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ing three thousand dollars a month on the site. My husband didn't even know that my business had grown to be that large." Originally called "Simply Tiffany," Whitchurch quickly learned an important lesson in brand management.

"I was served with papers at my front door from the Tiffany and Co. people, asking me to change my name or basically, they would continue with legal action," she says. "I would say that's the exact moment when my husband found out how big my company had become!"

With the success of her company and the insight gained, she is hoping to start a consulting firm to help other mothers who want to go into business for themselves. "I want to use my accomplishments for good and share it with other women who want to do this. The self-confidence I have gained is immeasurable and I was the worst case scenario, with a quad stroller, two nursing kids and one in a snuggli. So if I can do this, believe me, anyone can."



SUCCESS STORY

Ann Noder

What she did: Brought her own job home with her

If you can't come to us, we'll come to you:

Another opportunity for moms who chose to stay home and work are telecommuter positions like call centers. Companies use their home-based employees by setting up live remotes to help with customer service calls and other jobs requiring little to no face-to-face contact. No longer used for only sending e-mails and chatting to buddies across the globe, for these call centers the Internet is the preferred medium for handling business.

"I joined a public relations agency that allowed account executives to work from

home, and I have climbed the ladder to president of the company. I still work out of my home office and get to see my two young boys every day," says Ann Noder of Phoenix. Before serving as president of Orca Communications, Noder worked in television and broadcasting for 10 years. After the birth of her first son, CJ, she knew that her family life would soon take the position of priority number one and began to reassess her career goals. "As soon as I had my first son I knew I didn't want to miss the little things he would be doing," says Noder. "The small steps, the first words. I was determined to find a way to have a career, but be around as he grew up." Noder started an extensive search for companies offering better quality of life benefits and telecommuter opportunities, making sure to find out upfront the expectations the owner had in terms of "office hours" and what flexibility was allowed. This way she could be sure to meet her responsibilities at work while still enjoying the stay-at-home experience with her family.



SUCCESS STORY

Tamara Monosoff

What she did: Parlayed her knowledge of home-based business into a business

Do the numbers:

Although there are no concrete statistics on the number of women who work from home, according to the National Association of Women Business Owners, there are more than 10 million female-owned businesses in the country. Also, the Small Business Administration (SBA) reported in a recent study to the president that 53 percent of U.S. businesses are home-based businesses. These numbers were known all too well by Tamara Monosoff, a former member of the White House staff, who made the switch to

home based business by starting Mom-Inventors.com, a Web site devoted to producing and marketing inventions made for moms by moms. "The purpose of creating mominventors.com was to offer a community of support and information for mothers. When I began this journey, I had absolutely no idea how to bring an idea to market," says Monosoff. "Having learned the hard way myself, I wanted to offer them the tools they needed to get started as well as to provide support at each step of the product development cycle." The site includes helpful resources like a newsletter, a message boards where moms can interact with one another and expert advice on important topics like legal matters and product safety regulations. Deffigos and Whitchurch are both members of the MomInventors community and love its usefulness. "We have a community where we can bounce ideas off of each other, and offer our expertise to others if needed," Whitchurch says.

Balancing Act:

Noder loves the comfort in working from home, but says that it wasn't always so easy.

"In the beginning, I worked while my young son slept or played, but as he got older and I had another child, I found it necessary to arrange for in-home child care," says Noder. "Otherwise, it would have been an incredible challenge to speak intelligently on the phone with two boys clawing at my leg for a snack.

Monosoff advises moms to set aside at least two hours per week to focus on your business. Securing a babysitter to cover childcare can help moms maintain their work schedule and stick to it each week. "It doesn't sound like a lot but it is critical to have very specific time set aside just for business," Monosoff says.

When you're starting your own home business, Monosoff suggests these tips: 1. Create a structured environment for yourself and devise a simple plan to become more organized; 2. Write things down so that when you read them, they somehow become 'real'; and 3. Make task lists, and don't get discouraged if you can only accomplish one thing on the list per day. And remember, whether you work from home or an office or choose not to have a job, every mom is a working mother. ☺