

Business News And Notes

Technology Key For SMBs Facing New World Of Work

(NAPSA)—For small- and mid-size-business (SMB) owners, time is a precious commodity. They need to get more done with less time and fewer resources than bigger companies. The good news is, SMBs have access to affordable yet powerful technology that can make a big difference in their ability to get things done from anywhere.

In particular, cloud technology gives business owners and their employees access to e-mail, documents and business tools from wherever they are, helping them stay productive on virtually any device. Cloud-based productivity solutions allow sole proprietors and smaller businesses to be nimble without the traditional cost and complexity of big IT.

The cloud allows employees to better collaborate in real time across multiple locations, providing access to business e-mail and documents from the office or the road. In fact, research has proven that cloud services are an essential ingredient for efficiently growing a modern business.

The Boston Consulting Group recently published the results of a survey that revealed a big shift in the way SMBs work from just three years ago. Workers are no longer confined to desks or offices, and the tools that enable these modern work-on-the-go arrangements have been shown to have a direct impact on SMBs' bottom line—increasing revenue by as much as 15 percent compared to SMBs that don't use these technologies.

Newer cloud options allow SMBs to mix and match features based on specific needs and evolve with the business based on factors



Many companies enjoy more efficiency at less cost with the latest electronic systems and devices.

such as growth or seasonality. They also alleviate the fear of spending funds on soon-to-be-obsolete technology.

Here are a few tips to get started with new technology:

- **Evaluate your business needs**—Whether you're a start-up needing to connect employees on the road or a growing business seeking a competitive edge, the right tools can help increase productivity.

- **Move to the cloud**—Microsoft recently announced new Office 365 plans for SMBs, which offer Office apps like Word, Excel and PowerPoint, as well as e-mail, Web conferencing, and collaboration tools. The easy setup and 24/7 technical support allow owners to pay only for what they use.

- **Find a partner**—Working with an IT expert is one of the best ways to ensure technology delivers the most value. Tools like Pinpoint can help business owners connect with a partner with the needed skills and expertise.

Learn more at <http://aka.ms/compareplans>.