



**SMALL
BUSINESS
WEEK
2008**

In association with
BT

Getting ahead in business

Companies set to benefit from week-long event dedicated to supporting small businesses

ON October 13, government, industry and advisory bodies will unite to celebrate the country's 4.6 million small businesses.

Small Business Week, in association with BT Business, aims to ensure the community continues to flourish.

It will explore current issues facing businesses, while championing their cause and highlighting opportunities, resources and support structures available.

In partnership with BT, British Chambers of Commerce, everywoman and Business Link amongst others, events will take place across the UK, including round table discussions, web seminars, master classes and advice

clinics. The week will look at business confidence and mentoring, and how this is key to success at all stages of a company's growth – particularly in the current economic climate. Other areas will include flexible working, responsible business, winning and retaining customers, and driving innovation.

Bill Murphy, BT Business Managing Director, says: "The landscape for UK business has changed dramatically over the past year. Despite this, small and medium businesses remain the lifeblood of the economy."

"The sector continues to be dynamic and energising, but, more than ever, we need to ensure the right resources and structures are in place to support small businesses during these more challenging times."

Small Business Week will provide access to invaluable resources and advice to make the most of opportunities available to compete and thrive in business.

To access these, plus a full calendar of events and information on how to get involved, visit www.sbw08.co.uk

Read on to find out more about the opportunities being highlighted by Small Business Week.

Big news for small businesses

Small companies prove they can compete and thrive in the changing economic climate

Businesses across the country are under pressure from the credit crunch and crawling economy.

None more so than small companies, who are facing rising costs, lower credit and increased competition.

However, there is light at the end of the tunnel for those wanting to get ahead. By improving confidence, controlling costs and sharpening competitive edge, there's no reason why a company can't grow and prosper in today's difficult climate.

Small businesses can stand out from the crowd by running more efficiently, controlling spending and taking advantage of the latest technologies to help the business succeed.

Way Out Experiences, who organise eco-friendly holidays and volunteer projects tackling global issues such as the

'If a customer calls, we're able to instantly view their details'

extinction of orangutans in Borneo, is one small business doing just that.

The company relies on the speedy and accurate transfer of information between its UK communications office and Malaysian sites. This is made possible with the help of a web-based application for running a business – helping with everything from accounting to e-commerce and CRM – called NetSuite, provided by BT.

Marketing Director Afzaal Mauthoor explains: "Now, every person, no matter how remote they are, has access to real-time information about each customer."

"If a customer calls, we're able to instantly view their

details, improving our customer experience. It also saves time, and enables us to share information accurately and promptly.

"Every business is different and there's no single formula to get the optimum value from assets. However, by choosing the right communications technologies, understanding the web and taking advantage of free services available, any business can enjoy long-term value and increased productivity.

There are low-cost and free services specifically designed to help small business control budgets, while embracing flexible working, using VoIP for calls online, getting on-demand IT support, or consolidating suppliers can all help too.

Woody's Express Parcels, a haulage and courier firm operating from Stornaway in the Outer Hebrides with depots in Inverness, Aberdeen and Glasgow, decided to consolidate suppliers to save.

The business used services from a number of suppliers and whenever something went wrong, nobody wanted to take responsibility.

The company signed up to BT Communications Complete, a unified communications solution with broadband and ISDN services that reach the most remote areas of Scotland.

David Wood, Managing Director, says: "BT provided exceptional support, tailoring the system to our precise requirements, enabling us to deliver a more professional customer service."

And with the solution already making an impact, discussions are now underway to integrate mobile communications and extend the solution to serve other Woody's offices."

■ Go to www.sbw08.co.uk to download 'Understanding... Competing and Thriving in a Changing Economy', one in a series of guides designed to help small businesses increase their confidence and competitive ability.

