



SBA | Ascent Pre-launch Online Survey | 05.04.2019

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is committed to serving the needs of entrepreneurs with innovative, accessible, and high-quality services, resources, and educational opportunities. That's why the SBA created **Ascent**, a digital learning platform specifically for women small business owners like you who want to scale and expand their businesses.

Your responses to this survey will help us ensure that Ascent meets the needs of women small business owners. As a female entrepreneur, your feedback is critical to Ascent's success.

This survey should take no longer than 10 minutes. Thank you for your time!

NEXT SCREEN: PRA INFORMATION

- This research is sponsored by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Subject to the guidelines of the Paperwork Reduction Act, an agency may not conduct or sponsor an information collection, such as this survey, and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a current valid OMB Control Number. This survey is approved under OMB Control # 3245-0398, which expires on January 31, 2021.

The estimated time to complete this survey is 10 minutes, including the time to review instructions and completing and submitting the information. Send any comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspects of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the burden to Vicky Mundt (victoria.mundt@sba.gov).

- Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary.
- Your insights will be used to develop information and outreach materials that will help encourage the use of a new digital learning platform currently in development by SBA.

PRIVACY POLICY/SYSTEMS OF RECORD NOTICE

- This survey will not collect any personal information about you unless you choose to provide that information to us. If you choose to provide this information, it will be used for the express purpose for which it was intended.
- As a respondent to this survey, you are subject to Survey Monkey's [privacy policies](#).
- Learn more about the SBA's privacy policy [here](#).

[NEXT SCREEN: OVERVIEW INFORMATION ABOUT ASCENT]

About Ascent

You may have had a chance to participate in an in-person information session about Ascent. Here's a little more information about Ascent to provide context for your responses:

- Ascent is an online learning platform created for growth-oriented women entrepreneurs who are interested in scaling/growing their established, revenue-generating businesses.

- Ascent uses a modern, e-learning approach specifically targeted for women business owners who want to grow their existing businesses. It's packed with the information, resources, and tools women need to create and achieve their business goals. Ascent includes:
 - A learner-centric, intuitive, customizable user experience.
 - Structured content focused on specific subjects as well as “micro-lessons.”
 - Dashboards to monitor progress.
- Backed by research on the needs of female business owners, Ascent offers seven journeys with highly relevant content, including:
 - Entrepreneurial Leadership: Identify your personal leadership style and determine what success means to you
 - Opportunity & Innovation: Identify new business opportunities and spark innovative practices to grow your business
 - Opportunity Assessment: Evaluate new business opportunities from a strategic, financial, and personal perspective
 - Strategic Marketing: Develop a marketing plan for your business
 - Your People: Build the skills you need to attract, hire, develop, and retain employees
 - Your Business Financial Strategy: Learn to speak the language of finance
 - Access to Capital: Explore the when, why, how, and who of capital sources

[NEXT SCREEN: BEGIN SURVEY]

Based on what you know so far about Ascent...

1. How appealing is this product to you?

- Likert scale: Extremely appealing/Very appealing/Somewhat appealing/Slightly appealing/Not at all appealing
 - [BRANCH LOGIC] If you said “Not at all appealing,” why? [open-ended response]
 - [BRANCH LOGIC] If you said “Extremely appealing” or “very appealing,” how would you rate the appeal of the following features and aspects of the product? [STAR RATING] [RANDOMIZE]
 - Ability to customize my user experience
 - Ability to follow entire learning path and “micro-lessons”
 - Content is backed by research on the behaviors and practices of women business owners
 - Personal assessment tools
 - Dashboards to monitor progress
 - Created by the SBA
 - Created specifically for women entrepreneurs in the growth stage of business
 - Available at no cost
 - Information is useful, practical, and actionable
 - Other, please specify:

2. How likely are you to try Ascent?

- Likert scale: Extremely likely/Very likely/Somewhat likely/Slightly likely/Not at all likely
 - [BRANCH LOGIC] If you said “Not at all likely,” why? Check all that apply. [RANDOMIZE]
 - Too busy/lack of time
 - Currently using other resources that meet my learning needs and goals
 - Prefer in-person learning opportunities vs. online

