

# *Ambition*

---

Why being ambitious matters and  
how SMEs are achieving their goals

***Ambition.  
It's infectious.  
Without ambition, nothing would ever change.  
With ambition comes disruption.  
Growth. Customer success.  
Business and societal improvement.  
Ambition sees the status quo and declares  
"We can do better!"***

***But what ambitions burn in the hearts of SMEs?  
How are these ambitions transformed into reality?  
And how well prepared are SMEs to go on this journey?***

***Let's find out...***



---

# Executive Summary

---

**Being ambitious matters.** Our recent study found that more-ambitious businesses have experienced **faster revenue growth** and are more optimistic about the future.

These 'very ambitious' companies share a number of traits:

- They have a common mindset – **strategic, energised and pioneering**; very ambitious businesses don't wait to see what happens, they reach out and grab the future
- Very ambitious companies employ **very ambitious people** – after all, it is the people who will achieve the ambition
- They place significant **emphasis on technology** – adopting new technologies has already given them a competitive advantage and they want to be early-adopters going forwards

With this desire in place, the next step for businesses is to articulate their aims. Achieving **revenue and profit growth** are top of many companies' agendas. However, whilst small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in general are often somewhat vague about how they plan to achieve this, very ambitious companies have a more clearly defined plan. Developing new **products and services**, penetrating new **geographies** and expanding the **business premises** are all front-of-mind ambitions for very ambitious businesses.

Indeed, for very ambitious companies, it's all about pushing new boundaries, and not just in terms of growth. Whilst **improving business processes** – e.g. streamlining of working practices, effectively utilising human resource and introducing supply chain efficiencies – is important, it ranks lower on the agenda than achieving **customer success**. At the heart of very ambitious companies is an urge to understand more about their customers – what makes them tick and how can this knowledge be used to increase existing customer satisfaction and number of customers?

However, with all of these ambitions, there is a challenge. Whilst businesses undoubtedly have a desire and willingness to achieve great things, many are **far from ready** to make this a reality. Only around one in five are knocking on the door of success; the remainder must **improve their processes and technology** systems before they can accomplish their ambitions.

The higher importance placed on technology by very ambitious companies does, however, provide them with a competitive advantage, leaving them closer to achieving their ambitions than their less ambitious counterparts.

In particular, very ambitious businesses believe that technology solutions should be **cost-effective, scalable, specific to their industry** and **software-based**. This is increasingly leading them towards **cloud-based** solutions and **connectivity software** applications.

Of course, implementing the right technology successfully will be vital, which is why very ambitious companies see **business software providers** playing a highly important role in allowing them to achieve their ambitions.

---

---

---

# Research introduction: context and reach

---

Ambition is the lifeblood of SMEs. These businesses, built upon a vibrant combination of passion, determination and a desire to succeed, are constantly blazing new trails formed from powerful ambitions.

To be successful as a business, understanding these ambitions – and how they can be turned into reality – is vital.

*What do business leaders want to achieve? How close are they to achieving these ambitions? And what does the path to success look like?*

To find out the answers, we surveyed over **800 global, senior strategic decision-makers in business and IT** at companies with between **25 and 1,000 employees**, operating within the **retail, wholesale distribution and consumer products** industries.

We've found the results fascinating and hope you will too.



*Note: In this study, the phrase SME (small and medium enterprises) has been used to denote businesses employing between 25 and 1,000 people.*

---

The survey took place online during July and August 2014 and was conducted by independent B2B research specialists, [Circle Research](#).

For any questions relating to the research programme, please contact Graeme:  
[graeme.cade@circle-research.com](mailto:graeme.cade@circle-research.com)

**Circle**research  
FRESH PERSPECTIVE

---

# Contents

---

## 1. Defining ambition

- i. Recognizing very ambitious businesses
- ii. Why being very ambitious matters

## 2. Ambition priorities

- i. Achieving growth priorities
- ii. Customer success priorities
- iii. Business improvement priorities
- iv. Societal improvement priorities
- v. Ambition hierarchy

## 3. The ambition journey

- i. A readiness barrier to achieving growth
- ii. A readiness barrier to customer success
- iii. A readiness barrier to business improvement

## 4. Enabling ambition

- i. Technological investment wish list



---

# 1

## *Defining ambition*

---

What does it mean to be ambitious and  
does it really matter?

---

---

# 1



## Defining ambition

**NEARLY HALF (46%) OF BUSINESSES DESCRIBE THEMSELVES AS BEING VERY AMBITIOUS**

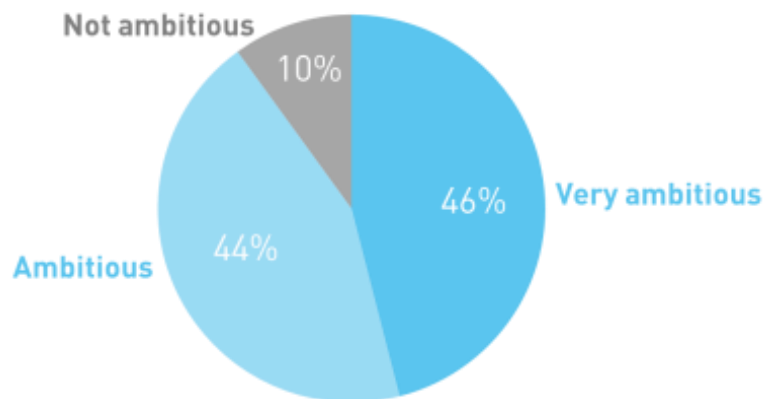
### Country Focus:

India is the most ambitious country – nearly three quarters (74%) of Indian businesses surveyed are very ambitious.

In contrast, Russia is the least ambitious country – here only just over one quarter (26%) are very ambitious, and nearly one fifth (19%) are not ambitious.

Ambition and SMEs go hand in hand. But what does it mean to be truly ambitious and how can you recognize an ambitious business when you see one?

Are you ambitious? If not, then you're in a small minority – only one in ten SMEs surveyed are happy with the current state of their business; the other nine want to improve it.



Q: How ambitious would you say you are as a company? Base: All respondents (804)  
Note: 'Not ambitious' includes SMEs that are 'happy with the status quo' or see the business as a 'lifestyle choice' rather than a pure business venture.

But whilst virtually all businesses are ambitious, the level of their drive varies. Approximately half of companies (44%) see themselves as 'ambitious'; whilst an equal proportion (46%) goes a step further to declare themselves 'very ambitious'.

This leads to two simple, but extremely important, questions: *what is the difference between an ambitious business and a very ambitious business? And why does it matter?*

# 1.1

## VERY AMBITIOUS BUSINESSES ARE ENERGIZED PIONEERS WITH A STRATEGIC OUTLOOK

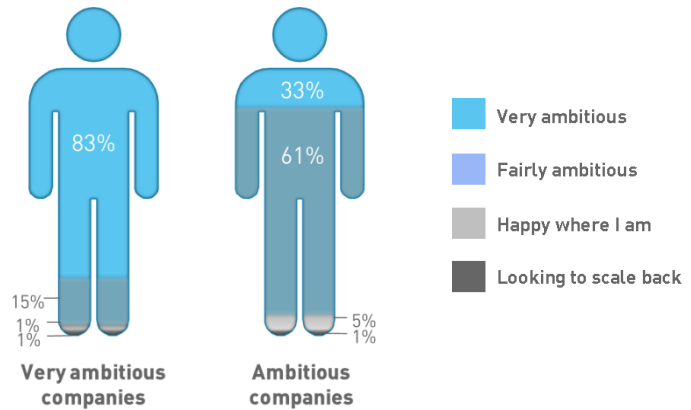
Based upon culture descriptors identified by 368 very ambitious SMEs.

### Country Focus:

Companies in India, Brazil and Mexico have the greatest desire to be first adopters of new technologies whilst the UK and USA are more reserved.

## Recognizing very ambitious businesses

As any owner will tell you, a business is not an inanimate object. Far from it, these companies are living, breathing, constantly evolving creatures, with employees at their core. It is essential therefore that **any business that wants to maximize its level of ambition needs to be formed of very ambitious individuals**. At the end of the day, it is the people who achieve ambitions.



Q: As an individual, within your job, how ambitious are you? For example, how ambitious are you to gain promotions, pay rises, extra responsibility, input into wider company strategy, recognition by your peers and the industry, etc.? Base: all very ambitious SMEs (368) and ambitious SMEs (353) answering the question.

So, how do very ambitious businesses attract and maintain very ambitious people? The key lies in the culture. Very ambitious businesses are **energized pioneers with a strategic outlook**. They see themselves as 'innovative', 'entrepreneurial', 'proactive', 'driven', 'big-picture thinking' and 'connected'. They are not 'bureaucratic' or 'slow to change'. Instead, they foster an environment that allows ambition to flourish.



Q: Thinking about the 'culture' of your company, which, if any, of the following words / phrases do you think describe your business? Words sized proportionally by prevalence. Base: all very ambitious SMEs answering the question (368).

In addition, operating in the modern, digital world, very ambitious businesses understand the **importance of technology**.

