

SMALL BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

The Right Technology Has Become A Key To Small Business Success

(NAPSA)—For a growing number of small businesses, offering high-tech solutions or doing business on the Internet have presented formulas for success. An important part of both these formulas is finding the right technology.

For example, Tastefully Simple, a 300-employee direct sales company based in Alexandria, Minn., has experienced significant growth since 1995. The company offers a line of upscale gourmet foods, sold primarily by independent consultants at home tasting parties nationwide.

More than 85 percent of product orders are made via the Internet by the company's consultants. Order management, individual consultant business reports and company information are available online.

The company decided to purchase its technology direct from HP and uses a broad range of HP products, including HP ProLiant DL580 and DL380 servers, HP StorageWorks storage area networks, desktop and notebook PCs and printers.

"We couldn't have grown this quickly without technology," said Doug Cyphers, technology services senior team lead at Tastefully Simple. "HP was the only vendor that offered the range of products and solutions we required at the time."

Starting out small in the early years, Tastefully Simple had



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acquired an assortment of hardware from multiple vendors. It recognized the need to establish a standardized, reliable infrastructure for all of its business needs.

"HP provides solid products to help us create a stable environment. Standardization helps us reduce management costs, which helps our bottom line," said Cyphers.

Whether you call it flexibility or scalability, the ability to change technology as a company's needs change is also part of the formula for small business success.

For instance, Vesta Corp. is a leader in stored value recharge

services and has experienced 6,330 percent growth over five years. Their services are designed to support credit card-not-present transactions—think using a value-added card to buy something online or over the phone—requiring real-time customer authentication and account recharge.

For more than seven years, the company's proprietary recharge and authentication technologies have maximized revenue and provided secure, convenient account recharge services for customers of AT&T Long Distance, Cingular, American Airlines, Citibank, AT&T Wireless and others.

Vesta turned to HP as well, tripling the number of HP servers it uses in less than three years. The company is continually working to accommodate the IT needs associated with its fast-paced growth.

"Our rapid growth demands a server line that can scale as fast as we do. The flexibility of HP ProLiant servers has allowed us to seamlessly add capacity and move with client demand," said Jason Blackhurst, vice president of operations, Vesta.

HP is a technology solutions provider to consumers, businesses and institutions globally. More information about HP solutions for small and medium businesses is available at www.hp.com/go/smb.