

FOCUS
for the FAMILY

Making Money from Home

How to Run a Successful Home-Based Business

donna partow



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Making Money from Home

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To Taraneh Joy



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Introduction

I haven't met you, but I suspect I already know two things about you:

1. You need to make extra money from home.
2. You need to make it starting *right now*.

Trust me, I get it. I've been right where you are. Granted, it was a long time ago, but the memory is vivid. I was at my desk in the investment-banking department on the twenty-eighth floor of a Philadelphia high-rise on Black Monday (October 19, 1987), the day of the largest stock-market crash in American history.¹ Not long afterward our entire department was eliminated. That was the end of any illusion I might have had about the stability of the American economy or the reliability of a company paycheck. It was also the beginning of my journey as a home-based businessperson.

Maybe your family has recently learned the same painful lessons. Or maybe you're being proactive by getting a side business going, just in case. Honestly, it doesn't really matter what prompted you to pick up this book. What matters is that you now have in your hands a step-by-step guide to making money at home in a global economy. And the time to start is now.

The Internet has changed the world forever. Take a quick visit to a Web site like oDesk, and you'll discover that computer-based work Americans charge \$30 to \$60 an hour or more for can be done by exceptionally well-educated, brilliant people in places like India and the Philippines for \$2 an hour. You might not know anything about oDesk (or Elance or Guru), but I guarantee that every business owner or corporate executive worth anything sure knows about them.

The bad news is this: offshore competition. You can forget about the infamous medical transcription, work-from-home "jobs" that people still

get suckered into. You can forget about any job or opportunity that doesn't require American ingenuity. Those jobs have gone, are going, or will soon go overseas. If you don't believe me, pick up your phone to make an airline reservation or to get technical support for your computer. Chances are, the person on the other end won't be living in America.

Now the good news: American ingenuity can't be outsourced. And you have it, whether you give yourself credit for it or not. Does a fish swim in water? If it's alive, I promise you, it's in water. If you're in America, you're swimming in American ingenuity all day, every day. I've now traveled on six continents and have discovered that no other country is like the United States. Although we've fallen behind in some areas, the independent entrepreneurial spirit that launched America in the first place is still what makes us unique in the world.

So here's what we're going to do together: We're going to give you a battle plan that begins with a comprehensive evaluation of just how much ingenuity you really have—all the way to the successful launch of your money-making enterprise. And if you already have a home business, I'll show you how to make it even more successful.

How To Use This Book

By purchasing this book, you've already taken the first step to establishing your own home business. In the following chapters you'll learn everything you need to know to plan and launch your business: how to choose a business that's right for you and your family, how to develop a business plan, time-management tips, marketing strategies, how to cut through legal red tape, how to lay a solid financial foundation, and much more. If you already have a business, you'll learn how to improve your bottom line and maximize your success. You may even find ideas for solving some problem that's been holding you back.

What you won't read in this book is a bunch of fluff or a relentless

belaboring of the obvious. Instead, you'll learn everything you need to know to get started, *right now*, in a successful home business based on current technology. And because I recognize that technology changes daily, I've created a companion Web site for this book: www.makingmoneywithdonna.com. This site will continually update you on cutting-edge technology and opportunities. Throughout the book you'll find direct links for the latest information. You'll also find links to additional resources, as well as forms and charts designed to help you organize yourself, your business, and your household for success.

At the beginning of each section of this book, I'll be profiling the career of a woman who has succeeded at creating a home-based business. These women will add a fresh perspective and give you a look at the unique way each woman has made her business work. The profiled women may seem over-the-top, but each started small. Don't feel intimidated (or tired) when reading their stories. You don't have to take over the world; you may do as little or as much as you and your family feel is necessary for your business. However, if it is your intent to go big, this book will equip and inspire you.

Material featuring frequently updated topics is denoted with a ✨, and the URL (universal resource locator) for the Web page is noted as well.

At the end of each chapter, you'll find questions to help you clarify pertinent issues and discern the direction of your business. Some chapters also include assignments, enabling you to lay a business foundation in bite-size chunks. I highly recommend that you answer the questions and complete the forms as thoroughly as possible. The more work you do up front, the more likely your business will succeed.

Part I



Foundations for a Home-Based Business

Seven years ago, Kimber King was a busy stay-at-home mom with three boys, ages six, four, and two. She wasn't looking for a way to make money from home, but when she began using a line of products that dramatically impacted her health, she couldn't help telling everyone she knew about it. Kimber recalls, "The products were sold through a network marketing company and I actually had a very negative view of the industry. But the results I had with my own health far outweighed all the negative things I felt about the business." So she quickly signed up enough family and friends to reach the top rank level in her company in the first six weeks. Within ninety days, her monthly earnings matched

the full-time income she had previously been paid in the corporate world.