Woody's Express Parcels is the only independent courier company with daily deliveries throughout the Outer Hebrides



Diary Dates

Get ahead in business by visiting one of these seminars taking place around the country

■ BT Talking Business

Monday 13 October
BT Tower, London

Free half-day seminar to inform businesses about ideas and technologies that could save time and money.

Also, advice on staying ahead of the competition.

■ Making IT and Communications Work for You

Tuesday 14 October

The Derby Conference Centre, Derby
Helping business owners and managers to exploit changes in IT and communications in order to transform their business. In conjunction with BT Local Business and the

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Chamber of Commerce.

■ How to Help Your Business Thrive in a Challenging World

Wednesday 15 October
BT Business Showcase, Trinity Park, Birmingham

Opportunity for local businesswomen

to network. Includes improving website effectiveness and gaining free support to help a business grow. In conjunction with everywoman.

■ BT Talking Local Business

Thursday 16 October
Easterbrook Hall, Dumfries

See earlier BT Talking Business event.

■ Business South West 2008

Thursday 16 to Friday 17 October
Westpoint Arena, Exeter

Exhibitors and visitors can gain new contracts and generate sales to expand their business at this networking event with suppliers from across the region.

■ Visit www.sbw08.co.uk for a full calendar of events in your region.



Winning formula

How to keep customers and attract more to maximise your profit

Websites are key to winning customers – and more importantly – keeping them. And it's never been easier to set up on the internet to make a success of your business online.

However, using the web to attract new customers isn't just about having a great website – it's about making sure the right people find it.

From social networking sites to search marketing, even choosing a name can determine whether a company is a success online.

Domain names, available through internet service providers, are essentially an online address that reflects a company's identity. They should be easy to remember and connected to a company's brand and – most importantly – easy to spell.

We've all heard of Facebook and Myspace, but social networking sites are also a popular way to provide information about a small business and what they have to offer.

For example, BT Tradespace is a free online service allowing small companies and individual sellers to reach potential customers and partners by building a presence online.

BT Tradespaces are free and easy to set up and use. After just one month of using bttradespace.com, HedgePig, an

online business that sells unusual gifts, saw a 20 per cent increase in its monthly turnover.

Most people use search engines like Google to find exactly what they need, locally, nationally or internationally.

Likewise, businesses can use search marketing to generate sale leads and attract new customers to their site.

The process can be time-consuming and costly. However, smaller businesses can take advantage of subscription services, such as BT Web Clicks.

From just £20 a month, the service offers keywords and professionally written advertising copy to boost a company's searchability on the web.

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is another way to increase a business's searchability. In its simplest form, it is the process of designing a website in a way that will make it appear high up in search engine rankings.

It's important to remember that no two customers – and no two businesses – are the same. In order to grow, every small business needs a multi-faceted, integrated customer service that takes all foreseeable preferences into account.

So when you're looking at how to retain customers – and attract new ones – follow this easy, five-step guide:



It's never been easier to set up on the internet, whether you are based in an office or work on the move

1. BE FAST

Ensure the technology mix and culture of the organisation are geared for speed.

2. BE FLEXIBLE

Customers have their own ways of working, and their preferred channels of communication. Be prepared to deliver quality services through a multitude of media.

3. BE OPEN TO NEW IDEAS

Just because you're used to working one way, doesn't mean you can't experiment. Undertake regular performance reviews and look at how you can improve.

4. BE RESPONSIVE

Offer a consistent service and a consistent consumer experience



Skincare company Daisy Diva, founded by Mandy Allen, went from being a relatively unknown business to receiving nearly 2,000 website hits after joining BT Tradespace

wherever your staff may be, whether it's in the office, at home or on the move.

Software-as-a-Service as a fast, flexible and affordable way of getting these systems in place.

5. BE ORGANISED

Make the most of technology to ensure that key customer service data is captured and used appropriately. Use

■ Visit www.sbw08.co.uk to download 'Understanding... Winning and Retaining Customers'.



