



## SMART MOVE:

*Invest in point-of-sale software specialized for florists.*

Since buying Floral Accounting Systems Inc.'s POS software in 2008, Tracy D'Amico wastes less time on tedious tasks such as banking and digging through register tapes for her accountant's sales tax records. That leaves more time for promoting Rose Garden Florist's best-selling products and services, which she identifies more easily thanks to reports the software generates.

D'Amico discovered that weddings, for example, were a larger portion of business at her Barnegat, N.J.-based shop than she realized, and giftware moved more slowly than she thought. So she cut giftware space from 50 percent to 20 percent of the show-room and added a design consultation room. Since making the change, wedding work has grown from 10 percent to more than 30 percent of her business. Overall sales have grown 8 percent since buying FAS.



**ROOM TO GROW** Tracy D'Amico added this design consultation room to make the most of her growing wedding business, a decision made obvious by her POS software.

"Our bridal sales alone have increased almost enough [in 2009 through 2011] to recoup the initial investment in our POS," D'Amico said.

D'Amico used QuickBooks — which she considers "doable" for a startup — her first four years in business. (She bought an existing store in 2004.) "But the difference, oh the difference of using a made-for-flowers POS — huge!" she said. Employees no longer use two processes for recording income — logging delivery sales into QuickBooks and ringing carryout sales on a cash register (later entered into QuickBooks).

She also happily abandoned "the chicken scratch of today's employees" and related room for error, for the automated enclosure cards generated through FAS. Although she knows some florists insist hand-written cards are more personal, she'd rather have them legible and accurate.

**Be a Wise Guy:** Consider keeping QuickBooks for some purposes. D'Amico still uses it for expense recordkeeping, including payroll, and because some of its reports are more "thorough" and "easy-to-read" than those of FAS, she said.



**Tracy D'Amico**  
Rose Garden Florist  
Barnegat, N.J.  
Years as retail florist: 22

In sports, a smart play can win the game. In literature, a clever plot can launch an unknown author to critical acclaim. In film, an actor's research can lead to a box office hit and a chance at an Oscar. And in business, a bright idea, whether big or small, can lead to a profitable year, a happier workforce, new customers or stronger standing in the community and among your peers.

But small business owners often don't have time to brainstorm — much less execute — new ideas. Even if managers and employees have generated a mental list of potential changes or spent a long, snack-fueled brainstorming session filling white boards and super-sized Post-It notes with ideas, they're often too busy to conduct the due diligence needed to separate the truly good ones from the harebrained. Lucky for you, we found 30 tried-and-true smart moves, worthy of imitating. But one company's shrewd decision won't always be the right solution for you, so choose the ones that meet your needs.