

## Home-Based Franchises

### Opportunities Offer Reduced Cost & Complexity

“When people go to work, they shouldn't have to leave their hearts at home.”

-- Betty Bender

Here's a modern-day version of Betty's quote: “When people go to work, they shouldn't have to leave home – period!”

While it's been said that home is where the heart is, it's become increasingly true – especially over the last decade – that home is where the *franchise* is. Home-based businesses are certainly not a new concept, but until the early '90s, most were independent start-ups and consultant-based initiatives. Today, the home-based franchise industry is growing exponentially, enabling entrepreneurs to run legitimate and successful businesses with relatively low cost and complexity.

Let's start by drawing an important distinction: There is a *BIG* difference between home-based franchises and business opportunities (often called “Biz-Ops”). A home-based franchise offers a proven business model; a biz-op generally offers far less quantifiable proof. Here's how one such “opportunity” is being marketed today:

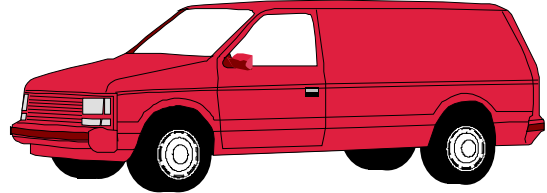


*free business is something you deserve as well. I'll show you how to reproduce exactly what I have done.”*

*“If you ever desired to make a million dollars but never found the right vehicle, then you may be like me, an attorney who was trading his hours for dollars, spending 60-70 stressful hours per week, and missing out on the important things in life. But this opportunity turned things around. Now I spend my days at home, adjusting things around my family's baseball schedules, soccer schedules and school event schedules, finding time to throw the football with the boys or go walking with my wife, and otherwise enjoying life. I started part time spending a couple hours per day. Six months into this I was able to walk away from a stressful law practice. My income doubled in just eight months, spending half the hours. Making a multiple six figure income with this stress-*

Is it *possible* to earn \$100,000+ per year working solely from your home computer less than 20 hours a week with no requirement to market and sell your products or services? Perhaps, but if it were easy, wouldn't we *all* be doing it!?

As a more reliable alternative, we recommend looking at home-based franchises. Home-based franchises offer a wide range of businesses with the added benefit of low cost and complexity. Though operating from an *office* is always an option, when a business is home-based, there is no expense for real estate, leases, construction, insurance and other costs typical of fixed retail operations. And there is usually little or no expense for equipment, inventory or employees. Even if you have employees, they can usually also operate from home.



Home-based franchises sometimes involve mobile services, which gets your product or service out to the client vs. requiring them to have them come to you.

As well, such franchises can be business-to-consumer (B2C) or business-to-business (B2B) -- or both. Here are just a few examples:

- ◆ Accelerated Account Receivables (B2B)
- ◆ Artificial Turf (B2B & B2C)
- ◆ Bath & Kitchen Refinishing (B2C)
- ◆ Business Consulting (B2B)
- ◆ Carpet & Upholstery Care (B2B & B2C)
- ◆ Commercial Building Maintenance (B2B)
- ◆ Commercial Cleaning (B2B)
- ◆ Communications Consulting (B2B)
- ◆ Company Cost Savings (B2B)
- ◆ Decks & Outdoor Structures (B2C)
- ◆ Dry Cleaning (B2B & B2C)
- ◆ Equipment Leasing (B2B)
- ◆ Home Decorating (B2B & B2C)
- ◆ Kitchen Remodeling (B2C)
- ◆ Lawns & Landscaping (B2B & B2C)
- ◆ Live-In Home Care (B2C)
- ◆ Management & Sales Training (B2B)
- ◆ Mobile Car Wash (B2B & B2C)
- ◆ Mobile Pet Grooming (B2C)
- ◆ Mobile Photography (B2B & B2C)
- ◆ Non-Medical Home Care (B2C)
- ◆ Pavement Maintenance (B2B & B2C)
- ◆ Power Washing (B2B & B2C)
- ◆ Property Restoration (B2B & B2C)
- ◆ Property Maint. & Repair (B2B & B2C)
- ◆ Real Estate Sales (B2C)
- ◆ Residential Cleaning (B2C)
- ◆ Roof Inspection (B2B & B2C)
- ◆ Tax Preparation & Review (B2B)

## Can You Live Where You Work... and Work Where You Live?

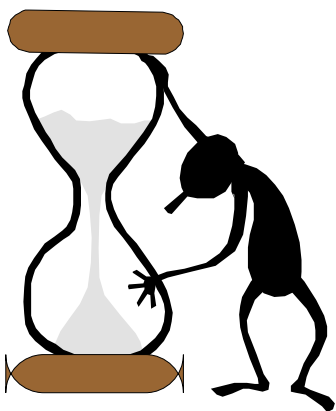
A unique situation occurs when a business is operated from the home. Conflict can result from the infringement of the customer/business interaction on family functioning. A family and business does not integrate successfully in the same space without some planning. Five considerations:

- ◆ **Family cohesion.** Each household will need to answer the following: 1) What will the business demand from the home space? 2) What does the family need from the space in the home? 3) How can you develop a management plan for household space use that best accommodates your family and your business?

- ◆ **Personal and family time schedules.** If the schedules of family members are fixed and intermeshed (one car and each person needs to be on time for various commitments), a business would have to meet this time schedule. It would be difficult to retail items such as paintings and crafts if customers stop by anytime.
- ◆ **Use of space.** Is your business one which requires storage space, an area for customer interaction, specialized tools and equipment, or convenient access for pickup and delivery? Is confidentiality a problem? The arrangement of space may affect ongoing family activities. The most convenient part of the house for customer interaction, pickup and delivery is often the most shared and public parts of the house (kitchen, living room, etc.). Space separations must be maintained for deductions as business expenses for tax purposes. One must determine if this part of the house has too many uses that are part of the pattern of your family's life to also be used in the business.
- ◆ **The Neighborhood** - How do your neighbors feel about a business in the neighborhood, and what city and county codes permit your business to be established in the neighborhood? Higher traffic in the neighborhood may cause disenchantment among friends and neighbors.
- ◆ **Risk handling behavior.** Another aspect of family functioning that relates to a business at home is the family's attitude toward risk. Some are risk seekers who look for opportunities to be tested, willingly take financial risks, and promote novelty and change in their lives. Others tend to avoid change and desire a secure environment at home and around the family.

## Personal Considerations

Beyond family issues, it is extremely important to think your personal needs. In our experience, two questions are very important:



- ◆ **Time Management** – Can you manage your own time? Most people, if asked if they could be 100% productive if 100% responsible for their own success, would say “H\*ll, Yes!” In reality, setting your own schedule and being responsible for your own time – especially if you have previously depended on others to do that for you – can be a challenge.
- ◆ **The Social Factor** – Working from home can be a lonely existence. How social are you and how much do you depend on that human connection? Working from home doesn’t preclude communications with other people, but unless you are proactive in “getting out there”, it can certainly minimize your connections.

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In conclusion, why not work at home? Who wouldn't opt for a 10 foot vs. a ten-mile commute!? Home-based franchises offer optimum convenience and reduced cost and complexity. But only you can decide if a home-based franchise is right for you. We stand ready to assist you with finding the ideal business, whatever that may be. Contact us today!

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*We are an affiliate of The Business Alliance, Inc., one of the world's largest franchise networks with more than 25 years experience helping entrepreneurs like you find and own their own businesses.*

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