

# Business News & Notes

## The 2006 Small-Business Forecast

(NAPSA)—It seems small businesses are bracing for a big year. Two-thirds of small- and medium-sized-business owners said they expect their companies to grow in 2006, according to an Administristaff Business Confidence Survey—and that's just the start of what could be welcome news for employees. How will these companies invest and in what direction will they grow? Experts offer these predictions for 2006 business trends:

### Advancements In Technology

Forrester Research's Ken Vollmer writes that organizations are focusing on "Integration-centric business process management" solutions. These solutions involve improving interactions between co-workers, customers and business partners. In plainer terms, this could mean that 2006 is the year of the all-in-one device.

For instance, the C5510n MFP from OKI Printing Solutions is a compact color communications center that lets business teams copy, scan, print or manage documents from their desks or at the machine itself. The technology can be networked, allowing for multiple users, and just as importantly one MFP can take the place of three or four other machines.

### Improved Communications

The availability of color printing technology means the bar has been raised for small business communications. Professional-looking color documents will be the norm, with exceptional documents possibly giving companies a competitive advantage. That is once again where devices such as the C5510n MFP come in. It prints and copies in vibrant color at up to 12 pages per minute—the fastest of its



**A survey found that 66 percent of small and medium-sized businesses plan to hire more workers in 2006.**

class on the market—and enables end users to scan hard-copy documents or artwork.

Business meetings are expected to get a boost as well, with new types of software applications turning old-fashioned presentations into interactive experiences. New technology can be used to make presentation slides appear three dimensional or to add new types of graphics, animation and even music to projects.

### More Employees

2006 may be a good year to work for a small- or medium-sized business. Sixty-four percent of respondents to the Administristaff survey said they plan to increase salaries and 66 percent plan to hire new employees. What type of workers will be hired? Companies generally say they're looking for people who are comfortable with technology and with decision-making.

Those characteristics may lead to some good matches. Management consulting firm ECnow.com predicts that employer-employee relationships will "strengthen for the first time in years."