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Dryden retail survey

Product expansion pays off

By Sylvia Veal
Staff reporter

A survey conducted by the Economic Development Office indicates that Dryden retail business improved in 1989, contrary to rumours of doom and gloom. Of 54 surveys mailed, the office received 28 back.

"I think it gave us a pretty good sampling," said Jim Dayman, economic development officer for Dryden.

One question asked retailers to compare 1989 sales with the previous year. More than 60 per cent indicated there was an increase in business. Six said the business was about the same and an identical number indicated a decrease in sales.

Those businesses registering an increase

reported it was up an average 16 per cent, while those reporting a decrease said sales were down an average 15 per cent.

Those who showed an increase in business were asked why they thought it had improved. Forty-six per cent credited expansion of products and product lines, while 33 per cent indicated business was maturing. Another 21 per cent said increased marketing helped.

The final question was directed at businesses which showed a decrease. The main reason for the downtrend appeared to be a feeling that people were not spending this year. Several also believe local consumers were spending in Winnipeg and Minneapolis rather than Dryden.

Mr. Dayman said it was interesting to note that even businesses which said sales were about the same felt consumers were just not spending.

Area financial institutions indicate that deposit growth is as good or better than other years.

"We're looking at things positively," said Cliff McGrimmon, Royal Bank manager. "For example in loans, there has not been an appreciable increase in delinquency."

Although a generally slowing economy is predicted for 1990, Mr. Dayman said many businesses look for a "flurry of spending in the last quarter of the year" before the Goods and Services Tax becomes a fact of life.

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