Very ambitious companies have already experienced real business benefits as a result of adopting new technologies (88%) and they use technology to differentiate themselves from competitors (83%). As such, they always want to be amongst the **first to adopt new technologies** (80%).



# 1.2

## MORE AMBITIOUS BUSINESSES MAKE MORE MONEY

### Country Focus:

Russia appears to be a volatile market. Over the past two years, SMEs in Russia are most likely to have experienced revenue growth of more than 100% (8%) but are also most likely to have experienced a revenue decline (8%).

## Why being very ambitious matters

Some businesses are more ambitious than others. So what? Why should we care?

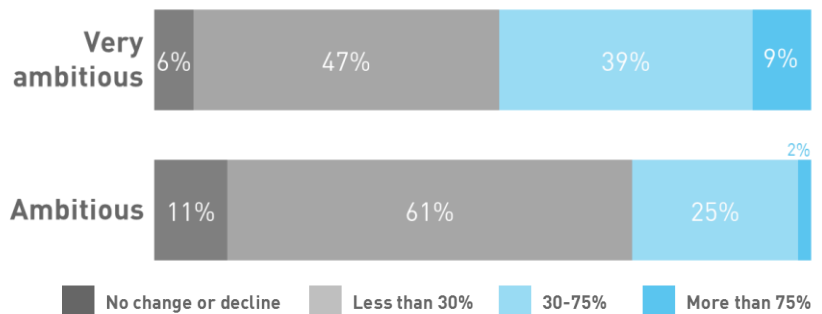
Theoretically, there are numerous reasons one could argue for the importance of ambition, ranging from primeval anthropological arguments on the natural drive for dominance, through to social enterprise theories on how business advancement benefits wider society.

However, for the time being, let's keep this very simple and look at something every business can relate to – money.

What we see is one simple relationship: **more ambitious businesses make more money.**

Over the past two years, nearly **half of very ambitious businesses (48%) have seen revenue growth of more than 30%**, compared to just over one quarter (27%) of ambitious companies. The relationship becomes even stronger when we head to the extremes of revenue growth. 9% of very ambitious businesses have seen revenue growth of more than 75% over the past 24 months, compared to just 2% of ambitious businesses.

### Actual revenue growth over the last two years

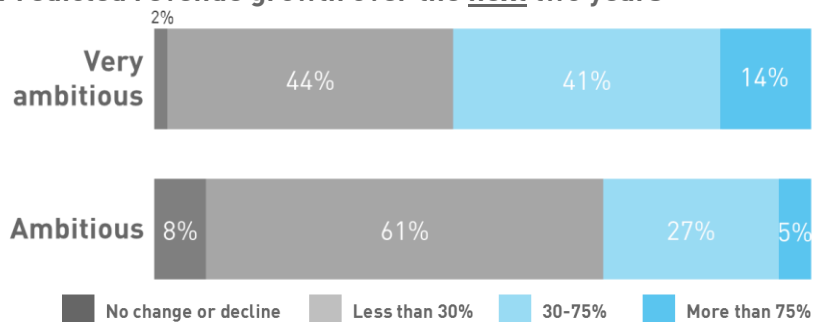


Q: Over the past two years our company's revenues have...

Base: all very ambitious SMEs (348) and ambitious SMEs (345) answering the question.

And this **trend is set to continue**, with very ambitious companies predicting much greater revenue growth over the next two years than their counterparts.

### Predicted revenue growth over the next two years



Q: Over the next two years we expect our revenues to...

Base: all very ambitious SMEs (364) and ambitious SMEs (349) answering the question.

---

# 2

## *Ambition priorities*

---

What ambitions are top of SMEs  
priority lists?

---

---

# 2



## Ambition priorities

### ACHIEVING GROWTH IS THE HIGHEST PRIORITY AMBITION

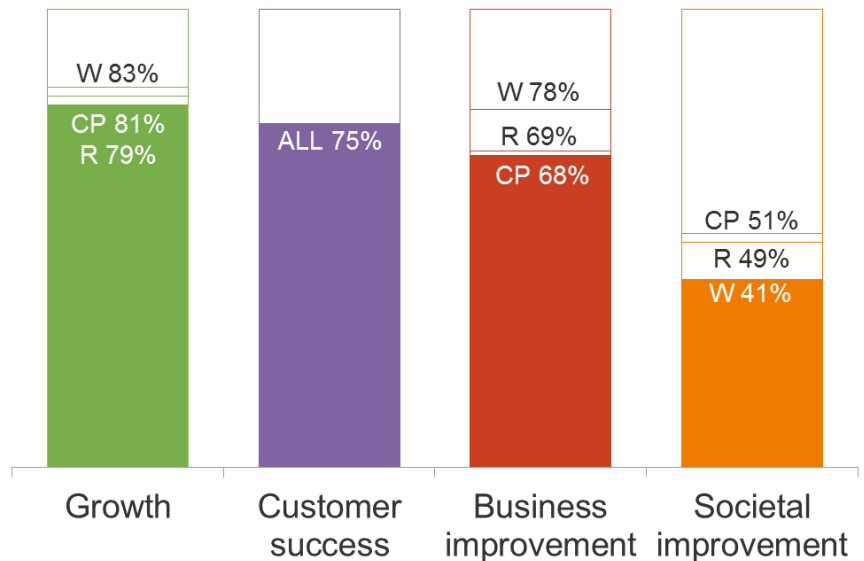
If businesses are driven by ambition, what exactly are they driving towards? Ambition can take many guises, so having a clear understanding of what you are trying to achieve is vital.

Ask an ambitious SME what they want to achieve and at a broad level they are likely to tell you three things:

1. We want to **grow**
2. We want to increase our **success in the eyes of customers**
3. We want to improve our processes and become **more efficient**

In addition, about half will tell you they also want to go beyond these direct business ambitions and make a difference to the wider world by **improving society**.

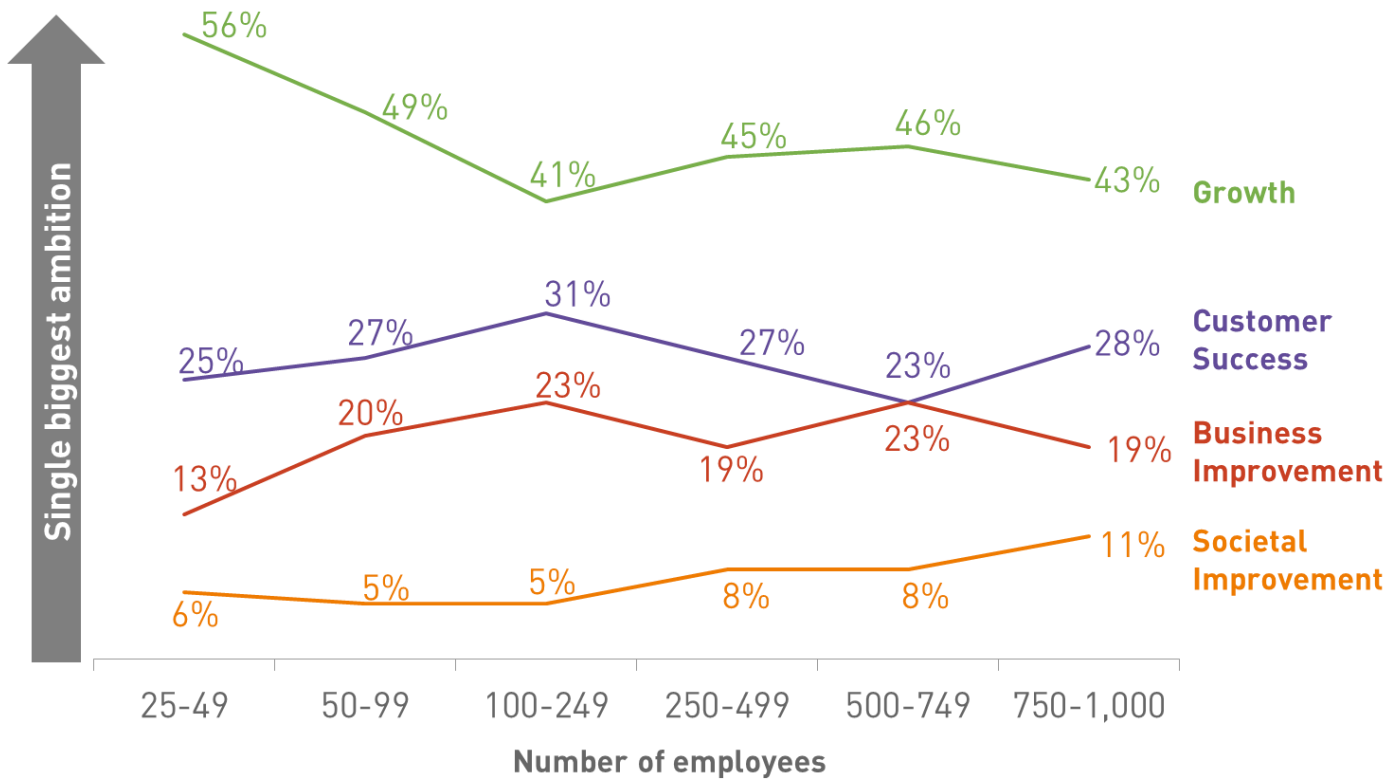
**% of businesses for whom the following are ambitions:**



Q: Which, if any, of the following are specific ambitions for your business?  
Base: all respondents answering the [721].  
Key: R = retail; W = wholesale distribution; CP = consumer products

## Ambition priorities

However, asked to choose just one primary ambition, **achieving growth** comes out as the clear winner – something that is especially important amongst smaller businesses.



