



STATUS
MANAGEMENT SERVICES

**ISO -
why register?**

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ISO - WHY COMPANIES REGISTER

**By Status Management Services Ltd
- The UK ISO Standards Survey
Summer 2024**

PRIMARY FINDING

The primary finding is that most companies seem to be obtaining ISO registrations for the right reasons:

- To improve internal processes and practices.

This is a rather gratifying finding given that this is what the standard was actually invented for all those years ago. It is only later that it has become a means of excluding companies from tenders and contracts.

Obviously, however, it is realised that we may have a somewhat biased sample, in that those that respond are likely to be interested in ISO registrations and want certification to help their business!

Nonetheless, it is of value to see why companies decide to get ISO and then the reality that follows.

We also see, in another paper in the series, how companies get more business following ISO registration. Some of this new business is obtained organically but much results from potential clients demanding registration, which then opens new commercial doors to new contracts. This appears to be especially true for those in the business to business (B2B) arena.

It would also appear, from the findings, that in today's competitive environment companies cannot operate and expect to win contracts from blue chips or public sector organisations without an ISO certification.



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Having said that, it is rather gratifying to see so many companies obtaining certification for the right reasons; to improve their business processes.

THE DETAIL

The analysis, perhaps unsurprisingly, reveals that Business to Business (B2B) companies are more likely to be “pressured” into certification as a result of clients demanding registration. Given the sometimes more arduous tender processes found in the B2B arena, this is probably to be expected.

As such, is believed to be useful to reproduce a number of the individual survey responses, people said:

- *“It simplified the tendering process.”*
- *“It eliminates need for in depth specific answers to pre-qualifications, many of which are marked subjectively and often with potential new clients, there is a tendency to mark potential newcomers to the market more harshly than the incumbents.”*
- *“ISO has raised our profile in the marketplace”*
- *“Certain opportunities wouldn’t be open to us if we didn’t have ISO”*

The last comment was made repeatedly throughout the survey in many different ways.

However, in stepping back and thinking about what the questions are really about the following is revealed:

68.4% of respondents wanted ISO to improve internal processes and practices	This is about internal business process effectiveness and efficiency
61.4% of respondents wanted certification because existing clients demanded it.	This is about protecting existing income streams
56.1% of respondents wanted it to get new clients	This is about developing the business and growing new income streams
40.4% of respondents needed ISO to comply with Trade Body requirements.	This is about compliance

We can therefore cluster those that pursue certification into two groups; those responding to:

- Internal pressures – the desire to improve
- External pressures – clients and trade bodies

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We can then treat those that get ISO to improve processes as a different group.

Obviously, and in discussions with Statusus, it would appear that these are not mutually exclusive camps, but our analysis reveals that any point of convergence usually occurs **after** these systems have been put in place and have been registered.

Furthermore, those that pursue certification because of external pressures also find that ISO does help them with better management, better control and improved efficiency.

However, these companies don't appear to have it any easier than others as they are as likely to be challenged with the need to get "staff [and manager] buy-in".

One quote from a survey respondent put this particular point it very well:

- *"When people buy into it they see it as a support to help them do their job better - when they don't, they see it as a stick that they are beaten with."*

One of the most surprising [to Statusus] outcomes from the survey was that over 35% of the respondents were in fact Business to Consumer (B2C) focused companies.

Additionally, the external pressure to obtain registration appears to be much less of an issue for these B2C companies, possibly due to the greater autonomy that arises from selling direct to the consumer.

THE SURVEY BACKGROUND

The survey, and the associated analysis, was undertaken and validated by [Dr Edward Nugent](#) and [Kajsa Nordström](#) of [Digital Scorecard](#) to ensure an unbiased and independent view.

The analysis is based on a survey of UK SME's and businesses and was undertaken over the spring and summer of 2024. All data was anonymised as part of the research. The results from the study are not meant to represent all UK SMEs but due to the sample size it is believed to provide a realistic picture of UK SMEs and their thoughts about ISO registration.

To learn more about the survey and to access other papers please go to:

<https://www.isoconsultantsuk.co.uk/ISO-survey-2024/>.

ABOUT STATIUS

Our mission is to help ambitious owners and managers become great leaders. We want to help them, and their people, deliver:

- Better strategies
- Better systems (the ISO bit)
- Better measurement (the KPI bit)
- Engaged people delivering
- Better results... the interesting bit

Our team of consultants have experience in implementing, supporting and developing a variety of ISO standards across multiple sectors. All consultants will have gained "hands on" operational experience in a variety of fields before becoming consultants, including engineering, manufacturing, retail, warehousing, and logistics, to name just a few.

The consultants hold a selection of qualifications including degrees and master's degrees, the NEBOSH General Certificate, the Institute of Leadership and Management Award, the NEBOSH Fire Safety, the EOR/202N Work Safely in an Engineering Environment – Basic Lift Safety Certificate, IOSH, Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP), DSE Assessor, and (of course) specific ISO auditor qualifications.

The company is itself registered to ISO 9001, 14001, and 45001 by [ForeFront Certification](#) a [UKAS](#) approved certification body. The company also hold [Investors In People](#) Accreditation and is a member of the [British Quality Foundation](#) and [The Good Business Charter](#).

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Checkout www.statius.co.uk for more details.

Papers from this study

1. ISO - Why companies register
2. ISO - The benefits
3. ISO - The impact on sales and contracts
4. ISO - The pleasure and **PAIN** of maintaining standards
5. ISO - Preparation for assessment and the value of audits