- Prefer learning opportunities that are specific to my industry
- Not relevant to my current learning needs
- Prefer to use resources from the private sector or higher education
- Other, please specify:

3. How likely are you to recommend Ascent to someone you know?

- Likert scale: Extremely likely/Very likely/Somewhat likely/Slightly likely/Not at all likely
 - If you said “Not at all likely,” why? [open-ended response]

4. What is the likelihood that you would use Ascent on an on-going basis? (Likert scale)

- Likert scale: Extremely likely/Very likely/Somewhat likely/Slightly likely/Not at all likely
 - [BRANCH LOGIC] If you said “Extremely likely” or “very likely,” what would motivate you to continue to use Ascent? [OPEN-ENDED]
 - [BRANCH LOGIC] If you said “Somewhat likely” or “slightly likely,” what would motivate you to continue to use Ascent? [OPEN-ENDED]
 - [BRANCH LOGIC] If you said “Not at all likely,” why wouldn’t you use Ascent on an on-going basis? [OPEN-ENDED]

5. Which of the 7 journeys are you most interested in? Please rank the journeys from most interesting to least interesting.

- Entrepreneurial Leadership: Identify your personal leadership style and determine what success means to you
- Opportunity & Innovation: Identify new business opportunities and spark innovative practices to grow your business
- Opportunity Assessment: Evaluate new business opportunities from a strategic, financial, and personal perspective
- Strategic Marketing: Develop a marketing plan for your business
- Your People: Build the skills you need to attract, hire, develop, and retain employees
- Your Business Financial Strategy: Learn to speak the language of finance
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6. What other journeys or content would you like to see added to Ascent in the future? Check your top 3. [RANDOMIZE]

- Short-, medium-, and long-term business planning
- Working with the government (e.g., capturing government contracts)
- Why and how to get your business certified as a woman-owned business
- Dealing with challenges and failure
- Strategic networking, strategic partnerships, and building relationships
- Lead generation and sales techniques
- Planning for and managing growth
- Diversity and inclusion
- Other, please specify:

7. Where do you learn about new products and services to help you run your business? Check your top 3 sources of information.

- My trusted business advisors—my accountant, attorney, business consultants, etc.
- Women’s business organizations—e.g., WBENC, NAWBO

- My local chamber of commerce
- Podcasts
 - Which ones?
- LinkedIn
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Business publications
 - Which ones?
- Email marketing
- Search engine results
- Other, please specify:

[DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION]

Finally, please tell us a little about yourself.

8. Would you be interested in testing a “beta” version of Ascent?

- Yes
 - [BRANCH LOGIC] If yes, please provide your contact information below. We’ll reach out to you via email to invite you to sign up as a product tester:
 - First name
 - Last name
 - Email address
- No

9. What is your state of residence?

- [LIST OF STATES]

10. How long have you been in business?

- Started this year
- 1-3 years
- 4-7 years
- 8-11 years
- 12-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 20+ years

11. How many employees does your business have?

- Just me-I’m a “solopreneur”
- 1-5 employees
- 6-10 employees
- 11-20 employees
- 21-50 employees
- More than 50 employees

12. What industry is your business in? [RANDOMIZE]

- STEM (science/technology/engineering/mathematics)
- Financial services (e.g., wealth management, financial advising, accounting)
- Construction and related services (design/build, architecture)
- Information technology
- Advertising/marketing/communications
- Law/legal services
- Manufacturing
- Transportation
- Retail
- Hospitality (hotel, restaurant)
- Healthcare
- Other, please specify:

13. What was your business' estimated annual revenue in the last fiscal year?

- Under \$100,000
- \$100,000-\$249,999
- \$250,000-\$499,999
- \$500,000-\$999,999
- \$1,000,000+
- Prefer not to say

Thank you for taking our survey!