

ICON INFORMATION CONSULTANTS

Pamela Chambers O'Rourke powers consulting firm with HP tools



"I wouldn't be where I am today without HP tools. Like me, HP believes that effective business tools are critical to success, whether you're a small company, a non-profit organization or a large business. My little HP 2133 Mini-Note PC, for example, is full-featured, lightweight and fabulous."
—Pamela Chambers O'Rourke, President and CEO, ICON Information Consultants, LP, Houston

HP customer case study: Pamela Chambers O'Rourke relies on HP to power successful IT consulting company

Industry: IT consulting, staff augmentation, project management

HP recommends Windows Vista® Business.

Fed up with the slow pace and lack of customer focus at her IT company job, Pamela Chambers O'Rourke 11 years ago struck out on her own to found ICON Information Consultants. She thought maybe she'd reach billings of \$70,000 her first year—and instead surpassed \$2.5 million. With ICON experiencing double digit growth every year since, O'Rourke needed a reliable technology backbone to support continuous expansion and consistently outstanding customer service. Long familiar with HP quality and service, she turned to HP Compaq Business Desktop PCs, HP Servers and HP Printers. For a mobile computing solution that can keep up with her own frenetic pace, she relies on the HP 2133 Mini-Note PC.

"Over the last 11 years that ICON has been in business, we have grown rapidly," O'Rourke says. "We started with a single HP Desktop PC in a one-person office to 750 employees and annual revenues of \$75 million. HP products allow us to create an IT infrastructure that is scalable with our business needs. Specifically for my own work as a multitasking mobile executive, the HP 2133 Mini-Note PC is indispensable."

Houston-based ICON provides staff augmentation, vendor management, project management, pay rolling, and security management for customers including many Fortune 100 firms. The company employs 750 consultants throughout the United States, and specializes in placing Information Technology as well as accounting and finance professionals. ICON is a certified Woman's Business Enterprise (WBE) by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council and a Texas-certified Historically Underutilized Business.

Objective:

Operate competitively and productively as rapidly growing, woman-owned staff-augmentation company

Approach:

Deploy comprehensive array of HP Mini-Note PC, Business Desktop PC, HP Server and Print Solutions

IT improvements:

- Lightweight mobile computing
- Powerful, energy- and space-efficient desktop PCs
- Scalability to accommodate rapid corporate growth

Business benefits:

- Deploy next-generation tools for optimal performance
- Provide superior customer service
- Support ongoing business expansion
- Maximize operational cost efficiency

“With the HP Compaq dc5800 Small Form Factor PC and the HP Compaq dc5800 Microtower PC, we expect to see reduced maintenance costs, higher productivity of staff and reduction of energy usage.”

Pamela Chambers O'Rourke, President and CEO, ICON Information Consultants, LP, Houston

A mover and shaker with a passion for excellence

Early in her career, at a time when women in IT were relatively rare, O'Rourke broke new ground through technical prowess and a passion for customer service. She holds a degree in Management Information Science and worked as a network engineer/project manager. Colleagues acknowledged her for her talent at testing and crashing websites. However, her boss told her she “spoiled” her clients and made co-workers nervous. “I’m a mover and shaker. They didn’t know what to do with me—they’d never met anyone who could work so fast,” she says.

Buoyed by the strength of her father’s lifelong belief in her, O'Rourke left her job to launch ICON. She’s also created a sister company, iSolutions Ltd, to do project management. To keep her edge, she pays herself on commission. In 2002, the U.S. Small Business Administration named her “SBA Person of the Year.” Among her long list of accolades are: Top 25 Women Business Builders, Fast Company magazine; Largest Woman-Owned Business in Houston, Houston Business Journal; Woman of Excellence, Women’s Enterprise Magazine. The award O'Rourke most cherishes is a “Woman Business Star” nomination from The Women’s Business Enterprise Alliance. It reflects her commitment to assisting the growth and development of woman-owned businesses. Her biggest business challenge, O'Rourke says, has been hiring employees who meet expectations. Another challenge is accepting that some people resist “positive and technology changes.” She’s had to learn patience, which she works on daily.

