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WAHM-IT!, The Masters Course

A Work-at-Home Mother's Guide to Successfully
Building a Real Business on the Net

by Elizabeth Martyn, Cate Brizzell, Jennifer McVey, Erin Nield

Preamble

We are Elizabeth, Cate, Jen and Erin, four “work-at-home mothers” or “WAHMs.”

We joined forces to write this special Masters Course because we wanted to share with you our discovery, that building a theme-based Website is a fantastic solution for WAHMs who are looking for a fun, rewarding way to earn steady income from home.

Why?

First, building an information-packed Website gives you the total flexibility and freedom you need, so that you can devote time to your family. And second, it's a thoroughly enjoyable business that has the potential to provide you with a long-term source of income as this page outlines...

<http://wahm.sitesell.com/>

Who are we?

Believe us, we're **not** Internet gurus, up to every trick in the book to extract dollars from the Web! No, we're four ordinary moms, three in the USA and one in the UK, who met up through our shared desire to give time to our families **and** have fulfilling, lucrative work of our own.

If you'd like to know more about us, our sites, and how we came together to write this Guide, check out **The Background Story**. It's an interesting read!

Throughout WAHM-IT!, The Masters Course, you'll find *quotes from real Site Build It!-owning WAHMs!* These nuggets of wisdom and inspiration come from one of the Site Build It! (SBI!) Forums (a friendly gathering place for SBI! owners) and a thread about WAHMs. We'd like to thank all of those women for sharing their experiences in such an inspiring way.

Like us, you've probably come across lots of get-rich-quick schemes on the Web, promising you fantastic earnings for little effort. We want to reassure you, that is **not** what we are about.

In this course, we share with you the underlying principles that ensure sites like ours have the potential to succeed. Follow those principles, and you won't go wrong. However, **you** will have to supply the thinking power and the motivation.

It takes work, and time, but the journey is extremely worthwhile. And the beauty of it is, it can fit perfectly into your life as a WAHM.

*By the way, please don't feel neglected if you're a **work-at-home dad**. We've written to moms – well, because we're moms, and that's what came naturally. But we're sure that many dads who are also doing the main child-caring would also love to start their own Web businesses, so please join us. This is for you, too.*

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This Masters Course covers...

- all the how-to information you need to get started.
- inspiring stories of real-life SBI! WAHMs and their Websites.
- tips on managing your household and family successfully while you work.

Chapter 1 covers your introduction.

In Chapter 2, in Steps 1 and 2, we discuss the pros and cons of some of the **approaches to “work outside the home”** that you’ve probably looked at as a mom. We then consider some of the more common ways of **earning income at home**, both online and offline, which you may have considered, and see how they compare with what we’re doing.

In Step 3, we give an **overview of building a content-rich Website** and show you **why it’s such a good option** for you as a WAHM. We demonstrate, in detail, how it can give you the flexibility and income you want, while at the same time providing you with a creative and satisfying ongoing enterprise that lets you reach beyond being “just Mom”.

Step 4 is the **nitty-gritty section**. This is where we explain how the Site Build It! system of Website-building functions. It’s broken down into four easy stages, and we talk you through each one to give you a thorough understanding of the process.

<http://buildit.sitesell.com/>

In Chapter 3 -- we love Chapter 3 -- you’ll find three of our favorite **Case Studies**, stories of real moms like you, who are building profitable Websites today and making a great success of it. They tell you, in their own words, how their sites are working for them, how much time they put in, how much money they make and their plans for the future. (And if that whets your appetite, remember there are lots more inspiring case studies in the separate book included with this download.)

Chapter 4 is **The Background Story**, where you can find out more about us and how this WAHM-IT! came into existence.

In Chapter 5, we’ve pulled together some **Helpful Resources**, everything you need to learn more and get started.

Chapter 6 introduces you to some more WAHMs and how/why they started their own businesses. Inspirational role models!

Chapter 7 provides organizational tips to keep your family and business on a stress-free moving-forward track.

WAHM-IT!, The Masters Course

Don't worry. It won't take you forever to read. We've kept the course concise and easy to pick up and browse whenever you have a few minutes to spare while the kids are sleeping or playing.

Before you start, we suggest you print out this pdf file. Fine Print is simple to use. (<http://www.fineprint.com/>) It will keep the bulk manageable, by allowing you to print 2 or 4 pages on each 8.5" x 11" sheet. We recommend that you put your printed copy into a 3-ring binder for convenient access.

