



# Technology

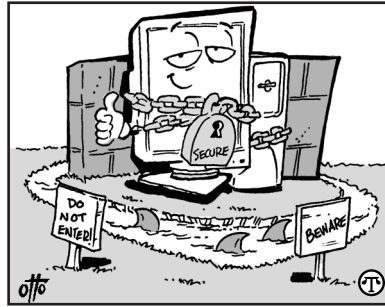
## In Our Lives

### Small Steps For Small Businesses To Improve Their IT Infrastructure

(NAPSA)—For the more than 8.2 million small businesses in the United States alone, developing a comprehensive IT infrastructure is not always a first priority given their budget and resource constraints. But with the current Internet threat landscape, small businesses cannot afford to assume they are a small target. In fact, since today's hackers are now more focused on financial gain than notoriety, their current goal is to find the path of least resistance.

Small businesses, categorized as having 10 to 99 employees, usually have less of an established security infrastructure than larger enterprises, making them an increasingly attractive mark for unscrupulous hackers. Plus, with small businesses growing at a rate of 15 percent over the next four years, they will continue to be a target for online security threats.

In addition to malicious online attacks, system failures, natural disasters or human errors are all ways in which a small business can easily lose critical and confidential information. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, as many as 40 percent of small businesses do not reopen after major disasters. Since small businesses account for the lion's share of the gross domestic product, it is vital to protect these small businesses from shutting down to maintain a stable global economy.



“Small businesses need cost-effective and easy-to-use IT products that are specifically designed to meet their business needs while providing the necessary protection against online threats or data loss,” said Erna Arnesen, vice president, partner and industry marketing expert at Symantec. “Symantec provides small businesses with a logical road map for their IT needs and includes everything from protecting their systems from virus attacks to backing up their data and keeping critical applications such as e-mail up and running.”

With limited time and resources, it can be tough for a small-business owner to know where to start. With the following simple IT steps and best practices, small businesses can improve their IT infrastructure and protect their critical data and confidential information:

- Practice an in-depth defense strategy that looks at security from the gateway, network and all

endpoints, including mobile devices.

- By working with a solution provider, small businesses can ensure that their IT products meet their business needs and are compatible with current hardware and software, since most small businesses cannot afford to completely rip and replace their IT infrastructure.

- Identify products that are affordable and easy to install and manage if you do not have a dedicated IT staff or consultant.

- Back up data frequently to prevent data loss from malicious attacks, system failure, human error or even natural disasters.

- Develop internal IT policies now, which will condition employees, vendors and partners to practice best measures that will support your business as it grows.

- Avoid high-risk areas such as WiFi networks at airports and coffee shops. If it is necessary to use these connections, make sure you have deployed proper security measures to protect your desktop from hackers taking advantage of unsecured access points.

- Work with IT vendors who offer a set of solutions that help small businesses protect against today's threat landscape and that are easy to acquire, deploy and manage.

You can learn more online at [www.symantec.com](http://www.symantec.com).