Q: Which of these is your single biggest ambition?

Base: all ambitious and very ambitious SMEs answering the question (713), with splits by number of employees (47-155).

### Country Focus:

France and India were the only countries in the research not to rank achieving growth as their highest priority ambition. In both of these countries, customer success instead takes centre stage.

# 2.1

## VERY AMBITIOUS BUSINESSES KNOW HOW THEY PLAN TO GROW

Q: Thinking about achieving your business's ambitions, how high of a priority is each of the following objectives? Base: 721.

### *Achieving growth priorities*

Let's look at each of the four types of ambition in turn. Firstly, **achieving growth**.

There are two – somewhat predictable – high priority growth ambitions that are prevalent across a wide range of businesses, regardless of the industry they operate within or their overall ambition level: **increasing revenues** and **growing profits**.

However, where we see a difference is in the 'enablement' of this growth.

For businesses operating within the consumer products industry, the key is diversifying the product offering. Wholesale distribution organizations are more concerned with penetrating new geographies; meanwhile retail organizations are focussing on expanding their business premises.

#### Growth enablers:

Consumer products → Developing new products

Wholesale distribution → Penetrating new geographies

Retail → Expanding business premises

In addition, whilst ambitious and very ambitious organizations share similar priority levels in terms of overall revenue and profit growth, **very ambitious businesses have greater clarity over how they plan to enable this growth**.

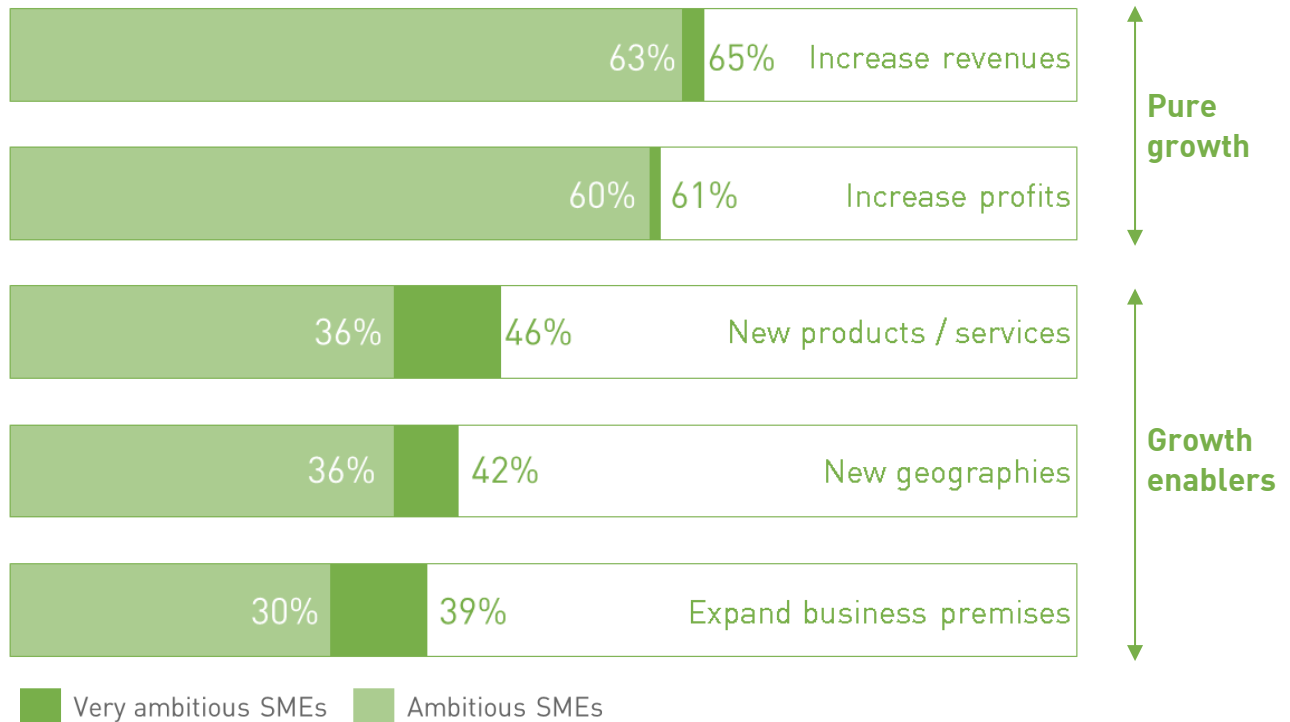
#### Country Focus:

Penetrating new geographies is particularly important for businesses in Russia (61%); whereas companies in Germany are much less concerned with expanding their geographical reach (30%).

Nearly half of businesses in India (45%) want to expand their business premises compared to around only one fifth (22%) of French companies.

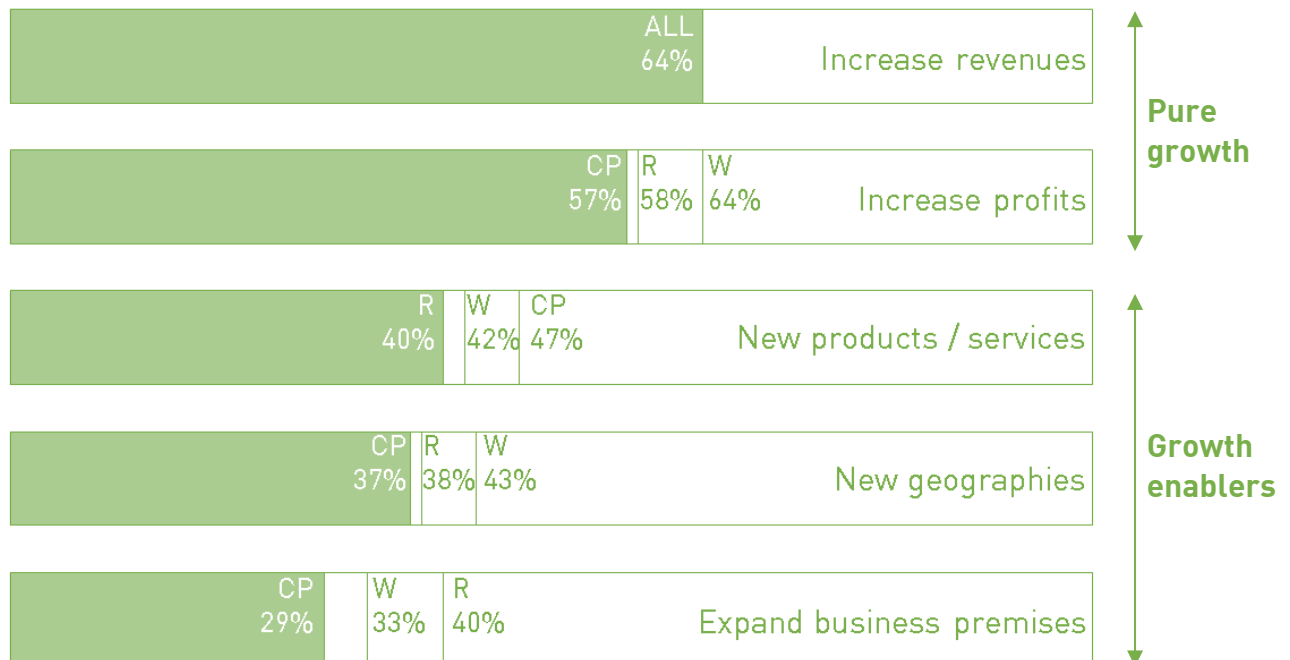
# Achieving growth priorities

## % of businesses by ambition level, for whom the following are high priority ambitions



Q: Thinking about achieving your business's ambitions, how high a priority is each of the following objectives?  
 Base: all respondents answering the question split by ambitious SMEs (353) and very ambitious SMEs (368).

## % of businesses by industry, for whom the following are high priority ambitions



Key: R = retail; W = wholesale distribution; CP = consumer products.

Thinking about achieving your business's ambitions, how high a priority is each of the following objectives?

Base: all ambitious and very ambitious respondents answering the question split by retail (231), wholesale distribution (215) and consumer products (203).

# 2.2

## VERY AMBITIOUS BUSINESSES HAVE A GREATER DESIRE TO WIN AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

Q: Thinking about achieving your business's ambitions, how high a priority is each of the following objectives? Base: 721.

### *Customer success priorities*

When it comes to **customer success**, there are two types of ambition – the ambition to improve your customer performance by doing what you already do... just better; and the ambition to redefine your image in the eyes of customers and be rewarded for gold-standard excellence.

