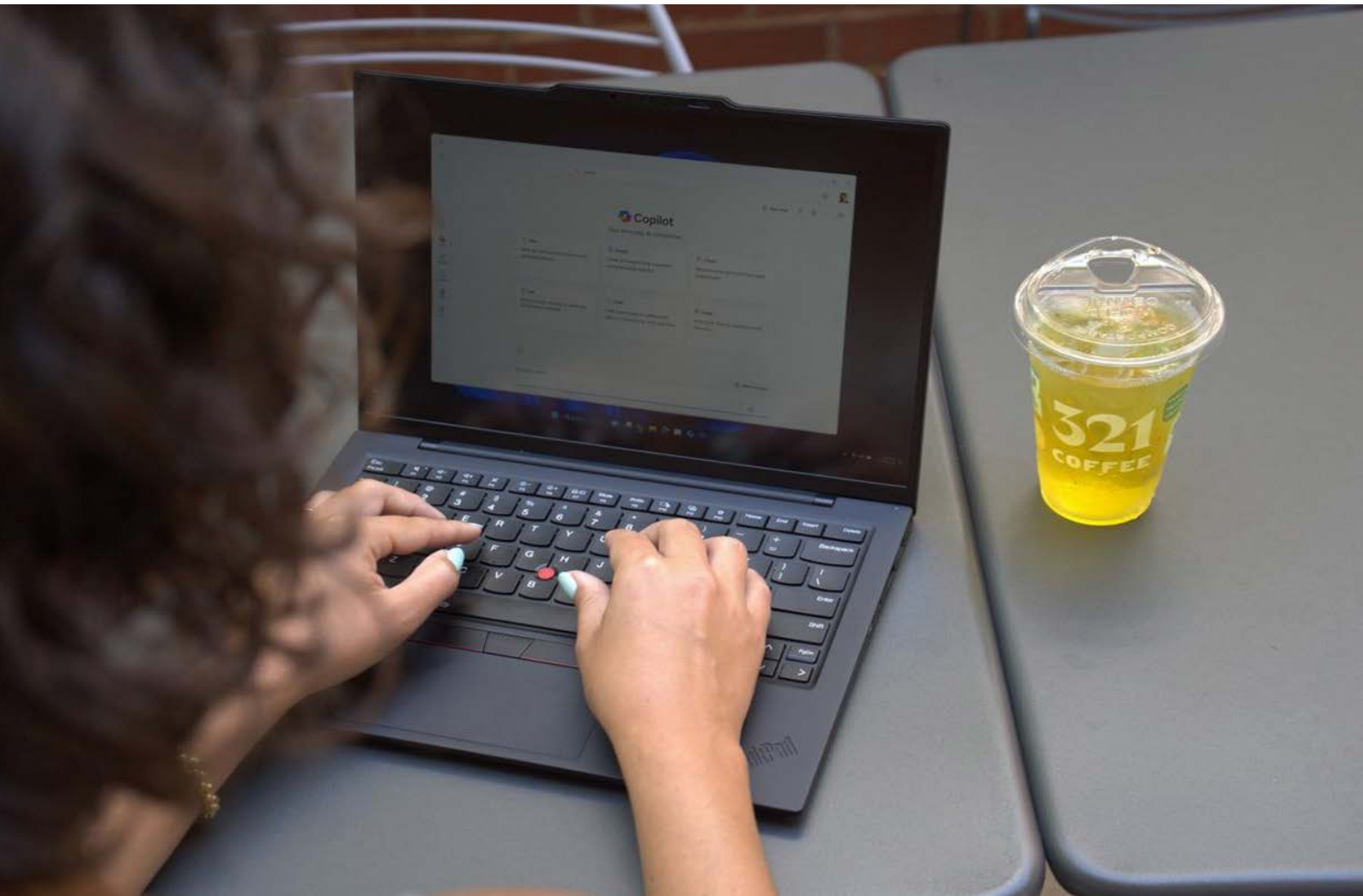


AWA Matters

For Members of American Workers Association

2025

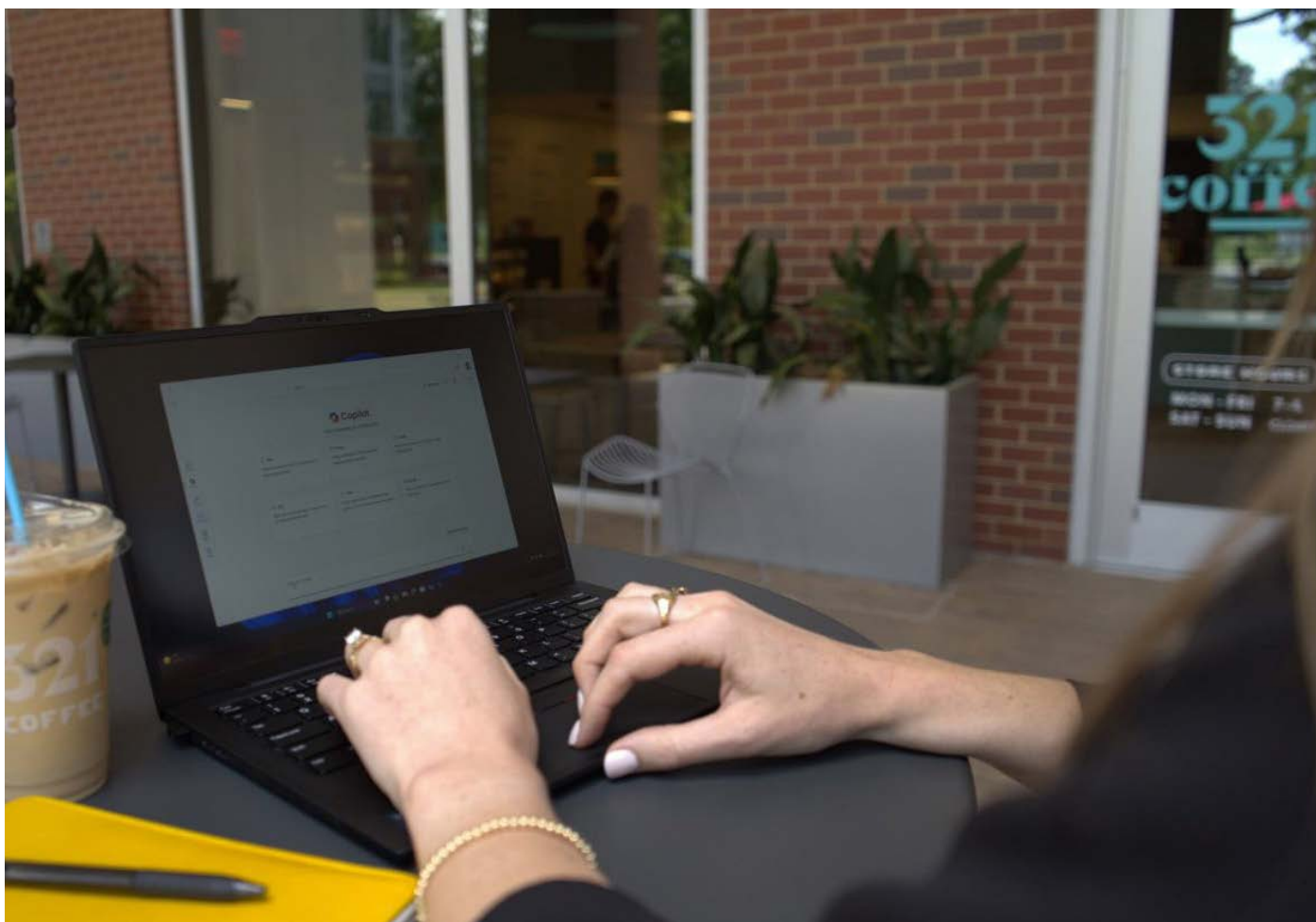


Expert Tips for Small Business Success in the AI Era

(BPT) - Did you know small businesses comprise 99.9% of all businesses nationwide? Today's small businesses are entering a new era, with smart, accessible technology helping to level the playing field, making it easier than ever to compete, grow and thrive. From AI-powered PCs and generative AI tools like ChatGPT and Gemini, to intuitive platforms like Canva, Square, Shopify, Mailchimp and QuickBooks Online, there's technology available to support almost any business need today - no IT team required.

The result? Modern technology is opening doors to give small business owners powerful, affordable resources right at their fingertips. Technology helps entrepreneurs and small businesses automate everyday tasks, tackle challenges, streamline operations and scale smarter - proving that small really can be mighty.

