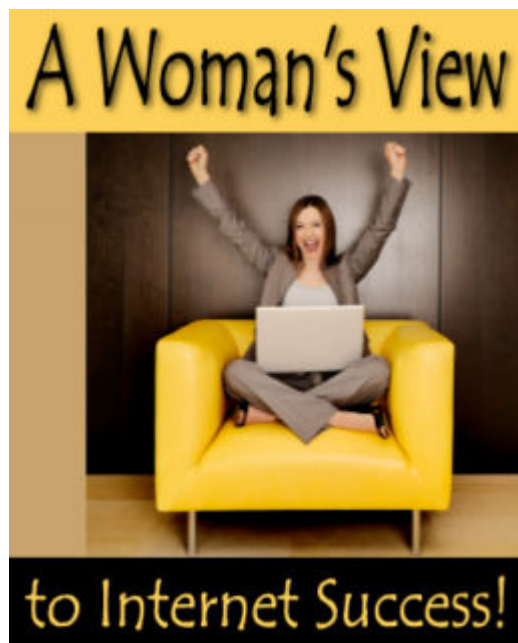


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Do You Know Which WAHM (work at home mom) Business is Right for You?

When you are considering working from home, there is a set of decisions that must be made. First, you must decide whether or not working at home is right for you. Next, you need to consider what type of work at home job you will be doing.

There are many opportunities for WAHMs out there, both offline and off. Having a successful WAHM career starts with evaluating your own skills and requirements in a job and then finding the right match.

Sometimes the best place to start with your WAHM career is where your out of the home career ended. Many women find that they can become independent contractors in the field that they previously worked in. You can use your previous work experience as a launching pad for your WAHM career. Some of the ways to use your experience to your advantage are: finding a company that hires people in your field to work from home, using your previous experience to become an "expert" writer in your field or starting a business related to your previous field.

However, some women look at their WAHM careers as a way to break out of their old job. If you'd like to try something completely different, there are plenty of opportunities for entry-level work as an independent contractor. Many of these jobs deal with telephone or online customer service. When you work as a customer service agent from your home, you just need a reliable Internet connection and a working phone. Companies also hire medical transcriptionists, data entry professionals and virtual personal assistants to telecommute.

If you want to start your own business, the opportunities are very vast. You can start with a direct sales company and sell products from an established brand to friends and neighbors. You'll make commissions through your sales and also off of recruiting other people to sell the products. There are hundreds of direct sales companies that offer everything from aromatherapy products to candles to cooking supplies.

Another option for starting your own business is offering a service in your community. Day care center operators, florists, professional organizers and hairdressers all have the option of working at home, among many other professions. Of course, starting a business in your community normally means that you've had some experience in that field. However, there are some small business ideas that can be started without much experience at all.

Many women turn to the Internet for a source of at home income. The World Wide Web offers a plethora of job opportunities. You can offer your services online as a freelance web designer, writer or virtual assistant.

You can also start an online store that sells products that you make yourself or have the rights to resell. Many WAHMs establish their businesses online by using one of the popular auction sites, like eBay. Still others find a home in internet marketing, by directing web traffic to a website and then recommending certain products and services.

Decide first what type of job you'd like to do and then work from there. If you are truly a people person and need to get out each day, direct sales or a local service business might be right for you. If you are the type of mom who lives online and is comfortable with the Internet, try finding a job or starting your own business on the web. If you like the comfort of having a weekly paycheck, look into telecommuting positions.

Once you've decided what category of job you'd like, do some research on what it takes to be successful at that type of business. If you feel like you are drawn to one particular business or company, then sit on your decision for a week and see how it feels. Imagine what your life will be like as you take on the duties of that job. Most importantly, be realistic with yourself about how much time you can devote to your business. Finding the right match isn't hard when you thoroughly consider your options.

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Dealing with WAHM Stereotypes

One of the hardest issues to contend with as a WAHM is the perception of others that you aren't working. Many people think that working at home isn't working at all, and that you have all of the free time in the world. Those who have spent any time working at home know that there is a lot of time and energy that goes into effectively working at home. Friends who call in the middle of the day, spouses who expect you to be doing more while home or family members who make offhand comments, can undermine those efforts.

Not all stay at home moms work, and if you have friends who don't it can be hard for them to understand that your days aren't free. Calls during your working time, invitations to lunch and uninvited guests can throw a wrench in your work schedule. In order to get your friends to respect your time, it's important to make your working schedule clear to them.

If you don't have a clear work schedule, then it is time to make one for yourself. By setting office hours for yourself, you make it clear to everyone around you that you are serious about your work. It will also help set boundaries for your time. Tell your friends that you will be unavailable from a certain time to a certain time, but you'd love to talk before or after those times. You may even go so far as to turn off your phone.

If you do answer the phone and someone wants to chat, politely let them know that you are working but can speak after a certain time. Also, schedule things like lunches or visits for one day per week. This way you'll reduce the drop-ins and spontaneous invitations.

Spouses can sometimes have difficulty understanding why, if you are home all day, the housework isn't done. This problem can best be solved by familiarizing him with the nature of your business. Show him exactly what you need to do each day, and how long it takes to do each task. Help him understand your work schedule, and how much time you need to work per day. Showing exactly how much money you are making will help him realize the benefits of your work as well.

Then ask him to help you come up with solutions for working at home and maintaining the household. Make a list of things that need to be done each week, and assign duties to you, him and the children (if they are old enough). Then taking care of the house becomes a family priority and something that you all share responsibility in. Notify him of any special projects by keeping a work calendar on the wall. That way he can see what is going on with your work schedule, and why you have ordered pizza for dinner three times in the last week!

Many WAHMs can be hurt over offhand comments about working at home. Family or even friends can say things like "Well you have the time, because you are at home." In situations like these, you have two choices. You can either get upset and offer a flustered defense or you can take their comments with a grain of salt and offer a calm response. Depending on the situation you can say something like "Well, let me check my work schedule. I know I am not available on these days" or "That would be great on Friday afternoon, which is when I leave time in my work schedule for those types of things."

Remember, working at home is new territory for many people although the numbers of WAHMs are growing. It may take some time for the average person to understand the commitment and scheduling that it takes to effectively work from home. You may never convince some people that you are actually working while at home but establishing respect for your own time is one way to make them see that your work is a priority.

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Beware of Work At Home Rip Offs

If you need to make money at home, you've no doubt starting looking for work at home opportunities. Every woman who wants to become a WAHM has traveled down the same path.

Unfortunately, that path is littered with scams and traps to take money and time from honest women looking to make money from home. With a little common sense and extra research, you can find legitimate work at home opportunities.

The first step is to search for jobs in the right places. Don't simply click on ads to find work. Try to find helpful groups of WAHMs who have successful work at home jobs to guide your search. You can try searching on message boards or finding e-mail groups for ideas of where to start your work at home job search. Many of these women can give you insight into which work at home opportunities are actually worth your time.

Keep in mind that there are no real ways to get rich quick on the Internet or by working at home. The only people who get rich are those who are scamming others. Never believe an ad or an "employer" who claims that you will get rich instantly.

