



“We wouldn’t use anything but HP—HP Business Notebook PCs, printers, paper and inks. Just as in cooking, the ingredients and equipment you use makes a huge difference in the final dish. In business when you start with the best you end with the best—for your customers and for your company.”
—Karen Smith, President and CEO, smith marketing group, Campbell, Calif.

HP customer case study: Entrepreneur Karen Smith drives success with HP notebook PCs, HP printers and HP supplies

Industry: Marketing and public relations

HP recommends Windows Vista® Business.

Objective:

Equip full-service marketing, graphic design and public relations agency with technology solutions for mobile computing and high-quality in-house printing.

Approach:

Deploy HP Compaq 6910p Business Notebook PCs, HP All-in-One and HP Color LaserJet Printers

IT improvements:

- Reliable, lightweight Business Notebook PCs support staff mobility
- Standardization enables interchangeability of accessories
- Dependable tools support operational efficiency
- High-quality printing brings company and customer collateral in-house

Business benefits:

- Outstanding products and services build customer satisfaction
- Crisp screen and print images enhance marketing presentations
- Mobile tools enable off-site management
- CEO takes a vacation!



Karen Smith knew even as a teenager that someday she wanted to run her own company. Her career for many years built the enabling foundation; she worked as a marketing communications professional for companies ranging from start-up ventures to well-known corporate giants. In 2000, Smith set sail on her own. As President and CEO of smith marketing group, inc., she is fulfilling her dream. Her California Bay Area company is a full-service marketing, communications and public relations agency specializing in marketing services and consulting resources. Backing her success every step of the way is an integrated network of HP Business Notebook PCs, printers, supplies and services.

"Because we standardized on the HP Compaq 6910p Business Notebook PC, we can just come into the office, sit down and get to work. All the docking stations are the same. That has been a tremendous time saver, because you're not running around trying to figure out which power cord is yours."

Karen Smith, President and CEO,
smith marketing group, Campbell, Calif.



Smith appreciates HP Total Care for her business. Total Care includes support around the clock on products in- or out-of-warranty. And with HP expertise and learning options, Total Care allows Smith to protect her HP solutions and use online chat options and sales support as needed.

"HP solutions help smith marketing group put its best face forward," Smith says. "When you have the best team of people working for you and the best technology and systems in place, you produce the best results for your customers. That's why I choose HP."

Challenges in business

smith marketing group reflects the diversity of a thriving global business culture. Walk into its offices on any given day and you might hear Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Hebrew, Italian or French—all languages spoken by smith marketing group staff. The company started out with mostly high tech clients, but has expanded to include non-profit organizations, Chambers of Commerce, doctors, lawyers—indeed everything from mom-and-pop operations to Fortune 10 companies.

In the beginning, there was just Smith and her home equity line of credit. Her major challenges were financing and staffing—issues common to virtually every start-up. "My attitude is that you can do anything you set your mind to," Smith says. "I really don't like to label any challenges as being because I'm a woman. When you launch a business, the challenges usually are funding and ramping up. You need to have people on your team to get the business, but at the same time you don't have the customers yet to support the overhead."

Smith's first customer was HP. However, her first equipment was not. With her eye on the checkbook, Smith chose other brands—and soon regretted the

decision. "The printer broke very quickly, and it never did produce quality prints. I had problems with the notebook too. When it came time to replace everything, I decided to standardize with HP. It was a brand I knew personally. Its high ROI just makes business sense. The prices are competitive, the quality is outstanding and HP stands behind its brand."

"My life is on my HP notebook—all my applications, from graphic design to customer databases. I use my HP Compaq 6910p Business Notebook PC to manage the company, make customer presentations and even for my personal work. Because I depend on my notebook for everything, I choose HP quality and reliability."

Karen Smith, President and CEO, smith marketing group, Campbell, Calif.

For help selecting the appropriate solutions, Smith went to the HP website and consulted HP's Small and Medium Business Center. "They were extremely helpful," Smith says. "We called because we needed to talk through what made the most sense for the agency. The HP representatives helped us pick the tools that were best suited for the way we work and the things we need to accomplish."

The HP Compaq 6910p Business Notebook PC: mobile processing power

smith marketing group employs some 30 persons, including temps she places at client organizations. Each of the firm's seven core employees uses an HP Compaq 6910p Business Notebook PC. A powerhouse of mobile productivity, the notebook PC delivers a full range of integrated wireless and security solutions with high-performance graphics. Smith selected this model because it allows the company to standardize while meeting the needs of a diverse and mobile staff. "With

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Business.

our office needs ranging from intense design projects by graphic designers to Internet research by copywriters to the full gamut of business applications, we needed versatility in our set standard," she explains. "I wanted one standard model so we could switch out accessories and power cords, but it had to demonstrate performance with a lot of processing power. That's why I chose the HP Compaq 6910p Business Notebook PC."