For most businesses, priority is placed upon the former: **doing what they already do... just better.**

This type of ambition, prevalent amongst over half of businesses, can take one of four main formats:

1. Achieving **optimal customer satisfaction**
2. Always **delivering on time and to specification** – an ambition that is most important for the wholesale distribution industry
3. **Growing the customer base**
4. **Increasing understanding of customers**

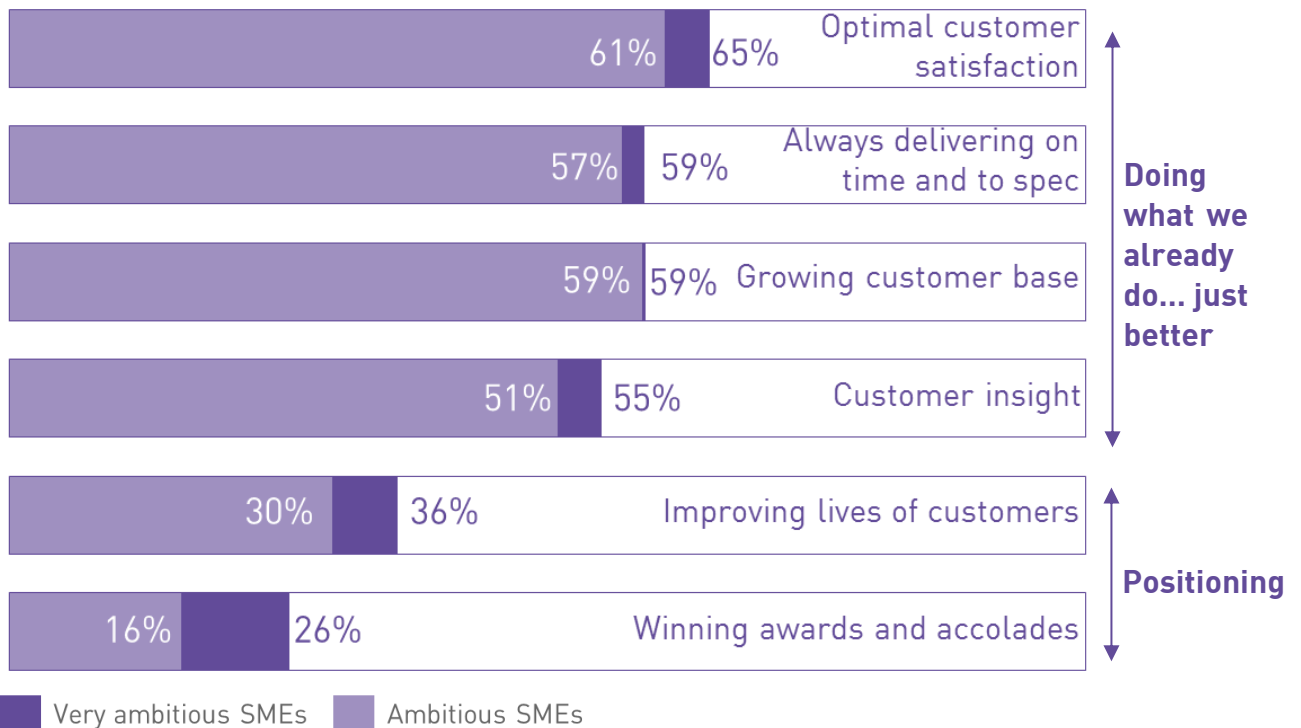
By contrast, the latter type of ambition – focused around **positioning** – is only prevalent in around one quarter to one third of SMEs.

Here again though, very ambitious companies are more advanced – especially when it comes to the ambition to receive **awards and accolades.**

#### Country Focus:

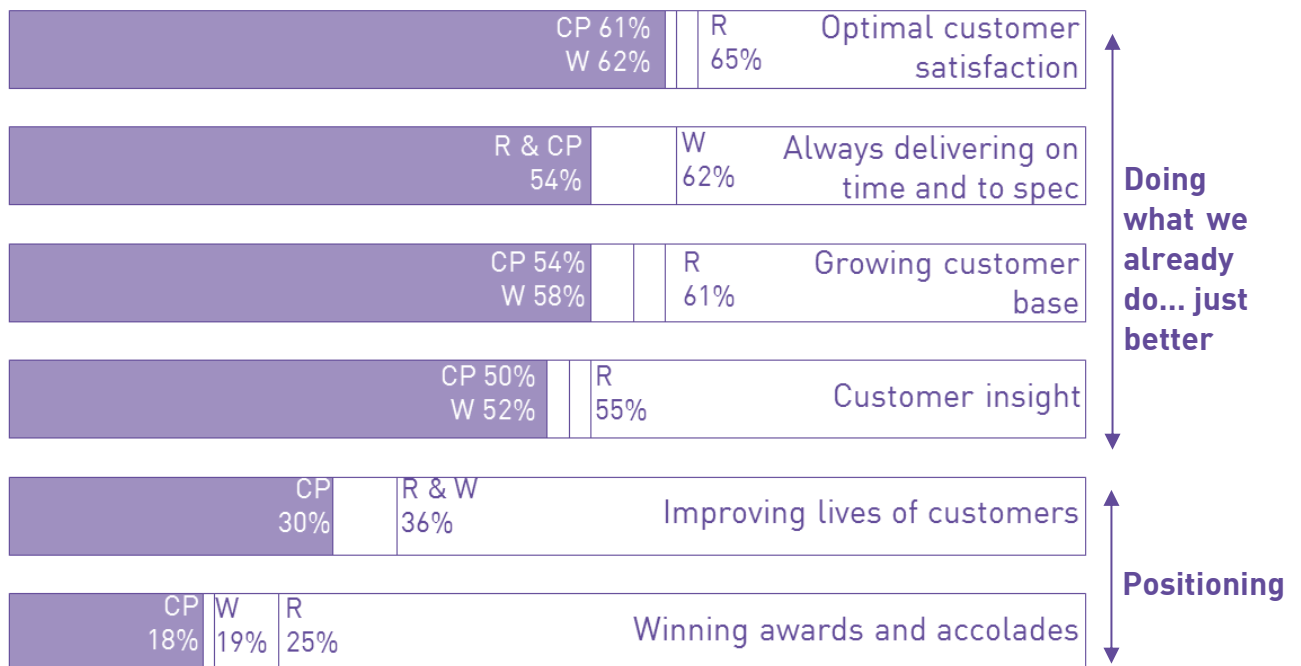
Winning awards and accolades is nearly three times more important to businesses in Australia (38%) than to those in Germany (13%), UK (15%) or USA (15%).

% of businesses by ambition level, for whom the following are high priority ambitions



Q: Thinking about achieving your business's ambitions, how high a priority is each of the following objectives? Base: all respondents answering the question split by ambitious SMEs (353) and very ambitious SMEs (368).

% of businesses by industry, for whom the following are high priority ambitions



Key: R = retail; W = wholesale distribution; CP = consumer products.

Q: Thinking about achieving your business's ambitions, how high a priority is each of the following objectives? Base: all ambitious and very ambitious respondents answering the question split by retail (231), wholesale distribution (215) and consumer products (203).



# 2.3

## BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT IS A HIGHER PRIORITY WITHIN WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTION

Q: Thinking about achieving your business's ambitions, how high a priority is each of the following objectives? Base: 721.

### *Business improvement*

Similar to the first four factors under customer success, **business improvement** is all about doing what you already do... just better.

But rather than regarding external relations, these ambitions relate to **internal process efficiencies**.

These ambitions are a series of incremental improvement aims. Whilst they may not seem revolutionary, even relatively small changes can lead to vast performance improvement.

Once again, very ambitious companies place more emphasis on these ambitions.

However, when it comes to business improvement, we also encounter a further trend: **business improvement is more important within wholesale distribution**.

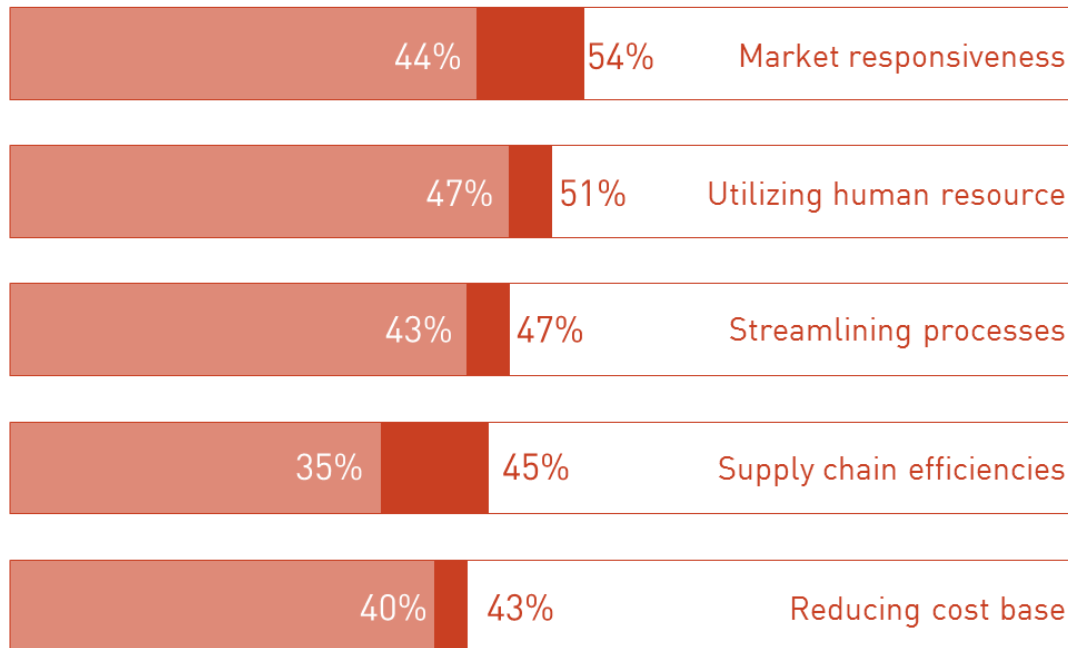
In this industry – where margins are tight but volumes are large – any efficiency that can be introduced will have a significant impact on the organization's bottom line.

