## Five Web Tips For Every Small Business Owner

(NAPSA)—Small business owners have to juggle multiple responsibilities and watch the bottom line. Although many turn to the web for marketing help and for services to run more smoothly, knowing some tips and tricks on how to better use these tools can make a big difference in terms of time, money and headaches saved.

David Friend, who was recognized by Ernst & Young as one of New England's Entrepreneurs of the Year, shares five tips to help owners be smart with their online efforts and their business.

**1. Use social media platforms to connect with your customers.** Whether it's Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn or Pinterest, these channels are quick ways to remind your customers of your offerings. Post regularly to stay top of mind; sharing an update once a week will keep your followers engaged.

**2. Listen with your eyes.** Online review sites, from Angie's List to Yelp, give people a number of ways to voice their opinions. Monitor these sites regularly to see what customers are saying about your business. And know the dynamic isn't just one way. You can use this as an opportunity to gracefully accept compliments or tactfully respond to criticism; however be careful not to engage in an argument.

**3. You've got mail.** In today's fast-paced times, consumers may



**Online backup for small business can be both easy to implement and cost effective.**

find it easier to send an email instead of calling with a question or inquiry. Try to respond quickly, which will show customers that you care about them and that you are able to help them with any issues. A quick answer can improve overall customer satisfaction.

**4. Beware of data thieves.** With more business conducted online than ever before, cyber security should be top of mind. To protect your data, do not open suspicious emails, use strong passwords, and make sure your anti-

virus and anti-malware signature database is up to date.

**5. Make sure you're protected.** Results from a recent study by Carbonite revealed that small businesses have big gaps in their data backup plans, which puts them at risk for losing valuable information in the instance of power outage, hard drive failure or even a virus. In fact, the study showed that small businesses continue to choose risky and unreliable technologies:

• 50 percent use **external hard drives**, yet 40 percent didn't start backing up until they experienced a hard drive failure.

• 42 percent use **USB/flash drives** primarily because it is perceived as easy, yet only 6 percent believe USB/flash drives are actually reliable.

• More than one-third use **CDs/DVD drives** to back up data, even though 62 percent feel they are inconvenient or risky.

Just like seat belts and insurance, you may only appreciate online backup after it's too late. However, its implementation is very easy and cost effective. It gives business owners peace of mind and more time to focus on the matters at hand. Online backup services such as Carbonite offer an affordable and reliable way for small businesses to back up their data, plus there's a 30-day free trial on its website www.carbonite.com.