

Home-Based Business For Fun And Profit

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SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND YOU

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Self-employment is the ticket to higher earnings without limit and the right to control and work your own schedule. But it's not easy work. A lot of self-employed people are working longer hours and weeks than ever in their own business. The difference is they are doing work they truly enjoy, and are getting paid for it!

You have the talent and ability to work on your own! Perhaps you're just not sure what business you'd like to specialize in.

Sales aren't just the slick folks on the automobile showroom who want to know what it will take to get you in that car today. Selling is the process by which a product reaches a consumer. It can take many forms. If you have some preconceived ideas about sales right now, erase them from your mind. Start with a clean slate by remaining open to all possibilities in your home-based businesses.

After all, if you're marketing a product you would buy yourself, it will be easy to convince others of its value. Since you're selecting the right business opportunity, you'll unquestionably choose the business that has the most appeal to you. Selling something you love almost never feels like work, or real selling!

HOW TO GET STARTED

If you currently have a job, you may want to break into your home-based business on a part-time basis until you've built up enough earnings base to leave. There will probably be no greater feeling than when you walk out the door and into a business where you call the shots!

If you're between jobs, then by all means go at this full-force. All you need to do is to contact the businesses listed here that interest you and begin the process of determining if this is right for you.

There may be several opportunities here that are franchises. There is no available data that says that electing to go the franchise route to start your business has any lower success rate than beginning a new business from scratch. Again, view these choices with an open mind and investigate the opportunity thoroughly before making the commitment. If you're working part or full time, you can, perhaps, be even choosier.

THE TOP 10 WAYS TO EARN MONEY AT HOME

1. ANTIQUES

The buying and selling of antiques has been and should continue to be a very productive business, financially, for

those that do it. Here, you only need an extra room in the house, or the use of your garage -- and you have an office!

If you have a large home that has some antique furnishings, you might consider turning it into a showroom for your antique acquisitions and sales, providing you satisfy any local zoning regulations. The interest in antiques will survive into the foreseeable future. Many people choose to spend their free time on the weekends "antiquating" from place to place to try and pick up a few odds or ends and maybe a jewel or two. If you know anything about antiques, this may be a great opportunity for you.

For more information, check out the book, "Buying and Selling Antiques", by Don Cline and Sara Pitzer. Your local library may be filled with other publications on this subject that can get you started quickly. Your only overhead may be inventory and advertising!

2. BAKING

Have you ever been told that you have a recipe which people would line up to get if they could? Ever had anyone tell you that you should be selling those cupcakes you make? There are a number of success stories about people who have launched successful businesses by cooking at home and then marketing to local people first. Word of mouth on a good product may start to get restaurants or bakeries interested in acquiring your culinary masterpieces. Then you progress to selling them state-wide and presto! A winning home-based business!

For more practical advice on the assorted aspects of setting up a specialty foods business, you should contact your local U.S. Department of Agriculture Home Extension Agent in your county. Since every U.S. county has such an individual, that person shouldn't be hard to find!

3. BED AND BREAKFAST PROPRIETOR(S)

Have you ever stayed in a bed and breakfast and thought, "hey, I can do this!" You probably went on vacation and simply chalked your thought up as one of those pipedreams one gets when they stay in a beautiful spot.

Don't toss that thought away! While it's not easy work as the hours can be long and it's usually a seven days per week business, it's often something that you can work into a daily schedule. After all, it's merely an extension of doing the housework for family, right? More and more Americans are taking after Europeans and opening their homes to travelers. If you have an extra room or two since the kids moved out, you can start a bed and breakfast in your own place!

Bed and breakfast popularity will continue as more and more vacationers and business travelers seek a different accommodation away from the predictability of the average hotel room. If they enjoy their stay, many become "repeat" customers, coming back to the same familiar surroundings time and again.

If you don't need to do any major renovations in the house to accommodate this type of establishment, you can be off and running with very little money invested, other than advertising and some new "guest room supplies". If your dream is to buy a bed and breakfast somewhere in a vacation paradise, there are probably houses for sale that will work for this purpose.

Whatever your design, there are several good books on the subject of starting your own bed and breakfast, including "Start Your Own Bed and Breakfast", by Beverly Mathews. Check them out at your local library.

4. CHILD CARE

Due to the financial pressures many families face today, many parents work outside of the home to bring in enough income to pay daily living expenses. A single parent is obviously working but all too often both members of a two parent family are in the workforce.

This creates a home-based opportunity. Children must be watched, all day if they're not in school, or, otherwise, for a brief time after school before the parents finish work for the day.

Caring for one additional child may not be that lucrative, but taking care of several children can certainly be a full-time, financially successful business. Often, taking care of several children is made somewhat easier as the youngsters often will play together.

You can do this at home for only a small investment in basic equipment and toys for the kids in addition to the advertising of your business. There are several publications that address starting this type of business, including "Family Day Care", by Betsy Squibb.

Another resource is the Day Care Council of America, 5730 Market Street, Oakland, CA. 94608.

