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## **Routes to the SMB Market: Opportunities and Challenges for Technology Solutions Vendors**

### **Technology Solution Vendors Need to Sharpen their Focus to Educate, Reach and Serve SMBs, according to SMB Group**

07.21.2010 – The SMB Group's latest report, ["2010 Small and Medium Businesses Routes to Market Study"](#) reveals that SMBs are often frustrated and confused about how to apply technology solutions to help them achieve their business goals. SMB respondents state that their top two technology challenges are to figure out how different types of solutions can help their businesses, and to get better insights out of the data they already have.

“SMB view growing revenue and attracting new customers as their top business goals,” according to Laurie McCabe, Partner, SMB Group. “But they are often unable to get the metrics they need to better manage their businesses--and have a hard time sorting through a plethora of technology jargon and fuzzy, indistinct solution value propositions to figure out what solutions will help them.”

These challenges were just as significant in medium businesses as in small ones, despite the fact that most medium businesses have IT staff, larger IT budgets and better access to external technology advisors. "As a result, newer channels, such as application marketplaces and social media are taking off as key sources for information and guidance as SMBs try to get better insights before they purchase," says McCabe.

These results highlight just one of the challenges and steps that SMBs face in making technology solution decisions. Too often, IT solutions vendors consider only one or two steps in the process--such as the eventual purchase channel--when formulating their go-to-market strategies. By analyzing the entire process, from needs identification through the actual purchase, vendors can do a more effective job of educating, reaching and selling their solutions to SMB customers.

The [SMB Group "2010 Small and Medium Businesses Routes to Market Study"](#) partnered with [Hubspot](#), a leading Internet inbound marketing company, to develop the survey, which illuminates the complete decision making process for North American SMBs for software and service technology solutions including:

- ERP, Financials and Accounting
- Business Analytics
- Collaboration
- Contact and Customer Management
- Infrastructure Management Solutions and Services
- Web site design/hosting
- Online Marketing

Study findings analyze all aspects of the cycle, including needs identification, general information sources, individual advisors, key selection criteria and purchase channels.

- Top SMB business and technology challenges
- How the Internet, social media, app stores and marketplaces, the generational shift and other trends are reshaping SMB routes to market.
- Current and planned SMB use of software and services technology solutions
- Where SMBs go to discover and learn about different types of solutions--and why
- Who SMBs rely on to guide them in selecting these solutions--and why
- Top reasons that some solutions make the “short list” over others
- Where SMBs purchase software and services technology solutions--and why they select these channels
- SMB budgeting process and spending plans
- Decision-making process and roles

For more information about the study, please visit the [SMB Group](http://www.smb-gr.com) web site at <http://www.smb-gr.com>, or contact us at (508)410-3562 or send an e-mail to [surveys@smb-gr.com](mailto:surveys@smb-gr.com)

### **About the SMB Group**

The SMB Group focuses exclusively on researching and analyzing the highly fragmented “SMB market”—which is comprised of many smaller, more discrete markets. We take a custom approach to working with clients, assessing where you are in the market today, and the steps you need to take to get where you want to be tomorrow.

Our collaborative and pragmatic, actionable research approach provides you with insights and recommendations you need to capitalize on shifting market requirements and trends, and create successful go-to-market outcomes.

Our primary focus areas include: business solutions; digital marketing solutions; collaboration and productivity applications; cloud computing, software-as-a service (SaaS) and managed

services; IT Infrastructure solutions and management services; social networking strategies and analysis; and unified communications, VoIP and conferencing solutions.