There are also a few red flags to look for when you are searching for Internet jobs. You should never have to pay for work or job lists. There are plenty of free listings available that can provide tons of work at home opportunities. Companies that want to charge you for lists of jobs are just trying to get your money. The lists are often filled with dead job leads, or lists of companies that want to charge you money. Many work at home scams will also require you to pay a start-up fee or cover the cost of "necessary" training. Again, legitimate jobs will never require you to pay them any money for you to work.

Another warning sign is if the ad or website tells you to "act now." You should always do research before joining a company and never feel pressured to make a decision right away. Many websites are set up with text that says that the offer will expire on today's date. But if you revisit that website the next day, the ad says that the offer expires on that day.

If you are unsure about a company, do some research on the Better Business Bureau website. The BBB has files on all businesses that have had complaints filed against them. You can see what other people have to say about a particular company and be steered away from scams.

There are some scams that have been around for years that should be avoided at all costs. These business scams have unfortunately been successful for the scammers, so they continue to take the money and time of hardworking WAHMs. If you see an offer for any of the following types of jobs, run the other way.

Envelope stuffing is a common scam, although it is being seen less and less these days. These jobs are normally listed as mail service jobs, and then you are asked to pay for a start up kit. After you receive a start up kit, you are given instructions to place your own work at home ads. You basically just sell the start up kit to other people and become a scammer.

Craft assembly scams can take many forms. Typically, you receive a set of crafts to complete with instructions. You generally pay for the set and then are told you will be reimbursed for the kits and also paid for their assembly. After working hard at assembling the kits and returning them, you will be told that your work is not up to their quality standards. You will be out the cost of the kits, and they will sell your crafts anyway.

There are legitimate jobs out there for WAHMs, but you have to do some research on the opportunities first. With a little time and careful analysis you can find a work at home job that will be rewarding and scam free.

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Drawbacks to Working At Home

Working at home is one of the fastest growing trends in careers today. However, many people jump on the WAHM bandwagon without considering all of the drawbacks to working at home. While some people are naturally inclined to work at home, others find the transition more difficult to make. There are many benefits to working at home, but the drawbacks need to be considered before you make the choice.

The first drawback to looking for a work at home career is that your current career may not easily transfer to a work at home situation. If you work in the medical field or are a police officer, being a WAHM might not be an easy transition unless you are willing to change careers entirely. Sales and administrative positions transfer well, as do creative jobs like design and writing. For those in jobs that can't make the work at home switch, you'll have to think carefully about what you want to do when start working at home and start investigating that field.

Cost is another important factor in deciding if working at home is right for you. Although many mothers start working at home to save on childcare, there are added costs to being a WAHM. If you need health insurance, it will have to come out of your pocket instead of being paid by your employers. There are also many taxes that you will have to pay. Your record keeping must be excellent in order to keep track of your income and expenses, and to fill out your income tax return at the end of the year.

Working at home with children is not always as easy as it seems. If you have young children that aren't in school yet, it may be difficult to work when they are awake. This can mean lots of busy naptimes and late nights to get your projects done when they are sleeping. Family members can help take care of your children from time to time, but the responsibility of both your children and your job will be firmly in your hands. With older children, it is sometimes easier to work from home. But you will still have to start and maintain a fairly balanced schedule in order to get everything done.

WAHMs have to be very self-motivated and disciplined in order to get their work done on time and correctly. If you are the type of person that is motivated by outside factors (such as a supervisor), then working at home may not be your cup of tea. When you work at home, there is no one there to look over your shoulder and make sure that you are still working. Distractions like the television, Internet and housework can be hindrances to your work at home success.

Isolation is another problem for WAHMs. Working at home alone can get frustrating and lonely. Make sure you are comfortable with spending time alone, and that you take steps to combat isolation. If you are especially prone to being depressed, then the isolation that comes with working at home may make you feel withdrawn and sad. Taking steps to combat loneliness is an important part of any WAHM's success.

After considering these factors, you may decide that working at home is not right for you. However, thousands of people deal with these drawbacks and still have successful work at home careers. These reasons should not stop you from becoming a WAHM if that is really what you want to do. Just make sure you understand the realities of the work at home lifestyle before you commit to it.

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Organization for WAHMS

Getting organized is the key to making your life as a work at home mom efficient and, relatively, stress free. If you can get and stay organized, your business and your home life will flourish. Without taking some simple organizational steps you'll be swamped with work and overwhelmed with laundry in no time.

One of the most important parts of getting organized as a WAHM is to establish business hours. Setting up specific working times during each day has many benefits. First, you'll be more consistent with your work. Once you've gotten used to starting and stopping at a specific time each day you'll work more efficiently. You'll manage your work time better and reduce distractions like checking your e-mail or watching television. You'll also be less likely to pick up things to do here and there, like laundry or taking time to errands. If you have set working hours, you'll schedule those tasks around your work time so you'll be more focused during your work time. It will help your family and friends understand that you are working while you are at home, and you won't be available during those hours.

Next, you need to start delegating tasks to other family members. It may seem easier to do everything yourself, but once you have work duties on top of household duties you'll realize how few hours in the day there actually are. There is nothing wrong with asking your children to fold the laundry, or having your husband cook dinner a few nights a week. By sharing the household duties as a family, you'll have more time to get your work done and feel more rested. The important thing to remember when you delegate is that things won't be done the way that you would do them. However, they are getting done.

Planning your work and family activities will make the whole house run smoother. If you don't have a daily planner, then you need to get one. It doesn't matter if it is a paper planner or a computer application. When you use a planner to write down everything that needs to be done, and then plan each activity for a specific time then you'll have the opportunity to manage your time more wisely in and out of your home office.

Organizing your home at large will help make your business more organized. While it may take a while to establish some organizational habits in your house, your efforts will be well worth it.

Don't try to get organized in a weekend or even several days. Work up to a level of organization. Start small with your desk space. Organize the things in your desk and top of your desk. Make sure that everything that you need has a place, and toss or donate things that you don't need. Then move on to another portion of the house. When something is out of place, it's easy to put it back in its home once you've taken the time to organize your storage spaces around the house. If need be, take a trip to an office supply store or home improvement store and buy items like bins, cabinets and shelves that will help you stay more organized.

Getting organized as a WAHM does take some time and effort. Realize that with time your organizational system will get better. Work with your family to make your home run efficiently, and then you'll be able to concentrate on your work when you need to.

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"Get Paid To" Programs for WAHMs

"Get paid to" programs (or GPTs as they are often called) are one of the many ways that WAHMs can make money from home. If you've been looking for a work at home job, you've no doubt run across ads that claim that you can make money by reading e-mails, answering surveys, trying free samples, doing assembly work, etc.

The good news is many WAHMs do make money from GTP programs.

The bad news is that the GPT industry is swamped with scams and ripoffs.

If you are interested in getting involved with GPT programs, you'll have to do your homework and take special precautions to protect yourself and your computer.

It should be noted that very few people make full time income from GPT programs. Like mystery shopping, GPT should be used as a supplemental income source at best. For many WAHMs, the GPT programs are a fun and easy way to earn some extra money when they need it. People who have experience with the programs recommend that you never rely on GPT to pay your monthly bills. But they can be a perfect solution to earn money for a special occasion or holiday shopping.

Just what are GPT programs? They fall into three basic categories: get paid to read e-mail, get paid to fill out surveys and get paid to try products. Each type has its own pros and cons. Before you start any GPT program, you should take some steps to protect your personal information. You will be required to give your personal information for many of these programs and the less you actually say about yourself the better.