Kimber soon began reaching beyond her immediate circle of contacts through social networking on the Internet. She recalls, “One night I stumbled upon a site on the Internet that described itself as a business-networking site. It was free and on the site you had the opportunity to create a profile page for yourself. I dove right in and started connecting with a ton of people. I did some things very naturally that literally launched my business on the Internet and to this day, from this one site I have an organization of six thousand plus members. Then I started branching out onto other sites like message boards and forums. I began cultivating online relationships mostly focusing on other stay-at-home moms.”

≡≡≡ *Kimber also credits her parents for
≡≡≡ much of her success.*

Another of Kimber’s success secrets is working with a personal business coach. Although she was earning a great income from home, she was working long hours on the computer and her income had remained the same for nearly two and a half years. “It was a very lucrative income for a stay-at-home mom of three,” she says, “But I began to have great goals for my family and helping others, and I was frankly stuck.”

Within eight weeks of working with the network marketing coach, Kimber was earning a monthly five-figure income and an annual six-figure income while reducing her workload to less than twenty hours per week.

Kimber also credits her parents for much of her success. “My dad instilled a spirit of excellence in me. By watching my mother work in her own hair salon, I learned how to treat customers.” Kimber says the key



Discover the Advantages of Working from Home

Let me begin with a brief look at the “why” of running a home-based business to show you the benefits, because your motivation and belief in the benefits are what keep you going when the going gets tough. But then we’ll quickly shift gears to the more essential and practical how-to suggestions on the following pages.

Like any job, working at home offers both advantages and disadvantages. In the days and months ahead, times of discouragement will come. You may struggle with prioritization and time management. In addition to those burdens, the physical and emotional demands of promoting your business can drain you. You may begin to wonder if all your hard work is worthwhile, and you may even be tempted to give up your plans. In those moments, turn back to this chapter, reexamine the many benefits of working at home, and redouble your efforts to succeed. Remember, anything worth having is worth fighting for.

Your Home Can Be the Center of Your Life

There's no place like home. I believe that with all my heart. Home can be the center of our lives, not just the place we come to recover from our lives. We can create an environment that fosters creativity and launch not just one narrow home business but a broad range of income-generating activities.

My first home-based business was in marketing communications: writing press releases, brochures, and ad campaigns. It was hard to get people to take me seriously as I tried to compete with the big-city advertising agencies. But I had a talent for writing and was absolutely determined to be a stay-at-home mother. I landed my largest client when I walked into his office wearing a dark pinstriped business suit and pushing my newborn in her stroller. This man said he was impressed with my motivation and touched by my priorities.

≡≡≡ *Remember, anything worth having is*
≡≡≡ *worth fighting for.*

Over the past twenty years, I've launched countless different moneymaking enterprises. Some were dismal failures; others were wildly successful. Most were somewhere in between. As of this writing, I have a dozen income sources. Granted, some provide only \$20 here and there. But hey, \$20 is \$20!

Let me illustrate. While away on a recent missions trip to Mozambique, I received checks from three businesses, totaling \$800. The amazing part is that it was all passive income from businesses I had set up on autopilot on the Internet.

How would you like to earn \$800 a week? Would you be thrilled with \$800 a month? Maybe you plan to become a business tycoon and

earn \$800 a day. It's up to you! But whatever your financial goals, I'm here to tell you that anyone can make extra money or have a full-time career from home if he or she is willing to work smart.

For almost twenty years, I've been a leader in promoting home-based businesses for women. I have spoken around the country on the topic of women's entrepreneurship, including two events at the CIA Headquarters in Langley, Virginia, and three conferences hosted by Senator John McCain. I have loudly proclaimed my firm conviction that every man and woman in America should develop some creative way to make extra money from home. And, under appropriate learning conditions, children, too, should develop those skills.

You Can Be Available for Your Children and Others

By working from home, you can avoid the hassles and costs of day care (which are far more substantial than most people realize) and enjoy spending time with your children. Even if you have to hire a babysitter to watch your kids in your home while you work, you'll be available at a moment's notice if needed. And you can keep a watchful eye on all that goes on throughout the day rather than sitting at a desk wondering if your children are okay.

