



## **Existing Industry Report 2015**

Results from the 2014-15  
Cedar Valley Regional  
Survey of Existing Business



Black Hawk | Bremer | Buchanan | Butler | Chickasaw | Grundy

# Business Background

# 67

## Businesses

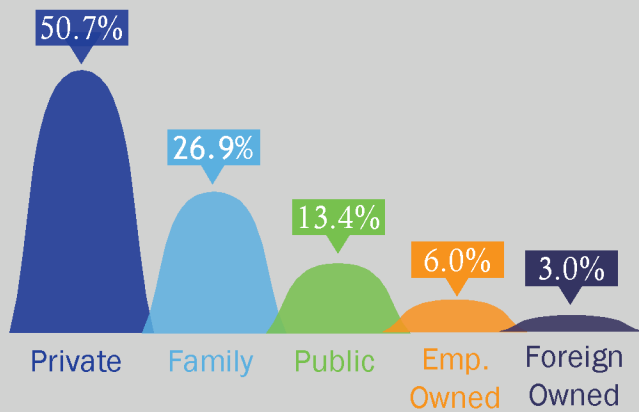
Manufacturing - 65.7%

Wholesale Trade - 11.9%

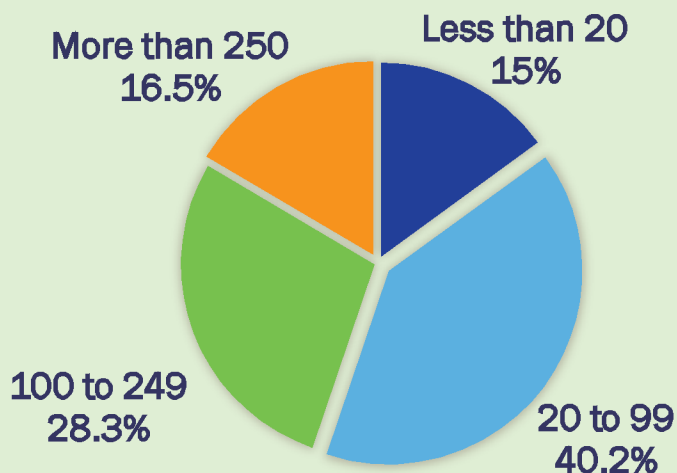
Professional, Scientific & Technical - 9.0%

Other - 13.4%

## Type of Ownership



## Number of Employees



The Cedar Valley Region's Business Retention and Expansion program utilizes the Synchronist Business Information System® developed by Blane Canada Ltd. as a tool to interview area businesses. Synchronist is designed to collect, analyze and report company data to give decision-makers valuable insight about the regional economy and plan economic programming to compliment the survey findings.

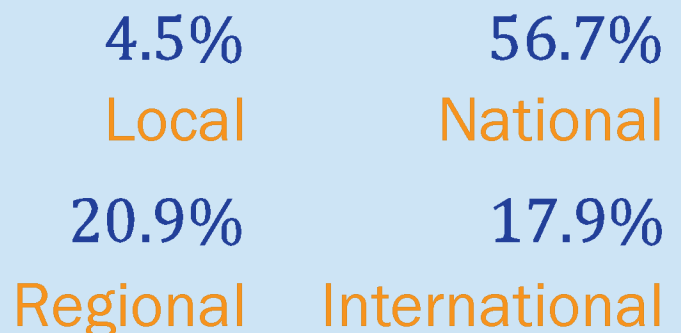
The BEST of the Cedar Valley team completed 67 interviews from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015.

