

# Small Business Technology Report

## Internet Helps Turn Entrepreneurial Dreams Into Reality

(NAPSA)—The Internet has helped a number of Americans get down to business and start working for themselves.

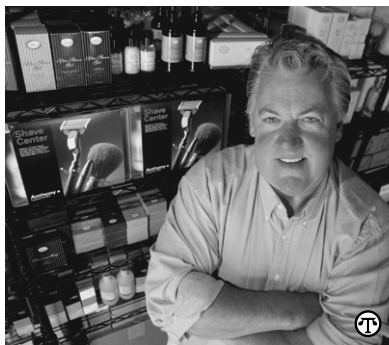
According to a new Yahoo! poll conducted by Harris Interactive, 72 percent of U.S. adults have thought about owning their own business, and more than half of those with entrepreneurial aspirations plan to launch a business within five years. Experts say a key driver of the growth in entrepreneurship is the revolution in new technology, particularly the Internet, which often lowers both the costs and risks of going into business. Indeed, 75 percent of respondents to the survey agreed that the Internet has made it easier to launch a business.

"The development of affordable, easy-to-use, e-commerce solutions and broad consumer acceptance of online shopping have enabled hundreds of thousands of people to make their entrepreneurial dreams a reality," said Rich Riley, vice president and general manager of Yahoo! Small Business. "Of course, going into business is still very hard work, but the Internet can be a partner in your success."

Businessman Mark Williams of Menlo Park, California is a good example of new technology helping the entrepreneurial spirit. Williams launched ShavingCream.com from his home in 2003, following a 30-year career in sales and marketing.

"The chance to work for myself, to put my ideas into play, and to answer only to myself are what drove me to start my own business," said Williams. "I recognized that the Internet was the new sales frontier and felt that it would hold great potential for the years ahead."

In addition to creating market



**A "cutting edge" business on the Internet—ShavingCream.com owner Mark Williams' entrepreneurial dreams have come true.**

opportunities for niche businesses like Williams' shaving products store, the Internet also provides a number of helpful tools and information. For example, Yahoo! recently launched a new online Small Business Resource Center (<http://smallbusiness.yahoo.com/resources>) filled with articles and advice on topics such as e-commerce, legal, finance, and hiring practices. The Web portal also offers free Web sites to small local businesses (<http://local.yahoo.com/freesite>).

As economic and demographic trends such as the aging baby boomer population continue to impact small-business growth, Americans are holding tight to their entrepreneurial dreams. According to the poll, nearly half of those who have considered starting a business (47 percent) said they would "never be too old" to do so. Williams, who is in his late 40's, agrees.

"My online business enables me to have a healthy and satisfying lifestyle—and a kind of freedom that I could not achieve in other jobs," he says.