

SMALL BUSINESS TIPS

Financial Management Crucial To Small-Business Success



(NAPSA)—Many small-business owners have started to worry about their finances as they confront an uncertain economy. Tightening credit, increased risk to cash flow and rising energy costs are just a few of the problems that many small businesses face. Luckily, small businesses have distinct advantages when it comes to getting into good financial shape during hard economic times.

Because small-business owners are often the head, arms and legs of their companies, they can evaluate and discover inefficiencies without wasting time navigating through various levels of bureaucracy, which allows them to make quick decisions. Often playing the role of CEO, marketing director, financial manager and IT consultant, small-business owners can and often must be in-the-know about various aspects of their business daily. This makes them especially qualified to tighten their belts and shift their financial strategies without delay.

Small businesses also have access to free resources that allow them to simplify otherwise complex processes. Free financial management software solutions such as Microsoft Office Accounting Express 2008 help small businesses tackle minor problems before they turn into major disasters. For instance, if neglected, something as simple as perpetual invoice delays can eventually lead to bankruptcy. Microsoft Office Accounting 2008 (<http://www.ideawins.com>) helps small businesses keep on top of their invoices and also offers the ability to generate reports on profits and losses, review

sales and progressions, and oversee expenses and outstanding receivables.

“We operate everything with Office Accounting Express,” said Arturo Vela, owner of Visible Salon Co., a company dedicated to the sales and marketing of beauty products. “We make payments to salons and invoice the distributor in New York; we control our warehouse inventory and manage our balance sheet. It’s impressive that Microsoft offers this software for no cost at all.”

Taking advantage of free programs and mastering simple processes with financial management software also leaves room for small businesses to be more creative with their finances. Usually, when things are going well, small businesses have the luxury to be more lax about their finances, and they tend to focus less on the future than on scrambling to solve immediate problems. However, with an unpredictable economy, small businesses need to think ahead and start saving for the future. Financial management software such as Microsoft Office Accounting 2008 can help small businesses implement a savings plan that will allow them to better weather hard economic times when the cash refuses to flow.

When facing an economic slump, using financial management software can not only save small businesses from having to wave the white flag when hard times arise, but can also prevent unnecessary worry about the future. As the old saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, and this rings especially true when it comes to managing small-business finances.