

The Business Of Attracting Customers

(NAPSA)—Finding and retaining customers may be two of the most important jobs a small business owner can undertake.

In fact, a study conducted for the United States Postal Service by Millward Brown Group, found that despite the fact that more than half (52 percent) of small business owners said they spend the bulk of their time trying to draw new customers, the inability to attract prospective clients is the number one reason for small business failure.

“Thousands of small business owners have struggled because of the difficulty in attracting new clients,” says Pam Gibert, vice president, Retail, Consumer and Small Business for the Postal Service. “However, catching the attention of prospective clients does not have to be difficult. The U.S. Postal Service’s Web Site, www.usps.com, has tools that can help small business owners attract new customers and features tips and strategies that can help them keep those customers coming back.”

The survey found that 41 percent of small business owners spend 10-20 hours a week trying to attract new customers to their business. An additional 20 percent spend more than half their week doing so.

Millward Brown surveyed 511 small business owners to gather information on their efforts to acquire and retain customers and their efforts to fulfill customer orders. Survey participants were owners of small businesses with fewer than 20 employees.

In the survey, small business owners said that lack of time and money are the two biggest inabili-

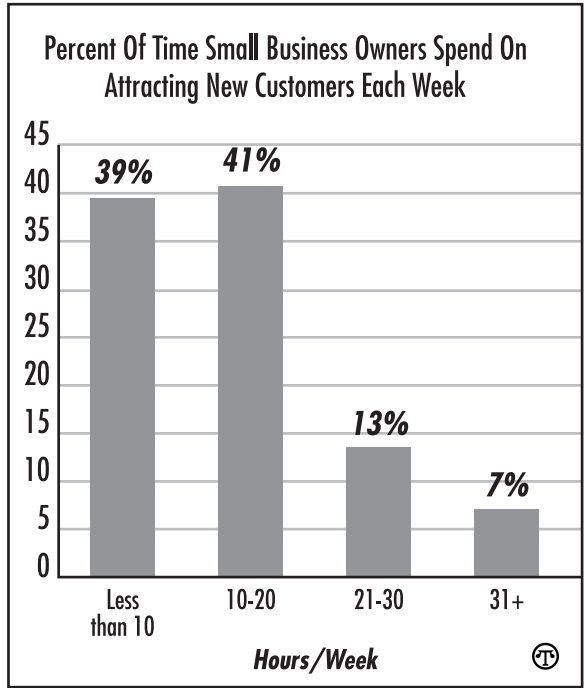
ties to gain new customers. More than 60 percent of them said it’s due to the difficulty of reaching prospective targets, while 59 percent acknowledged that it’s simply too costly to attract new customers.

“Clearly, small business owners need an easier and more cost-effective means of attracting new customers,” said Gibert. “The Small Business Tools Page at www.usps.com serves as a single, convenient resource to help small business owners attract and retain customers and fill orders. From showing them where to obtain lists of prospective customers, to helping them create and mail professional direct mail pieces, the Post Office’s online services provide cost-effective and efficient resources.”

Services offered through Small Business Tools include:

- Direct Mail—a resource that can help business owners create a direct mail campaign. The service lets businesses deliver targeted messages to the front doors of specific customers.

- NetPost Mailing Online—lets business owners design virtually anything from printed letters, self-mailers, and invoices, to newsletters and postcards on their computers. The Post Office then



takes the electronic file and has it printed, assembled and mailed.

- NetPost CardStore—small business owners can use the service to create customized advertisements or business cards online, in minutes. The Postal Service will print and mail the designs the next business day.

For more information visit www.usps.com.

The United States Postal Service is an independent federal agency that handles 46 percent of the world’s mail volume. The organization’s unique service network lets it deliver money, messages and other merchandise daily to over 135 million addresses—and with what have been called some of the more affordable postage rates available.