5. COMPUTER SPECIALIST

The advent of the computer age has changed the concept of self-employment. Having a computer at home has opened a number of opportunities for running your own business utilizing this equipment. Companies everywhere are "outsourcing" work that can be done by someone else on their computer, out of their own home.

If you're not that familiar with a computer, there are many low-cost (or free) seminars and classes that will teach you what equipment you need and how to use it.

If you're a whiz in computers, you may end up working as a consultant, writing programs for companies. If you're a beginner, you may find yourself able to obtain work as a writer, using your computer to produce copy that's easy to edit. You can also keep accounting and payroll records for companies on your computer's database.

Word processing software can be used not only for writers but for those that can offer secretarial services out of their house. Desktop publishing software can allow you to do newsletters for businesses and other organizations.

For more educational data, contact the Information Resources Clearinghouse at Syracuse University's School of Education, 030 Huntington Hall, 150 Marshall Street, Syracuse, N.Y. 13244. Their phone number is (315) 443- 3640.

There are a substantial number of good publications, too. Your local library will have several books on computer occupations. If you can operate a computer, you can find work in the information age today.

6. GARDENING

If you like working in your garden each year and growing vegetables for your family to eat, it's a definite possibility for home-based employment. Imagine clearing a little more space and growing more items that you can sell directly to the consumer.

Most produce stands will buy from you if your product is one of high quality. If you enjoy gardening, this could be your ticket! If you have some more land to use, do it! Plant what you can, when you can! Contact your local produce stands to ascertain their buying habits.

You can even inquire about your own produce stand if you have enough product. The more space you have on your land, the more likely you will be able to generate enough crops to run the business.

People love home-grown vegetables. They just don't have the time or want to be bothered doing it themselves. That's your open door!

For more information, consult books like "Plants for Profit," and "A Complete Guide to Growing & Selling Greenhouse Crops", by Francis Jozwik.

7. IMPORTER AND DISTRIBUTOR

There are a substantial number of products manufactured in other countries which can be bought inexpensively and sold here in the United States at a profitable level. The recent passages of the Congressional bills, NAFTA and GATT, may make it easier to bring in other products from other countries.

This is a business easily operated out of the home, depending on the types of stock you're carrying. You may have to rent some storage space, but the capital required to start should essentially be limited to the products you're buying to sell here.

Two good resources for you are:

* American Importers Association Membership Directory, 420 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017; and

* American Register of Importers and Exporters, 38 Park Row, New York, N.Y. 10038.

You can also look at books in your library such as "How To Make A Fortune In Import/Export", by Howard R. Goldsmith, obviously an optimistic look at this type of business.

If you know the type of product you want to import and the market most likely to purchase your goods, you have great potential for a successful home-based business.

8. INTERIOR DECORATOR

While this business will require you to be out and about, meeting with customers, it's the type of work many people would love to do. If you have a fascination for decorating a home, this could be your line of work.

Many people don't know where to start when they are remodeling or buying a house for the first time. If you have the knowledge of colors and patterns and what looks good together, plus the expertise of knowing where to get materials and furnishings, this can be a winning home-based business for you.

One excellent resource to consult is the "Interior Design Directory", available through Whitney Communication Corporation, 1050 E. 58th Street, New York, N.Y. 10155.

9. PHOTOGRAPHER

The sky's the limit here! Armed with your trusty camera and some good advertising, you can do weddings, models, family portraits, passports, student photos, local newspaper coverage; almost anything that requires a picture!

You can easily start this work, part-time, and work into full-time work based on your success and inclination. Not much equipment is necessary to get going as a camera off the store shelf can often do the trick today. Picking up a tripod and having a room sufficient for developing your pictures, and you're in business -- at home!

There are a number of excellent books available in your local library to get you started on the path of professional photography.

10. SEWING & ALTERATIONS

Many people love to sew. If you're one of them, consider offering this service out of your home. When someone buys a new outfit, it rarely fits perfectly, meaning some kind of alteration must be done.

People look long and hard to find reliable individuals to do their alterations. If you can sew, you're well on your way to opening the doors of this type of business.

One resource you can review is "Sewing for Profit", by Judith and Allan Smith. Or your library will have a handful of capable publications on starting up this type of business.

These are our suggestions as to the top 10 ways to earn money at home, enough to be a full-time self-employed businessperson!

But there are many other opportunities. The listings that follow may give you some other ideas you need to get started in business for yourself.

SUMMARY

Are you ready to start up your own business now?

Whether you begin from scratch or invest in a franchise, the time has never been better to get a home-based business off the ground. It's become almost routine in the business world to work with independent contractors. Many times, it's more cost-effective, too.

Most of these businesses do not require a substantial amount of start-up cash. Many of these franchise opportunities offer financing.

With Internet's help, your home business can be moved online and expand globally. Your profit will be significantly improved if you can integrate your traditional business into online business.

Julia Tang publishes Smart Online Business Tips, a fresh and informative newsletter dedicated to supporting people like you! To find out the best online business opportunities, and to discover hundreds more proven and practical internet marketing secrets, plus FREE internet marketing products worth over \$200, visit: <http://www.best-internet-businesses.com>

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