#### Country Focus:

Businesses in the USA are much more concerned with utilising their human resource effectively (64%) compared to their French counterparts (26%).

## Business improvement priorities

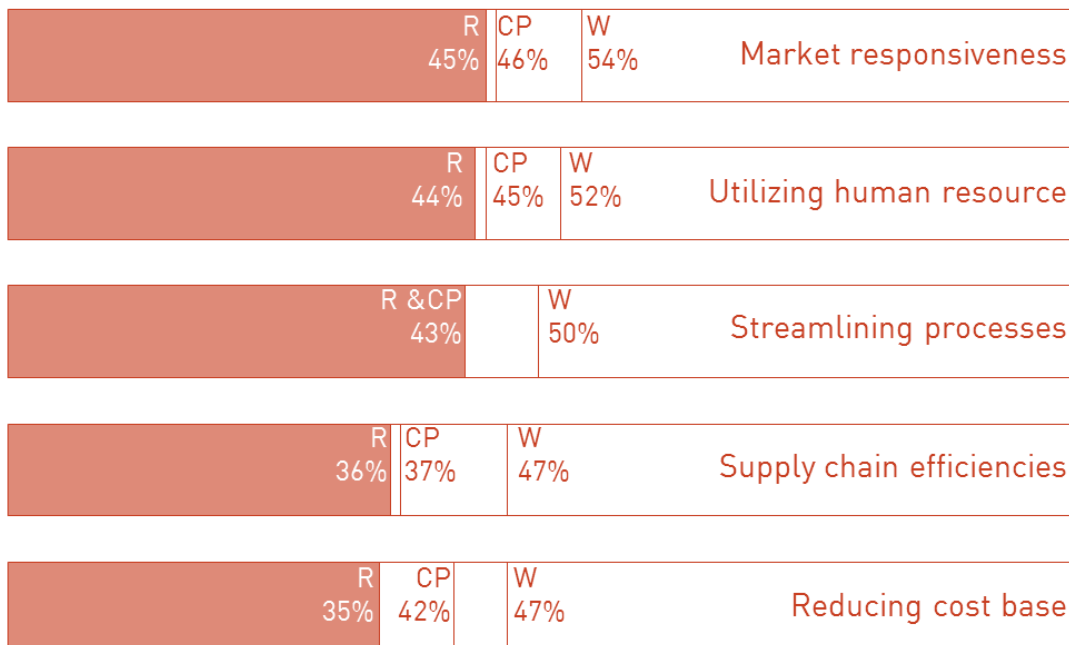
### % of businesses by ambition level, for whom the following are high priority ambitions



■ Very ambitious SMEs
 ■ Ambitious SMEs

Q: Thinking about achieving your business's ambitions, how high a priority is each of the following objectives? Base: all respondents answering the question split by ambitious SMEs (353) and very ambitious SMEs (368).

### % of businesses by industry, for whom the following are high priority ambitions



Key: R = retail; W = wholesale distribution; CP = consumer products.

Q: Thinking about achieving your business's ambitions, how high a priority is each of the following objectives? Base: all ambitious and very ambitious respondents answering the question split by retail (231), wholesale distribution (215) and consumer products (203).

# 2.4

## SOCIETAL IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES REMAIN 'CLOSE TO HOME'

Q: Thinking about achieving your business's ambitions, how high a priority is each of the following objectives? Base: 721.

### *Societal improvement*

At an overall level, **societal improvement** is a much lower priority for SMEs than growth, customer success or business improvement... and when we delve into the detail we see a continuation of this trend at a more granular level.

Within societal improvement, organizations place more priority on ambitions that are '**closer to home**'. Understandably, businesses are looking to help those in their immediate vicinity before widening their gaze.

**Improving the lives and career prospects of employees** comes first as a high priority aim for just under one third of companies.

This is followed by a focus on the business's public image through developing excellent **corporate social responsibility (CSR)**.

Businesses then start to look beyond their own companies out into the **local community**.

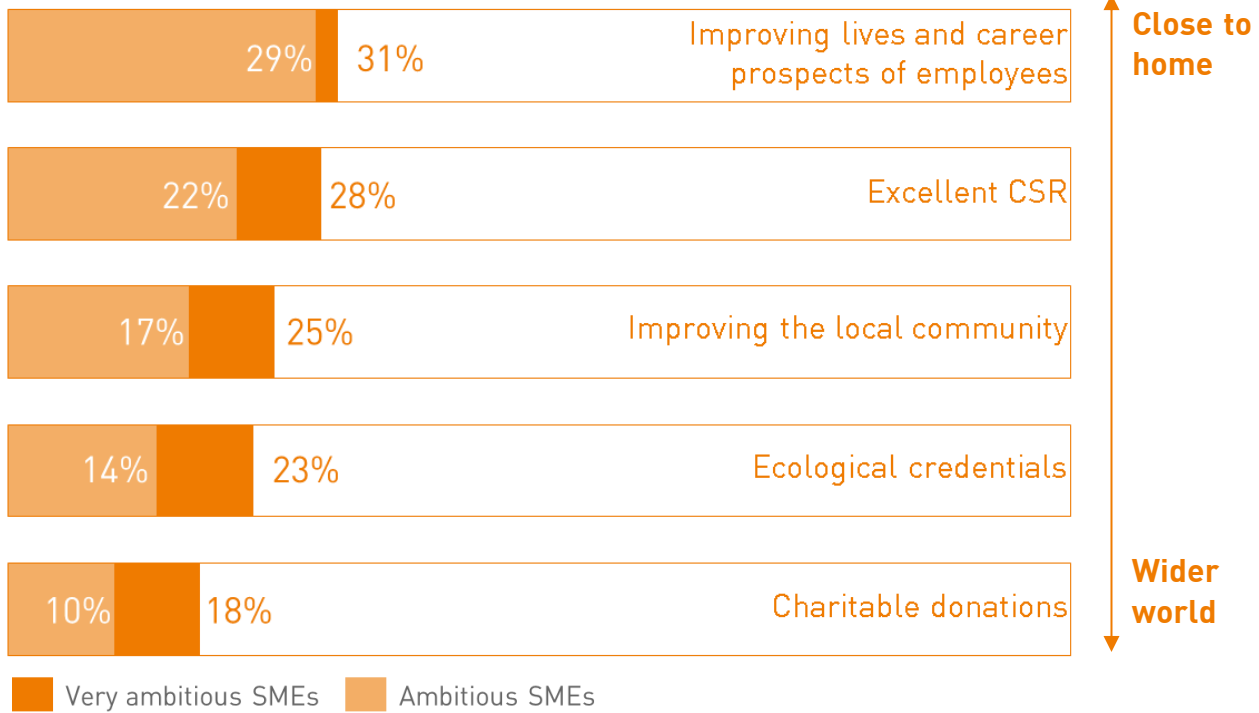
Making an impact on the wider world – be that through supporting **charities** or improving **ecological credentials** – is bottom of the agenda.

#### Country Focus:

Improving the lives and career prospects of employees is a high priority ambition for businesses in Brazil and Mexico (42%), but comes much lower on the agenda in China and Japan (19%).

