



Small Business Bulletin

How To Start, Survive And Thrive As A Small Business Owner



(NAPSA)—Small businesses will play a bigger role in driving the U.S. and global economies over the next decade. As a champion of small businesses, part of Intuit's mission is to enable the 72 percent of Americans who dream of starting a small business, and to help those already in business succeed and grow.

According to the Intuit Future of Small Business Report, small businesses will be more active in global trade as they take advantage of lightweight technologies that make it easier than ever to start and manage a business. In many cases, brain will meet brawn as low cost software and technology allow entrepreneurs to enter and compete in markets worldwide.

For those entrepreneurs looking to turn their business dream into a reality, here are five tips that will help you start the business you've always imagined:

1. Put it on paper. Writing a plan for your business will help you think about every possible scenario. It helps you stay on target and makes sure you don't overlook any competitors or key industry information.

2. Ask questions. Getting expert advice will help you successfully start and grow your business. You can find local support and training via government-funded small-business programs and community college business classes.

3. Leverage the "power of your peers." Extending your pro-

fessional networks can help you connect with like-minded entrepreneurs. Attend industry functions and seminars in your area, and get to know your local Small Business Association. Online social networks such as JumpUp (www.jumpup.com) provide free online resources and a huge pool of entrepreneurs for sharing best practices and forming strategic partnerships.

4. Get online. A Web presence is mandatory in the digital era. Thanks to the Internet, you no longer need a brick-and-mortar shop to serve and attract customers. Creating a Web site is cheaper and easier than ever. It allows you to stay open 24/7 and serve markets across the globe.

5. Spread the word. Marketing is essential to turn a great idea into a successful business. In addition to your business plan, create a marketing plan that includes a profile of your target customers and the best way to reach them, such as search engines, blogs, user review Web sites, local newspapers, industry publications and radio.

Small businesses will also use their customer and market knowledge to find success in niche markets. Big corporations will increasingly partner with small businesses for their understanding of these niche markets, while small businesses will gain access to big-business reach and capabilities.

To learn more, visit www.intuit.com/futureofsmallbusiness.