

# Is a Home Based Business Right for YOU?

By Brian Schaeffer

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How To Work From Home <http://www.howtoworkfromhome.info>

Here's the basic question: Is a home based business truly the best thing for you?

I know. I know, you wouldn't be reading this in an eZine about home business if you weren't ready to go or are already going, but the question is really important! It can make or break your income opportunities! You see there's a big difference between desire and having the capability to pay attention to the necessary details.

Depending on the kind of person you are, a home based business is a wonderful vehicle for generating income and providing other benefits, such as being a flowing outlet for your creative juices, but there can be some drawbacks to running a home business if you let them creep in!

I'm not trying to scare you off, but I do think everyone who is looking at running a home business should consider all of the particulars before starting. Jumping in with your eyes wide open is certainly the best way to go to avoid some common mistakes!

Let's examine some of those drawbacks first; then we'll look at a few of the benefits of owning and running a home business.....

To start with, you will need to provide a special space in your home for your business. Now, that doesn't mean that you have to run out right now and contract an addition to your home – especially since I want you to finish reading this article! It does mean that you will need a small place - a desk, a few boxes to store records, a space at the kitchen table or breakfast bar - that won't be cleared away if you have to leave it for awhile or if you sit down with your family for dinner.

The space you choose should be private or, at the very least, semi-private. Try to find a corner or out-of-the-way place if you don't have a room for a home office. You'll need privacy for things like phone calls to your customers or members and "thinking space". Nothing shouts "AMATEUR" like the kids playing in the background while you're on the phone!

Next, you need to know the deep, dark secret of home business! Shhhhh. Here it is...a home business can get extremely disorganized very, VERY quickly! No kidding! Your desk, filing system and special space can look like Hurricane Bubbaloosa swept through at 3:00 in the morning while you weren't looking if you're not careful!

You will have to set up some sort of filing and organization system by which you can find needed items at the time they are needed. (Think Hurricane Bubbaloosa here, and how to not have him

come through your particular space!!)

Dedicating yourself to the idea that housekeeping chores begin in your space or office is a must! Here's the sad part, you can't hire a maid to do it for you because you'll need to know where things are and how to lay your hands on them almost immediately!

If you're already in a mess, try this. First thing in the morning when you start to work, use the first ten minutes organizing, filing and cleaning – even before you turn on your computer. When you do turn your computer on, use the next ten minutes filing and cleaning up your email inbox! You'll be glad you did. I used to spend many a sleepless night cleaning out mine!

Moving on to the third thing, a home based business can be very lonely at times despite the fact that you may have children, dogs, cats, guinea pigs or other family members around you most of the time. Usually, you ARE your only employee in a home business (which some people consider to be a plus), so if you're a social bug and need lots of contact with other people to keep your blood flowing, you'll have to arrange regular social activities or you WILL go crazy with cabin fever! Loneliness is easy enough to fix by consistently scheduling outside engagements.

The opposite can also be true. You can have too much social contact in the form of interrupting children and family (or spending all your time freewheeling around instead of working). It's absolutely necessary to set up some household "work-at-home ground rules" in order to keep things running smoothly! Those rules should apply to you as well as those around you.

For example, my kids know that if I'm at the computer, any interruption had better be a dire emergency. Something on the order of magnitude of my office chair being on fire and I'm just too single-minded to have felt the heat and smelled the smoke yet!

Of course, I also have to make the effort to be the proverbial February groundhog and stick my head out every now and then. Just as the office is off limits when I'm working, when I'm out of it, I'm fair game!

Next, having a home business requires self-discipline in the sense that you have to pace yourself. Now we're not talking Tour de France here, but if you don't set yourself on a schedule of some sort, especially at the beginning, you'll lose track of the time.

Remember though, schedule flexibility of a home based business is also a very BIG plus for some people and probably one of the reasons you're considering, or actually running, one. Just don't flex to the point of breaking! Taking advantage of schedule flexibility to go do all the things you've never before had time for will definitely bust your business. The good news is that there really is a happy medium that can be found. It's somewhere between "work first" and "pleasure second".

