

Small Business News & Notes

Small Business Owners Claim Their Corner Of The Web

(NAPSA)—One of the best ways for small businesses to raise their bottom lines is to put the Web to work.

That's the news from analysts who say that 70 percent of Americans have home Internet access, making small businesses without Web sites comparable to small businesses not listed in the phone book. If customers can't find a company online, they explain, customers may not find that company at all.

Yet studies show that a surprisingly large number of small businesses have no Web presence. Experts attribute that fact to causes ranging from a lack of technological knowledge to a lack of money. However, there are a number of ways by which small companies can develop Web sites without spending much time, effort or cash.

For instance, companies such as Register.com let small businesses build their own professional Web sites with easy-to-use templates and instructions. Its WebSiteNOW! service provides 24/7 tech support by telephone, e-mail or online chat, and it is specifically designed for small-business owners with very little computer knowledge. Just as important, though, the service is relatively inexpensive and costs a

The screenshot shows the Register.com homepage. At the top, the logo 'register.com' is displayed. Below it, a navigation bar includes links for HOME, DOMAINS, EMAIL, WEB SITES, HOSTING, DRIVE TRAFFIC, and YOUR BUSINESS. A banner for 'NEW! Free Trial. Protect the data on your PC with Data Backup.' is visible. The main content area features the headline 'Get your business online today!' and a 'PHONE ONLY SPECIAL' offer. A search bar prompts users to 'SEARCH FOR A DOMAIN NAME' and 'CHOOSE YOUR EXTENSION(S)'. Below the search bar, there are input fields for a domain name (with 'www.' and 'e.g. mybrand.com' as examples) and a list of domain extensions including .com, .net, .org, .us, .biz, .info, .tv, .me, and .us. A 'Go!' button is next to the search bar. At the bottom of the interface, there are links for 'WEB SITES', 'HOSTING', and 'EMAIL'.

The Web can help small businesses weave a network of new customers.

considerable amount less than the average Web designer.

Small businesses that use the service can also create professional e-mail addresses for their companies. The addresses tend to appear more reputable to consumers than do e-mails sent from public e-mail accounts such as Yahoo or Hotmail—and they can be a great way to reach out to current and prospective online customers.

Perhaps the greatest benefit the Web gives to small business is the ability to level the playing field. Small companies that are online can reach the same amount of customers as big businesses—and thanks to new Web services, they won't need an expensive IT department to do it.

For more information, visit www.Register.com.