To start you should register a separate e-mail address for your GPT purposes.

Many programs can result in a lot of spam mail, so you'll want to keep your main e-mail address separate. You can also register with NetZero to get a free voicemail inbox and private phone number.

This is helpful in keeping your home phone free of telemarketing calls.

Get paid to read e-mail programs will pay you a few cents for receiving e-mail and clicking on links. Normally these e-mails offer special deals on products or encourage you to sign up for programs. Sometimes, depending on the e-mail program, you will get more money or "points" if you try the offer. You are not obligated to try the offers, and will get paid a small amount just for clicking on the link inside of the e-mail. There are many popular paid e-mail companies. Do some research before you sign up for a program to make sure that people are actually getting paid. Try not to sign up for too many programs at once or your GPT e-mail address will be swamped.

Getting paid to fill out surveys works in a similar way. You will sign up for a survey program and then fill out some personal information. You will be matched to surveys that are looking for the opinions of people in your income bracket, of your age or one of several different qualification factors. Depending on the company, you will get paid per survey, or completing surveys will earn you points that can later be redeemed. Just as with get paid to read e-mail programs, do research on survey companies before you sign up. There are hundreds out there but only a handful are worth the time and effort.

Finally there are get paid to try products programs. These programs pay significantly more than the other GPT programs. However, you will be required to pay anywhere from \$1 to \$10 to try the products. When you use these kinds of programs, you have to be careful to take complete records of what you will be receiving and when you need to cancel service or return the item. Most of the time you will be registered for recurring billing for a monthly service, which can be cancelled within the initial 7 to 14 days. You can call the companies and cancel the service, yet still be paid for signing up for the GPT program.

Remember that GPT programs are a great way to supplement income but are not something to be relied on for monthly bills.

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How Affiliate Marketing Can Enable You To Work From Home

Most of us are incredibly comfortable in our own homes. It is where all of our comforts are kept. Part of the daily grind of a job is having to leave the home. The task is much more difficult if you have children to consider. Many of us would love to be able to work from home. We are more comfortable and can be much more productive. However, very few regular jobs offer this type of flexibility. They want employees on site where they can be watched and monitored.

If you would like to make a living working from home, the affiliate marketing business could be the answer. If you have a computer, with internet access there is no reason your home office cannot become your new home business.

Affiliate marketing means that you work on behalf of another company. You help to expand a company that already exists. This provides you with several advantages. First, your marketing brands or products that are already on the market. You don't have to create new product and present it to the public. If the brands are fairly well known then attracting customers should not be too difficult. It is much easier to sell something that has an established reputation than to break in with something new.

Second, the advertising of the product will already be taken care of. The main corporation will have some suggestions and equipment available to help advertise the product or product line. This can include pamphlets, catalogues or posters. They will also make samples available at no cost to you. This minimizes your investment so the risk is nothing. You just need to concentrate on selling the product and maximizing your earnings.

Third, Affiliate marketing can be done in the comfort of your own home. As long as you have adequate storage space for company product there is no reason you cannot set up shop in the comfort of your own home. You can put as much or as little into the venture as you like. You are paid according to how well you perform. If you have an off month, it is reflected in your commission. You don't have to worry about a boss coming down on you. How much you do is entirely up to you.

Finally, running this business venture from your home presents very little risk for you. You have the perfect location and you don't need to invest any of your own money.

You are also not subject to work are sales targets to break even. What you produce is what you are paid for.

Running an affiliate marketing business is hard work. You'll want to make the most of your skills and talents and that means working some very long days. Don't be fooled by affiliate marketing companies that promise the world for very little effort. You'll have to work very hard promoting the products that you decide to sell. However, if you are willing to work hard and use all of your abilities, there is no reason why your affiliate marketing home business cannot be a huge success.

If you want to work from home then an affiliate marketing scheme is the perfect way. With minimal risk to you, you will be able to employ your skills to your own benefit. You'll have to work very hard but there is everything to gain and very little to lose.

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Basic Affiliate Internet Marketing

All of us would love to make a little more money. Sometimes just a little to supplement an income can be a huge help. Today it is easier than you think to get a little extra cash in your bank accounts. Most of us today have our own personal websites. We can get them for free and use them as a method to keep others informed of what we are doing. You can actually turn your website into a way of making some extra cash for you. By placing some ads on your site, you have the potential to earn some cash.

When people go onto your site, if they see an ad that is interesting and click it on you receive what is known as a referral payment. The more clicks the better. Gradually your earnings will increase as your website gets viewed.

You're not likely going to get rich with just your own personal website. However, it is a way to get started. There may come a time when you create another site and you can start turning this into a money making venture as well. You could sign up for an affiliate program and make money through their ads.

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To do this well you need to think of an appropriate affiliate program that readers of your site would appreciate. For example, if your site is about pets, you may want to look for affiliates that work with pet supplies, pet food or veterinary services. You'll want to have affiliates that will enhance your site. Having ads for rare books or sporting goods on a pet's website isn't going to attract too much attention.

Once you have a site up and running, you need to get a list of affiliate companies that will give you their advertising banners. There are loads of companies on the net that will help you. You can also get performance statistics on them as well. You will be able to track how much you will earn and how you will be paid. Once you get a few banners onto your site you'll be able to check the progress for yourself.

Two companies that are incredibly popular are commission junction and link share. These will both help you find affiliates for your website. They have loads of good, accurate information available on what companies would be best and how well they perform.

Signing up for one of these affiliate programs is easy. You will be asked for personal information so don't be put off. This is necessary because they will be paying you commission money. You'll be expected to give your social security number as well as take information. Once you sign up you will need to think about which programs to choose.

Commission junction has all of the information available on which companies pay which rates of commission. They also have information on how well and timely they make their payments. If a company is a shaky reputation, commission junction will know about it.

If you're looking to make a little more money then it is easy. Why not take the first step and turn your personal website into a way to make cash. Fill up those blank spaces with advertisements and let the money roll in. You can always expand and create different websites. The more ads you can get the better. Affiliate programs are great ways to help you earn money. You can start off small with your own site and then expand into other areas. Eventually, you could build your own affiliate business. Look into affiliate marketing. It could be quite lucrative.

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Pitfalls To Avoid When Starting Your Affiliate Marketing Business

Well, you have left that awful job and now are working for yourself. You have jumped on board your new venture which is affiliate marketing. You're incredibly excited and are working all the hours God sends to make this venture a success. You checking up and monitoring your site and you see that sales are going quite well.

Many of the strategies and things that you put in place have helped your affiliate company sell quite a bit. The end of the month finally arrives and you're waiting for that first large payment. When you check your account you are slightly disappointed. You did make some money but according to your calculations you should have had more. You check your sales figures again and decide to contact the company. They inform you that some of the items sold were returned so those had to be deducted from your commission.

This is disappointing but it does happen. Companies do not pay out commission on returned goods. You need to be aware of this to avoid fall into further pitfalls. No one would expect to be paid a commission on a returned item however; some less than honest affiliate marketing companies can use this to scam some of your profits. You need to make sure you understand their return policy and how it will affect the amount that you are paid.

A return occurs of course when a customer brings an item back. Charge backs can also happen when they dispute an amount on a credit card. Be sure you keep a close watch on which items are being chargeback or returned. See if there are any patterns that are obvious. If you notice that the orders that are charged back are always very high ticket orders then they could be giving you false information. They are doing this to keep you commission down and keep some for themselves. Keep a close eye on returns especially if you think it is happening a little too often.