Okay, now if you are thinking about putting your business on the net and you're new to the whole online business concept thing, than you have a large learning curve ahead of you. That means that there is a large amount of information you'll have to learn in order to successfully place your business online despite the facts of mirror web sites and replicatable businesses.

Learning curves start out slowly. You learn a little bit at a time; but, over time, your learning will accelerate and you will be able to learn more and more about a topic, faster and faster. The learning curve applies to everybody, so it really means just one thing: You will have to be patient with yourself at the beginning. (Throwing a hissy fit in front of the kids is not good role modeling!)

You can't give up just because you don't know enough at first! You have to make the commitment to see it through. A period of six months to one year is not at all uncommon before you feel like you

know what's really going on. Heck, I've been online in one way or another for eight years now and I'm still learning about stuff! Just remember that learning and earning are two different things here. Unless you're a whiz kid you'll probably be learning forever, but you can start earning right away!

A home based business also requires time for income to build, so don't quit your day job right away (unless, of course, you want to work nights)! You can start earning some income almost right away, but rest assured that 99.9% of the emails and web sites promising you instantaneous riches really mean that you are helping provide those riches to the upline that signed you on! They're not really as interested in getting you going, as much as they're interested in keeping themselves going.

Many of the get-rich-quick sites, eBooks, programs and sign-ups are just scams wanting your upfront \$29.95 (or whatever they charge). They depend on your frustration later to cause you to quit. You see if they can get 10,000 - 20,000 - 100,000 people to sign on at \$29.95 each, that's quite a chunk of change for them.

No, the real incomes generated for a lifetime are built relatively slowly and steadily. (I say "relatively" because the internet is changing the way the global culture is doing business by speeding up the information gathering and decision making processes. What is "slow" in today's virtual time would have been really pretty fast in the real time of twenty, or even ten, years ago!)

The concepts of solid online marketing - such as opt-in and viral - require build-up time. So do the traditional concepts of print and media advertising. But believe me, when they do build up, they really get going, providing you with a rock solid customer or subscriber base which will consume from you for years to come!

Okay, that's about it for some of the major drawbacks. Let's take a close look at the many benefits of owning and running a home based business.

First and foremost: YOU are the BOSS! You make the important decisions. You reap the rewards from your own work. There's no supervisor telling you what to do, how to do it and by when it needs to be done. You'll never receive a pink slip unless you decide to quit. You'll never be downsized or outsourced. You do the work, you earn the profit. All that sounds great, doesn't it? Believe me, it IS!

Next, with the right online business, you have virtually no overhead - building purchase or rental, merchandise storage equipment, shipping supplies, employees - or other expenses usually related to a business. Your ideal online business has a computer, a desk or work area and maybe a filing cabinet or box....really! In addition, if planned and constructed correctly, your home based, online business will have no inventory in which you personally have to invest and ship to your customers.

(If you're still shopping around for an opportunity, check out my site at <http://www.HowToWorkFromHome.info> for just such a business - there's my one plug - or seriously consider emailing the editor of this eZine for a recommendation.)

Another benefit is that your home business will have no employees - other than yourself - and consequently, no real messy withholding tax hassle. In fact, having your own home business gives you a number of tax advantages! You can even deduct part of your everyday household and vehicle operating expenses for business on your tax returns among other things!

And here are two of the best benefits of owning your own home based internet business. You can cross international boundaries at the speed of light by the power of the World Wide Web; reaching hundreds of millions more potential customers. You can also place your business on automatic pilot (or remote control, if you prefer) so that it is working for you 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, year after year, without taking a break, closing for the weekends or for holidays, or

being shut down due to illness. That's pretty fantastic!!

In a nutshell, if you are the kind of person who is self directed, can make and keep a schedule (especially a flexible one), be willing to go through the learning curve to achieve your goals and can stay organized, than the benefits of owning and operating a home based, online business far outweigh the possible drawbacks for you!

If that's the case, then GO FOR IT!! Start right now and don't let anything hold you back!!!

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Brian Schaeffer, editor of the How To Work From Home eZine and the Home Business Alliance Newsletter, has been involved with the internet, online home based business building and netpreneurism since 1995. He writes mainly about home based online and offline businesses. You may reach him at <mailto:editor@howtoworkfromhome.info> or visit his web site at

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