



SURPRISE | arizona

Doing Business In Surprise

# Chapter 11

November 2005

# Chapter 11: Home Based Business Considerations

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Fifteen years ago, going to work meant traveling from home to a plant, store or office. Today, many people do some or all of their work at home.

For years, millions of people squeezed extra hours into their workweek by taking work home from their full-time jobs. However, today millions are independent home-workers who work exclusively at home. Every day, people are striking out and achieving economic and creative independence by turning their skills into dollars.

Garages, basements and attics are being transformed into the corporate headquarters of the newest entrepreneurs - the home-based businessperson.

### **GETTING STARTED**

Before you dive headfirst into a home-based business, it is essential that you know why you are doing it. To succeed, your business must be based on something greater than a desire to be your own boss. You have to plan and make improvements and adjustments along the road.

As you ask yourself the following questions, remember there are no best or right reasons for starting a home-based business, but it is important to understand what this venture involves.

Working under the same roof where your family lives may not prove to be as easy as it seems. It is important that you work in a professional environment. One suggestion is to set up a separate office in your home to create this professional environment. Ask yourself these questions:

- Can I switch from home responsibilities to business work?
- Do I have the self-discipline to maintain schedules?
- Can I deal with the isolation of working from home?
- Am I a self-starter?

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*Additional  
Resources*

## **FINDING YOUR NICHE**

Choosing a home business is like choosing a spouse; your decision must be approached with a great deal of care. Before you invest your time, effort and money, take a few moments to answer the following questions. They'll help separate sound ideas from those with a high potential for failure.

- Does your home have the space for a business?
- Can you identify and describe the business you plan on establishing?
- Can you identify your businesses product or service?
- Is there a demand for your product or service?
- What advantages do you have over your competitors?
- Do you have the talent and expertise needed to compete successfully?
- Can you successfully run the business from your home?

## **KEEPING A FEW KEY THINGS IN MIND**

No one can tell you what type of home business will be satisfying and profitable for you. Ultimately, it's a decision only you can make. Consider your experience, knowledge, skills, contacts, location, time, products, interests, equipment and potential customer base. Pursue one of your hobbies, talents and/or passions! When you do something you really enjoy, you will stay motivated.

Don't quit your "day job" to go into business for yourself. Start your home business part-time. Take on several small projects to accumulate experience and references.

Be able to identify who needs you and would pay for your services. You want to match up what you enjoy doing and do well with what people are willing to buy.

Stay away from come-on ads or "seminars" luring you with the prospect of making big money from home. As they say, if it sounds too good to be true, it usually is. When checking out one of these companies, remember, the Better Business Bureau is not a government agency; they preach, "Investigate before you invest." They only issue "reliability" reports on businesses and attempt to warn about scams and how to avoid them. Be

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cautious of references provided to you by the company in question, as they might not be actual consumers of their product or services. Before attending any seminar, trade show, conference or exhibit touting any home business opportunities, ask around as to whether it is worth the time and financial investment. Some are; some are not.

Check out businesses providing products or services similar to the one you are considering. How many competitors will you have? How are their businesses run? What do you think of their services or product? Who are their customers? What could you do better ... or differently? Can it be done at home?

Conduct preliminary marketing research to help you nail down your target market. Start by asking you friends, relatives, neighbors, business associates, who they feel your target market might be.

If you find that your market is limited, switch to or add another product or service that will attract a broader base of customers. Or, conversely, find out what it is that appeals to a narrow market and offer a service or product that is highly specialized and compensated, and in demand because of its scarcity.

As soon as you've decided you want to start a home business, change your lifestyle. In other words, gear down financially. You'll find that you'll need to begin investing money into your new business venture and the sooner the better.

Once you make the transition to full-time home based business, you should either have enough income saved to sustain for at least 18 months, ideally for 2 years or have a part-time job. It normally takes that long for a business to establish a steady client base.

Network and make lots of connections. Let everyone know what you do. You can't start this process too soon.

Find a mentor or business coach---even if it's a friend with an optimistic attitude and some common sense advice. Connect with others who work at home.

You will work just as hard (probably harder) for yourself than you ever did working for someone else. Most home business owners are workaholics

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### *Additional Resources*

and burnout is not uncommon. People won't take you seriously. They can't believe you can actually work at home and get any "real" work done, or wonder why you don't have a "real" job." Can you really make a living at that?"

Isolation can be tough. You should enjoy your own company and like to work alone. Those who have enjoyed an atmosphere of corporate peer support may have more difficulty making the transition to a home based operation. A home business may give you more time with your children, but you'll need to line up day care alternatives for the times when you need a break.

