

# Driving Down The Cost Of Doing Business: Small-Business Technology Tips Help Save Time and Reduce Costs to Boost Profitability

(NAPSA)—For many small businesses, a reliance on technology is improving employee productivity while enabling them to get more done with fewer resources. The ability to move paperwork onto computers, automate routine administrative tasks and better manage work flow has become a source of “found” money.

“Small companies have limited resources, making it important for them to consider the business value of technology investments,” said Katie Jordan, senior product manager for Microsoft Corp. “A variety of new software tools allows employees to get more out of each day, and enable smaller businesses to operate more effectively and often allow them to compete as equals with larger rivals.”

This trend is evident in the hundreds of small companies where workers use sophisticated software applications to track and analyze data, better communicate with customers, and monitor business operations with increased efficiency.

The following are a few ways experts say today’s software can help improve your business’ bottom line:

## **Improve Productivity**

Using the proper technologies allows workers to complete tasks faster, increasing their effectiveness. Easy-to-use tools make communication and creating documents faster than ever, facilitating time management. For example, Microsoft Office Small Business Edition 2003 features improved tools that help you better manage, prioritize and act on an increasing volume of e-mail, including enhanced spam filters in Outlook.

## **Manage Customer Relationships**

Maintaining strong satisfaction among current customers while seeking new ones has never been easier. New software tools enable small businesses to better track customer interaction and sales leads and later analyze related trends. The latest technologies can help organize and consolidate customer information into one place for easy retrieval, helping



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you gain a better understanding of your customers and anticipate their future needs.

## **Market Your Company Effectively**

Lower marketing costs by creating marketing materials in-house. Microsoft Office Small Business 2003 includes Microsoft Office Publisher 2003, which has simple tools and templates for producing professional-looking brochures, catalogs, postcards, Web sites and CD-ROMs that strengthen your company’s image and its ability to compete with larger businesses.

## **Safeguard Your Business from Internal and External Threats**

Help prevent viruses, hackers or PC crashes from disrupting your business by ensuring that your software and hardware are up to date and reliable. Consider implementing a firewall or requiring employee passwords to help ensure optimal protection.

## **Work with a Technology Expert**

Invest in an information technology consultant to provide assistance with long-term technology planning, deployment and support. Hire a knowledgeable expert to prescribe the right solutions for your company’s needs, ensuring your technology investments are wisely spent to help maximize returns.

To learn more about Microsoft Office Small Business 2003 visit <http://www.microsoft.com/office/smallbiz/>.