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A third of small business owners use alcohol to relieve stress

www.crunch.co.uk

Despite freelancers generally feeling less stressed having left regular paid employment (46% are less stressed), new research* from Crunch Accounting has today found over a third (35%) currently turn to alcohol to relieve stress.

The survey from Crunch also found that 10% more men (39.5%) than women (29.5%) turn to drink to help them relax. This follows the [UK's chief medical officer's announcement](#) of new stricter alcohol guidelines.

The research also found that some of the most popular methods used by freelancers to de-stress include exercising (42%), cooking (24%), sex (15%) and meditation (12%).

The small business community named a series of factors that were contributing to rising stress levels, including the unpredictable ebb and flow of work (23%), late payments from clients (13%) and tax and red tape (9%).

Jason Kitcat, micro-business ambassador at Crunch said: "It's extremely worrying that so many of the freelancers and SMEs that drive our economy forward are turning to drink to deal with stress. It's clear that the government needs to do more to reduce the burden of red tape and ensure that freelancers and small business owners' rights are being better protected. On average it takes freelancers 25 days to chase a payment, and cashflow is a consistent source of stress, this is simply not good enough.

"It's also important to realise that although starting up and running a micro-business can be stressful, it can also be extremely rewarding. This explains why it's one of the fastest growing sectors of the country's economy, collectively employing 8.4 million people," added Kitcat.

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The research commissioned by Crunch Accounting surveyed 750 freelancers and small/micro business owners across the UK from 22 December 2015 to 7 January 2016. Key results below:

Questions:

1. What impact did leaving regular work to start working for yourself have on your stress levels?

- I am significantly less stressed – 19%
- I am moderately less stressed – 26%
- No change – 18%
- I am moderately more stressed – 19%
- I am significantly more stressed – 7%
- N/A - I didn't leave regular work to start working for myself – 10%

2. What is your biggest cause of stress?

- Late repayments – 13%
- Insufficient work – 21%
- Too much work – 11%
- Personal problems are harder to switch off from when freelancing – 5%
- Bookkeeping – 5%
- An unpredictable ebb and flow of work – 23%
- Tax and red tape – 9%
- Other cause – 5%
- None / N/A – 8%

3. Which of the following do you ever do to de-stress?

- Drink – 35%
- Smoke – 15%
- Take drugs (illegal) – 2%
- Self medicate (prescription) – 3%
- Sex – 15%
- Socialise – 29%
- Cook – 24%
- Exercise – 42%
- Meditation – 12%
- Extreme sports – 2%
- Read – 45%
- Watch TV – 57%
- None of the above / Prefer not to say 7%

About Crunch Accounting

Crunch is the UK's first and fastest-growing online accountancy firm, combining a team of expert in-house accountants available on-demand with simple online accounting software.

Designed specifically for freelancers, contractors and small businesses, Crunch is more than just an accountancy firm – it's everything you need to manage your finances. Their complete accounting solutions start at £64.50+VAT per month.

Crunch was co-founded by online entrepreneur Darren Fell and Accountancy Director Steve Crouch, with investment from Bebo co-founder Paul Birch. Former Skype CEO Michael van Swaaij is Crunch Chairman.

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