


Insight

INNOVATIVE THINKING FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Welcome to *Insight*, the newsletter that delivers custom small business advice and technology information to help you succeed. *Insight* provides you with valuable business strategies and software tips, as well as advice from small business experts, free software downloads, premium templates, and exclusive special offers. Look for the plus sign  to identify Small Business+ exclusives.

Ask the Expert

Starting a small business? 5 mistakes to avoid



Steve Strauss

You've got a great new business idea, and you've determined what you need to do next. But do you know what **not** to do? Do you know how to avoid the kind of errors that can doom a new venture before it really gets rolling? Mistakes made at the beginning of a company's life can have a large impact on its future prospects. Learn about [the five biggest startup mistakes](#), what you can do to avoid them, and where you can turn for help.

Top ways to win the PC security battle

IT consultants believe that the most effective data security policies are those that treat security not just as an IT problem, but as part of the underlying business process. This approach means that all facets of an organization should be involved in the security strategy discussion. To help you think practically and proactively about security and your organization, we've prepared a set of [5 questions and 5 tips](#) to guide your deliberations.

Year-end tax tips for small businesses

Get out your checkbook and save some money. It's not too late for your company to qualify for year-end tax deductions. Check out our [small business tax tips](#) to learn how you can profit by prepaying local income and property taxes, creating a one-person 401(k), or buying assets before the end of the year. Learn how you can reduce your tax bill by donating or destroying unsalable inventory, writing off bad debts, or even purchasing an SUV!

Business Insights

[6 steps to help secure your new PC](#)

It takes only 20 minutes for an unpatched and unprotected computer to be attacked after it is connected to the Internet. Follow these six steps to help make sure you aren't victimized.

[Change your business name? 7 issues](#)

What's in a name? Everything—particularly when it comes to your business. And that should make you extremely cautious when considering changing your business's name.

[Security, privacy, and getting the right technical support](#)

This course—designed for small business owners, managers, and employees—will help you identify and address the common technological problems you face to help ensure that your data is secure and your technology assets work properly.

[Why authentication technology can help your business](#)

Today, more than ever, protecting one's electronic identity has become a top priority. Authentication technologies validate a computer user's identity, control access to data, and can help protect against theft of confidential information.

[Get more business skills training](#)

Software Tips

[Finding and organizing e-mail messages with Outlook 2003](#)

Discover ways to manage your e-mail using Search Folders and the Find and Filter features in Outlook 2003. Learn how to save and view messages in different formats and automate where messages are stored.

[Getting started with Office Outlook 2007](#)

Learn how to efficiently manage e-mail, contacts, and schedules with Microsoft Office Outlook 2007. Explore new features that help you to access information quickly and manage tasks productively.

[Windows Vista Test Drive](#)

Now you can try the latest operating system from Microsoft without having to install it on your PC. Take the Windows Vista Test Drive and explore Windows Vista on your own, or follow along with guided exercises and videos.

[Backup and recovery can't get much easier](#)

See how simple it is to back up and recover your files with Windows Vista. Learn about easy-to-use tools that can help you avoid data loss resulting from hardware failure, cyber theft, or user error.

[Watch what you install on your server](#)

Today's server operating systems are so user-friendly that it seems almost anyone could successfully deploy a new application. But a server isn't as forgiving as a desktop computer. Learn what steps to take before you install that new software.

[Getting started with Windows Live OneCare](#)

Take a short tour of Windows Live OneCare and learn how to find information, set preferences, and manage common tasks like backup and tune-up.

[Discover PivotTable reports in Excel 2007](#)

Make sense out of your data. Learn about PivotTable reports in Microsoft Office Excel 2007, a fast and powerful way to analyze data and answer your questions.

[What's so great about PivotTable reports?](#)

Learn about the little-known yet powerful PivotTable feature in Microsoft Office Excel, which organizes, summarizes, and analyzes your data to reveal its meanings.

[Get more software training](#)

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Offers

[Need a business plan?](#)

Get started with this free eBook—"Your Road Map to Success: How to Write a Winning Business Plan"—from the Microsoft Startup Center.

[Enter today to win what you love](#)

Certified for Windows Vista products are designed and tested for ease of use, better performance, and enhanced security. Combined with your Windows Vista-based PC, it's an experience you're bound to love. Enter the "Look for the Logo" sweepstakes today.

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Webcasts

Microsoft Office System

Webcast: Top Tips for Excel 2007

On-demand

Microsoft Office Excel 2007 provides easy access to powerful productivity tools, offers a larger workspace, and delivers faster performance. [Listen and learn](#) about the top 10 ways you can put Excel 2007 to work for you.

Events



Downloads

[Microsoft Office Small Business free 60-day trial](#)

Save time and stay organized with this familiar, easy-to-use set of productivity and contact management tools.

[Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack for Word, Excel, and PowerPoint 2007 File Formats](#)

If you use Microsoft Office 2000, Office XP, or Office 2003, you can now open, edit, and save documents, workbooks, and presentations in the file formats that are new to the 2007 versions of Microsoft Office Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

[Microsoft Outlook Connector](#)

Use Outlook 2003 or Outlook 2007 to access and manage your Windows Live Hotmail or Office Live Mail accounts—including e-mail messages and contacts—for free!

[Word 2007 Add-in: Microsoft Math](#)

Easily create graphs, perform calculations, and solve for variables by adding computational and graphing capabilities to the Equation Tools Ribbon of Microsoft Office Word 2007.

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