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*Small Business Solutions & Inspiration*



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## 12 Online Business Ideas You Can Start Tomorrow

By *Sammi Caramela, Staff Writer* August 15, 2018 09:09 am EST

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Modern technology has enabled entrepreneurs to do their work from almost anywhere. In fact, many companies operate in a wholly digital environment, lowering overhead costs and offering freedom to entrepreneurs who want to conduct business on the move. Creating an online business is simply a matter of focusing on your strengths and expanding your network. Here are 12 great online business ideas to get you started.

## 1. SEO consultant

Do you know the ins and outs of search engines and have skills in platforms like Google Analytics? The owners of a lot of smaller companies don't realize how much of an impact search engine optimization (SEO) can have on their business. Educate those business owners on the power of SEO to help transform their websites into a more SEO-friendly property. Use your skills to show business owners how to read and use their analytics data the right way, and how to properly use keywords and structure content to get more traffic.

*Real-Life Success Story: [AJ Ghergich](#)*

## 2. Business coaching

If you possess a great deal of business experience and knowledge, why not create a business that helps aspiring entrepreneurs find success? You can use your skills to help new business owners get off to a good start and help experienced entrepreneurs keep up with demand. To show off your knowledge and skills and bring in clients, you can also write articles about business on platforms like LinkedIn.

*Real-Life Success Story: [Michael Port](#)*

## 3. Specialized retailer

There's an audience for everything, whether it's making dollhouse furniture or creating organic dog food. With a specialty e-commerce store, you can reach those customers who are seeking your specific products. All you need is a web-hosting service with an integrated shopping cart feature or with e-commerce software, and your business will be operational in no time. You can even work with vendors to ship products to customers on your behalf, which means you don't need to own a lot of inventory. **[See Related Story: [A Small Business Guide to E-Commerce Shipping](#)]**

*Real-Life Success Story: [Sunny Decals](#)*

## 4. Social media consultant

Larger companies can hire an agency or full-time staff member to run their Facebook and Twitter accounts, but small businesses often have to handle their own [social media marketing](#). With so many responsibilities, business owners are often too busy, overwhelmed or undereducated about the importance of social media to spend time developing and implementing a great social media strategy. As a consultant, you can help them determine the best tactics, posting schedules and content for their target audience. As their follower count grows, so will your business.

*Real-Life Success Story: [Mark Schaefer](#)*

## 5. Web design

There's nothing more off-putting than a poorly designed website, and often, it kills credibility. If you know HTML and have a good eye for design, you can launch a service to create attractive, easy-to-use websites for small businesses. Put your skills to good use for business owners who want to take their online presence to the next level. Build a comprehensive portfolio, and then create your own website to show it off and attract a steady stream of clients.

*Real-Life Success Story: [Leslie Bernal](#)*

## 6. Assistant/task manager

Do you have impeccable organizational skills? What about cleaning skills? Can you quickly and efficiently carry out these tasks? Maybe it's time to put those skills to good use by becoming an online personal assistant or task manager. Companies like [TaskRabbit](#) or [Zirtual](#) allow you to sign up for tasks you want to complete – including data research, virtual assistant or running errands – and begin building clientele.

*Real-Life Success Story: [Lynn Sudlow](#)*

## 7. Affiliate marketing

If you're a person who loves leaving customer reviews on sites like Amazon, stop doing it for free. Word-of-mouth advertising is still a huge lead generator for many companies, and a lot of businesses are willing to share a portion of their profits with persuasive individuals who will promote their products to the public. If you have a personal website with a large following, this might be easier to accomplish (PR reps are always seeking out brand advocates they can send free samples to). [Smart Passive Income](#) breaks down three types of affiliate marketing and explains which one is most profitable.

*Real-Life Success Story: [Darren Rowse](#)*

## 8. Remote technical support

Many small businesses don't have room in their budget for a full-time IT employee, so when their systems go on the fritz, they'll usually call a computer-savvy friend or family member. If you have experience working on computers and networks, you can eliminate their need to call in a favor and offer immediate remote technical assistance.

Real-Life Success Story: [Jamie Minter](#)

## 9. Handmade craft seller

Online sites like Etsy and ArtFire are platforms that make it extremely easy for crafters who can produce a steady supply of quality handmade items, like crocheted blankets or unique painted glassware. Startup costs are extremely low if you purchase your materials in bulk from a craft supplier, and if you can turn around orders quickly, you'll be making a profit in no time at all. It's even possible to turn your store into a full-time gig.

Real-Life Success Story: [Coralie Reiter Jewelry](#)

## 10. App development

Mobile applications are more popular than ever, and people are willing to pay good money for ways to manage their lives from their smartphones. If you have a great idea and happen to know coding, you can run with it and create your app yourself. If you just have an idea and don't know the ins and outs of how to turn it into a reality, there are plenty of software developers looking to collaborate with people on app creation.

Real-Life Success Story: [Evan Spiegel](#)

## 11. Instagram consulting

Despite Instagram's growing popularity, not all brands know what they're doing on the app. If you have a background in social media and marketing and a passion for photography and Instagram, starting a consulting business that focuses on the popular photo app can be a great way to make money while helping other businesses improve their content and thrive.

*Real-Life Success Story: [Kathryn Elise](#)*

## 12. Social media consulting

Sure, there are plenty of businesses offering social media consulting services, but you can stand out from the crowd by focusing primarily on networks that are still gathering steam with businesses. Facebook and Twitter are still the top networks, but businesses tend to struggle the most with more visual platforms like Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr and Snapchat. All of these platforms have huge audiences, but many businesses don't realize how big they really are, how effective they can be and how to make them work for their niche. Snapchat has more than 158 million users per day, according to [Business Insider](#). Instagram has more than 500 million daily active users, according to [Statista](#), and Pinterest has more than 200 million.

If you've got a background in social media and a deep understanding of these particular platforms, try starting a social consulting business that focuses less on the basics and more on helping businesses take advantage of the millions of users they're not reaching by sticking solely with Facebook and Twitter.

*Additional reporting by Adam C. Uzialko and Nicole Fallon.*



*Sammi Caramela*

Sammi Caramela has always loved words. When she isn't working as a Business News Daily and Business.com staff writer, she's writing (and furiously editing) her first novel, reading a YA book with a third cup of coffee, or attending local pop-punk concerts. The only time Sammi doesn't play it safe is when she's writing. Reach her by email, or check out her blog at [sammisays.org](http://sammisays.org).



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