

Recognizing Small Businesses That Think Big

(NAPSA)—Small businesses that are using information technology (IT) in innovative ways may be in line for an IT upgrade.

The Dell/National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) Small Business Excellence Award, established in 2004, honors small businesses that instill the spirit of innovation and apply IT to improve the customer experience.

The winner of the 2005 award will receive \$30,000 in technology and professional services from Dell; a “Day with Dell” program with Dell executives, including Mr. Dell, to share best business practices; a lifetime membership to NFIB; and other prizes.

Nine finalists will receive a Dell Latitude notebook and a one-year membership to NFIB. Selection of the winner will be announced later this year.

“Technology is a great entrepreneurial enabler and a cornerstone of growing businesses,” said Michael Dell. “By making smart investments in technology, even small start-ups can expand their industry presence and reach new customers. This award program commends those small-business owners who are leveraging IT to take their organizations to that next level of success.”

“Small businesses have a history of innovations that have driven productivity and growth in our economy,” said NFIB President and CEO Jack Faris. “NFIB is pleased to join Dell in recognizing small businesses who have the vision and creativity to use technology to make their businesses better for their customers.



Experts say smart investments in technology can take a business from a small start-up to a company with a strong industry presence.

A successful, second-generation, family-owned business with 54 employees, Donald A. Gardner Architects, Inc. of Greenville, South Carolina was the 2004 award winner. It was selected as the winner over many other applicants because of the company’s innovative, user-friendly Web site (www.dongardner.com) in an industry in which the Web is not widely used.

To be considered for the award, entrant must be a small business with 100 employees or fewer. The company must show how it has used information technology to drive a significant change and/or develop a competitive advantage in delivering superior customer value and experience, including customer case studies.

For a complete description of the criteria, rules and regulations, and to submit an application, visit www.dell.com/ceaward. Submissions will be accepted online until March 31, 2005. No purchase or entry fee is required.