Geographically, the participants were located in the following counties:

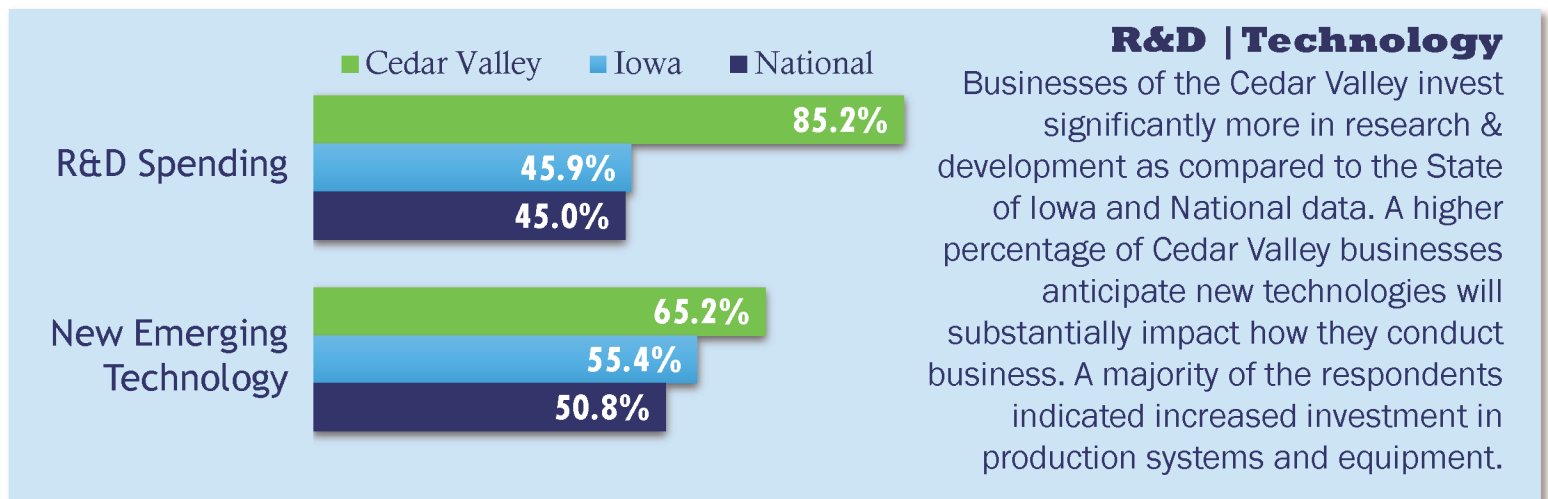
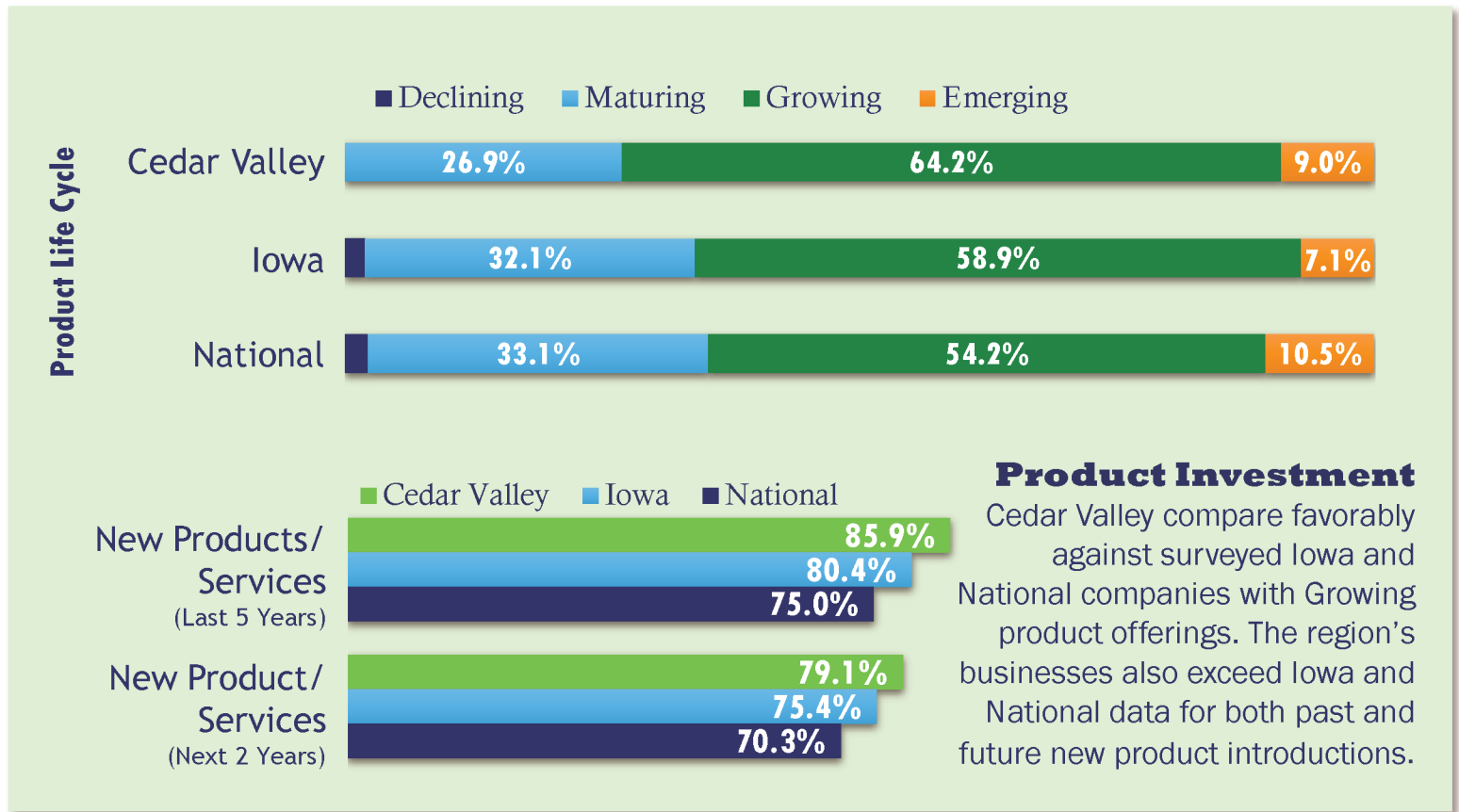