All set and ready to read?

Grab the binder and a highlighter pen, and settle into a comfortable place. Mark interesting passages and make notes as you go along. There's a lot to think about, review and act upon.

And now, join us on an exciting journey, on the pathway to Internet success...

Table of Contents

Preamble

Chapter 1 Introduction

Chapter 2 The Pathway to Internet Success

2.1 Step 1: Review the Offline Work Options for Moms

2.1.1 Working Outside the Home

2.1.2 Working at Home

2.2 Step 2: Going Online

2.2.1 Potential Online Income-Generators

2.2.2 Time to Reflect...

2.3 Step 3: Build a Web business Via a Theme-based Content Site

2.3.1 Building an Information-Rich Website

2.3.2 Enjoying Total Flexibility, and Making Good Use of Precious Time

2.3.3 Earning the Income You Need

2.3.4 Getting Beyond "Mom"

2.4 Step 4: The "How To" Answer.... The C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M Process

2.4.1 Introducing the C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M System

2.4.2 Content: The Crucial Element

2.4.3 Traffic: The lifeblood of Your Site

2.4.4 PREsell: Make Your Visitors Happy

2.4.5 Monetization: Earn Money From Your Site

2.4.6 Conclusion

Chapter 3 WAHM Case Studies

WAHM-IT!, The Masters Course

Chapter 4 The Background Story

Chapter 5 “Is SBI! For Me?”... Helpful Resources

Chapter 6 More Case Studies!

Chapter 7 Getting Organized

1. Introduction

Welcome to the world of work-at-home moms - WAHMs! And what a diverse and interesting world it is...

You might be a mom who's already working at home, or one who's wishing she could. Work-at-home moms live in all corners of the globe, and are at all different ages and stages.

Do you fit any of these descriptions?

- Pregnant, and wanting to sort work out before your baby arrives.
- A mom with babies and toddlers at home.
- A mom with kids at school.
- A slightly older mom, one of the "sandwich" generation who, alongside raising a family, has some responsibilities for her own elderly parents.
- A nearly empty-nester, whose teenagers will soon be gone.

Added to your family commitments, maybe you're:

- A single parent.
- A military wife.
- Living overseas.
- Working outside the home, in a demanding full-time career.
- Unable to get back into the job market.
- Finding part-time work inconvenient, unfulfilling or badly paid.
- Working at home, either offline or online.
- A stay-at-home mom, who'd like to contribute to the family income, but doesn't know how to do it.

All so different... and yet, in many ways, so alike.

There is a common thread that connects us. Partly it's in the experience of parenting, the way we all put our children's needs so high on the agenda. Partly, it's in our own desire to find ourselves in other ways alongside being a mom, and at the same time, to contribute financially to the family.

And to do that, we *all* need the same things. For us, and for you, no matter where we are, what the shape of our lives, as work-at-home moms we just *have* to have work that fits, that takes into account all that we hold most dear.

In this Guide, we hope you'll find the key to a better, more fulfilling future as a WAHM.

2. The Pathway to Internet Success

2.1 Step 1: Review the Offline Work Options for Moms

Once you have kids, work never feels the same again.

Take us. Before we were moms, we had full-time jobs. We worked long hours, socialised after work, brought papers home, commuted, focused on our careers.

Now? Since having children, we've tried just about everything. Working full-time and part-time outside the home, setting up a home-based business, working freelance, taking low-paid jobs to tide us over, saying 'Yes' to work that demanded too much – and suffering the consequences – even stopping work altogether.

Yep. Between us, we've done the lot.

And we've realised that our feelings about work are *completely* different from what they were pre-kids. Other moms feel the same:

Once my baby was born I found it difficult to focus on my work... with two kids. I feel torn between two worlds. There is no way that I can get to the career next step without putting in long hours, which I feel are not compatible with motherhood. Dian

My background is as an IT Business Analyst... all I can remember about my techie life was how I'd end up in a cube with another mom talking about how to get the heck out of there! Kristin

One thing is crystal clear. As a mom, your working needs change drastically. You still want and/or need to work, but you need different options to fit with the changes in your life.

And that's where you might have drawn a blank. Finding work that fits isn't easy.