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Windows Vista®
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Mobile multitasking with the HP 2133 Mini-Note PC

One partner that’s always met O'Rourke’s high expectations is HP. Studies show that women in business are relationship builders who gather the facts and seek “perfect” high-quality solutions at the right price. They want convenience, value, work/life balance and products that both simplify and enrich their workdays. For O'Rourke, all this led to her choice of the HP 2133 Mini-Note PC as her personal powerhouse. At 2.8 pounds and 10 inches wide, this highly mobile device comes with Wi-Fi Certified WLAN and optional Bluetooth® wireless technologies.¹ As with many women in business; O'Rourke’s office is wherever she happens to be—at home, on the road or at client sites. She sits in her kitchen and checks e-mail, finding the full-size QWERTY keyboard and touchpad easy to use even after carpal tunnel surgery. She favors Microsoft’s next generation operating system, genuine Windows® Vista®, for its improved operations and graphical interface.

“I travel extensively and I need a unit that has wireless capabilities so that my business won’t stop when I am out of the office,” she says. “My little HP 2133 Mini-Note PC is full-featured, lightweight and fabulous. I need to operate at top speed and it helps me stay ultra-productive.”

O'Rourke travels approximately two weeks out of every month, using her HP 2133 Mini-Note PC’s wireless capabilities to check and respond to business e-mails, complete Requests for Proposals, keep up with client

Customer solution at a glance

Primary applications

Mobile computing, office computing, data center, printing

Primary hardware

- HP 2133 Mini-Note PC
- HP Compaq dc5800 Small Form Factor Business Desktop PC
- HP Compaq dc5800 Microtower Business Desktop PC
- HP ProLiant DL360 G5 Server
- HP ProLiant DL380 G5 Server
- HP LaserJet P4015 Printer

information and update her travel plans. "The HP 2133 Mini-Note PC delivers a great balance of size and functionality," she says. "The ability to work remotely without missing a beat helps me strive for a better work-life balance." So valuable is the HP 2133 Mini-Note PC to O'Rourke's own efficiency that her company now is doing a cost/benefit analysis on equipping her sales and management teams with the device.

Up next: HP Compaq dc5800 PCs

As part of ICON's current office technology upgrade, O'Rourke chose the HP Compaq dc5800 Small Form Factor PC and the HP Compaq dc5800 Microtower PC as the company's high-performance employee desktop PC. Both models deliver full-featured, proven technology in a stable, long lifecycle environment with robust security and energy-efficient design. The Small Form Factor can be placed vertically or horizontally on work surfaces to maximize space efficiency.

"We chose those models because they combined functionality, reliability, increased processor speeds and cost effectiveness," she says. "We expect to see reduced maintenance costs, higher productivity of staff and reduction of energy usage. The cost savings could be significant." To safeguard information security, O'Rourke is looking into HP ProtectTools, HP's comprehensive security software suite that allows customers to control levels of protection. ICON's technology infrastructure also relies on HP ProLiant Servers and HP LaserJet printers.

Being in the IT business, ICON's connection with HP ensures customers of the company's ability to deliver secure, high-quality service. "HP is an American institution," O'Rourke says. "The public and our competitors know that HP is leading edge in everything it touches."

Women will ask for directions

Another research finding about women in business is that they are willing to seek out assistance when they need it, and use online resources to learn and to connect. O'Rourke calls her participation in an HP Mentor Protégé program a "dream come true" for building her confidence and skills. "While I have achieved a degree of success in my business, I know I don't have all the answers," she says. "I am always seeking out those 'in-the-know' who can offer tools, technology, guidance and advice on how to take ICON Consultants to the next level, which is global." She's also taken advantage of HP's Women in Business online resources, which include product information and selection guides; free templates for customizable brochures and letterhead; and free, instructor-led training classes available 24/7 on topics ranging from wireless networking to in-house marketing. "You have to have solid business tools and know-how to do your job," O'Rourke says. "I understand technology; therefore my whole career I've embraced HP. The company doesn't just make hardware; HP innovates solutions and services that help its customers—non-profits, small businesses, large companies and consumers—succeed."

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Helping women in business

Even as O'Rourke prepares for the next stage of growth at ICON, she supports other women to succeed at business ownership. She serves on the board of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC), the nation's leading advocate of women-owned businesses as suppliers to America's corporations. WBENC is a key source of information on trends in supplier diversity programs, and also is the largest third-party certifier of businesses owned and operated by women in the United States.

O'Rourke also has donated thousands of dollars and as well as a roomful of equipment to a program that helps women lacking high school diplomas help their children use computers. In 2005, the SBA named her Women in Business Champion of the Year.

"HP tools have made me successful not just as an entrepreneur, but as a business IT provider for my clients throughout corporate America," O'Rourke says. "As a woman and as a business owner, it's important to me to give back, to cascade success."

Contact the
HP Reference2Win
Program, 866-REF-3734
for more information.

To learn more, visit www.hp.com

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

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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 and IT 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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