This Small Business Month, business owners can celebrate the entrepreneurial spirit fueling economic growth and vibrant communities. Whether you're just starting out or looking to take your business to the next level, here are practical insights to help your business thrive in today's digital-first world.



Accessible resources drive impact

It's vital to recognize that any size business needs to optimize today's technological advances. In its third annual global CIO report, Lenovo found a whopping 96% of chief information officers expect to increase AI investments over the coming year. Additionally, 81% of CIOs say they're leveraging third-party AI tools or deploying a mix of third-party and proprietary AI. Notably, 39% of CIOs are already seeing a positive return on their organization's investment in AI.

Are most small businesses embracing new technologies? The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Teneo found that almost all small businesses (98%) are using AI-enabled tools and more than half (51%) use financial management tools like Intuit QuickBooks. In addition, nearly half of small businesses (47%) use four or more technology platforms and 40% use GenAI tools like chatbots and AI-powered image creation. In other words, adoption of new technologies is widespread, highlighting their importance in today's business environment.

To get started, begin by identifying one key area of your business that could benefit from automation - whether it's managing finances, improving customer service or streamlining marketing. From there, explore budget-friendly tools tailored to your business goals and tap into resources like mentorship programs and funding opportunities that can help you make informed decisions and implement tech with confidence. With the right support, small, strategic changes can unlock major efficiencies, setting the stage for long-term growth.

From underdog to top dog: Harness AI for big wins

AI isn't just for large enterprises; in fact, Vena FP&A reports that 80% of staff who use AI and automation tools say they have become more productive. Interestingly, less experienced workers experienced a 35% productivity jump, proving AI can make a positive impact for organizations and individuals, regardless of skill level.

A McKinsey report from March 2025 found 21% of organizations using generative AI say their businesses have fundamentally redesigned at least some of their workflows, resulting in cost savings. Lenovo's global 2025 CIO Playbook reports that AI spending expectations by IT decision-makers will nearly triple in 2025 compared with last year. The bottom line: Nearly half of organizations (42%) believe AI-powered devices boost employee productivity and experience. That's why an overwhelming 90% are piloting, planning or exploring AI-powered PC rollouts in the mid-to-long term.

The takeaway for small business owners? You don't need to overhaul everything, but focusing on one area of your business to leverage AI can drive meaningful results.

Resources to help businesses grow

When seeking resources to optimize technology for your business, start by identifying top technology priorities. Key places to start include improving cybersecurity, using project management tools to streamline workflows and automating tasks like email marketing and inventory management. You can find information and resources on the U.S. Small Business Administration website.

In addition, programs like Lenovo's Evolve Small are dedicated to championing North American small businesses. This year, Evolve Small is introducing the AI Grant, designed to demystify AI for small businesses and help integrate AI into their everyday operations. The grant, which will be awarded to eligible businesses, includes \$25K in grant funding, a comprehensive, customized Lenovo technology package valued at \$10K, AI training, plus access to mentorship, mental health and leadership coaching and community support.

There are also free resources available for any small business to leverage through the Lenovo Pro Community site, such as on-demand workshops and courses on AI PCs, informational guides on building your tech stack, data security, emotional intelligence and more.

By investing in key resources and embracing AI, Lenovo aims to empower small businesses to compete effectively with larger companies, ensuring they remain the beating heart of local communities.

Small biz, big impact

Small businesses are crucial to local economies, serving as cultural cornerstones by creating jobs and fostering innovation. In today's AI-driven landscape, technology isn't a luxury, it's a lifeline. When harnessed thoughtfully, even the leanest operations can unlock smarter workflows, sharper marketing and stronger customer relationships.

Fortunately, adopting newer and better technology does not have to break the bank or be overly complicated. The key is finding what suits your unique business needs and budget. With the right tools, support and mindset, small business owners can compete at a higher level than ever before - and win. Whether you're looking to simplify operations, better connect with customers or scale sustainably, now's the time to act.

Ready to embrace technology and bring your business to the next level? Explore resources, get inspired by real small business success stories and discover how the Evolve Small program is helping small businesses across the country thrive at Lenovo.com/EvolveSmall.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF MEMBERS

The Annual Meeting of the Members of American Workers Association will be held at 12444 Powerscourt Drive, Suite 500A, St. Louis, MO 63131, on Wednesday, August 13, 2025 at 11:30 a.m. (CST) for election of Directors and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting and any adjournment thereof.