Charge backs are also indicative of another more serious problem. If you notice that many of these charge backs are happening during an initial trial period, or the money back guarantee time, then there could be further problems. This is a sign that the product or service that you are promoting isn't up to customer satisfaction. It could be misleading or just poor quality. However, it will effect your commission and your future as an affiliate marketer. If this seems like it is happening a little too often then again, there are problems somewhere in the company. Look to get out and make alternative arrangements.

You also need to be aware of which items are actually commissionable. Make sure you understand which products you will be earning money from to avoid disappointment later. Sometimes the company will offer a selection of products to put on your site, however only certain items may be commissionable. Before agreeing to anything like this checks your terms and conditions carefully.

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Finally, you also need to make sure that items that are sold don't have any other conditions attached. Some will only pay a commission if the customer fills in the payment details immediately. If they select an item and continue to shop, you may not receive any commission on that item. You can also lose commission if the customer clicks on any other links before completing the order. If they order 30 of an item you promoting but click on something else then you have lost out on quite a large amount of commission.

Affiliate marketing is a great way to earn money. However, before jumping in head first you need to read your terms and conditions carefully. It may be worth having an attorney look them over for you. You need to be aware of the many pitfalls people fall into when they go into affiliate marketing. Read and understand your terms to avoid disappointment later.

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Tips For A Successful Affiliate Marketing Business

Now that you have decided to take the plunge and set up a business for yourself, you need to insure that you do all of the right things. Affiliate marketing businesses do take the risk away but you still need to conduct this venture as you would any other business. If it is your sole source of income you'll want to give it your all and make it as successful as possible. In this article, we will look at ways to get your business going and make it successful. By following the advice in this article your affiliate marketing business will get off to a great start and stay that way.

The first golden rule of any business is to identify the demand. With affiliate marketing programs you'll likely be giving a range of products to sell. Check out the demand of these types of things. You should try to stay away from trendy items. They'll sell like mad one minute but you'll be giving them away the next. You want things that you know people want and need. That way your long term sales objectives will get met.

Next is don't limit yourself to just one product. Try to offer a variety of things. Many affiliate marketing programs offer a selection and it is best to go with these. Basing your business on one product may work in the short term. However, someone will eventually come along with something better or cheaper.

Third, you need to set your business apart from others. You need to establish what makes you and what you offer better from others. What do you offer that sets you apart from other businesses? You should always use tact when talking about your competition. Putting them down or being rude will only backfire on you. Talk up the advantages that you offer and leave it at that.

Forth, you should definitely insure your home business. Everything can be fine one day but life can always take a funny turn. Accidents can happen to anyone. Ask yourself what will happen if one of your products hurts someone. Today, people can be sued for just about anything. Make sure you are insured incase the worst happens.

Fifth, you should always do your best to ensure fast and efficient service to your clients. However, there will come a time when there is a glitch. You need to keep your customers informed and aware of what is happening. Things happen that are beyond your control. Most customers are very forgiving if they are made aware of this. Keeping your customers in the dark could result in loosing them for good.

Finally, keep your customers happy. The happier they are the more likely they are to come back. Offer your customers incentives such as savings on their next purchase. It may cost you more but only in the short term. Keeping your customers happy will result is them referring you to others.

Affiliate marketing businesses are easier in the fact that they minimize risk. Everything else is like any other business. You need to work very hard to keep your customers happy. You need to set yourself apart from others and protect yourself against the worst. By following the advice in this article you will be giving your business the best possible chance for success.

[How to write and publish your own highly profitable ebook in as little as 7 days even if you can't type, can't write, and failed high school English!](#)

WAHM Blogs

Blogs are here to stay, and many WAHMs are taking advantage of the trend. Making money with blogs is a popular choice for many work at home moms. Blogs are simple to set up, and relatively easy to update.

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This is especially true when you compare blogs to other types of websites. Within just a few minutes, you can set up a professional looking blog for free and start your WAHM blogging business.

A blog is an easy to update website that looks sort of like a journal. Entries are made at a minimum of each week, and the newest entries appear at the top. Entries are normally short articles of 200 to 500 words. Readers visit the blog or read the new blog entries through a blog reading program. Readers can also comment on entries and provide links between their own blogs and your blog.

With blogs, the opportunities are wide open. Choosing a blog topic is as easy as looking at your own life for inspiration. There are blogs about everything from celebrity news to bathroom cleaning tips. Before you start a blog, do some research on the Internet to see if people are interested in your possible blog topic. Your topic doesn't have to be popular, but it does have to have a dedicated group of people who are interested in the topic.

When you pick a topic, make sure to stay within a fairly small "niche." The term niche is used to describe a group of people who have a similar interest. There are big niches – like working at home – and small niches – like tips for training your cat to sit on the toilet. Try to find a happy medium between a popular topic and a niche interest so your blog has plenty of readers. Some topics, like working at home or parenting, are too broad and have too much competition for readers.

You can set up your blog through a free blogging platform, like www.blogger.com or www.wordpress.com. There are also a half dozen others to choose from. The blogging platform will walk you through making your first entry into your blog.

After you've made a few entries into your blog, its time to monetize your blog. This means you'll be making specific changes to your blog in order to make money. One of the most popular ways to gain income from a blog is by using a contextual advertising program, like Google AdSense or Chitika. Contextual advertising pays you for each time a reader clicks on one of the advertising links on your page. The advertising program will scan your blog entries for keywords, and then place advertising on your page that relates to your page content.

For example, if you have a blog on children's television and write an article about Sesame Street, the ads appearing next to that article will have to do with that program. They might be links to shopping for Sesame Street items, or an ad for vintage Sesame Street collectables selling on ebay.

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One thing to note with contextual advertising is that you won't have to worry about placing the ads yourself each day. Once you enter the code on your blog, the program will automatically refresh the advertising when you make a new post. You will be paid several cents for each click. It doesn't seem like a lot per click, but it sure does add up quickly.

Contextual advertising is just one way to make money from your WAHM blog. You can also make product recommendations and suggest information products (e-books) to your readers. Each time someone buys a product you recommend, you will get a commission. Many bloggers find that making gentle product recommendations throughout their blogs are a way to garner extra income.

Finally, some companies will pay bloggers to create posts that suggest certain products or services. These companies pay a few dollars per post, and are fairly easy to use. The only drawback is that you'll have advertising posts throughout your blog content. However, many bloggers have found a way around this by putting "And now a word from our sponsors" at the beginning of each of their required advertising posts. This helps the advertising appear less intrusive.

[See this amazing TRUE STORY of how one woman with no previous business experience, earns \\$500,000+ per year selling other people's stuff online ... and how YOU can do it too!](#)

Beginner Blog Marketing

Blogs which are also known as web logs are the new thing on the internet. They are pretty much a platform that you can use that will allow you to post your thoughts on most any subject that you want to. They can be used for journaling, promoting, writing, and publishing, anything that your heart desires. However, if you are a beginner and new blogging as well as marketing, there are some very important things that you will want to know.

