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## Home-based business is ultimate American dream

**By Joseph Walker**

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For many, it's the ultimate entrepreneurial dream: a home-based business.

And why not? The notion of working from home conjures some delicious images: Conducting online business in your jammies, having home lunch every day, interaction with your kids and — this time of year — being able to catch an occasional glimpse of "March Madness" on the home TV.

Which is not to say there isn't a downside to all that, too: Being unshowered and in your jammies when a client or customer calls and says, "I'll be right over," and it's after noon; a steady diet of leftovers; that sometimes awkward overlap of family and work responsibilities; not getting any work done during "March Madness."

Of course, running a home-based business is more than just a quality-of-life issue. The larger issue, it seems to me, is deciding what that business will be. Some home-based entrepreneurs have their own business ideas and have built companies around their own inspiration. But others have had to work to come up with an idea. They know they want to run their own company; they just don't know what that company will DO.

For those who are looking for home-based business ideas, there are a lot of ideas on the Internet. I was perusing [entrepreneur.com](http://entrepreneur.com) and found a page listing dozens of interesting opportunities.

Some listings are vague — they tell you that you can "turn your current annual income into your monthly income," but they don't tell you exactly how. One such company has a whole list of things that it is NOT:

- "This is NOT MLM (multi-level marketing)!"
- "I do not make a list of my friends and family to pounce on."
- "I do not spam."
- "I do not do home parties."
- "I do not cold call."

But it doesn't really tell you what it IS. It does give you a phone number to call and an e-mail address to which you can respond, so if you're curious you can ask them to contact you.

Other businesses in the [Entrepreneur.com](http://Entrepreneur.com) listing are more up-front with who and what they are. For example, it's not hard to figure out what 1-800-DRYCARPET and 1-800-DRYCLEAN are about. Ditto Adult Internet, which bills itself as "your best opportunity to start making money from one of the Internet's top money-making industries." But we won't go there.

The most intriguing listings to me are for home-based businesses that serve a narrow market niche. For example:

- "Business Card Experts" offer a chance to become part of the "multibillion-dollar business card industry."
- "Candy Bouquet" creates "one-of-a-kind gifts crafted from gourmet chocolates and candies."
- "Clutterbusters" is an opportunity to "organize homes and offices, eliminating the stress and the mess."
- "Geeks on Call" provides "on-site computer services to homes and small businesses."
- And "Guard-A-Kid" is "the country's leading child identification franchise."

If none of these niches strike your fancy, come up with one of your own.

Find a niche, figure out a way to serve it well and you may be living your own home-based entrepreneurial dream by the next time "March Madness" rolls around.

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