The above notice is given pursuant to the By-Laws of the Association.

PROXY **American Workers Association** **August 13, 2025 Annual Meeting of Members** **THIS PROXY IS SOLICITED ON BEHALF OF** **AMERICAN WORKERS ASSOCIATION**

The undersigned member of American Workers Association does hereby constitute and appoint the President of American Workers Association, the true and lawful attorney(s) of the undersigned with full power of substitution, to appear and act as the proxy or proxies of the undersigned at the Annual Meeting of the Members of American Workers Association and at any and all adjournments thereof, and to vote for and in the name, place and stead of the undersigned, as fully as the undersigned might or could do if personally present, as set forth below:

1. FOR [], or to [] WITHHOLD AUTHORITY to vote for, the following nominees for Board of Directors:
Jay Delsing, Dale Turvey, and Nathan Dierking
2. In their discretion, the proxies are authorized to vote upon such other business as may properly come before the Meeting.

This proxy, when properly executed, will be voted in the manner directed by the undersigned member. If no direction is made, this proxy will be voted for the election of directors and officers.

DATED: _____, 2025

Signature _____

Name (please print) _____

Please date and sign and return promptly to 12444 Powerscourt Drive, Suite 500A, St. Louis, MO 63131 whether or not you expect to attend this meeting. The Proxy is revocable and will not affect your right to vote in person in the event that you attend the meeting.

St. Louis, Missouri
July 18, 2025
Date



How to Choose the Right Dental Care Products for Your Pet

(BPT) - If you're a pet parent, you probably worry about your pet's health. You may also know cats and dogs can develop oral health issues that are difficult to treat, leading to expenses and additional health concerns you'd rather avoid - for their sake and yours. That's why it's important to be proactive when it comes to your pet's oral health.

Poor dental hygiene in your dog or cat can lead to plaque buildup, bad breath, gum disease and even serious health issues that can affect the heart, liver and kidneys. Regular oral care keeps your pet healthier, from their snout to their tail.

In honor of Oral Health Month, there's no better time to start a new dental care routine for your four-legged family members.

Safeguarding your pet's dental health

Bad breath, yellow or brown tartar, red gums, difficulty chewing, excessive drooling or pawing at the mouth are signs of dental problems in your dog or cat. If you notice any of these signs, consult your veterinarian right away.

Vets recommend brushing your pet's teeth with pet-safe toothpaste, and scheduling regular vet checkups and dental cleanings as needed.

Most pets aren't crazy about having their teeth brushed, so there are many oral health products that also help improve dental health in cats and dogs that you can use along with brushing.



Find the right oral health supplement for your pet

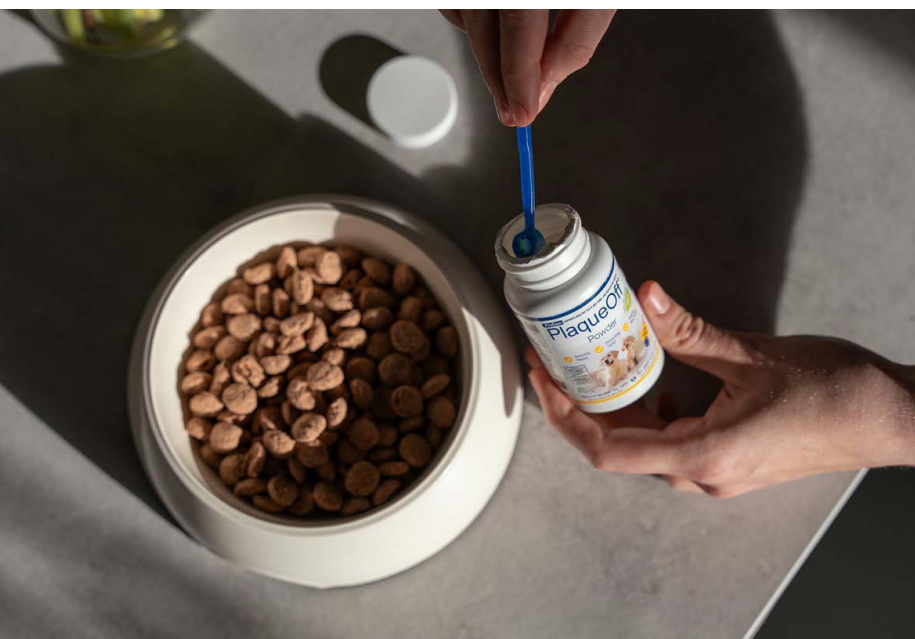
Besides cats and dogs having very different needs and challenges when it comes to oral health products, their age, breed and size also make a difference. Pets are individuals too, with their own preferences and behaviors - not to mention allergies, food sensitivities or picky eating habits that can make administering products difficult. The key is finding what your pet responds to the best.