Blog marketing is pretty easy if you have a marketing mind. You are going to find that many people use blogs as a diary, and many times these blogs that are used for this purpose are not intended to make them money, but simply a way to put their thoughts out there and find others that are going through the same thing. If you have never even had a blog before, the simplest thing that you can do is to start one, and just journal in it for a while.

This will allow you to learn just what it takes and what it is all about to keep up a blog. When you are just journaling your thoughts and what is on your mind, you have nothing to lose and nothing to gain. You don't even have to make your blog public if you don't want others to read what you have to say. That is a personal preference. However, doing this will let you see how it works. Then you can move on to trying to market a product or a service.

Using a blog to market something is cheaper than using a website. This is because there are so many free ones out there that you can use to get the word out, and they are really just as good as having a website that you pay for. There are of course some advantages to having your own URL, but for a beginner, a free one will work until you get the hang of it and want to move it all over onto your own server. The free blogs are just not that customizable. If you are not familiar with HTML, you are going to find that your blog will look like everyone else's. But, that is ok in the beginning. You can always make changes later on once you are becoming successful.

When you have your own blog, you are in charge of the content that is posted on it. You can decide what is said, and what is not. You are after all writing it all, right? So, the sky is the limit. Whether you want a blog that does website reviews and takes nominations, or you want to sell things that you make out of your home, the choice is yours. Using a blog to get the word out about whatever you want too is a great way to market and promote something.

Blog marketing can get complicated if you let it. It is really only as hard as you make it. While there are some bloggers out there that are making a six figure income with the use of blog marketing, we all know that it can be done. We just want to know how. Well, for any beginner, start small, and be consistent. The six figure bloggers all did. They started with one, built it up, and then added another blog, built it up. Then, keeping up both blogs and not letting them fall behind, they continued to add more and more. Of course they had help, and they outsourced a lot of their work. If you are looking to make a massive income with blogging, you will need some help.

Blog marketing is a great thing to learn. If you can sell things from a blog, you can sell them anywhere. Making money by using a blog is one of the most satisfying things that you will ever learn how to do. Just do not expect to make money over night, know that you have to work at it consistently everyday, and remember to put into it what you want to get out of it.

Discover how YOU are going to make \$150,000 a year (at least) working from home at your very own kitchen table!

Blog Marketing: How Much Money Can You Make?

When you are using blog marketing to make an income, really the amount of money that can be made is something that you determine. You are in charge of the amount of work that you put into it, and therefore in charge of the amount that can be earned. Of course, the more you do, the more you can possibly make. The old saying, "If you build it, they will come", is one that is not true in the marketing world of the internet. Not only do you have to build it, you also have to market it and promote it. You have to get your blog out there so that people can find it and know that it exists.

Blog marketing is not something that will give you a limited income. The more you promote and market, the better your chances of making money or more money. Lets say you all ready have a blog set up. You are promoting some services and products through your blog, and you are making a nice little effortless income. Well you want more income; you want to make more money with your blog. What do you do? You promote it more. Maybe you can start with the paid blog directories and submit your blog to those. Investing some of the money that you make is a great idea, especially if you are looking to increase your income.

However, there are also many free tools that you can use to promote your blog as well as techniques. There is the comment section that is on just about every living blog on the internet. The comment section is a very useful and powerful tool that you can use to get visitors back to your blog. For example, lets take a market like model airplanes. You have a blog on model airplanes, and you want more traffic. Well, the first thing that you would need to do is to find a blog that is about airplanes, or models. You can even use your direct market if you wish which are model airplanes. Once you have found an authority blog that gets traffic, and comments on a regular basis, you can leave comments as well. Leaving comments with a link back to your blog will give others that read the high authority blog a way to get to yours. If your blog is of interest to them, they may even bookmark it, and become a regular reader.

If you are not all ready, be sure that you update your blog regularly. Doing so will allow your readers to know when they can come back to your blog for new content. Let them know how often you are going to update, and stick to it. If you tell them you will be updating once a day, do so. Or you just might end up with readers that will not follow you because they can not depend on you to give them what they are looking for; new fresh content.

When you use blog marketing to make money, the sky is the limit. The amount of money that you can make is determined by you, and something that you set. The more work and patience that you put into it, the more money you will get out of it. Whether you are promoting your favorite things, or someone else's, do it with a passion for the best results.

How to write and publish your own highly profitable ebook in as little as 7 days even if you can't type, can't write, and failed high school English!

Blog Marketing Online: What You Should Know

Marketing your blog online can get complicated and confusing if you are working on your first one. However, for a blog marketing guru, it really is not that complicated. Anyone that is familiar with blog marketing online knows that it takes dedication, hard work and consistency. For someone just starting out with their marketing campaign, it may seem like a lot of work with little or no pay off to be seen right afterwards. However, just know that marketing is something that you have to build. You have to work on it and continue to market your blog.

There are many things that you can do to market your blog and get it out there to be seen by the world. One of the most important things is to visit other blogs that are relevant to yours and leave comments. Doing so gets your blog out there to readers of other's blogs. And in return can get you some new visitors as well as readers. While all of this might seem confusing at first, after a while you will get the hang of it and it will make sense and fall in place.

Posting on your blog on a regular basis is another way to get new readers. Who wants to read a blog that is never even updated? Would you? Of course not! So give your readers what they want with new content and give it to them often. Post daily, weekly or bi weekly and be consistent about it. This way your readers and visitors will know how often to check your blog for a new post.

Know where your traffic is coming from. Know which search engines are directing people to your blog and which are not. Find out what keywords are bringing people to your blog as well. If you know all of this all ready, use it to your advantage. Write more content on the keywords that are working for you and monitor where you fall on the search engine pages that are sending visitors.

If someone leaves a comment on your blog, be sure to acknowledge it. No one wants to have a conversation with themselves, and it will only take a brief moment to reply and let them know you appreciate them. Otherwise if you have a section full of comments and you have not replied, chances are that you will not be getting many more. The readers may even drop you off of their list of blogs to visit frequently as well. Using your head and treating others as you would want to be treated is a big part of marketing.

Make friends with other bloggers. Network with them and find out how they get so many visitors to their blog and what they do to keep them interested. Exchanging ideas with other bloggers that are successful is a great idea and a good way to make friends. If you want, you can even become friends with other bloggers offline as well. Use this to your advantage and do not just take from the conversation though, be sure that you share all of your blog marketing techniques as well with your new found blogging friends.

If you happen to be quoting an article from another source or blog, always be sure to provide a link back to the original. Other wise this is known as plagiarism and something that is looked down on in the world of marketing. Stealing someone else's content is not a good idea and not something that you will get away with. You will get caught if you try to say someone else's work is your own of it is not. This is not a good way to start off in the blog marketing world as well.

Blog marketing is a great way to make extra income and get your blog out there and known. Use these techniques above to get your blog more traffic and readers and you will eventually reap the rewards.

[See this amazing TRUE STORY of how one woman with no previous business experience, earns \\$500,000+ per year selling other people's stuff online ... and how YOU can do it too!](#)

Getting Started With Blog Marketing

Blog marketing is quite easy to get started in. If you all ready have been blogging, you will more than likely pick it up very easily and naturally just as if you have been doing it all along. Also, if you all ready blog, you might find out that you have been marketing the whole time anyways, and just not realizing it.