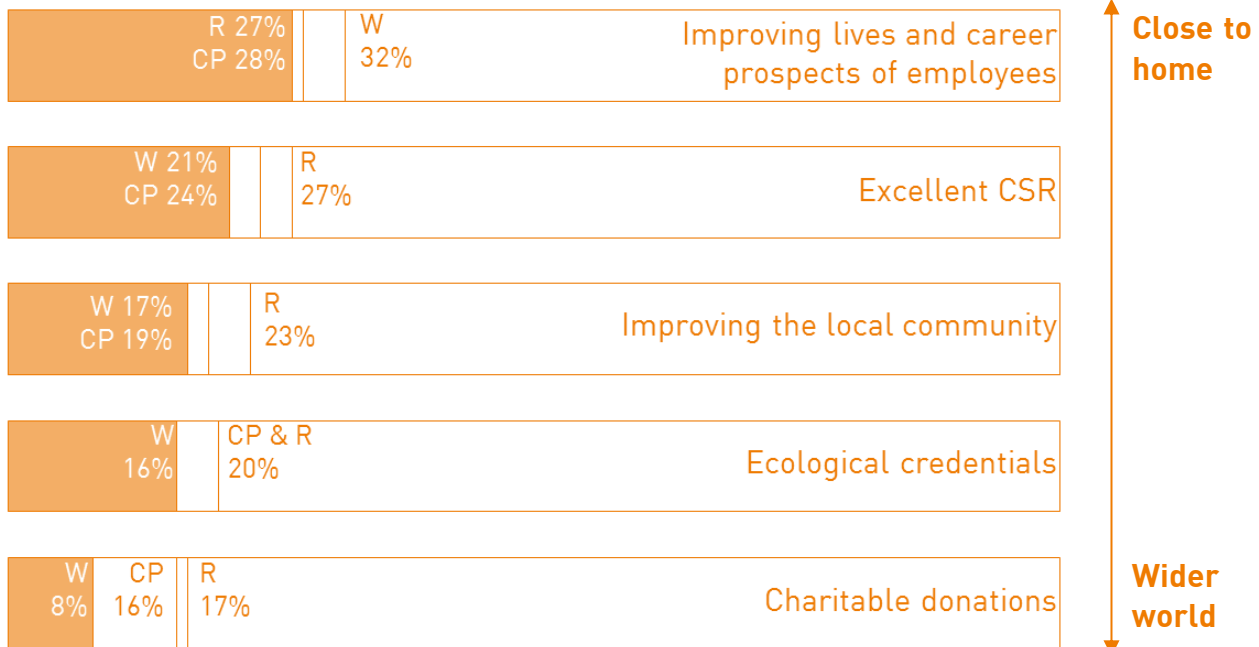
## Societal improvement priorities

### % of businesses by ambition level, for whom the following are high priority ambitions



Q: Thinking about achieving your business's ambitions, how high a priority is each of the following objectives? Base: all respondents answering the question split by ambitious SMEs (353) and very ambitious SMEs (368).

### % of businesses by industry, for whom the following are high priority ambitions



Key: R = Retail; W = Wholesale Distribution; CP = Consumer Products.

Q: Thinking about achieving your business's ambitions, how high a priority is each of the following objectives? Base: all ambitious and very ambitious respondents answering the question split by retail (231), wholesale distribution (215) and consumer products (203).

# 2.5

## MORE AMBITIOUS BUSINESSES PLACE HIGHER PRIORITY ON POSITIONING AND GROWTH ENABLEMENT

Q: Thinking about achieving your business's ambitions, how high a priority is each of the following objectives? Base: 721.

### Ambition hierarchy

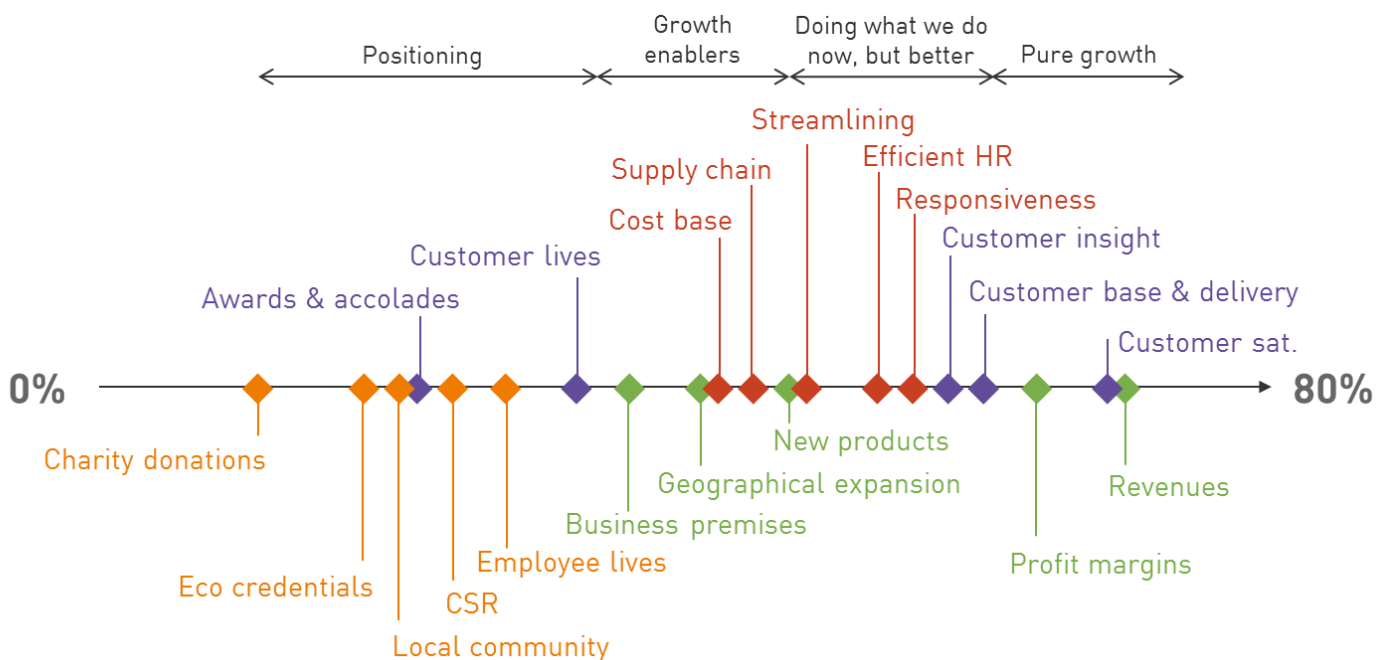
Let's put this all together. Take any very ambitious SME. What will be their top priority ambitions?

Firstly, top of the tree is pure monetary growth – increasing revenues and profits.

Next come a group of ambitions relating to 'doing what we already do... just better'. Whilst these may be concerned with incremental improvements, they should not be underestimated. Achieving these ambitions can have a big impact – especially in the world of wholesale distribution.

Moving further down, we then encounter specific growth enablers – different forms of expansion, which are ultimately aimed at increasing revenues and market share. **Very ambitious businesses have a clearer idea of just how they want to go about this expansion.**

Finally, bottom of the agenda are ambitions related to the organization's **positioning** and contribution to the wider world. **The more ambitious you are, the higher a priority** these become, but they are still 'nice to haves' rather than a top priority.



### Prevalence as a high priority ambition

Q: Thinking about achieving your business's ambitions, how high a priority is each of the following objectives? Base: all very ambitious SMEs answering the question (378).

---

# 3

## *The ambition journey*

---

Turning visions into realities

---

---

# 3



## The ambition journey

### DESIRE AND WILLINGNESS EXIST... BUT MOST COMPANIES ARE NOT YET FULLY READY

Q: When it comes to achieving your ambition, to what extent do you have the right processes and technology in place to deliver the vision?

Note: SMEs were asked to denote their readiness as a percentage. Answers have then been defined as follows: <60% = "A long way off"; 60-75% = "Some progress"; 75-90%="Good progress" >90%="nearly ready".

### An ambition begins with a desire, but achieving it requires willingness and readiness.

It's one thing to have an ambition. It's another thing entirely to achieve it. This is a journey that **starts with desire** – the vision of a person or people within your organization to make something happen.

This vision must then be turned into **willingness** by spreading the ambition throughout the organization. Finally, you need to have the **processes and technologies** in place to allow you to implement the vision.



This research found that the first two factors exist in abundance. With the large majority of SMEs declaring themselves to be 'ambitious' or 'very ambitious', and further being able to pinpoint exactly what these ambitions are, there is a **prevalence of desire**. In addition, as we have seen, very ambitious companies share common traits – they're energized pioneers with a strategic outlook. As a result, we can assume they're **willing**.

But what about **readiness**? How close are organizations to having the technologies and processes to implement the vision?

The answer – the basics are in place but there is a long way to go before all the pieces of the jigsaw are assembled.

# 3.1

## MORE-AMBITIOUS BUSINESSES ARE CLOSER TO ACHIEVING GROWTH AMBITIONS

### Country Focus:

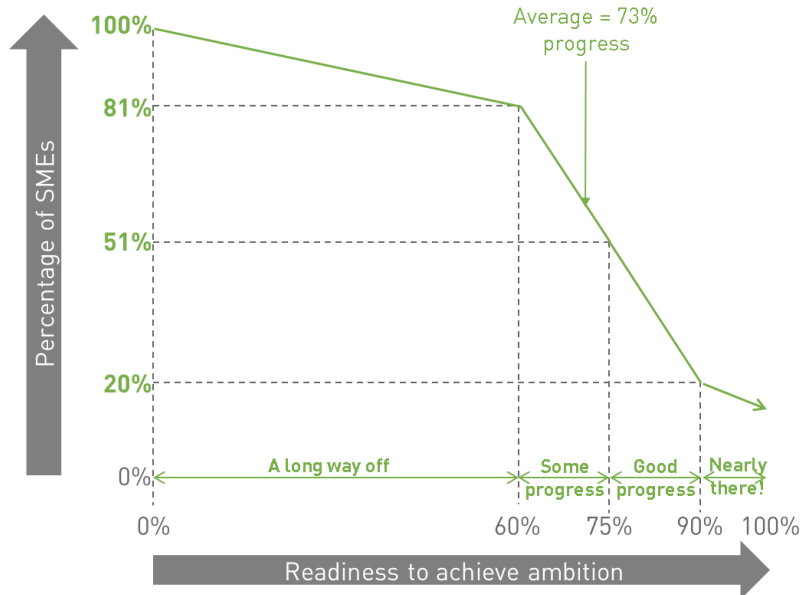
Companies in France are least prepared to achieve their growth ambitions – only one in twenty five (4%) are nearly ready.