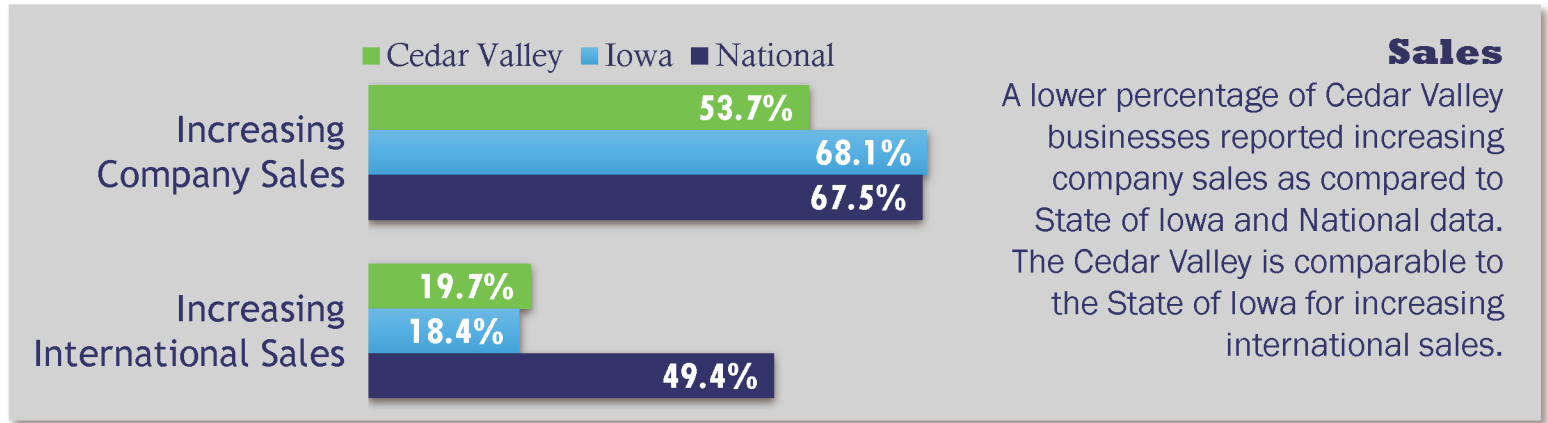
- **Black Hawk** – 47.8%
- **Buchanan** – 20.9%
- **Bremer** – 14.9%
- **Butler** – 6.0%
- **Chickasaw** – 6.0%
- **Grundy** – 4.5%

