

# The Key to Business Survival? Put a Woman in Charge

ITHACA, N.Y. (Newswise) — The key to long-term survival for many businesses is having a woman in charge, according to Cornell University researchers.

Many businesses survive longer under female ownership, according to research by Michele Williams, assistant professor of organizational behavior in the ILR School, and Arturs Kalnins, associate professor of strategy at the School of Hotel Administration.

"We find that female-owned businesses consistently out-survive male-owned businesses in many industries and areas," said Michele Williams, assistant professor of organizational behavior in Cornell's ILR School. "Our study contributes to the debate about gender and business ownership by going beyond typical questions asked by researchers and policymakers.

"We explore the often-ignored third possibility — that female-owned businesses systematically out-survive male owned-business in specific industrial sectors and regions."

Williams co-authored the study with Arturs Kalnins, associate professor of strategy in Cornell's School of Hotel Administration. The study will be published this year in the *Journal of Business Venturing* and is available at [ScienceDirect.com](http://ScienceDirect.com).

The authors found that many of the largest industries in which survival rates of female-owned businesses outpaced those owned by men were related to four broad sectors: educational services and dance studios, clothing, gift giving and alcohol sales and service.

"One of our more surprising findings was that eating establishments that serve alcohol as well as drinking establishments survive longer under female ownership," said Kalnins. "This goes against some stereotypes that restaurants and pubs are male-dominated businesses."

In cities with populations of more than 500,000, female-owned businesses lasted longer. Elsewhere, male-owned businesses survived longer, according to the report.

"For 25 years, economy-wide aggregate studies have not distinguished between different types of industries. These studies often show that male-owned businesses survive longer. New kinds of studies will show that that is only true in certain industries," Kalnins said.

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