

Home Business Guide for Windows

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What is it like running a home business?

My business is selling software (like this) through retail, shareware and freeware channels.

Typically it adds 2-3 hours of extra work to my daily routine and anywhere from 0-12 hours on the weekend.

On the way to work I stop at my PO Box and pick up the days orders. Opening the **envelopes stuffed with checks** is the most **fun** part.

After work I enter the names and addresses into my computer and print an envelope. This is stuffed with a diskette and several pages of printed material. The process takes 5-10 minutes per order.

In addition I get a lot of email, and spend time tracking expenses and working on software. Working on software involves distribution, press releases, notices to users, as well as writing the new version. My business is world wide, with customers in Australia, Hong Kong, Europe, etc.

Okay for you. But what about me? How do I start a business? And what do I do?

Let us consider this windows small business guide you are reading right now as a business example for a minute.

It is not really a program at all, but a document presented in a more pleasant form. It required no programming on my part.

The only requirements to create it were:

1. Knowledge of a subject. Something people are interested in.
2. Tools to create it. All of which were free or easy to come by.
3. Distribution and marketing.
4. Writing and communication skills.
5. PC and a modem.

Almost any information could be sold in this manner. It costs me nothing other than my time and knowledge. Unlike a traditional newsletter, no publisher can reject it or take a cut.

There was no need for advertising, and distribution is done by a computer with a modem through various on-line services like CompuServe, Internet, and America Online. Ultimately it has the potential to reach millions of people world wide. And the number of computers is growing fast. There is also little or no competition in this area.

The **key** to selecting your own home business is that we take advantage of **your** special knowledge and talents.

You can easily publish your own information electronically. Sell your expertise or advice. We discuss how this is done in the next chapter. If you write well, and have knowledge people will pay for, creating a product like this takes little more than writing a report.

You can come up with an original idea on your own or with help from experts. Often this can be done by combining several existing techniques in a new way.

By planning carefully and producing something in high demand you will have an excellent chance to be successful.

While most of the information could also be applied to opening a traditional business, we will concentrate on developing a new idea in a fast growing area.

Since you already have a computer, you are aware that millions of people around the world are now connected by networks like CompuServe and Internet. This number is growing fast and presents many new opportunities.

While we will be discussing specific ideas, the Home Business Guide is designed to give you a foundation of business assets which can be applied to any good business idea.

1. **Think.** Start thinking of yourself as a businessperson instead of an employee. Constantly be searching for new opportunities and high growth areas. When you see a successful business try to figure out the original idea behind it.
2. Look at yourself objectively. What do you like to do? What do you do better than other people?
3. Join local business groups, take classes, surround yourself with people who have already achieved what you are looking for.
4. Order the Home Business Guide, read it a few times. **Think Business!**
5. Carefully select your business, and do it (**really do it, no excuses**). If there are specific areas of the business you do not enjoy or cannot do well, hire others or outsource those roles.

In the next chapter we will discuss details of starting the business, and obtaining the tools you will require.

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