D&B U.S. Economic Health Tracker

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

September 2014

Small Business Health Index

D&B’s Small Business Health Index rose nearly half a point during the most recent reporting period, owing to strong improvement in bill and credit-card payments. Despite the improvement the small business outlook remains subdued due to tepid economic expansion.

U.S. Jobs Health

D&B estimates 247,000 new non-farm jobs were added to U.S. payrolls in August 2014, with notable gains in business services and manufacturing.
D&B’s U.S. Economic Health Tracker revealed continued slow and hesitant economic growth in August 2014, though some bright spots emerged. The small business sector showed strength in on-time bill and credit-card payments, although prolonged credit card use remains worrisome. Meanwhile, an estimated 247,000 non-farm jobs were added to U.S. payrolls. The business services and manufacturing segments saw especially strong hiring activity, adding an estimated 59,000 and 32,000 jobs, respectively. Finally, overall U.S. business health proved a bright spot driven by substantial improvement in the financial health of the private sector. Despite concerns over write-offs and bankruptcies, businesses are less vulnerable to failing over the next year, based on the weighted average of D&B’s Viability Rating, Delinquency Predictor, and Total Loss Predictor.

**U.S. Business Health Index**

Source: D&B Global Data, Insights & Analytics

U.S. business health remained virtually unchanged in August 2014. Overall, U.S. businesses maintain on-time bill payments and exhibit lower risk of failure over the next 12 months.

**Perspectives**

D&B’s U.S. Economic Health Tracker revealed continued slow and hesitant economic growth in August 2014, though some bright spots emerged. The small business sector showed strength in on-time bill and credit-card payments, although prolonged credit card use remains worrisome. Meanwhile, an estimated 247,000 non-farm jobs were added to U.S. payrolls. The business services and manufacturing segments saw especially strong hiring activity, adding an estimated 59,000 and 32,000 jobs, respectively. Finally, overall U.S. business health proved a bright spot driven by substantial improvement in the financial health of the private sector. Despite concerns over write-offs and bankruptcies, businesses are less vulnerable to failing over the next year, based on the weighted average of D&B’s Viability Rating, Delinquency Predictor, and Total Loss Predictor.

**Methodology**

**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 August 27, 2014.

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