"We do a lot of direct mail campaigns and we print them all in-house. I don't have to send them out to a printer because the printers, papers and inks we use from HP are of such high quality. It's a valuable added service we can provide our customers."

Karen Smith, President and CEO, smith marketing group, Campbell, Calif.

Smith uses her notebook frequently on the road with clients. All her business productivity tools are there, from e-mail¹ to customer databases; biometric log-in provides security. In meetings, the crisp screen image showcases brilliantly her company's impressive product portfolio of graphic and website designs. "We're very mobile in our office," she says. "I find myself often meeting people in coffee shops and restaurants. It's wonderful to be able to pack up and take my mobile office with me. The HP Business Notebook is light weight making it easy to tote around all day, and the battery lasts a long time. I show a lot of our creative work to potential customers on my notebook. It's important to have a flawless presentation onscreen. The very image of my company is at stake."

The Business Notebook users find the size perfect for travel and work in the office. The graphic designer

adds a HP LP2465 24-inch Widescreen LCD Monitor for the extra size required in graphics applications. The company also uses HP Care Pack Services for extended warranty protection. At the office, the Business Notebook PCs all network to the company's three HP printers.

Printer power in-house: from marketing collateral to customer work

smith marketing group uses two HP Color LaserJet Printers and an HP All-in-One, with HP print cartridges and paper. The All-in-One covers office printing, copying, and scanning and fax. The HP Color LaserJet printers produce all the company's stationery, business cards, direct-mail pieces and marketing collateral—no need to spend time or money sending work outside. Smith, who serves as a publicist for national entertainment award nominees, uses the HP Color LaserJet printer's large-format capabilities to print posters for nominees. For work destined for large-run presses, the HP Color LaserJet printers produce great color to act like proofs, she says. What's more, the printers open the door to serving a client base that neither needs nor can afford high-volume printing.

"A lot of our customers are small businesses," Smith explains. "Our HP Color LaserJet Printers let us print high-quality materials fast and inexpensively. I can run the work right here in my office and deliver it to my customer. The ink and the vibrancy of the colors are outstanding. Customers are extremely satisfied with the results."

HP supplies, she adds, add to the overall package of quality and reliability. "I would never use remanufactured cartridges because of what they do to your equipment," she says. We use all HP—paper, printers and ink."

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Customer solution at a glance

Primary applications

Graphic design; operations management; mobile computing; in-house printing of company and customer collateral

Primary hardware

- HP Compaq 6910p Business Notebook PC
- HP All-in-One printer
- HP Color LaserJet Printers

HP Services

- HP Care Pack



Contact the
HP Reference2Win
Program, 281-514-5755
for more information.

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Rapid growth and a long-needed vacation

With such a dynamic operation in place, Smith marketing group is entering its eighth year in growth mode. Revenues increased substantially last year and Smith is looking forward to the company receiving its woman-owned business certifications. Smith is a member of the American Marketing Association and the Public Relations Society of America. Her company also volunteers at their local animal shelter with pro bono graphic design and newsletter work.

With everything humming along, Smith recently took her first vacation in years, touring the East Coast. She took a few weeks to travel from Montréal to Washington, D.C., stopping at Niagara Falls, Martha's Vineyard, Nantucket and other beckoning

spots. With her HP Compaq 6910p Business Notebook PCs in hand, she was able to stay in touch with the office and keep things running smoothly. "I'm so excited," she said from on the road. "Without my HP solutions and my expert staff, there is no way I could be President and CEO and be out of the office."

Pausing to think about it, Smith notes that outfitting her company is a lot like equipping a kitchen. An avid cook, she learned by trial and error that the best knives, the best pots and freshest ingredients make a huge difference in quality. "It's the same thing in business," she says. "When you use the best technology and you have the best team, you produce the best results for your customers. At Smith marketing group, we choose HP."

To learn more, visit www.hp.com

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¹Wireless access point and Internet service required and sold separately. Availability of public wireless access points limited.

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Certain Windows Vista product features require advanced or additional hardware. See

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/getready/hardwarereqs.aspx> and

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsvista/getready/capable.aspx> for details. Windows Vista Upgrade Advisor can help you determine which features of Windows Vista will run on your computer. To download the tool, visit www.windowsvista.com/upgradeadvisor.

This customer's results depended upon its unique business environment, the way it used HP products and services and other factors. These results may not be typical; your results may vary.

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