## A readiness barrier to achieving growth

Let's take SMEs' biggest single ambition – achieving growth.

Asked how close they are to having the necessary processes and technologies in place to achieve their growth ambitions, only one in five businesses (20%) say they are 'nearly ready'. The remainder must improve their processes and technologies before ambition can become reality.

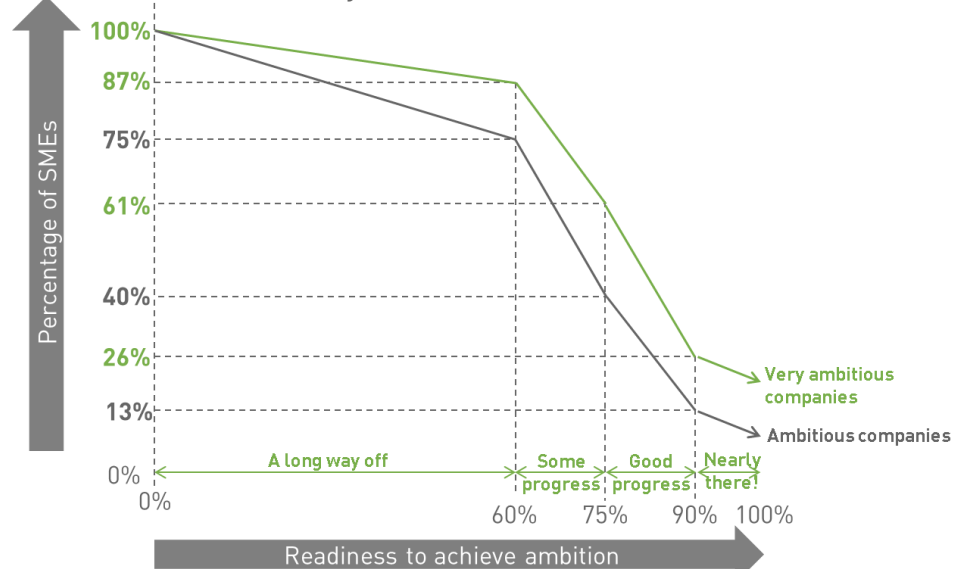
### Progress made towards having the technologies and processes in place to achieve growth ambitions



Q: When it comes to achieving growth, to what extent do you have the right processes and technology in place to deliver the vision?  
Base: all respondents answering the question (578).

If you're a very ambitious organization, you're likely to have made more progress than your competitors, but still only one in four will be fully prepared.

### Difference in readiness by business ambition level



Q: When it comes to achieving growth, to what extent do you have the right processes and technology in place to deliver the vision?  
Base: all ambitious (278) and very ambitious (300) SMEs answering the question.

Unless investment is made in technologies and processes, businesses risk becoming detached from their growth ambitions.



## A readiness barrier to customer success

# 3.2

## COMPANIES MUST BRIDGE A TECHNOLOGICAL READINESS GAP TO ACHIEVE CUSTOMER SUCCESS

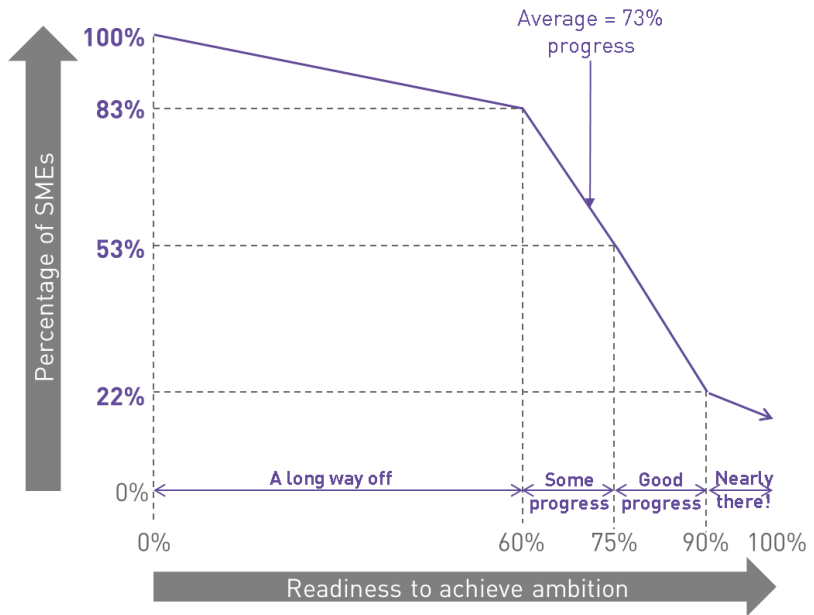
### Country Focus:

Two thirds of businesses in Australia (67%) have already made good progress to having the technologies and processes in place to achieve their customer success ambitions.

As competitive pressure continues to increase, delivering a great customer experience, whether to the end consumer or a customer within a supply chain, can be a distinguishing feature.

Of course, better technology and processes provide support for greater **customer success**. But when it comes to readiness for achieving customer success ambitions, businesses are once again poorly prepared.

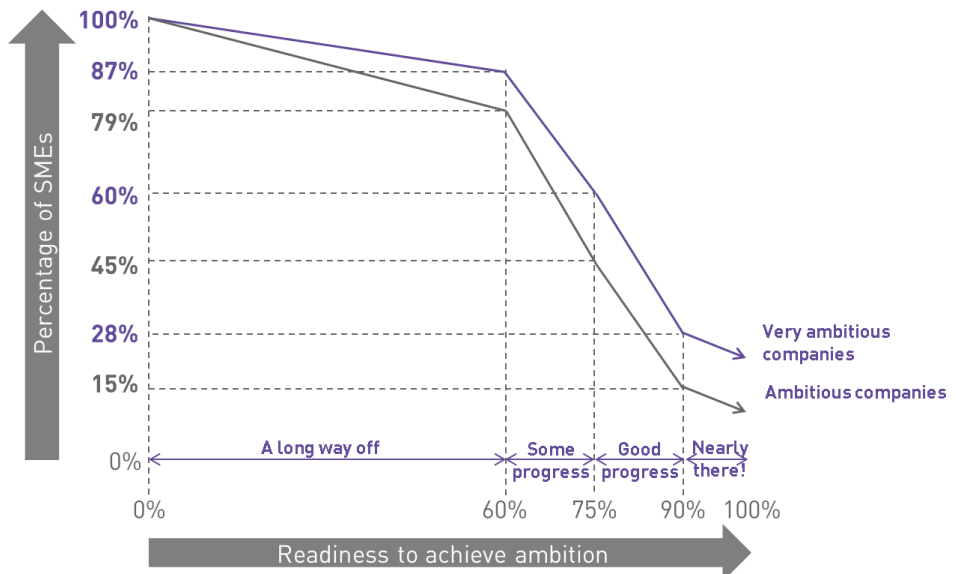
### Progress made towards having the technologies and processes in place to achieve customer success ambitions



Q: When it comes to customer success, to what extent do you have the right processes and technology in place to deliver the vision?

Base: all respondents answering the question (543).

### Difference in readiness by business ambition level



Q: When it comes to customer success, to what extent do you have the right processes and technology in place to deliver the vision?

Base: all ambitious (265) and very ambitious (278) SMEs answering the question.

