BizBuySell Releases Q3 2026 Insight Report

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Buyer and seller confidence soften, while demand remains strong for high-quality businesses

ARLINGTON, Va.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Oct. 20, 2026-- BizBuySell, the largest online marketplace for businesses for sale and a CoStar Group, Inc. (NASDAQ: CSGP) company, published its Q3 2026 Insight Report, providing the latest look at U.S. business-for-sale transactions and sentiment among owners, buyers and brokers.

Transaction activity remained relatively stable despite weaker sentiment. A total of 2,132 businesses changed hands in Q3 2026, essentially flat from Q2 and down 7% year over year. The median sale price reached $350,000, up 17% from a year ago, while the market-wide average cash flow multiples increased 2.6%.

Confidence weakened on both sides of the small business acquisition market in the third quarter. Buyer confidence fell to 49, while seller confidence declined to 47. For the first time since BizBuySell began tracking sentiment in 2013, both buyer and seller confidence have declined year over year for two consecutive years, reflecting growing concerns around financing conditions, inflation, operating costs and valuations.

Buyers remain active but are increasingly focused on profitable, recession-resistant businesses with strong financials. The trend extends the flight to quality seen during the first half of 2026, as tighter underwriting and greater scrutiny of financial performance continue to shape which businesses attract buyers.

For sellers, declining confidence appears tied to margin compression. Three in four owners reported higher fuel and energy expenses, 67% said inflation is not easing, and more than half said customers are spending more cautiously. Among owners planning to sell, more than one in four (27%) say current conditions have them considering selling sooner than planned.

“Confidence has softened, but buyers haven’t left the market. They’re simply becoming more selective,” said **Bob House, President of BizBuySell**. “Buyers are gravitating toward businesses with reliable cash flow, clean financials, limited owner dependence, and a clear path to financing. Those qualities can make the difference between attracting interest and attracting serious offers.”

The full Q3 2026 Insight Report, including interactive market data, sector performance and data tables, is available at BizBuySell.com/insight-report.

About the BizBuySell Insight Report
The BizBuySell Insight Report is a nationally recognized economic indicator that tracks the health of the U.S. small business economy. Each quarter, BizBuySell analyzes sales and listing prices of small businesses across the United States based on approximately 50,000 businesses for sale and those recently sold, reporting changes in closed transaction rates, valuation multiples and other economic indicators for the small business transaction market. Closed transactions are reported to BizBuySell.com on a voluntary basis by business brokers nationwide. Each report includes real small business data on over 70 major U.S. markets and across 65 small business industries.

About BizBuySell
BizBuySell is the largest business-for-sale marketplace online, receiving over 4 million visits per month. Since 1996, BizBuySell has offered tools that make it easy for business owners and brokers to sell a business, and potential buyers to find the business of their dreams. The website also features an extensive franchise directory as well as an easy-to-use business valuation tool.

About CoStar Group
CoStar Group (NASDAQ: CSGP) is a global leader in commercial real estate information, analytics, online marketplaces, and 3D digital twin technology. Founded in 1986, CoStar Group is dedicated to digitizing the world’s real estate, empowering all people to discover properties, insights, and connections that improve their businesses and lives.

CoStar Group’s major brands include CoStar, a leading global provider of commercial real estate data, analytics, and news; LoopNet, the most trafficked commercial real estate marketplace; Apartments.com, the leading platform for apartment rentals; Homes.com, the fastest-growing residential real estate marketplace; and Domain, one of Australia’s leading property marketplaces. CoStar Group’s industry-leading brands also include Matterport, a leading spatial data company whose platform turns buildings into data to make every space more valuable and accessible; STR, a global leader in hospitality data and benchmarking; Zonda, a leading provider of data, analytics, software, and marketplace solutions for the residential construction industry; Ten-X, an online platform for commercial real estate auctions and negotiated bids; and OnTheMarket, a leading residential property portal in the United Kingdom.

CoStar Group’s websites attracted over 118 million average monthly unique visitors in the second quarter of 2026, serving clients around the world. Headquartered in Arlington, Virginia, CoStar Group is committed to transforming the real estate industry through innovative technology and comprehensive market intelligence. From time to time, we plan to utilize our corporate website as a channel of distribution for material company information. For more information, visit CoStarGroup.com.

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