2.1.1 Working Outside the Home

After you became a mom, your first thought might have been to return to a job *outside* the home, where you'd always worked. That's what we thought, too. But once you have kids, it isn't always the best solution.

You could **go back to your old job**, part-time, or even full-time. But it's hard to cope with the pressures, it's exhausting, it means arranging childcare and, just maybe, it doesn't give you the same buzz as it did 'before kids'.

We'd go to baby showers in conference rooms at lunchtime and mood was sombre at best because all the moms knew we'd be back to 70-hour weeks 6 weeks after delivery. Kristin

Another option? You could **get a job for \$10 an hour**, working in an office or serving food. You'd have a low-pressure job that brings in some useful cash.

But take that path, and where are you, this time next year... in two years... in five?
Answer:

- still earning \$10 per hour, doing work you likely don't love.
- still earning only when you work.

Work now/pay now provides an instant money-fix. But there's little or no progression. And that \$10 an hour is quickly spent.

Like us, you've probably discovered that once you're a mom, working outside the home has major drawbacks. So perhaps you've explored the options for working *at home*, instead.

2.1.2 Working At Home - Offline

What kind of work could fit alongside all the domestic and childcare tasks you do? Where's the work you can be **paid** for?

Here are some of the offline possibilities that WAHMs we talked to have tried:

- **Service businesses**

Sell your knowledge, skills and experience.

- **You offer your expertise or skills for an hourly rate or a flat fee.** Examples: consulting, bookkeeping, medical transcription.

Downside: You need to fund training and equipment, find clients, and work when, and possibly where, it suits *them*, rather than you.

I trained to be a medical transcriptionist at night, and after six months, began transcribing weeknights. I would sign on each night, praying there was enough work to meet my desired income level. I had to work one weekend a month, and if the kids were sick, or I couldn't work, I had to find a substitute. Working 1-5 hours a night, I earned around \$500 a month. Cate

- **Open your own business at home.** Examples: in-home hair or beauty salon, children's daycare facility.

Downside: Your home might need alterations. You work when clients want your services, rather than at the best hours for you. You fund your own training, equipment and insurance, and take the wear and tear on your home or rent premises.

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I'm a WAHM with 2 little boys, one who just started kindergarten. I used to run a hairdressing salon out of my house. I worked in the evenings when my husband was home, but guess what, we never saw each other, and we rarely were together as a family... the four of us. Michelle

- **Sales businesses**

You create or purchase products and re-sell them for a profit.

- **Make your own product**

Crafts, quilts, baked goods, marketed at craft fairs, kiosks in local stores - the list is endless.

Downside: You can sell only as much as you can make, unless you outsource. Selling could take up as much, or more, of your time, as making the goods.

- **Catalog sales**

There are many catalog companies, with Avon one of the most well-known. You drop off catalogs to customers, pick up orders and deliver products.

Downside: You spend hours traveling between customers and may be required to work evenings/weekends.

- **Party plans**

You purchase a starter kit, from which you sell make-up, jewelry, kids' toys, kitchen utensils, etc. for companies like Tupperware and Usborne Books. You take orders at parties held in customers' homes, and also deliver products.

Downside: You may work difficult hours, as most parties are in the evenings or weekends.

- **Multi-level/Network Marketing (MLM)**

Melaleuca, Herbalife and Amway are well-known companies. You sign up as an independent representative and buy a supply of goods. Your "upline" is the person who brought you into the business, and you become their "downline".

I ran a party plan business for two-and-a-half years. I recruited a team of 3 or 4 and usually earned around \$400-\$800 a month. I didn't like having to keep track of inventory, constantly delivering product, hounding people to set up parties, and then having to go out at night and lug all my stuff in and out of customers' homes, especially in the dead of winter. Cate

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You make money when you sell the products you buy from the company. Uplines earn commissions on their downlines' sales, so you must recruit other sales people to expand your own downline.

Downside: You must pressure your downlines to get results. Products are usually expensive, and you need to store stock. These jobs involve inconvenient hours and travel, plus you have deadlines, hours that suit others and fluctuating income.

Please don't misunderstand us...

We are not disparaging the hard-working moms out there who *are* making money at all of these work-from-home options. We admire their energy and determination, and some certainly do thrive. (And if you love the work you're currently doing, stay with us, because we're going to show you how you can get more leads, more sales, build a larger client base and downline... without leaving home.)