For anyone that has never blogged before, you will of course want to start a test blog just to get the feel of how it is. You want to become familiar with the blogging platforms that you will be using and know how to make a post. While most blogs are free, you are also going to see that many of them are quite different. You will have to get to know the kind that you are using, and want to use. Otherwise, you might get lost along the way. So starting a blog and just blogging for a little while will help you with this. You can blog about anything that you want to. Maybe journal for a few weeks, or talk about your favorite movies. The sky is the limit.

So once you have become familiar with blogging and what it takes to post and make changes, you are ready to go further. The next thing that you are going to want to do is choose a niche market. You will want to choose something that is low in competition, but yet is something that people are searching for. If you happen to have a hobby or something that you love to do, there you go. Otherwise, you may have problems coming up with topics.

Now that you have your topics in place, it is time to begin blogging. When you are blogging for the purpose of marketing, you want to give your readers something that they have to keep coming back for. You want to peak their interest and make them want more from you. This will keep your readership base up and will allow you to have followers that will follow you anywhere to see what you are going to say next on their favorite topic.

Now that you have a topic, you want to determine just how much time you are going to spend updating and posting in this blog. If you tell your readers that you are going to post on a daily basis, do so. If you let them know that you will be blogging weekly, you should also stick with that do that also. Whatever you tell them, be sure that you do not let them down. Otherwise they will find another blog to read in the place of yours. Which is something that you will not want.

Learning SEO and applying it to your blogs is something else that you may want to do. This will help you as far as search engine rankings are concerned and will allow you to go further up the page. After all, that is the point to all of this, right? If you do not have time to learn what SEO also known as search engine optimization is all about, you may want to hire someone to apply it to your blog for the best results. You will find that some SEO gurus are quite affordable.

Discover how YOU are going to make \$150,000 a year (at least) working from home at your very own kitchen table!

Opening an Online Store

Opening your own store as a WAHM is easy when you take your business online. Online shopping is becoming a mainstay of American commerce and more people are comfortable with making purchases from Internet stores. If you have something that you are passionate about selling, consider opening an online store.

Before you start an online store, do some research online and check out your potential competition. If you have a business idea in mind, it is worth the time and effort to see what else is being sold in your category of products. If you have no idea what you want to sell, you'll also want to head online to search out what would be most profitable to sell.

When you make the selection of what you are going to sell, remember to think "niche." A niche is a small category of products that meet the needs of a specific group of people. Your online store shouldn't have a "Wal-mart" approach where there is a little bit of everything for everyone. Online commerce is all about small categories of interest. There are so many things to choose from, you have more success when you cater to a small and specific group of people.

The best place to start with finding a niche is thinking about your own interests. When you sell to a niche that you know well, you are more likely to know what products will be of interest to those people. You can sell to your clientele based on your own experience.

Many WAHMs start an online store because they have homemade products to offer. One example is handmade baby clothes and cloth diapers. Many WAHMs have found success with putting their sewing skills to work and selling their wares online. Other popular handmade online stores include bath and body products, candles and gift baskets.

This does not mean that you can't have online store success if you don't make your own products. There are hundreds (if not thousands) of WAHMs who have success by opening stores stocked with store-bought inventory.

Whatever your choice, whether handmade or store bought, there are many options for hosting your online store. These options depend on how comfortable you are with web design. Many companies, like Yahoo, offer store websites that are very user friendly and simple to set up. They can cost anywhere from \$30 to \$200 per month for the storefront services. Many WAHMs also find success with eBay stores, which allow them to sell in auctions or in a fixed price format.

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Look at all of your options before you choose your online store hosting. Remember that the quality of your hosting will reflect the quality of your business. The last thing you need is your entire website going down due to cheap hosting. The best choice is to find a reputable host that will provide you with a storefront and hosting for a reasonable price. Don't try to pinch pennies on this aspect of your business. You could end up out of business in no time.

Once you've found a place to host your store, you'll need to drive internet traffic to the store. One of the easiest ways is to trade banners with other WAHM online stores. Many WAHMs support each other in their online efforts. This form of networking is a great way to introduce your products to customers who already look to support WAHMs. You can also advertise using pay per click advertising and work on your website so that it increases in page ranking for certain search terms.

Keep your customers coming back with an easy to navigate website, simple ordering techniques and good customer service. Even though most of your business will be done online, it's a good idea to get a business phone line and put that number on your website. This way customers can feel confident in purchasing from you because they know they can speak to a real person if there is a problem with their order.

Regardless of what type of online WAHM store you choose to open, following these tips will make your business a success.

[How to write and publish your own highly profitable ebook in as little as 7 days even if you can't type, can't write, and failed high school English!](#)

Driving Traffic to Your Websites

Here are 21 methods for driving pre-qualified visitors to any website, blog, or affiliate link. We suggest that you use several of these to develop a comprehensive marketing plan that can be changed as needed.

1) Yahoo Answers

You can go through and start answering questions at answers.yahoo.com

You'll be surprised at the many questions left unanswered in many categories. You can become an "expert" within many fields by answering questions, and having relevant links point back to your site. It's a quick way to build back links and actually have targeted users viewing your site.

Check it out at answers.yahoo.com

Be sure to never spam. It's important to be friendly with your answers, and provide good relevant information. The goal here is to have the user to trust you.

To get started simply browse the categories or you can search for questions. For example you can do a search for "making money" and it will produce questions people have asked about "making money".

2) Myspace.com

Create a [myspace account](http://myspace.com) and start marketing to the users. Some quick tips for myspace are:

- **Never spam**

- Join relevant groups and participate within the groups.
- Post interesting bulletins that provide useful information
- Send friend requests to users within the groups you've joined.
- Use graphics in your posts to catch the attention of the reader.
- Use catchy titles, anything boring will be ignored.
- For non-targeted friends, you can try friendstorm.net
- To automate friend adding, comment posting and bulletin posting you can check friendbot.com and madderadder.com

3) Yahoo Groups

Join yahoo groups. I've joined groups within the "Home Business" section and promoted my products/services to group members. You can also create your own group as well. One of the keys here is to offer free reports and tools to the users, and then use that free report to up sell your main products/services.

You can find home business groups at the link below:

finance.dir.groups.yahoo.com

The marketing/advertising groups at the link below:

finance.dir.groups.yahoo.com

4) Stumbleupon.com

Download the [stumbleupon toolbar](#) and ensure you click "I like this" to all of your websites, and have your friends and family do the same and click the "I like this" to all your sites. Also create pages specifically for stumbleupon that either is funny and odd, which can range from funny pictures to funny videos. This works well since stumbleupon users love to browse sites that have odd and funny stuff, or even free stuff would work good as well.

5) Forum Linking

Every forum you join, always have a signature file that contains links to your most treasured websites. Be sure to use your preferred keywords within the links or perhaps catchy titles to entice clicks.

Search your own primary keywords in Google to locate forums on topics that compliment your niche or your product. But **NEVER** post to any forum just for the sake of posting your links. **Always** contribute good information if you want forum users to click your links, visit your site, and perhaps buy your products and services.

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6) Craigslist.org

Submit free ads to craigslist.org. Be sure to read the Terms of Use first, and do not to spam these classifieds.

One or two ads per week in a few select cities are fine. If you submit too often or to many times, your ads can be flagged or you can be blocked altogether as a spammer. Always use catchy titles to ensure your ad is read.