Small businesses can win prizes worth more than £2,000

To mark Small Business Week 2008's Responsible Business Day on Thursday 16 October, BT Business has teamed up with sustainability experts from Global Action Plan (GAP) to offer 10 small businesses the chance to win a package of prizes worth more than £2,000.

GAP is an independent charity committed to engaging people in practical solutions to environmental and social problems, enabling them to operate in a more energy efficient way.

The charity recently helped three small

businesses make savings of £12,000 in one year, while reducing their environmental impact and increasing appeal to customers.

THE PRIZE

■ Global Action Plan will provide training and support to empower winning businesses to achieve Phase 3 of BS8555 standard in environmental management*.

■ Winners will also receive one free month of audio conferencing from BT Business and a 12-month BT Tradespace Premium subscription.

Improved environmental management can deliver tangible bottom-line cost savings that, depending on the size of the business, can run to tens of thousands of pounds annually.

All small businesses are eligible to enter. Simply fill out a form online. The deadline for entry is Wednesday 15 October.

For terms and conditions and to enter, visit www.sbw08.co.uk/gogreen

Winners will be announced during Small Business Week 2008.

*For more details concerning BS8555, see www.iema.net/acorn/bs8555

Power to the people

Small businesses can gain big advantages with flexible working

EVERY employee dreams of a better work-life balance, while every business wants to attract the best employees and work as cost-effectively as possible. Now, with improved technology such as high-speed broadband and Wi-Fi, achieving these goals has never been easier.

More employers are now offering flexible working, which enables staff to work remotely – at home and on the move – with full access to office systems and information.

This gives employees more control over their lives and work while delivering both cost and efficiency benefits for businesses.

From April 2009, all employees with children under the age of 16 will have the legal right to request flexible working.

BT Business works with over 1.1m small businesses, helping them to work flexibly and more productively, while latest BT research suggests that by 2010 more than 50 million Europeans will spend some time working remotely, instead of at their usual workplace.

Flexible working is not something to be scared of – but it does require careful planning. Follow these top tips to get started...

1. ASSESS BENEFITS

Take a look at what happens now in your business and where you can make improvements. Are you responsive to customers? Are staff always contactable? Where could you benefit from working more flexibly?

2. LOOK AHEAD

Consider your objectives for the coming year – growth, new customers or services – and think about how you can resource and manage these changes, whilst still controlling costs.

3. PLAN FOR CHANGE

Flexible working requires adjustments – think about the impact. Remote staff will be able to stay in touch and work with office-based staff, but procedures for working must be in place to ensure productivity across teams.

4. GET HELP

Take a fresh view of your communication needs. Find a reliable supplier who can advise on converged systems and services to aid flexible working.