But we wonder how many moms fall by the wayside sooner or later, discouraged by all that these jobs demand of them in return for payment that is seldom generous, and limited long-term prospects.

We speak from hard-earned experience, and we came to the conclusion that somehow, somewhere, there **had** to be a better way to earn money.

And that's why we – like you – went looking for other, more family-friendly ways to earn.

2.2. Step 2: Going Online

We turned to the Internet in search of flexible work to do at home. After all, the Net's an amazing place, where women often feel very comfortable.

But start looking for online work and you are bombarded! The Internet is jam-packed with get-rich-quick scams, "failsafe" offers, "foolproof" money-makers, seductive "experts". The clamour on the Web is deafening. Some of that noise is highly, dangerously persuasive.

It's easy, very easy, to end up confused and anxious. It's even easier to lose two very precious things – money and time.

I kept on researching and researching... until I got so tired with all the hype and gurus who only wanted me to buy more stuff. I even bought into one of those \$999 - \$3,000 e-marketing courses. I took a hard look at these and gave up - demanded refund - (as they are all about selling me more stuff). Ann

2.2.1 Potential Online Income-Generators

Within the resounding racket on the Web, you'll come across some common possibilities, that you might have tried, or thought about trying. We found out the hard way, that while some do have potential, others are total time-wasters and all have drawbacks.

- **Telecommuting**

With a good telecommuting job, you can earn a reasonable salary doing work like data entry, typing, or customer service calls. Doesn't it sound perfect to be able to work from home, while your kids crawl around next to you?

But...(there's always a "but," isn't there?)...

- Hordes of people are chasing a handful of legitimate telecommuting jobs.
- Wages are typically less than you'd earn at an outside job.
- Work hours are often inflexible.
- If you're sick, on vacation, or can't work for any reason, you don't get paid.
- You still have a boss!

- **Taking surveys, reading emails or surfing the Web**

Perhaps you've stumbled across sites offering to pay you to complete surveys for market research, read ads via email or surf the Web.

Beware! Some of these programs do pay money. But the amount is minuscule and the task so time-consuming, all you'll end up with is pocket change. If you need a reliable source of income that takes on more of your family's financial burden, look elsewhere.

As for autosurfing programs, where you get paid to surf to sites in order to enhance their visitor numbers - be doubly careful! These companies ask you for money, then pay you "interest" in return for visiting Websites. These are pyramid schemes. Invest only money you can afford to lose - and who can afford that?

- **Auctions**

Maybe you've tried eBay - we have. Its explosive success has allowed moms across the globe to stay home and make money.

But... (Aha! You knew that was coming, didn't you?)...

- Sales are seasonal. You buy product off-season, so you may have girls' swimsuits cluttering up your garage for months before you unload them.
- Competition. Unless you find that secret stash, you're fighting everyone for sales.
- Fees. Both eBay and Paypal take a chunk out of your hard-earned money.
- Finding reliable dropshippers who sell unique items at low prices is tough.

And again, if you're not working, you don't get paid.

Those are just a few of the job possibilities you'll come across on the Internet. Some are scarcely worth considering, and there are disadvantages to them all.

But there is one common-sense approach that you may have never considered. We'll tell you about it in a moment. But first...

2.2.2 Time to Reflect...

Take a moment to think over your own experiences. If you like, write down here or in a notebook the jobs you've had since you've been a mom. Think about those jobs.

How well did they work, for you and your family?

What was difficult about them?

What is it that you're looking for? What is it that would make work more manageable for you?

Start making a list.

Ours begins like this....

- instant time off whenever we need it, when the kids are sick, or in a school play, or on vacation...
- extra money for the family budget...
- work that's creative, fun and fulfilling...

What's on your list? Write down all of your thoughts.

You have just started your WAHM wish-list. It's a powerful blueprint. Read on to find out about a common-sense approach that could help make those wishes come true.

2.3 Step 3: Build a Web Business Via a Theme-Based Content Site

2.3.1 Building an Information-Rich Website

Yes, *that* is the common-sense approach that each of us found in our own way. It solves so many of our work-at-home dilemmas.

And the best part? It doesn't matter if you're starting from scratch, or are currently building a business. It can work for you, too.

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Building a Website based on information allows you to create *your own* income-earning opportunity. There's no boss, no clock to punch and potentially you can make money 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It's yours, and it has that vital flexibility you need.

