

Reading The Small-Business Barometer

(NAPSA)—Small businesses can use the Internet to effectively and affordably advertise and connect with customers. But when it comes to using some of the latest Web-based tools, a new report found many small businesses aren't ready to pull the trigger.

The report found that small-business owners understand the importance of the Internet to their business, with 46 percent deriving some revenue from the Web, but do not know how to utilize newer Web-based tools to their full advantage. For instance, despite evidence that blogs can be a powerful marketing tool, only 11 percent of small businesses said they use blogs to connect with potential partners and customers.

The research report is the third in a series titled "Capital Access Network Small Business Barometer" and was commissioned by Capital Access Network, Inc. (CAN). The survey was conducted nationally among small-business operators who accept credit cards as a form of payment. Here's a look at some additional findings:

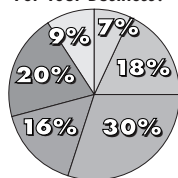
Factors Affecting Small Business

The report asked respondents to identify the top factors affecting the success of small-business firms. Overall expansion ranked at the top of the list, followed by the development of additional marketing and advertising programs, and third, ensuring an active presence for their business on the Internet.

An Advanced Web Strategy?

Despite a need to connect with customers, "having an active social media...strategy" ranked seventh out of 10 choices when respondents were asked for their business-related priorities. The finding reinforces the fact that not all small businesses have a grasp

What Is The Primary Reason Preventing You From Investing In An Increased Internet Presence Or Using Internet Tools For Your Business?



- ☐ Don't know how to implement them
- ☐ Limited understanding of how to effectively use them
- ☐ Don't have the available funds
- ☐ Don't have the time or people to manage it
- ☐ Don't think they are important
- ☐ Other



Online Opportunity—Only 11 percent of small businesses use blogs to connect with customers and partners, according to a new report.

of the benefits of newer social media technologies such as blogs or Web-based communities and instead focus their limited resources on tactics they are most familiar with. Ultimately, access to financing may be one barrier small businesses face when trying to take full advantage of the newer social media technologies.

Paying For the Web

Thirty-four percent of respondents indicated that they were aware they could sell their future credit card receivables in exchange for quick, accessible working capital. This process is also known as a Merchant Cash Advance and is growing in popularity among small-business owners as a cash flow-friendly way to obtain funding to expand or promote their company.

For more information on small business, visit www.CapitalAccessNetwork.com.