## Primary Market

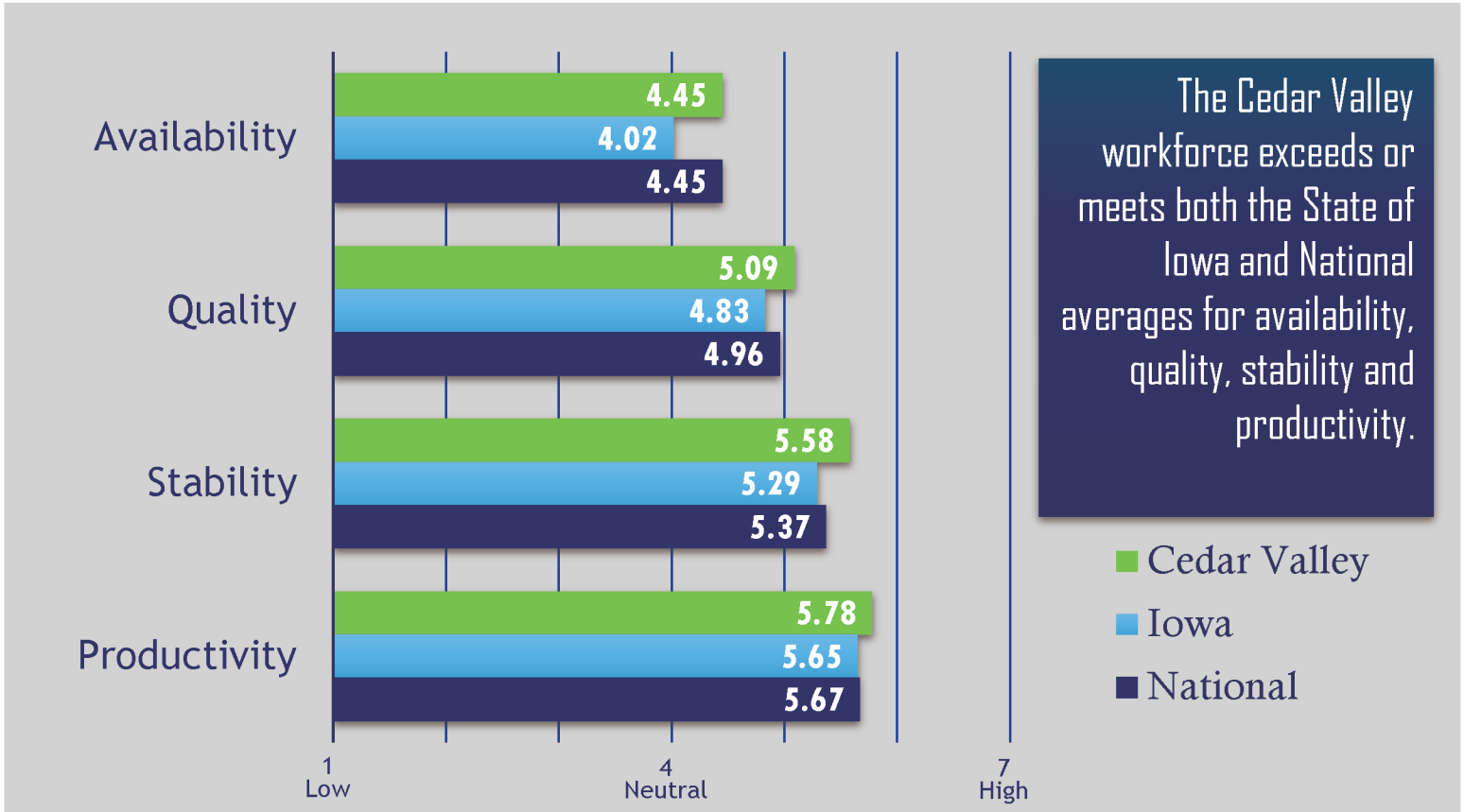
Over three-fourths of companies reported their primary markets as National or International.



