

# Small Business News & Notes

## Time Management Tips For Small Businesses

(NAPSA)—Making every minute count can be a key part of small business success.

Some 24 percent of all start-up small businesses fail within two years, and over half (52 percent) close their doors within four years, according to the National Federation of Independent Business. While larger companies often have a team of professionals to manage every aspect of a business, small business owners are faced with trying to make two hands work like 20.

To succeed, you need to find ways to maximize time without short-changing your company on professionalism. Thomas O'Brien, president of T. O'Brien Consulting Services, LLC, a small business expert with more than 35 years of experience, cites the following time wasters even the most brilliant small business owners make:

- Using the wrong software. An increasing number of computer programs are available for such tasks as accounting, contact management, etc., but most people only use a small portion of each program. Before investing, talk to other small business owners to find out the program's ease of use, reliability and usefulness. Streamline the process by evaluating what programs and tasks are essential. Eliminate the rest.

- Too much e-mail. Checking, reading and answering e-mail can take hours. Use an e-mail filter to organize messages by priority. Checking and responding to e-



**By speeding up the time-consuming job of printing labels, a company can put employees' time to better use.**

mail on demand can seriously interfere with other tasks.

- Disorganized files. Are you wasting a lot of time looking for papers on your desk? By staying on top of paperwork, you can prevent being buried by a paper avalanche later—or losing the one piece of paper needed for the task at hand. Also, make sure your files are clearly labeled.

- Wasting time with labels. Marketing your small business often means sending out loads of information to interested parties. Labels often make material look professional, but the printing of entire sheets can be wasteful and more importantly, time-consuming. Typically, it takes a person three to four minutes to set and print each label from a computer to a standard printer. Consider investing in a desktop label printer, such as the DYMO Label-Writer ([www.dymo.com](http://www.dymo.com)), which can reduce the time to run labels from minutes to mere seconds.