

# Establishing A Professional Image When You Work At Home

By BB Lee

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It is often difficult to appear professional if you are working out of the home, among noisy children, barking dogs, hungry spouses waiting for dinner. And certainly many potential clients express open disdain if they call your home and hear screaming children in the background while you try to converse professionally.

It's unfortunate, but many ill informed clients assume that home based business owners are not as serious about their business or that their work is not as good as a large company. If the home based business owner wants to survive in this highly competitive world he must demand respect and project the image of a professional business person who is capable of handling any job, large or small.

Let's tackle a few ways you can appear professional, even if your office is a small space in the corner of your bedroom. I am assuming you have a complete computer set-up already. This would include your computer, printer, scanner, fax.

Purchase an answering machine and use it on a separate telephone line employed only for business calls. This will establish a professional image, especially if a client calls and you are unavailable. Plus, your telephone line will not be tied up with personal calls for the family.

Or if you prefer, you could opt for voice mail. You can easily

purchase this through your local telephone company. For a modest fee per month, through your existing telephone number, you can set up several mailboxes to take messages when you are unavailable.

Another way to project a very professional image is to purchase, or print up on your home computer, business cards. The information on your cards should include your name, business name, your title, address, telephone, fax, email address, URL address, cellular telephone number. Give these business cards out when ever possible. These cards will help to remind potential clients of your services and make it easy for them to contact you.

And of course you will need suitable business stationary to keep in contact with your clients. If you are on a budget, print up your own stationary on the best paper you can afford. There are many inexpensive software programs you can use to handle this project.

Purchase brochure paper at your local office supply store and print up your own advertising material with all your contact information included.

You might also want to establish a one page web-site on the Internet to serve as an Online business card to potential clients. Include all the information you've printed on your business card, plus, a little background information about your company. Remember to register the site in all the major search engines.

You live in a residential area and receive a large quantity of packages. In order to appear professional, plus cut down on the neighborhood traffic congestion, set up an account at a local mail drop center. Many of them will give you a professional sounding address for all your business mail.

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BB Lee is Editor/Publisher of SmallBizBits Newsletter.  
Practical Advice For All Your Home Business Goals.  
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