# Key Performance Indicators



# Workforce Characteristics



**61.2%** have  
**Recruitment Problems**

Common Difficult to Fill Positions:

- Machinists
- Computer/information technology professionals
- Welders
- Engineers
- Truck Drivers

**94%** of companies reporting industry-related recruitment problems are  
**Manufacturers**

**Recruitment Problems**  
related primarily to

**Industry 63.0%**  
**Location 37.0%**

**Employee Training**  
**Increasing 23.0%**  
**Stable 73.8%**

Training Budget Allocation:

- New Job Skills – 45.4%
- Proficiency Training – 46.7%
- Remedial Skills – 7.9%

# Expansion Plans

**Room for  
onsite  
Expansion**

**50.7%**  
**Yes**

*Companies with less than 100 employees were less likely to have room for onsite expansion as compared to companies with 100 or more employees.*

**Community  
may not be  
Considered  
for  
Expansion**

**32.3%**  
**Yes**

*The primary reason the Cedar Valley Region would not be considered for future expansion was workforce availability.*

**52%**  
**of companies  
have plans to  
expand in the  
next 3 years**

Total investment is estimated at over \$131 million.

66.7% investment in real estate & construction.

An estimated 523 new jobs could be created.

93.9% believe the community's technology infrastructure is adequate for growth plans.

42.9% have no room for expansion at their current location.

37.1% said there are reasons the community may not be considered for future expansion, mostly due to a lack of skilled workers.

# Key Findings

## Strengths & Weaknesses

In the last three years a quarter of the companies surveyed identified business and sales growth as a great achievement. While another 16% were proud of their production improvements and innovation. These accomplishments could be the result of identified regional strengths of *geographic location, access to markets and suppliers, quality of life, low cost of doing business*, and the *quality and productivity of their current workforce* as top regional strengths.

However, the lack of *availability of skilled workers* and *passenger air service* were the most frequently identified regional weaknesses. Of the businesses surveyed *workforce availability* is the top barrier to growth in the Cedar Valley.

## High Growth & High Value Companies

Over half of the businesses interviewed have high value and growth potential. Nearly all of these high value/high growth companies are in the growing and emerging phase of their main product/ service lifecycle, and all plan to introduce new products in the next two years. These companies are primarily composed of manufacturers (67.6%), wholesale trade (13.5%) and professional, scientific and technical services (8.1%). Additionally, two-thirds stated they have plans to expand within the next three years.

Nonetheless, many of these businesses face challenges. These obstacles include the lack of available skilled workforce, lack of available land to expand on their current location and the need to diversify their customer base. These obstacles may force the businesses to expand outside of the Cedar Valley.