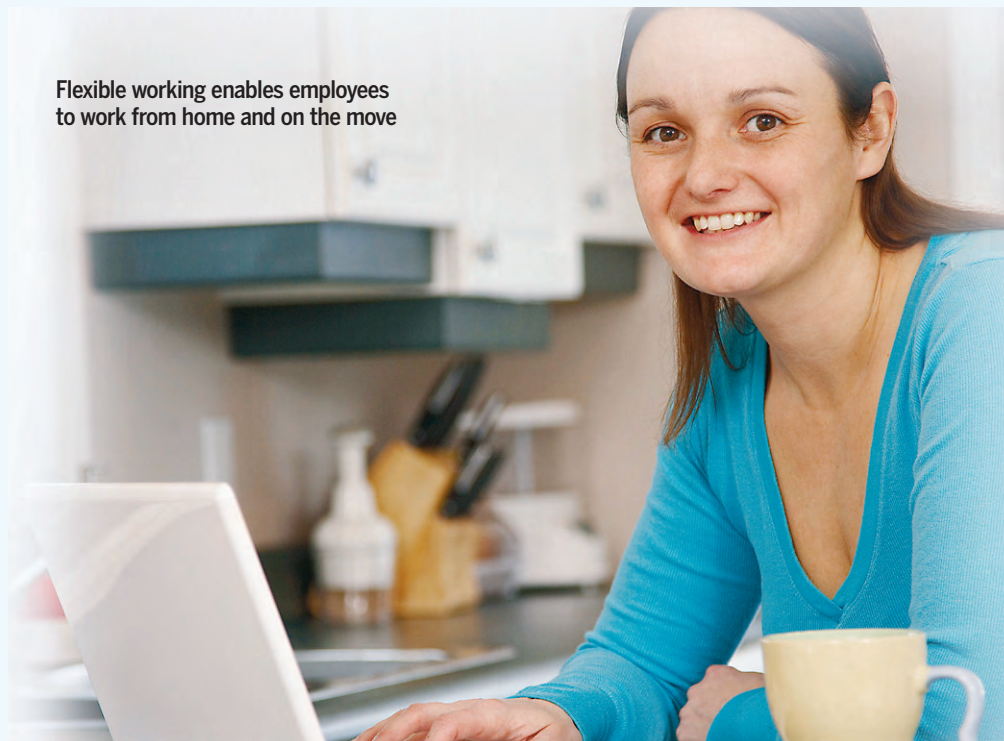
5. TOP EQUIPMENT

Cutting corners can be counterproductive. Equipment that's easy for remote workers to operate outweighs savings made by using cut-down versions of software and services.

6. SECURITY CHECK

Securing your business systems to block unauthorised

Flexible working enables employees to work from home and on the move



access is even more essential when you have employees logging in remotely. Get expert help from your IT supplier.

7. RELIABLE SERVICE

Remote workers depend on constant and reliable connections and devices, so make sure you provide appropriate maintenance, repair and support services.

8. CLEVER PURCHASES

New devices and services for remote working are launched every day, so it helps to know what's available to buy. Call BT to find out about the latest laptops, mobiles and PDAs.

9. REVIEW COSTS

With guidance from the right supplier, you should have a clear idea of potential costs and savings. Review regularly to ensure you're getting the most out of flexible working.

10. SIMPLICITY

The internet-based technologies behind flexible working are all tried and tested. Your supplier will help you plan a cost effective way to use the latest technologies.

■ For more information and to talk about how BT can help you harness flexible working for your business, visit www.bt.com or download 'Gaining a Competitive Advantage with Flexible Working' at www.sbw08.co.uk.

Doesn't your business deserve 99.99% reliable broadband?

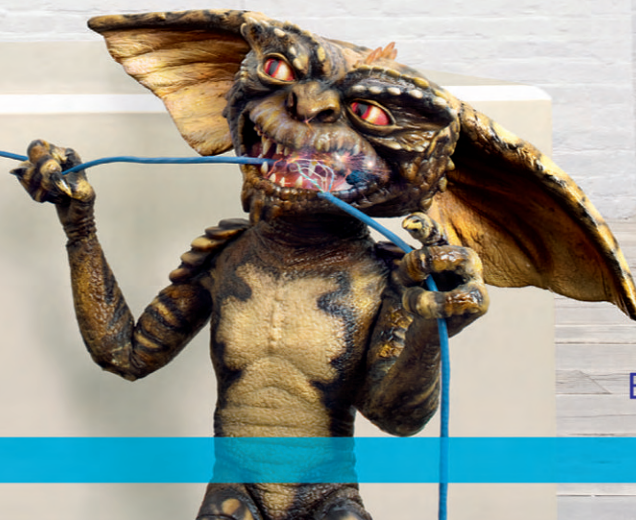
We think so. That's why BT Business Total Broadband offers unbeaten reliability. And if you do need some help, our freephone UK-based team of business broadband experts are on hand 24/7. And with 95% of calls answered within 30 seconds you'll be able to get back to doing what you do best as quickly as possible.

All this from just £19.79¹ a month.

To find out more call:

0800 345 7639

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