

Small Business News & Notes

Small Business, Big-Time Office

(NAPSA)—For small businesses in a never-ending fight for clients, first impressions mean a lot. So when a home-based financial planner wants to impress a millionaire CEO, talking stocks at the corner coffee shop just won't do. Trouble is, a one-man shop can't afford a well-appointed office at a prestigious business address. Or can he?

As National Small Business Week recognizes the more than 25 million entrepreneurs who form the backbone of the U.S. economy, it's ironic that high-priced commercial real estate keeps many of them from realizing their true potential. But the rules are changing.

"More flexible workplace arrangements now give small businesses access to the same premium office space that Fortune 500 companies enjoy, but at a fraction of the cost," said Mark Dixon, CEO of The Regus Group, the world's largest provider of outsourced workplaces.

Here are three ways an increasing number of innovative entrepreneurs are leaving the coffee shop, and still staying in the black.

1. **Outsourced Offices:** Fully furnished, ready-to-use office space has become the perfect solution for small-business owners who need a professional place to spread out and get serious, even if it's on a part-time basis. With the business center providing everything from furniture to IT support and a receptionist, start-up costs are minimal. And since the terms are month to month or even daily, there's no risk of getting stuck in a long-term lease. Small-business owners can customize an office plan that meets their specific needs.

2. **Facilities that Fit:** What about small-business owners who already have an office but can't



FLEXIBLE WORKPLACE arrangements are giving small businesses access to premium office space.

afford the professional facilities that big companies take for granted? "A recruiting specialist who needs to conduct interviews across the country can skip the plane ride and book a videoconferencing room," said Dixon. Similarly, consultants and trainers can hold sessions in fully stocked meeting rooms booked by the hour or the day.

3. **Anywhere Access:** The technical revolution has created legions of mobile professionals whose offices are airports and hotel rooms. But even the most gadget-heavy road warrior can long for a real desk, a full-size phone and a receptionist. From Hoboken to Hong Kong, some outsourced office providers have worldwide locations, so business nomads always have a productive place to plug in and meet with clients.

While the costs of long-term leases once kept small businesses looking small-time, today's entrepreneurs are using creative office strategies to stake their claim alongside the biggest players in their industries.

To learn more about flexible workspace arrangements for small businesses, visit www.regus.com.