4 Tips for Launching a Business While Working From Home



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You might regularly dream of running your own business and being your own boss. Imagine: You don’t have anyone to answer to, you get to make the decisions and you directly benefit from the fruits of your labor.

Interestingly, this season of working from home could actually be the perfect time to launch a side business. Sixty-five percent of Americans report they are more productive, and 27 percent say they are working more hours from home.

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That’s great for employers, but it can also be great for employees aspiring to launch their own businesses. Working from home means you can manage your own hours with no one looking over your desk. It means you’re saving time commuting. Moreover, increased productivity can mean you can maintain your work responsibilities with less time.

You no longer have the excuse of saying you don’t have the time to explore and launch business ideas. Working from home creates the perfect environment to make the leap into entrepreneurship. On the other hand, launching a business while mostly confined to your home has its challenges too. Here are some tips on how to do it successfully.

1. Conduct user research in your free time

As with any business idea, you want to research the market and customer needs. If you want to start a subscription wine business, you’ll want to know how many consumers you can potentially reach, and if they would really want your product.

Understanding market size can come from internet research, but how do you talk to customers if you’re at home? In today’s environment, you likely won’t go to the nearby wine store and ask consumers what they think.

Instead, you can find target customers online. Ashwinn Krishnaswamy launched an alternative hemp-based cigarette called Oklahoma Smokes. To find customers, he posted interview requests on Craigslist and Reddit in exchange for his product. He also found prospective customers on Instagram by direct messaging people who posted hashtags related to quitting smoking.

In all, Ashwinn connected with 300 potential customers. He

learned deep insights into how potential users perceived his product, and why, for example, oral fixation was important to them. This not only gave him ideas on how to construct his brand and positioning, but gave him conviction that his idea could succeed.

Fortunately, this research can all be done in your spare time from home.

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2. Build with no-code platforms

With digital businesses, you might get stopped in your tracks because you have no idea how to start building a product. Finding a tech-savvy co-founder is difficult, especially when you’re only in the concept phase. Tech leads tend to gravitate towards opportunities that have more traction.

Working with a development shop is an option, but it can be pricey. Costs and scope can easily rise, and then ongoing logistics can prove difficult. You might consider learning how to code, but as with most skills, getting to competency takes time. This could be unrealistic to take on in addition to your day job and business planning.

Instead, you can use a no-code platform to launch an initial version of your product. With Squarespace of Shopify, you can launch an online store. With tools like AppyPie, you can create a mobile app with features like user management and push notifications. Although learning these apps does take some time, using them will allow you to get your product to market quickly and cost-effectively entirely from your home.

3. Delegate

As a one-person show trying to launch a business on the side, you can only do so much. How do you conduct market research, find prospective customers, build a product and produce marketing materials all while managing a full time job? It’s a tough – if not impossible – task.

Taking your savings and hiring employees to build your vision is an option, but it’s expensive. More importantly, it’s risky before your new business.

Fortunately, there are numerous marketplaces for finding freelance talent. On TextBroker, you can plug into a network of writers who can help you create content, and on Upwork, you can find everyone from virtual assistants to data scientists who can work on a contractual basis.

If marketing is a challenge, consider hiring a marketing agency for a month. While you have them on retainer, they can help you scale guest-posting efforts or help launch your product.

Working with freelancers or agencies requires some capital investment, but you have the flexibility to hire for the short-term and remotely. Additionally, you’re outsourcing your workload and gaining expertise.

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4. Strive for productivity

Launching a business takes time and dedication. Even though you’ll have more free time while working from home to explore new business opportunities, you’ll feel like you never have enough time. There are always thousands of things to do.

To gain productivity, clearly delineate time for your regular work, your family life and your entrepreneurial endeavors. In your calendar, mark when you'll be spending time on your normal job and your new business. This helps manage expectations with your family on when you have to focus on work and holds you accountable to dedicating time to entrepreneurship.

For both work and your business, ruthlessly prioritize. Give your manager regular updates on your progress and how you're prioritizing work. This alone will make you stand out as a great employee. And for your own business efforts, focus on what's big enough to matter. You can do thousands of things, but identify the ones that will make a real difference.

You have nothing to lose

Working from home affords a unique window of opportunity to start a business on the side, which will hopefully blossom into a full-time opportunity. There's little risk to giving it a shot while you keep your day job.

Use these strategies to get a simple version of your product in customers' hands as fast as possible, and start learning.

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