7) Site maps

Always have a site map for all your sites, and ensure the site map is submitted to Google. You can create a free site map using the online software at this website:

xml-sitemaps.com

Once your site map is created, then upload it to your site and submit it to Google using the link below:

<https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/siteoverview?hl=en>

8) Viral E-Book Giveaway

If you have an e-book of your own that contains your links, give it away free and allow others to do the same. This also works fairly well when you have another author's e-book that allows you to brand your own links inside.

Be sure the e-book provides good information to the readers. You don't want to get a reputation as a junk peddler.

9) CSS Website Design

This is not really a marketing method but I think it's important.

When having your website designed it's best to use CSS to organize the layout of the site rather than using tables. CSS can power the layout using div tags instead of table tags. This will ensure your design is tableless. It will allow your textual content to have more weight when viewed by the search engines. If you have a designer, ensure you request "CSS Tableless Design" for your next website layout.

10) Submit To Directories

Most people already do this, but just in case you haven't, you should submit to directories. You can find a list of directories below:

strongestlinks.com/directories.php

The above list some of the better directories to submit to. By submitting to these directories you can acquire back links and more traffic to your site.

11) Tell a Friend

You can install a tell a friend script to your site that will allow users to "refer" your site to their friends and colleagues. The downside to this is that some spammers try to manipulate tell a friend scripts. Be sure the one you use actually has "image verification" (like Captcha) to limit form manipulation; otherwise you may find spammers trying to use your form to send spam.

12) Search Engine Optimization

Realize that unless you are targeting keywords that have little or no competition, SEO is a **long term marketing method**.

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You probably will not start receiving traffic from search engines next week – no matter how well optimized your site and webpages may be.

Some good forums to review for free SEO tips are:

<http://sitepoint.com/forums/forumdisplay.php?f=3>

<http://forums.digitalpoint.com/forumdisplay.php?f=12>

<http://forums.seoachat.com>

<http://forums.searchenginewatch.com>

<http://searchengineforums.com/apps/searchengine.forums>

I suggest joining each of these forums for the sake of review, and then frequent the ones that you like best.

13) Squidoo.com and Hubpages.com

Create a “lense” for your site topic at squidoo.com and a “hub” at hubpages.com - This is one of the latest fads but is also in a position to change the way the Net works over the long term – at least as much as YouTube if not more so.

14) Social bookmarking sites

Submit to each of these sites.

PageRank current on 21 April 2008

<http://technorati.com> PageRank: 8/10
<http://del.icio.us/> PageRank: 8/10
<http://www.furl.net/> PageRank: 8/10
<http://www.digg.com/> PageRank: 8/10
<http://www.simpy.com/> PageRank: 6/10
<http://myweb2.search.yahoo.com/> PageRank: 6/10
<http://www.stumbleupon.com/> PageRank: 8/10
<http://ma.gnolia.com/> PageRank: 4/10
<http://www.spurl.net/> PageRank: 6/10
<http://www.rawsugar.com/> PageRank: 6/10
<http://bluedot.us/> PageRank: 5/10
<http://netvouz.com/> PageRank: 6/10
<http://www.blogmarks.net/> PageRank: 4/10
<http://www.backflip.com/> PageRank: 6/10
<http://www.blinklist.com/> PageRank: 7/10
<http://www.taggly.com/> PageRank: 5/10
<http://www.markaboo.com/> PageRank: 5/10
<http://socialbookmarking.org/> PageRank: 4/10

15) Article Promotion

Write keyword rich articles relating to your site and product and submit those articles to:

ezinearticles.com PageRank: 6/10

zinos.com PageRank: 5/10

ideamarketers.com PageRank: 3/10

articlecity.com PageRank: 6/10

PageRank current on 21 April 2008

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16) Site Explorer

Create and submit a sitemap for each website you run.

siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com

17) Epinion.com

Post your opinion on related products and services at epinion.com

18) Adbrite.com

Buy text ads and links on related high traffic websites from adbrite.com

Track those ads closely with the tracking software of your choice, so you won't waste money on non-performing ads, and also to know which ads ARE making money for you.

19) Newsletter Box

Always have a newsletter box on your website that will allow all visitors to subscribe for updates on your site. This can be a real winner, as you'll be able to market your product or service to these subscribers.

You can use aweber.com or getresponse.com for convenient but professional online autoresponder service.

20) Pay per Click search engines

I've listed this last since almost everyone does this, but I can't have a list of marketing tips without mentioning PPC. [Google Adwords](#), [Microsoft Ad Center](#) and [Yahoo Search Marketing](#) are the big three.

Other options are SearchFeed.com and Goclick.com.

For a comprehensive list of pay per click search engines see this link:

[Low Cost Pay Per Click Search Engines](#)

21) Blog Comments

Search your own primary keywords on Google to locate blogs on topics that relate to or compliment your niche or your products. Then, begin to visit those blogs on a weekly basis to contribute your on topic comments and worthwhile information, along with a backlink to your own site.

Always be considerate of the blog publisher and other users, avoiding coarse or vulgar language. Never post off-topic comments or you may get yourself banned. I suggest you avoid automated blog posting softwares – as they amount to little more than spam, and you won't get away with that tactic for long. Besides, if you're not willing to do some actual work, you're in the wrong business.

Surely some of these marketing methods have caught your eye.

You may not (probably won't) get a “flood of traffic” overnight.

But combining **several of these methods** into a comprehensive **marketing plan of action** will produce better results than all the one time ad shots, so-called traffic softwares, and black hat guru tricks that you will ever see in your lifetime.

Starting and running a business is not the same as winning a lottery.

And success in business **is not a one-shot proposition** or a big cash windfall.

Instead, it's about your willingness and consistency

.... your *willingness* to put forth the required effort – and to *continue* doing it on a *consistent* basis.

[See this amazing TRUE STORY of how one woman with no previous business experience, earns \\$500,000+ per year selling other people's stuff online ... and how YOU can do it too!](#)

Business Start-Up Fact Finder Manual

America is coming home to work. Home-based offices are becoming the wave of the future. Tens of thousands of workers are opting for this way of life, a life in which they can make their own hours, commute to work in seconds, make their own choices and become their own bosses.

For many the home office is becoming the location for a full-time job and the primary source of income. For others it is a part-time venture. Many start on a part-time basis and grow their business into a full-time operation.

Current figures available indicate that during 1991 the percentage of self-employed working from home jumped by almost 6% to approximately 12 million. While working at home has an almost irresistible appeal to many, and many have some big misconceptions of what it is like, here is some very useful information that can help you get started successfully.

Legalities of Working at Home

Zoning

Before setting up your new business it would be advisable to check on the legal status of your business. You need to check zoning laws for your community which may dictate if you can legally operate a business from home. We realize that many businesses never check on zoning for their home-based business and chances that they ever get into difficulties with the law are probably pretty slim. If there are no changes in structure and you do not have customers and or employees enter your home, regulations will tend to be far more easy. Laws and regulations change from community to community, but the following 5 factors will generally be regulated items:

1. Separate business and private entrances.
2. Square footage of the home which is taken up by commercial space.
3. Employees working in the home.
4. Certain occupations such as jewelry or clothing
5. Storage of commercial goods, especially any hazardous materials.

Here is an important suggestion: keep relations with your neighbors on a friendly basis. Your neighbors will soon become aware that you are working at home.