My older daughter, Leah, is now in college. She was homeschooled much of her life, and I was a stay-at-home mom throughout her entire childhood. Although I was often extremely busy working forty hours a week, and even more on my businesses, I was always available when she truly needed me. Won't it be nice, when your children reach adulthood, to look back and say the same?

Perhaps you have a disabled family member or are caring for elderly parents. Maybe someone in your home has a chronic illness, and you need to be available for doctor and other appointments. Working from

home allows you to be there to care for them and gives you the flexibility to take time off during the day, setting your own schedule.

You Can Be a Positive Role Model for Your Children

Some would argue, “I’m too busy raising my children to run a home business.”

I counter, “Don’t you think it just makes sense to include your children in your business so they learn to be entrepreneurial and self-sufficient under God’s sufficiency? Don’t you think that training them to run their own businesses might prove to be more significant than running them around to various afterschool activities?”

Fortunately neither of my daughters has the mind-set that some corporation is going to give her a paycheck and job security for the rest of her life. That is an absolute delusion. We need to train our children for the real world, where wise people use the gifts God has given them to mind their own businesses—even if they also have careers. Both of my daughters, who are now nineteen and thirteen, have already had many moneymaking businesses. They’ve done everything from making bookmarks and jewelry to running my book table and processing credit-card orders from my Web site.

When my oldest daughter was fifteen, she organized a teen missions conference that attracted seven hundred people. I had very little involvement. How did she know how to do that? She’s been working at Christian conferences since she was two years old! Leah has also raised thousands of dollars for her various missions trips by making and selling crystal bracelets.

In addition to being able to watch my children grow while I worked from home, they also watched me grow as a businesswoman. By observing me model entrepreneurship, both of my daughters learned valuable business skills.

You Can Help Shoulder the Financial Load

Not only can you work from home; you should. With few exceptions, it's unwise to rely solely on one income source in today's unstable economy. Now more than ever, I thank God that I have multiple streams of income from my various home-based enterprises. All over the world, mothers not only nurture their families, but they also play a vital role in ensuring the economic survival of their families. I've seen this with my own eyes as I've traveled worldwide—from the subsistence farmer in Africa bent over her crops with a baby slung on her back to the Asian mother selling items in the local market while children sit nearby, often working as well.

Women throughout history have contributed to the economic survival of their families. We can do the same, and if we exercise wisdom, we can do so in a way that won't detract from our role as nurturers. In fact, working from home will enhance all of the roles we play and increase our stature in the eyes of our family members. My children not only love me, but they also openly admire me. How can you put a price tag on that?

You Can Enjoy a Sense of Accomplishment

One of the most important things I hope my children have learned from observing me making money from home is that productive work is not a punishment; in fact, it's inherently rewarding. Many of us have experienced that exhilarating feeling of working hard to complete a project or the joy of beholding something we've made with our own hands. A home business will provide abundant opportunities for you to enjoy that exhilaration.

As the old saying goes, "If Mamma ain't happy, ain't nobody happy." It's equally true that when Mamma is happily enjoying a sense of accom-

plishment, everyone around her benefits. I think I've modeled a wonderful lifestyle for my daughters. It's a lifestyle I'm quite certain they'll choose to replicate.

You Can Be Your Own Boss

Many people fear dependence on a corporation because they have had the rug pulled out from under them or have seen it happen to so many of their colleagues. The days when you could rely on a company to look out for your best interests are long gone. While you're working diligently for XYZ Corporation, it's entirely possible they're filling out your pink slip. Once you establish your own home-based business, you'll have the pleasure of signing your own paycheck. And when you think you deserve a raise, you can give yourself one.


When you work for an employer, you're required to work when, where, and how *they* choose. When you have your own home business, you have more control over when, where, and how you work. Of course, you're still responsible to your customers, and there will be crunch times when you don't have a choice about how many hours you put in. But there is usually much more time flexibility when you are your own boss.

Once in a while when I'm struggling with some aspect of my home business, one of my relatives will joke, "Donna, you should go back to banking." But we all know I'm completely unemployable! I've been my own boss for too long, and I don't think I could ever go back to having someone else tell me what to do with my time.

You Can Continue Your Career

Many women spend years training for a career before their children arrive on the scene. Teachers, nurses, doctors, lawyers, and many other professionals can quite easily transfer their hard-earned skills to a home-

based business. Knowing that your career isn't on hold will give you satisfaction, even though the majority of your time may be spent with family. This is especially important if you want to resume your before-children career after the children have grown.