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## *APPENDIX A: Useful Contacts and Websites*

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### **Office of Economic Development—City of Surprise**

12425 W. Bell Rd., Bldg. D-100  
Surprise, AZ 85374  
Phone: (623) 875-4273  
Fax: (623)875-5049  
Web site: [www.surpriseaz.com](http://www.surpriseaz.com)  
E-mail: [econdev@surpriseaz.com](mailto:econdev@surpriseaz.com)

Determining where to start is not always easy. If you aren't sure who to contact or what steps to take, Surprise's Economic Development Department is a great place to begin.

The Economic Development staff will be happy to assist you in determining a path to start your business, expand an existing business, or find a new location. The Economic Development Department offers business firms an ombudsmen service to assist with the City's development process, increase understanding of regulations and assess project needs. Staff can also provide introductions to other departments or additional resources.

The Economic Development Department has services designed for both new and existing businesses—from small entrepreneurial operations to Fortune 500 firms. Services include confidential consultations, assistance with site selection, introduction to private and public sector development and real estate representatives and providing demographic information to assist potential new business owners.

Surprise's Office of Economic Development actively promotes and preserves the economic strength of the city to ensure that Surprise is the preferred location for new, existing and expanding organizations.

### **Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce**

12801 W. Bell Rd., Suite 14  
Surprise, AZ 85374  
Phone: (623) 583-0692  
Fax: (623) 583-0694  
Web Site: [www.northwestvalley.com](http://www.northwestvalley.com)  
E-mail: [chamber@northwestvalley.com](mailto:chamber@northwestvalley.com)

The Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce is a private, not-for-profit business organization providing a wealth of information for any size business. For more than 42 years, the Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce has been a leading advocate for businesses. The Chamber also acts as an ombudsman for resolution of public policy issues that affect the business community at a local, county or state level.

As one of the largest Chambers in metropolitan Phoenix, members are given many opportunities to market their businesses and to enhance their business skills through individual counseling, group workshops and networking activities. The chamber also hosts monthly seminars and events to assist our members.

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### **Maricopa County Regional Library - Surprise**

16089 N. Bullard Ave.  
Surprise, AZ 85374  
Phone: 623-544-6371

Web Site: [maricopa.gov/library](http://maricopa.gov/library)

The Surprise Library is a great business resource and contains various business materials, government and legal documents and “how to” publications on such topics as how to start a business, how to get a loan and how to write a business plan. The Northwest Regional Library is located in the Surprise Recreation Complex in the City of Surprise. This 23,000 sq. ft. facility is the District’s newest “state of the art” Regional Library with a collection of over 40,000 items in all formats and offers over 60 Internet-accessible computers throughout the building. It is a model of the latest technology in the library and information field in terms of customer service with self-checkout, self-check in and Smart Library Cards.

### **Arizona Department of Commerce**

1700 W. Washington St., Suite 600 Phoenix, AZ 85007  
Phone: (602) 771-1100 Toll free: (800) 528-8421 Fax: (602) 771-1209  
Web site: [www.azcommerce.com](http://www.azcommerce.com) E-mail: [webmaster@azcommerce.com](mailto:webmaster@azcommerce.com)

The Arizona Business Assistance Center, a division of the Arizona Department of Commerce, provides a variety of resources to assist anyone interested in starting, expanding or relocating a business in the state. The Arizona Business Assistance Center has three components and are located at the Arizona Department of Commerce.

### **Arizona Business Connection**

Web site: <http://www.commerce.state.az.us> “Small Business Services” page; then go to “Arizona Business Connection - [Walks you through what you need to know to start or expand your business](#)”.

Phone: (602) 771-1196 Toll free: (800) 542-5684

The Arizona Business Connection’s Web site provides regulation and licensing information for starting a business. At this Web site, you may also create a customized information package to print at your convenience. This office also produces the free publications, Guide to Establishing and Operating a Business, Small Business Book and Entrepreneur’s Encyclopedia, available at the Chamber of Commerce and Regional Library. To obtain copies of these publications, visit the Library or call (623) 544-6371 or drop by the Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce at 12801 West Bell Rd., Ste. 14, Surprise, AZ 85374. Phone (623) 583-0692

Fax (623) 583-0694. Web page [chamber@northwestvalley.com](http://chamber@northwestvalley.com)

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### **Office of Minority/Women-Owned Business Enterprise Services**

Phone: 602-262-6790

<http://www.azcommerce.com/mwbedir/>

The Office of Minority/Women-Owned Business Enterprise Services acts as a resource and advocate for women and minorities who own businesses by helping them market their products and services to state agencies and other companies. The office publishes a directory of women and minority-owned businesses that is distributed to state agencies, local corporations and financial institutions.