Some may even be envious, and yes, unfortunately zoning authorities will generally become aware of home office zoning infractions through a "friendly neighbor".

Business License

Most cities or counties require businesses to be licensed. Some home-operated businesses, however, are not required to have a business license. Check with your local City or County Clerks Office to obtain regulations for your locality.

D.B.A. Registration

If you are using your own name as your business name it will not need to be registered, but if you use any other name, or even your abbreviated name, almost all localities require that you register the name. This is called a fictitious name registration or D.B.A. "Doing Business As" registration. If your name is:

Randy M Jones and you name your business Randy Jones or Randy M Jones Enterprise you will not have to register it, but if you call it: RMJ Enterprises you will generally have to register the name.

Most states have a name search bureau which is a part of the state government. You will generally be able to call this office to see if a given name has already been registered to someone else in the state. This is important to do, or it could be costly later. If you give your business a name which is already registered to another company, the other company may demand, and even take legal action to make sure you comply, that you cease to use the name.

Your Company as a Legal Entity

Businesses are most commonly set-up as one of the following entities:

The Sole Proprietorship

Incorporation

Partnership

Most new businesses choose the Sole Proprietorship. It is the least complicated. It requires no paperwork. The proprietor you, or you and your spouse as the owner, or owners, are taxed for all net profit from your business. You add the income of the business to other income, or deduct the business loss from other income. Your tax adviser can give you specific information.

The disadvantage of the Sole Proprietorship is that as the owner you can be held fully liable in a lawsuit. An incorporation, on the other hand, will give you some protection. In this case the "INC" rather than you is the legal business entity. If you are starting a business that tends to have liability exposure the corporation may be the way to go. In this and other legal questions, only your attorney can give you competent legal advice.

Partnerships are generally chosen when unrelated individuals own a business. A partnership should be set up by an attorney, or all kinds of problems can develop later.

Designing Your Work-space

First, you must determine how much space you need. Chances are what you may initially think is quite large may be crowded or not enough space. While many businesses are started from a corner of the bedroom or kitchen, if the space is available it would be far better idea to take a spare area of the house and convert it into your office. There may be space in the basement, garage, or a spare bedroom. Having a separate space is more efficient and will make for maximum efficiency. It is also psychologically important. You do not want home activities to interfere with your business, or vice versa.

Friends and family will need to be told politely firmly that business hours mean business and dropping in, or calling to chit chat is not acceptable. Psychologists suggest that you work "from" home not just in your home. There is a danger of becoming isolated. Inasmuch as time allows, participate in seminars and local business activities and organizations.

Financial Planning

It is said and also my own personal experience that owners of new businesses never have enough time or money. The majority of small businesses which do not succeed will fail because they are not properly financed. In your financial planning carefully review all required start-up expenses as well as on-going expenses before revenue will be generated. Estimate your profit margins and all fixed and controlled expenses. Almost all entrepreneurs will tend to be much more optimistic about their estimate of the financial performance of a business than what is necessarily realistic. There are always unforeseen expenses.

It is a good idea to only invest in absolutely necessary expenses. This applies to furnishings, supplies and all equipment. Computer equipment in recent years has become outdated within a short period of time. So, if what you acquire will serve you well for 2-3 years you will be able to upgrade your equipment later on. Your emphasis should be on conserving capital. As your business develops, unexpected hurdles will come along and periods of low revenue. Your capital will make it possible to keep your business operating during these times.

Why Should You Have A Business Plan?

While writing a business plan can be made into a highly sophisticated undertaking especially by large corporations, it's easy to do when done for a new or small owner-operated business. Essentially, you will be committing your plan to paper. As you do so your thought will become more formal and concrete and this will tremendously assist you in the development of your business. If you are considering to obtain financing for your new business either through a bank or the SBA, a formal business plan will be a necessity. Home-operated businesses will have a much more difficult time in obtaining financing.

Don't Forget Uncle Sam

As in all undertakings of life from birth to death and beyond, the IRS will be there to watch over you. Almost all small, home-based businesses will start out as "Sole Proprietorship." This legal status is best for ease of handling and for tax benefits. Your net business income or loss becomes an addition or deduction to other income declared at the end of the year. Careful record-keeping of all business revenue and expenses is a must. Keep a separate business checking account for your business. Do not intermingle business and personal expenses. Other special tax benefits and regulations apply to home-operated businesses. You should obtain professional advice from your tax adviser.

Free Publications available:

"Record-Keeping For A Small Business" IRS publication 583. Call the IRS 1-800-829-3676.

"Business Use Of Your Home" can also be obtained free from the IRS.

"Tax Guide For Small Business" is an annual IRS publication #334. It is also free.

Insurance

One disadvantage of being self-employed is not having health and disability insurance. You may also need liability insurance. Your homeowners insurance covers your belongings in your home, but it may not cover all business inventory and equipment. Check with your insurance agent to make sure you have the right coverage.

Factors that will Determine Your Success

Do Your Homework

The more you know about your business, the better your chances of success. Attend seminars and join trade associations. Read books and trade publications. If you do not have a business background a business introductory class at a local college would be advisable.

Planning is Key to Your Success

You and your family's future and livelihood is at stake. So your decision and planning to start a business are very serious matter. Establish a long range plan which encompasses your business and financial plans. You should obtain legal or financial advice from an attorney or accountant before committing to nay long range or major financial transactions. Agreements with suppliers or customers shoul;d be put into writing.

You Must Wear Many Hats

Small business owners over time can become experts on a variety of subjects. At the start the most important aspect is the mind-set. Your communication to the rest of the world through all available means will determine your success. here is an abbreviatedmarketing check list:

- Telephone equipment
- Promotional Material
- Advertising (Don't forge the Yellow Pages)
- Stationery
- Direct Mail
- Membership in Organizations
- Direct Sales

Invest in Good Equipment

The right equipment will make your work easier and your business more efficient. To conserve cash used equipment should also be considered.

So What Are Your Chances

The better you think they are the better they generally are, and don't forget that among thousands of others:

Apple Computer, Domino's Pizza, and Walt Disney all started as home-based businesses.

Resources/Associations

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There is a great deal of expert advice and resource material available to you. Much of it is free of charge. A variety of literature is available, both excellent books on all business subjects and various magazines. Your local Chamber of Commerce often sponsors classes. Banks can give you advice, or can be used as a sounding board. Local schools offer a variety of classes of interest to business owners. Don't forget the Public Library. Last, but not least, don't forget the U.S. Government.

SBA (small Business Administration) offers a range of services such as loans, financial consulting, computer and technical consulting services and a variety of publications.

Check your local telephone pages, or contact:

Small Business Administration
1441 L Street NW
Washington, DC 20416
(202) 659-6000

United States Chamber of Commerce provides literature, telephone referrals and other services to small businesses. Contact your local Chamber of Commerce or:

United States Chambers of Commerce
1615 H Street NW
Washington, DC 20062
(202) 659-6000

Internal Revenue Service offers a variety of services which includes workshops, films and publications to clarify tax matters for small businesses. Contact your local IRs office or:

Education Branch, Taxpayer Service Division
IRS, Department of the Treasury
1111 Constitution Ave.,NW
Washington, DC 20274
1-800-424-1040

Better Business Bureau (BBB) The BBB can be an important ally in checking on potential suppliers and other businesses. Check for telephone listing in the city where the company you are checking on is located.