The amazing thing about the Internet is how easy it now is for a woman to stay current and relevant in her field while mothering and earning money from home.

The amazing thing about the Internet is how easy it now is for a woman to stay current and relevant in her field while mothering and earning money from home. These types of opportunities were hard to come by when I wrote my first home-based business book. Now they abound. Let's hear it for technology!

There Are Opportunities for Tremendous Success

When you work nine to five for someone else's company, to a large extent your boss controls how well you do. But when you work for yourself, only your ability and determination set the limits, assuming you start with a great product or service people want. Maybe there's something you've always dreamed of doing. Now is your chance to do it! You may aspire only to make a little extra money, but there's always the chance that your "silly idea" will catch on, and you'll find yourself transformed into a very successful entrepreneur. Someone has to think up those great ideas. Why not you?

I know a number of Christian women who earn six-figure incomes thanks to their home businesses. Yes, you read that right. Six figures! I

even know women who've earned more than a million dollars, and one woman who has earned several million. With few exceptions, these women did not set out to achieve such tremendous success. They were just doing what they loved, and the success followed. Put another way, they were walking in obedience, and God's blessings chased them down the street and overtook them. It could happen to you!

The Top Ten Ways to Avoid Scams

1. **Surf with caution.** Understand that the mainstreaming of the Internet has created both good news and bad news for aspiring home-based business entrepreneurs. Good news: Opportunities abound. Bad news: Scams abound.
2. **Beware advertisements.** No legitimate company on the planet will ever advertise to hire an employee to work from home. Not gonna happen. Never. No, not ever. Why? Very simple: If a company had a legitimate interest in hiring employees to work from home, there would be an instantaneous pileup of current employees and their circles of influence. The very fact that a company is advertising work from home is your first clue that it's a scam.
3. **Never buy a list or directory of companies that supposedly hire people to work from home.** These are phony! Once and for all: The answer to the question of who will hire you, keep you secure, pay you lots of money, and grant you the freedom to set your own hours from home is *no one*. You don't need a list or directory of no one.
4. **Choose freedom or security.** I constantly hear from people who want the freedom of working from home as well as the perceived security of a job. Freedom and security are always

a trade. Will you give up some of your freedom for security? Or will you give up some of your security in return for freedom? You'll never have both in full measure. Accept reality: You cannot have your cake and eat it too.

5. **Understand the role of oDesk and similar outsourcing Web sites.** In the introduction, I mentioned the emergence of Web sites like oDesk and, in one sense, this is an example of companies looking for people to work from home. And yes, many Americans are trying to capitalize on this new trend. Some are even succeeding. However, for the most part, companies who post on oDesk aren't "hiring"; they're simply outsourcing on a project-by-project basis for the express purpose of not hiring employees. So although some opportunities exist, I believe sites like oDesk are actually bad news for any North American woman who wants to work from home and is hoping she might find someone to hire her. If you thought the competition was fierce when millions of Americans were looking to work from home, now millions more people around the globe are in the mix. You'll have to compete with people who are willing to work for a few dollars an hour, and it's nearly impossible to build a successful North American business like that. Now, if you're willing to move overseas, that's a whole new ball game, and oDesk can become your very best friend. That's well beyond the scope of this book, but if it's something you're interested in pursuing, read *The 4-Hour Work Week* by Timothy Ferriss.
6. **Know the code.** As soon as you hear phrases like "more work than I can handle" or "looking to train someone" or "just want to help others duplicate my success," run for the door. Or

click the mouse. It's a scam. If these people really had more work than they could handle, their relatives and friends would be beating down the door to get in on it. But since it's a scam and they've already driven away all their friends and relatives, they're on the Internet trying to scam you. Don't be fooled.

7. **Beware whirlwind friendships.** There are some unethical people whose entire marketing strategy consists of befriending people just to recruit them for this, that, or the other "business opportunity." Over the years a number of people have swept into my life with a friendship that felt more like a whirlwind romance. In every instance it turned out they were in a network marketing business. As soon as they discovered I wasn't interested, the whirlwind friendship ended, and they moved on to the next person.
8. **Check it out.** Don't rely on information provided by the person trying to sell you. Turn to Google, the Better Business Bureau, and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to verify the claims and promises.
9. **Take your time.** Don't let anyone pressure you into making a decision on the spot. If it's a great opportunity today, it will be a great opportunity a week from today.
10. **Big dollars should raise a big red flag.** It shouldn't cost more than \$500 to \$1,000 to launch a business from home.

Questions

1. What prompted you to pick up this book?

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