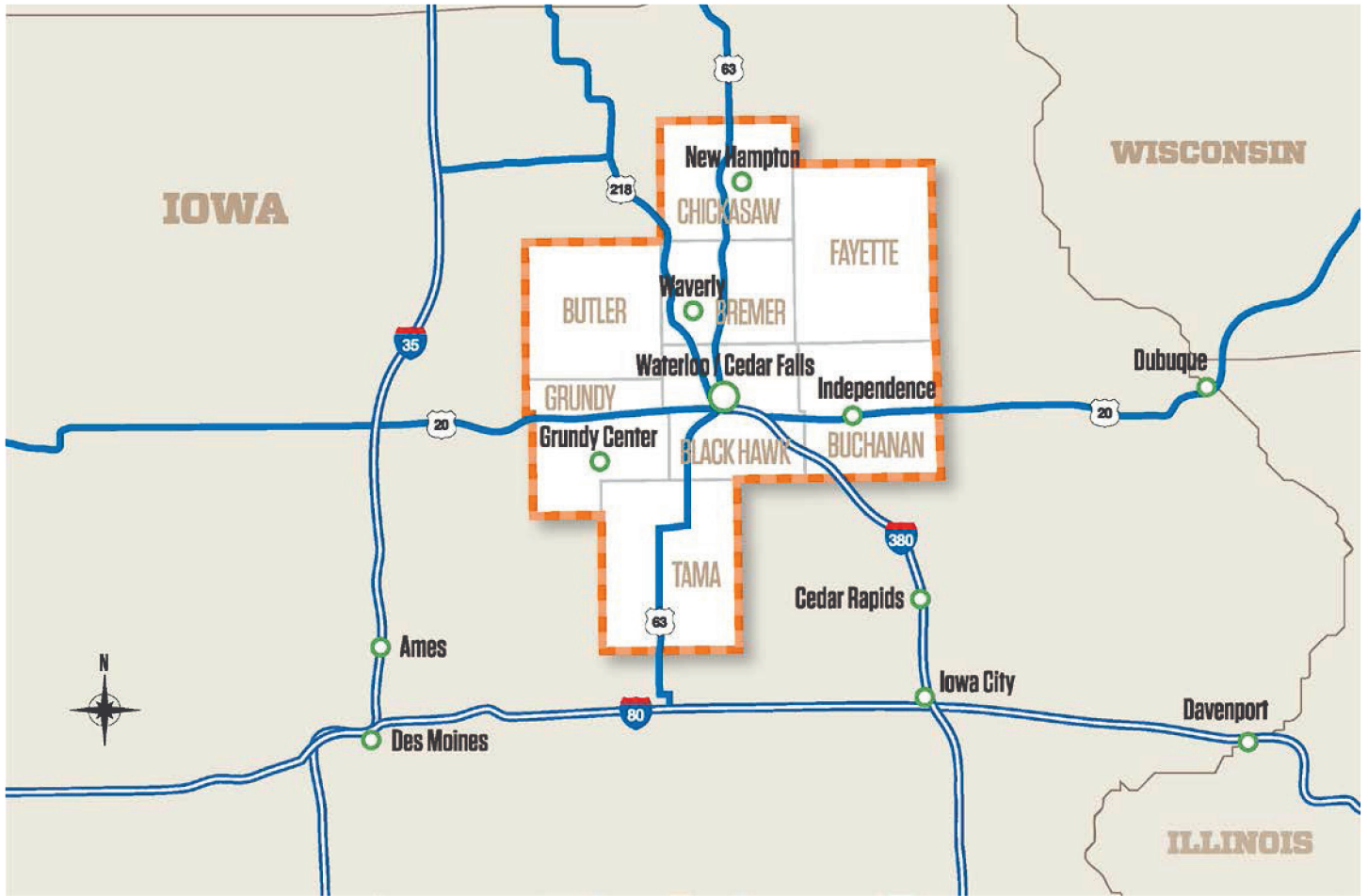
## Technology-Related Opportunities & Challenges

New technologies and process improvements are impacting two-thirds of the businesses and their industries, so it will be critical that appropriate support and technical assistance is available in the region to allow these businesses to remain competitive. In addition, a third of these businesses stated that production is under capacity in their industry, which indicates the potential for growth and expansion.

To support efforts to enhance broadband access, 35.2% of the companies surveyed expect increased consumption of internet access, while 47.2% will see an need for broadband speeds.



# Cedar Valley Regions



*Advancing Business Together*



**BEST**

OF THE CEDAR VALLEY

BUSINESS EXPANSION | STRATEGIC TRENDS

*Advancing Business Together*

Cedar Valley Regional Partnership

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