## A readiness barrier to business improvement

# 3.3

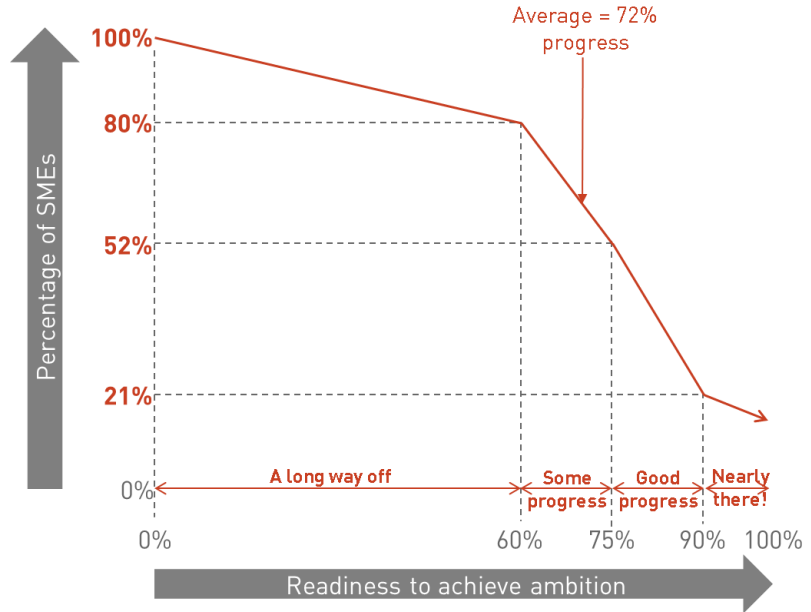
VERY AMBITIOUS  
BUSINESSES ARE OVER  
TWICE AS LIKELY TO BE  
READY FOR BUSINESS  
IMPROVEMENT

### Country Focus:

Many companies in the USA are struggling to get the processes and technologies in place to achieve their business improvement ambitions – nearly one third (29%) are still a long way off.

Moving on to **business improvement**, we see further verification of a technological readiness gap. Once again only around one in five businesses (21%) being nearly ready to achieve their ambitions.

### Progress made towards having the technologies and processes in place to achieve business improvement ambitions

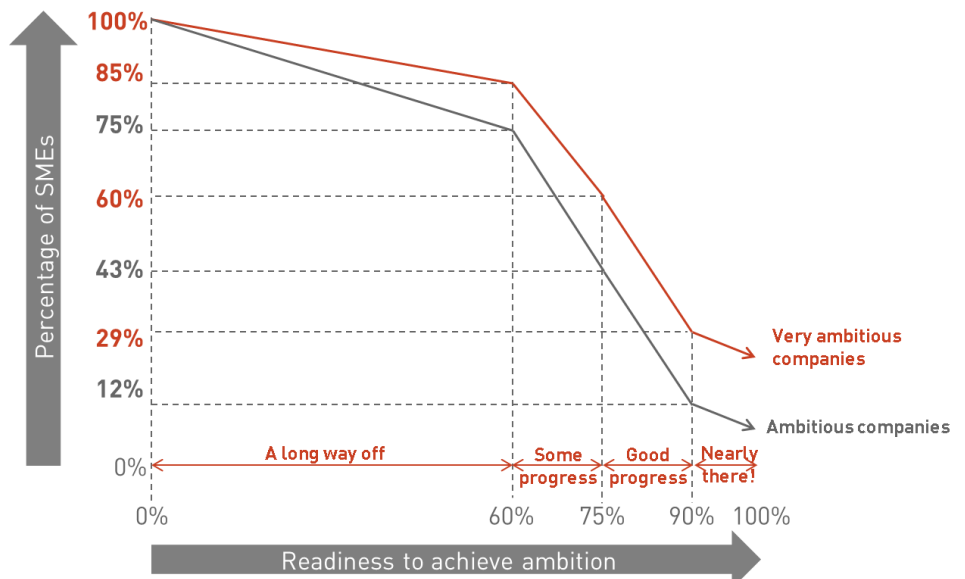


Q: When it comes to business improvement, to what extent do you have the right processes and technology in place to deliver the vision?

Base: all respondents answering the question (513).

Here, the gap between very ambitious and ambitious businesses is even more exaggerated – around one in three very ambitious companies (29%) are nearly ready, as opposed to only about one in ten ambitious companies (12%)

### Difference in readiness by business ambition level



Q: When it comes to business improvement, to what extent do you have the right processes and technology in place to deliver the vision?

Base: all ambitious (243) and very ambitious (270) SMEs answering the question.

From the results, it's clear that the **technologies that have got businesses to where they are today will not be sufficient for achieving their future goals**. Further investment will be required.

---

# 4

## *Enabling ambition*

---

How will SMEs complete the  
ambition jigsaw?

---

---

# 4



## *Enabling ambition*

### TECHNOLOGICAL INVESTMENT WILL BE CRITICAL FOR ENABLING AMBITIONS TO BE ACHIEVED

Based upon questions regarding the benefits of technology and current technological readiness levels

#### If desire and willingness exist in abundance, how will SMEs plug the process and technological readiness gap?

SMEs have great desire and willingness to achieve a raft of ambitions. Nearly all businesses (90%) define themselves as ambitious, with 46% declaring themselves to be very ambitious. These very ambitious businesses make more money than their competitors. They also share a number of other common traits:

- They have a **shared culture** – energized, pioneering and strategic
- They employ **ambitious people**
- They recognize the **value of new technologies** to the extent that they want to be **first adopters**

However, whilst they recognize the importance of technology, companies still have a way to go before they have the necessary technologies in place to allow them to achieve their ambitions. Only around one in five businesses are close to having the necessary technologies and process in place (slightly higher amongst very ambitious businesses).

Two things are clear:

- 1. Technology plays a vital role in very ambitious companies**
- 2. These organizations do not yet have the technologies in place to allow them to fully achieve their ambitions**

It is logical, therefore, that in order for businesses to achieve their ambitions, there will need to be a technological investment. But in a world with an exponentially increasing number of technology solutions, how will decisions be made over which solutions to choose, and what will be the technologies that are chosen?

Thankfully, very ambitious companies have a 'wish list' that makes their technology decisions somewhat simpler.

# 4.1

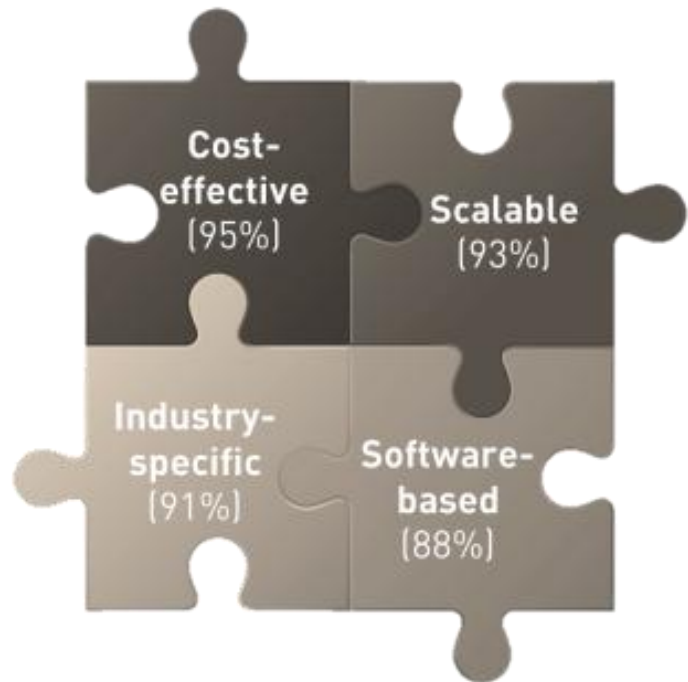
## BUSINESS SOFTWARE PLAYS A VITAL ROLE IN AMBITION ENABLEMENT

### Country Focus:

Introducing cloud-based solutions is seen as being much more important by businesses in India (90%) than those in Russia (48%).

## Technological investment wish list

Very ambitious SMEs have a **wish list** that they use to inform technological investment decisions. At the heart of this wish list are four key principles: technologies must be cost-effective, scalable, industry-specific and software-based.



Q: How important do you think each of the following are for achieving your ambitions?

Base: all very ambitious SMEs answering the question (353).

As a result, very ambitious organizations see two specific types of technology as becoming increasingly important to their strategies:

- 1. Connectivity software applications (89%)**
- 2. Cloud-based solutions (76%)**

But whilst they have a plan in place, very ambitious organizations also recognize that they won't be able to 'go it alone'.

Instead, very ambitious companies state that they will look towards **business applications, analytics and mobile solution providers** to help them implement their ambitions – nine in ten very ambitious businesses (90%) say these providers **will play an important role in allowing them to achieve their ambitions**; one third (34%) go further than this to describe the role as vital.

The development of this relationship between companies and business software providers will be the crux of ambition enablement – the final piece of the jigsaw that needs to be completed.

**To achieve ambitions, using technology is crucial.**

**Making the right technology choices is imperative.**

---

"Believing that **nothing is impossible**"

"**Success**"

"Setting **challenging targets** and achieving **strategic goals**"

"Ambition is your **future**"

"Striving for **continuous improvement** both  
professionally and personally"

"To go **over and above**"

"To **take risks** and push **beyond the norm**"

"To **take responsibility** when not required"

"**Desire** and **determination** to improve"

# Ambition

"To be **better than our peers**"

"Being a **go-getter**"

"To be **the best** at what we do"

"The desire to **grow** and become **stronger**"

"Always looking for ways to **improve** or **expand**"

"Wanting to **achieve great things**"

"It means reaching out to **more consumers**, building **new markets**,  
**increasing profit** margins and bringing about more **benefits to**  
**employees**"

"Desire and drive to **surpass perceived**  
**obstacles** and **exceed goals**"

"Being **better than the competition**"

Selection of responses given to the question:

Q Thinking generally, what does the word 'ambition' mean to you in a business context?

