Working with diverse industries, we are fortunate to be mindful of the small business trends that affect businesses across the U.S. While there are numerous articles on emerging trends, industry-specific and general in scope, the following encompass a few that stand out for 2019.

#### Labor Market

For January 2019, the <u>Bureau of Labor Statistics</u> (BLS) reported the unemployment rate at 4.0%. The unemployment rate has remained consistently below 4.0% since June 2018. The tight labor market positions employers to actively compete for and proactively seek talent.

## Gig Economy

From rideshare drivers and dog walkers to software developers and accountants, the gig economy is booming. According to a <u>survey</u> from Bankrate, about 37% of Americans have a side job. A report on the <u>Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households</u> from the Federal Reserve confirms that three in 10 adults work in the "gig economy" as a source of supplemental income.

## Social Responsibility

Now more than even consumers are speaking loudly with their dollars as online boycotts or news of good deeds spread with the ease of a tweet. Social responsibility influences consumers' decision-making. A study by MNI Targeted Media Group found that GenZ, the generation known as digital natives, influences about \$4 billion in discretionary spending. From the respondents to the survey, 50% reported that knowing a company is socially conscious influences their decision.

## **Subscription Services**

Many businesses are making a push to automated self-ordering or subscription services. The <u>subscription box market</u> has grown considerably since 2014 with food and beauty making up 60% of the share of subscription boxes. The appeal of subscription services comes in large part because they grow revenues about 5 times faster than S&P 500 company revenues based on <u>The Subscription Economy Index report from Zuora</u>.

# Cybersecurity

A <u>survey</u> sponsored by IBM Security and conducted by Ponemon Institute, reports that in 2018 a data breach in a U.S. company cost an average of \$7.91 million, the most across the globe. With technology a part of day-to-day life for companies of all sizes, cybersecurity is at the forefront of trends to watch in 2019. Learn more about <u>cybersecurity</u>.

#### More on Small Business Trends

The selected articles below represent a small sample of trends that are worth watching in the year ahead. The rate of change is accelerating at a fast pace thanks in part to technology and we hope that this platform serves as a tool to support the exchange of ideas and information to support the small business community and SBDCs.

#### Read more at:

- The Top Five Small Business Trends To Monitor In 2019 (labor market)
- <u>5 Business Trends That Will Continue to Rise in 2019</u> (subscription services and socially responsible)
- Gigs, ghosts and apps: The top 3 small business trends on the rise in 2019 (gig economy)
- 5 Corporate Social Responsibility Trends to Watch in 2019

Interested in starting your own business or looking to grow your existing business? <u>Find Your Local Small Business Development Center</u> for no-cost business advice and free or low-cost trainings.

If you have a small business resource or SBDC story you think would make a great feature, please <u>Contact Us</u>.

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