D&B U.S. Economic Health Tracker

A multi-dimensional view of the U.S. Economy

March 2014

Small Business Health Index

D&B’s Small Business Health Index has contracted modestly, although small businesses saw improvement in on-time credit card and bill payments.

U.S. Jobs Health

D&B estimates 146,000 new jobs were added to U.S. payrolls in February 2014, with significant gains in manufacturing, construction, and business services. Employment growth is anticipated to continue at a slower pace.
The D&B U.S. Business Economic Tracker revealed mixed signals for U.S. businesses in February 2014. Wintry weather had a negative impact on the Small Business Health Index, driving the decline in small business performance. There are signs of softening in the small business sector but clearly weather is the primary influence. Meanwhile, an estimated 146,000 new jobs were created, boosted by strong gains in the construction, manufacturing, and business services segments. Finally, overall U.S. business health strengthened in February, registering a 53.1-percent index value, matching January as the highest recorded level since the index began in December 2010. U.S. businesses continued to improve their balance sheets and overall financial performance.

The Small Business Health Index measures year-over-year small business performance through equally weighted payment patterns and credit use. U.S. Jobs Health combines Small Business Health Index industry data with BLS figures to forecast monthly nonfarm payroll employment. The U.S. Business Health Index provides a year-over-year equally weighted average of D&B’s Viability Score, Delinquency Predictor and Total Loss Predictor. The index ranges from zero (with all businesses recording high levels of risk) to 100% (with all businesses recording low levels of risk). Data available as of Feb. 28, 2014.

Methodology
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