

Small Business Trends

the forces driving small & midsize business

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SMALL BUSINESS TRENDS brings you daily updates on trends that influence the global small business market.



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9 Major Trends

Visit Small Business Trends' sister site, TrendTracker. We've summarized our daily posts into 9 major trends shaping the small business market: [Small Business Goes Global](#), [Small Businesses Pick Niches](#), [Graying of Small Business](#), and [more](#).

Tuesday, October 05, 2004

Virtual Workplace Trend Changes Business

For some time now we have been pointing out how small businesses are leading the charge toward the [virtual work environment](#). This is a significant trend sweeping the USA and other developed nations.

In this excerpt from an [HR.com article](#) (registration required), Ralph Gregory, founder of the [Intelligent Office](#) emphasizes just how far-reaching this trend is today:

"Going to work" is becoming old school. "Work" is now something you do and no longer a location. The growth of telecommuting, home-based businesses, cell phones, laptops and other mobile means is mute testimony to the idea that more and more people are leaving the traditional office behind. ...John Challenger, CEO of Challenger, Gray & Christman, Inc., an international outplacement consulting firm, predicts "telecommuting will be the predominant workplace trend in the next 20 years."

This socioeconomic shift that is quietly underway promises to literally alter not just the entire commercial landscape but also the where and how people choose to live. The forward-thinking businessperson would be well advised to consider how this will alter every aspect of running a business in the very near future.

Just today I had a business discussion involving how to sell to small businesses in the 21st century. It's a challenge to cost-effectively reach the small business market with a marketing message or sales pitch, especially when so many small businesses operate virtually. Do you go through channel partners that already have relationships with small businesses? How about reaching small businesses online? Are referrals from other small businesses the right answer? Or what about marketing near or locating next to retail outlets that small businesses frequent, such as the local Kinko's, Office Max, Post Office or Starbuck's?

The small business market has always been a tough one to crack because it is so fragmented. The virtual business trend adds to the challenge and requires thinking outside the box.

By Anita Campbell | [Permalink](#) | [Comment? \(0\)](#) | [Links to this Article \(0\)](#)

Monday, October 04, 2004

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