With these challenges in mind, Swedencare offers a variety of ProDen PlaqueOff® oral health products specially designed to address different pets and their individual needs, including powders, soft chews and more. The active ingredient in ProDen PlaqueOff® is A.N. ProDen® - a 100% natural organic kelp, sustainably harvested from the pristine waters off the Scandinavian coastline. It works with the pet's body and creates an effect that dissolves existing tartar build-up and prevents new deposits from forming.

Here are some options to choose from:

ProDen PlaqueOff® Powder

Using a powder to help reduce plaque, prevent tartar and treat bad breath is ideal for a seamless addition to your cat or dog's diet, as you simply sprinkle once, daily. It's also the most economical choice, particularly for long-term use. This option is especially suitable for introducing to younger pets as a preventative measure, given its longevity and cost-effectiveness.



Trusted by veterinarians for promoting good oral health and approved by the Veterinary Oral Health Council (VOHC), product trials of ProDen PlaqueOff® Powder show a significant reduction in plaque and tartar, while also improving bad breath. You'll see a noticeable improvement in 3-8 weeks, when used as directed.

Powder for Dogs provides correct dosage information based on the weight of your dog. Powder for Cats offers a tasty formula containing brewer's yeast that's specially made for cats, which they won't be able to resist!

Treat them with ProDen PlaqueOff® Soft Chews

These soft chews are another option to try that has shown significant reduction in plaque and tartar, while also improving bad breath. The product for dogs is the only VOHC-approved soft chew on the market with A.N ProDen®. These soft additions to their oral health routine may be welcome treats for your cat or your dog.

Dogs love their bones

For dogs who love to chew, Dental Care Bones provide dual functionality - they're designed to satisfy a dog's natural chewing instincts while also aiding in dental care. If your dogs prefer a longer-lasting treat to engage with, this may be the perfect option. Whether you use them as a relaxation aid or a reward, Dental Care Bones provide a fun way to help keep your dog's teeth clean and breath fresh.

Dental Care Bones contain the same unique, clinically proven seaweed ingredient as the rest of the ProDen PlaqueOff® products, ensuring your dog's oral health routine will be bolstered with every chew. They come in a variety of flavors and sizes, catering to both large and small breeds, making them a versatile addition to your pup's dental care regimen.

Pet oral health made simple

It's never too early - or too late - to start with good dental habits. Finding the best option for your pet will make taking care of their dental health a lot easier. By taking proactive steps now to help keep your furry friend's teeth in good shape, you'll feel good knowing you're helping to support their overall health and well-being for years to come.



**Association members
enjoy 5% off pet
insurance plans**

A health insurance plan for your pet frees you from financial stress when choosing the best available veterinary care for your furry friend. With Figo:

- Insurance plans cover unexpected illnesses and injuries of your dog or cat.
- Visit any licensed veterinary practice, emergency hospital or specialist in the US, Canada or Puerto Rico.
- Choose from three flexible plans that can be customized to meet your budget needs.
- We may reimburse up to 100% of your actual vet bill with options for unlimited annual benefits.

Log in to the association website at americanworkersassociation.com for complete details.



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For information regarding your membership
and association services, call or write:

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1-800-992-8044 or (636) 530-7200

Articles in this newsletter are meant to be informative, enlightening, and helpful to you. While all information contained herein is meant to be completely factual, it is always subject to change. Articles are not intended to provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Consult your doctor before starting any exercise program.

Benefits may not be available in all membership levels. For more information, or to upgrade your membership, please call 1-800-387-9027.

American Workers Association (AWA) is a non-profit organization serving the goals and needs of the independently employed across the nation. Since its inception in 1995 AWA has been dedicated to providing benefits and resources to help its members, as well as advocacy opportunities so they can have a voice on issues to positively impact their lives.

Despite changes to the economy and the health care landscape that have made an uncertain future, AWA is focused on assisting its members in any way possible and growing into a leader for everyday families.

