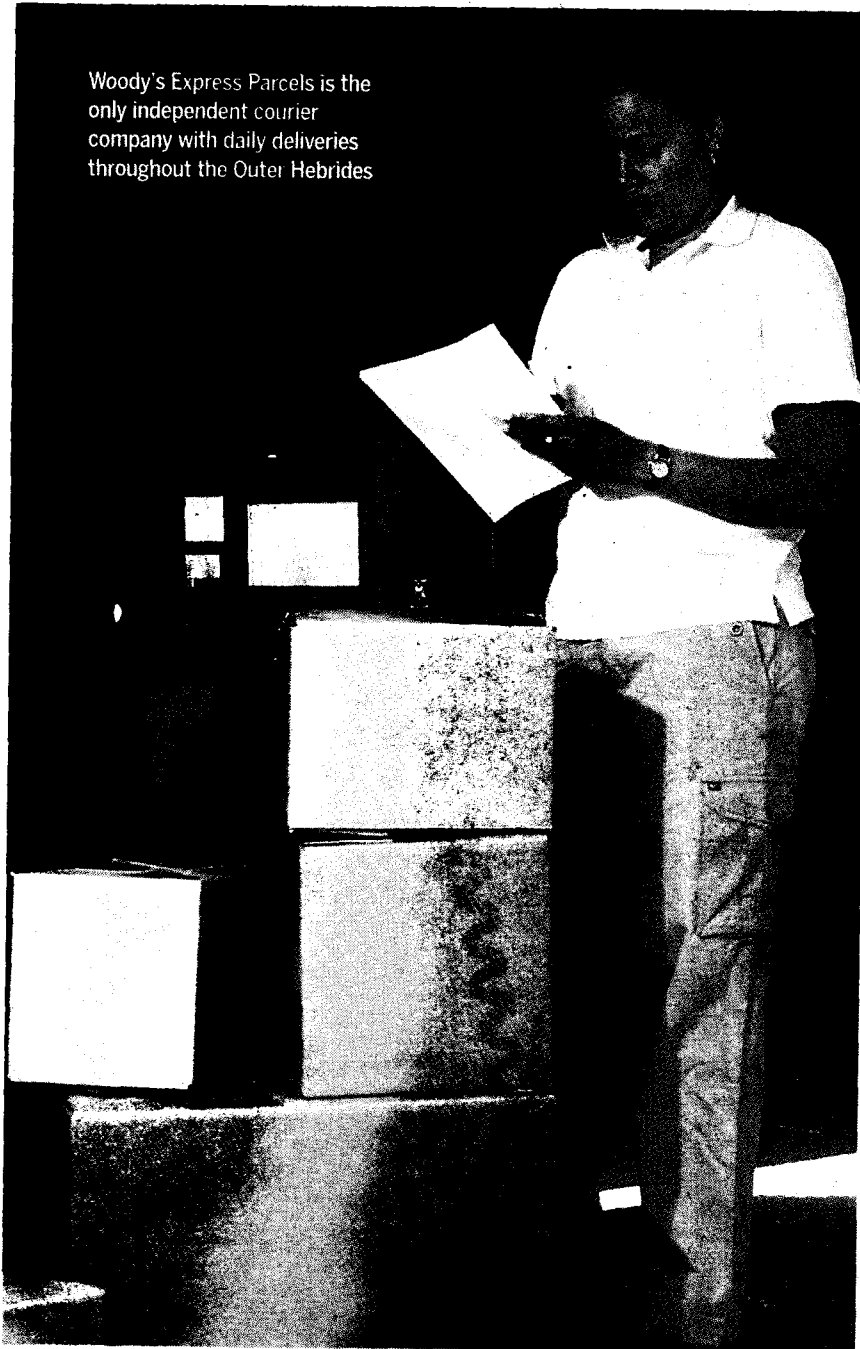




Big news for small businesses

Woody's Express Parcels is the only independent courier company with daily deliveries throughout the Outer Hebrides





Small companies prove they can compete and thrive in the changing economic climate

Businesses across the country are under pressure from the credit crunch and crawling economy.

None more so than small companies, who are facing rising costs, lower credit and increased competition.

However, there is light at the end of the tunnel for those wanting to get ahead. By improving confidence, controlling costs and sharpening competitive edge, there's no reason why a company can't grow and prosper in today's difficult climate.

Small businesses can stand out from the crowd by running more efficiently, controlling spending and taking advantage of the latest technologies to help the business succeed.

Way Out Experiences, who organise eco-friendly holidays and volunteer projects tackling global issues such as the

'If a customer calls, we're able to instantly view their details'

extinction of orangutans in Borneo, is one small business doing just that.

The company relies on the speedy and accurate transfer of information between its UK communications office and Malaysian sites. This is made possible with the help of a web-based application for running a business – helping with everything from accounting to e-commerce and CRM – called NetSuite, provided by BT.

Marketing Director Afzaal Mauthoor explains: "Now, every person, no matter how remote they are, has access to real-time information about each customer.

"If a customer calls, we're able to instantly view their

details, improving our customer experience. It also saves time, and enables us to share information accurately and promptly.

"Every business is different and there's no single formula to get the optimum value from assets. However, by choosing the right communications technologies, understanding the web and taking advantage of free services available, any business can enjoy long-term value and increased productivity.

There are low-cost and free services specifically designed to help small business control budgets, while embracing flexible working, using VoIP for calls online, getting on-demand IT support, or consolidating suppliers can all help too.

Woody's Express Parcels, a haulage and courier firm operating from Stornaway in the Outer Hebrides with depots in Inverness, Aberdeen and Glasgow, decided to consolidate suppliers to save.

The business used services from a number of suppliers and whenever something went wrong, nobody wanted to take responsibility.

The company signed up to BT Communications Complete, a unified communications solution with broadband and ISDN services that reach the most remote areas of Scotland.

David Wood, Managing Director, says: "BT provided exceptional support, tailoring the system to our precise requirements, enabling us to deliver a more professional customer service."

And with the solution already making an impact, discussions are now underway to integrate mobile communications and extend the solution to serve other Woody's offices."

■ Go to www.sbw08.co.uk to download 'Understanding... Competing and Thriving in a Changing Economy', one in a series of guides designed to help small businesses increase their confidence and competitive ability.