

**MAJORITY OF UK START-UPS SAY SHARING COSTS IS ESSENTIAL FOR SURVIVAL*****New report lays down blueprint for start-up success***

**LONDON (30<sup>th</sup> April, 2013):** New research by Zipcar, the UK's largest pay-as-you-drive car network, commissioned with national campaign StartUp Britain, finds that 54% of British start-ups are clubbing together to share core business functions with other businesses. Over half (55%) identified sharing resources with other businesses as 'essential' to business survival.

The findings are part of a report launched today by Zipcar - '**The Smarter Business Blueprint: Insights from SME Trailblazers**' - published in partnership with StartUp Britain and Ashridge Business School. The report combines fresh research surveying over 1,000 UK start-ups to discover how they are taking on traditional businesses by building smarter, more agile business models. These findings, together with key insights from Ashridge-led focus groups, which united successful UK entrepreneurs, lay down an invaluable six-point blueprint for 'start-up survival'.

The Zipcar research finds that ownership of business assets and permanent employment of human resources is now a thing of the past for many businesses. Whilst 48% of start-ups currently share one or more physical assets - such as vehicles and offices - with other businesses, 31% are now also sharing elements of their workforce - choosing to access certain job functions 'on demand'.

The types of resources being shared are broad. The top three shared infrastructure costs include technology (22%); office space (22%) and vehicles (15%). The top three shared human costs include: accounting (35%); administrative (21%); and human resources (15%).

The move towards the sharing of costs is viewed as a long-term measure, rather than a reaction to the recession, according to 65% of survey respondents. In fact, half (50%) of business owners surveyed said that cost sharing with other businesses was part of their original business plan.

According to the report, the growth in sharing is fuelled by a raft of innovative new businesses that utilise Internet and mobile technologies to enable companies to access services in more convenient and cost effective ways. With nine out of ten (93%) start-ups relying on technology, it is not surprising that the start-up community is at the vanguard of adopting these new types of services.

Mark Walker, General Manager, Zipcar UK said, “As a company with technology and mobile platforms at the heart of its member offer, we are passionate about supporting the next generation of start-ups. It was with this in mind that we developed **The Smarter Business Blueprint**. We want to help the thousands of UK start-ups to get the inside track on how to survive and thrive in today’s challenging economy.’

‘One of the strongest recommendations that came out of our research was for businesses to reconsider the role that ownership plays and move towards a more sharing approach. Whether you are hiring a car by the hour with Zipcar, or a desk space by the day, sharing with other companies enables start-ups to access resources they might not otherwise afford, as well as providing greater flexibility, reducing overheads and improving the bottom line.”

Emma Jones, co-founder of StartUp Britain adds, “StartUp Britain is excited that this research shows how, increasingly, UK entrepreneurs are carving out new - and better - ways of working to become smarter and more agile. By providing a flexible, collaborative model, businesses like Zipcar are responding to and supporting British start-ups, helping them to operate more flexibly and cost effectively. It is these businesses that are the job creators and innovators of the future, and it is essential that their growth is fostered.”

Kai Peters, CEO of Ashridge Business School, commented, “Our focus groups, backed up by this new research, show that a new breed of enterprise is emerging across the UK SME and start-up community, embracing an innovative combination of agility, collaborative strategy and customer-driven adaptation – all needed to thrive in today’s fast evolving and unpredictable economy.”

Mark Walker continued, “Zipcar understands this new breed because we are one of them. We believe that it is the businesses that challenge traditional models, embrace new technologies and understand changing consumer behaviours that will be the success stories of the future. We created **The Smarter Business Blueprint** because we know there is a better way of doing business.”

Zipcar’s ***Smarter Business Blueprint*** is available for download [here](#).

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**About the Research**

Zipcar partner Start-Up Britain surveyed 1,296 members between the period 26 March – 9 April 2013.

**About Zipcar**

Zipcar UK is part of Zipcar Inc., the world's largest pay-as-you-drive car club with operations in urban areas across the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Spain and Austria. In the UK, Zipcar operates in London, Bristol, Cambridge and Oxford and has local authority partnerships in Kent and Surrey. Zipcar members benefit from: 40 miles of fuel, insurance, maintenance, roadside assistance, road tax and the Congestion Charge when travelling in London. Zipcar offers a dozen models of self-service vehicles by the hour or day to residents and businesses looking for an alternative to the high costs and hassles of owning a car. Zipcar is a subsidiary of Avis Budget Group, Inc. (Nasdaq: CAR), a global leader in car sharing and vehicle rental services. Information is available at <http://zipcar.uk.mediaroom.com/>

**About StartUp Britain**

The StartUp Britain campaign is backed by Government but operates as a fully private sector supported venture. It was founded by eight individuals and business owners and is sponsored by Intuit, PayPal and BT Business. Its role is to inspire, accelerate and celebrate entrepreneurship. [www.startupbritain.co.uk](http://www.startupbritain.co.uk)

**About Ashridge Business School**

Established in 1959, Ashridge is a leading business school for working professionals with an international reputation for executive education, organisation and management development. Its activities include degree qualifications, open enrolment programmes, customised programmes, organisation consulting, academic accreditation services, virtual learning and applied research. It is one of the very few schools worldwide to achieve triple accreditation from AMBA, EQUIS and AACSB; the UK, European and American accreditation bodies. [www.ashridge.org.uk](http://www.ashridge.org.uk)

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