The nature of website building is such that I can stop or take a break at any point and carry on when time allows. I can work in my pyjamas and fuzzy slippers and switch from work mode to mommy/caretaker to silly dance partner whenever the mood strikes. And I'm here to answer all my kids' questions, kiss their boo-boo's and hear their newest words or discoveries. It's a beautiful thing. Michelle

Each of us started out by building just one Website. Now, we're moving on to build more – and more! But these aren't just any Websites.

The best way to explain a theme-based content site is by asking you to think about how you surf the Web. You loathe badly organized sites, flashing banners “shouting” at you, messy sites stuffed with ads, or information that's way off the theme. Whether it's recipes, parenting tips, travel deals, or gardening advice, you want **information**, right? Easy to find, clear, and lots of it!

You want solutions to your problems, jokes to make you giggle, art ideas for keeping kids busy on a rainy day. Info, info and more info. If you don't find the answer in a click or two, you're gone and on to the next site. When you do find a site that delivers, you bookmark it, send it on to friends and family members, and go back time and again, because it's such a great resource.

Those are the kinds of Websites we build.

With billions of pages on the Internet, we've learned the importance of standing out from the crowd (and what a huge crowd it is!). We know now that the best way to keep people coming back for more is to build a site filled with engaging and original information, with solutions to our visitors' problems or wishes, and all the facts they're looking for.

We call that information “**Content**”, and it's content that wins the day hands down in the drive to create successful Websites.

This common-sense method of building a Website can work for you to leverage your results if you already have a service business, or sell a product (your own, or one sourced from a manufacturer).

But you don't need to have a physical product or service to sell. A content-rich site can also allow you to earn money as an “infopreneur”. That means, you provide free information, and earn money through advertising and/or commissions. Or, you can package your information digitally and sell it as an e-book or e-course, using completely automated systems.

We WAHMs are a committed bunch, and knowing I could earn income from something based on my passion... and do it in my own time... that's really the ultimate situation. By

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the way, I just stopped taking clients and have replaced that with income from my site and freelance work that has come my way through the international exposure my site has given me. Michelle

Whatever route is best for you, there are dozens of ways you can earn money from your site, so that while your visitors get the content they love, you earn the income you need.

It's win/win.

We'll tell you **how** we build our sites in Step 4. But first, you may be wondering, "What *exactly* is it that would make building an information-rich Website such a great choice for me?"

2.3.2. Enjoying Total Flexibility, And Making Good Use of Precious Time

For us, it's because a Website fits in so beautifully with our priorities. After all, how many times have you considered a work prospect, then passed it by because it didn't fit with your life as a mom? The start was too early, holidays were inflexible, office was too far away, you had to work evenings, the pay wouldn't cover the cost of childcare – we could go on...and on...

The bottom line? You're a mom. Flexibility is crucial. You want work that you can readily drop when the baby's been up teething all night or your child's suddenly ill and can't go to school.

When you have truly flexible work you needn't panic, whatever your day throws at you.

At the same time, when you *are* working, you want every moment you spend to count. Like us, you're already juggling a thousand things a day. Don't you just hate wasting a moment of your valuable time? So you need a job that rewards you, even on days when you can only give it 15 minutes.

Building our information-based Websites gives us that flexibility, and that satisfying use of time.

Think about it. You can skip the commute and head straight for your computer when kids are asleep or at school. Whenever you can squeeze some time into your schedule - early morning, late at night, on weekends - you can access the Internet and make progress on your Website.

I begged, borrowed and stole every spare moment to build my site (still do). If you are determined and it's what you really want and it turns you on, you will do it. Patricia

You can start slowly - all of us did. If your family is very young, you might have just a couple of hours a week to spare. That's enough to get you started. And as your children grow you'll have a few more hours to spend, developing your site, slowly and steadily.

WAHM-IT!, The Masters Course

When I began with SBI!, I had two children aged 1 and 3, and life seemed fairly manageable. I spent about eight hours per week building my site. Then I turned around and discovered that I had a 2-year-old and a 4-year-old - and I was pregnant.

Life seemed a lot busier, and I found only an hour or two per week for my site. Now I have a baby, a 3-year-old and a 5-year-old and life is chock full. I spend less than half an hour per week on my site (usually typing with one hand while nursing the baby!)

