



Digital ambition can translate into bolder investment and integration. And, with mounting evidence of a correlation between purpose and performance... in a more volatile world, it may be one of the most underappreciated sources of advantage.”

**Jason Habak**

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## PwC’s 12th Global Family Business Survey

# Australian family business findings – Building tomorrow’s advantage

In a more uncertain operating environment, Australian family businesses are focusing on strong foundations—anchoring growth in purpose and agility. But turning that strength into tomorrow’s advantage will require progress across succession, governance and technology.

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## Key findings and actionable ideas for CEOs/Owners



### Growth

Persistent cost pressures, slower growth, geopolitical tension and accelerating artificial intelligence (AI) are challenging norms and reshaping markets.

While growth remains on the horizon, many Australian family businesses are choosing to strengthen their foundations before accelerating again.

**27%** are choosing to stabilise their core business—up 12% from 2023

**27%** still want to grow quickly and aggressively—over 10% more than global

**47%** achieved growth—down from 77% in 2023

**30%** achieved double-digit growth over the past year

**70%** anticipate growth in the next two years—down from 85% in 2023

### Actionable idea

**Reassess key trading relationships for growth.** Actively review trading relationships and test whether they truly support long-term strength. Prioritise growth that diversifies risk—enter new markets, develop new products, and reach new customers—while favouring opportunities with lower capital intensity. The goal isn't growth at any cost, but growth that makes the business more resilient.



### Purpose

One of the most striking findings: Australian family businesses feel strongly about purpose. It isn't a 'loose' or symbolic statement. It guides how they grow, how they make decisions, and how they show up for customers.

Global survey results show a clear correlation between purpose and performance. Those with a clear, well-communicated purpose are twice as likely to:

- pursue aggressive growth
- prioritise innovation
- pursue long-term goals
- foster a culture of experimentation and innovation

**83%** say they have a clear company purpose

**80%** say their purpose is directly tied to the way they deliver their products and services—a far stronger alignment than global at 60%

### Actionable idea

**Make purpose visible.** Australian family businesses live their purpose well—now it's about articulating it clearly. Too often it isn't formally written down or regularly communicated. Codify it. Share it with employees, embed it in the value proposition, and communicate it with confidence so customers and partners understand what the business stands for—and why it matters.

## Key findings and actionable ideas for CEOs/owners



### Agility

Agility is seen as a strength for Australian family businesses—and it's where many believe they're responding best in today's tougher environment.

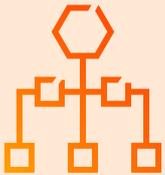
Where agility is less visible is in partnerships and collaborations.

**70%** place their business in the top two levels of agility when responding to changes over the past year—more than global

**19%** see strategic partnerships and collaborations as evident in their agility—far below global at 45%

### Actionable idea

**Lean into partnerships and collaborations, locally and globally.** Reach out, form alliances and tap into broader ecosystems to amplify agility and unlock new growth pathways. AI collaboration, in particular, is a path to early-mover advantage and market share.



### Succession

The biggest challenge in preparing the next generation is building capability—specifically the specialised skills and modern business education future leaders need (73% vs 56% globally).

**37%** are holding to their leadership transition plan, but a third have no plan at all

**23%** are delaying timelines amid uncertainty—a sign of caution and lack of formal transition pathways

### Actionable idea

**Build skill capability from the ground up.** Create structured development pathways for the next generation that give them the skills and confidence to lead in a modern business environment. Meanwhile, make succession a continuous, transparent process. Open dialogue early, define roles and expectations, and put a clear plan in place to guide the transition when the moment comes.



### Structure

Family business boards are highly centralised (63%), often led by a single leader, and remain narrow in gender, age, and industry experience.

The risk is clear: limited diversity narrows thinking and slows capability building at a time when businesses need broader insight.

**37%** have no women on the board

**80%** have no one aged under 40

**50%** have only family members—compared to 33% globally

**53%** have no one from a different industry background

### Actionable idea

**Strengthen structure and governance by broadening who's at the table.** Bring in diverse perspectives—across gender, age and industry—to improve decision-making and support future leadership.

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### Technology

Although family businesses want growth, they're cautious about the technology that could accelerate it.

Expansion now relies heavily on stronger systems, automation, and data-led decision-making. Or, at its most transformational, leading to new business models and revenue streams.

**30%** say digital transformation and AI is a top priority—third in the list

### Actionable idea

**Move from interest in technology to integration.** Pair digital ambition with investment in training, clear policies and the systems needed to turn technology into real business value. Without that foundation, particularly with AI, teams will create their own unguided approaches—and the risks grow quickly.

**The next move is yours.  
We're here to help you make it count.**



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