best year yet. We’ve just hired new staff to keep up with demand!”

Make Believe  
Events, Glasgow.

### SURVEY OF MICRO BUSINESS CONFIDENCE IN THE UK, JANUARY 2014

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