### **Small Business Advocate—Governor's Council on Small Business**

1700 West Washington, Suite 220 Phoenix, AZ 85007

Email: [gcsb@azcommerce.com](mailto:gcsb@azcommerce.com)

Telephone: 602-771-1173

Fax: 602-771-1209

The Small Business Advocate maintains ongoing communication between the Governor's Office and small business. The advocacy office works with chambers of commerce and other groups to develop policies and programs relevant to small business, supports state legislation that benefits the business community, and interacts with state agencies to improve relationships between state departments and the small business community.

### **Arizona Secretary of State's Trademark and Trade Name Office**

Phoenix Customer Service Center

14 N. 18th Ave just across street from the Capitol Executive Tower

Mailing Address 1700 West Washington, 7th Floor Phoenix, Az 85007-2888

Phone (602) 542-6187 or 800.458.5842

Web site [www.azsos.gov/business\\_services/trademarksandtradenames.htm](http://www.azsos.gov/business_services/trademarksandtradenames.htm)

Email [trades@azsos.gov](mailto:trades@azsos.gov)

### **Arizona Corporation Commission**

1300 W. Washington Street Phoenix, AZ 85007 (602) 542-3230

[www.cc.state.az.us](http://www.cc.state.az.us)

<http://www.cc.state.az.us/corp/filings/forms/packets.htm>

### **Maricopa County Recorder**

Main Office (Downtown) 111 S. Third Ave., Phoenix AZ 85003

Phone: 602-506-3535

Southeast Office (Mesa) 222 E. Javelina, Mesa AZ 85210

Phone: 602-506-3535

<http://recorder.maricopa.gov>

### **Arizona Department of Revenue (ADOR)**

2902 W. Agua Fria Freeway Phoenix, AZ 85027

Phone: (602) 255-2060 Forms by Phone: (602) 542-4260

Web site: [www.revenue.state.az.us](http://www.revenue.state.az.us) Forms by Fax: (602) 542-3756

"Business Basics: A Guide to Taxes for Arizona Businesses," is found online at <http://www.revenue.state.az.us/brochure/622.pdf>



**SURPRISE**  
ARIZONA

*Beyond Expectations*

**City of Surprise  
Economic Development  
Department**

12425 West Bell Road  
Building B

Phone: 623.875.4273

Fax: 623.875.5049

E-mail: [econdev@surpriseaz.com](mailto:econdev@surpriseaz.com)

**City of Surprise**

## **Small Business Assistance Program (SBAP)**

*Interested in starting your own business? We'll help you get your business started and serve as an on-going resource. We'll work with you as long as you need help.*

*Through the SBAP, Surprise offers one-on-one coaching and counseling to existing and would-be entrepreneurs, helping them establish business plans and access private and public resources. Our Economic Development staff is complemented by a network of volunteers with business expertise. Go to [www.surpriseaz.com](http://www.surpriseaz.com)—Economic Development Department—or call 623.875.4273 for more information.*



12801 West Bell Rd., Ste. 14,  
Surprise, AZ 85374

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Fax: 623.583-0694

Email: [chamber@northwestvalley.com](mailto:chamber@northwestvalley.com)

*Welcome Business Partners!*

*The Northwest Valley Chamber of Commerce encourages you to become a business partner with the Chamber and become active in one of the most vibrant business organizations in metropolitan Phoenix.*

*The Chamber is adept at providing assistance with marketing your product or service, finance options for your business, leads, seminars and workshops, several networking options as well as events to showcase your products.*

*Chamber members are at the very heart of the region's success. Through their commitment to the community, they create a partnership between local businesses and residents. Chamber members provide more than membership dues. They are volunteers, leaders and advocates for optimum quality of life in the Northwest Valley.*

*Long before there were thousands of rooftops in the area, there was the Chamber of Commerce. Early business owners recognized the potential of the Northwest Valley and banded together to create a thriving economy and a great place to live. We thank the early pioneers in the region. They created the strong base for the growth and accomplishment that was to follow years later.*

*Join us; won't you? We're always looking for people who share our values and goals: pursuing all of the good things in life, right here in the Northwest Valley. Stop by the Chamber office any weekday and learn a lot about local life.*