But in every season of my momming, SBI! keeps chugging along, doing its magic. Traffic keeps building and my subscriber list keeps growing. When I'm ready to jump back in again, my site will be healthier than when I set it down months ago. Ellen

A content-filled Website grows as your babies grow. A well-planned site continues to attract visitors, earning income. If you need time out – a day, a week, or a bigger block of time, when a new baby arrives, for instance – your site carries on, growing in the background, until you can return to it.

After a while your work becomes a part of your family's dynamics. It's something you do alongside raising your children, an on-going project not just for yourself, but also for your family and for their future. As your children get older, you might even choose to involve them, too.

A useful add-on to that flexibility is a Website's total *move*-ability. You can work on it, wherever you end up in the world.

The great thing for me is that it doesn't matter where I am. We've lived in four different houses over the last year and so long as I have a connection to the Internet I can carry on building my sites. Nor does it matter which country I'm in – my sites, at least, remain where they are, and have become my homes in cyberspace! Claire

Building our own Websites has given us a measure of independence that no other work opportunity we've ever come across can offer. It could do the same for you.

2.3.3 Earning the Income You Need

As a mom, you work hard for your family.

Yes, you may have a partner who shares the load, and that helps. But we know how many hours you're putting in, because that's what we do, too.

We know that when you're not soothing babies, playing with toddlers, driving kids around, helping with school work, you're doing laundry, shopping, cooking – all the myriad tasks that go into keeping a home and family running smoothly.

The reward? It's in the deep satisfaction of seeing your children happy and growing. You're there to share day-to-day life with them, find your toddler's lost cuddly, help with your 10-year-old's project, sympathise with your teenager's broken heart.

But there's one thing you don't get in return for all those hours of loving labour.

WAHM-IT!, The Masters Course

Money.

Money - who earns it, who spends it, what it means – raises a whole bunch of questions for moms. We *like* earning. It empowers us in many different ways. But we *love* raising our kids, too. Like you, we want to do both.

Many mums that I chat to feel torn between the desire to be there for their children and the desire for more control and independence. Annabel

Maybe you're not interested in earning a whole lot of money right now. If you've chosen to take time out of the job market, chances are you can manage on your family income – but a bit more would probably be welcome.

Or maybe you need funds *now*. Perhaps you're a single parent, struggling to make ends meet, or your partner has taken a pay cut and it's up to you to bring home the difference.

Whatever your financial situation today, take a moment to stop and think.

How would you like to find an earning source that took up only the time you could comfortably offer? One that could give you a small income fairly soon – and had the potential to g-r-o-w spectacularly and consistently in the future?

Imagine if that work began to bring in money. Not much to start with, but a steady trickle, that gradually turned to a stream.

Money that came in, not just during your working hours, but during the many more hours that you spend tending to your family. Money that came in while you slept... or while you went on vacation. Money that still came in, if you needed time off.

I am happy for the people who are supporting their families with their online income, but that's not me. I won't have time for several years, probably, to devote enough time to my site for that to happen.

But right now, I am making several hundred dollars per month! Am I planning to one day make significant money with my site? Definitely. In the meantime, am I delighted with \$300+ per month passive income? Absolutely! Ellen

Suppose that as long as you carried on chipping away, bit by bit, you were rewarded with a stream of income that kept on growing and continued to come in, far into the future.

What would that mean to you?

In time, you could dump the \$10-an-hour job. Or ease yourself out of a full- or part-time job that pays, but makes colossal demands on your time and energy, and leaves you worn to a frazzle. You could pull back on the party plan or the medical transcription. Or focus your net-based efforts into a more satisfying and rewarding direction.

That's what developing a content-filled Website could give you.

WAHM-IT!, The Masters Course

Make no mistake. This is **not** a get-rich-quick scheme. There is no promise about money this week, or money without work... steady, focused work.

As to how much you can earn, there's no easy ballpark answer there, either. The amount varies, and depends on many factors. Everyone's experience is different.

Within six months of starting my site, it was providing a growing full-time income for us. It brings in about 25% more than the income I earned at the highest paying "real" job I've ever held. My second site currently earns between \$600 and \$1000 per month. Rena

Approached in the right way, building a Website, as we and many other WAHMs are doing, can answer your wish to earn income, and offer you a slow-burning, long-term money-making proposition.

We particularly like the idea of nurturing our sites as we do our kids, putting our best efforts into making them as strong as they can be. And, like our children, our income will continue to grow into the future, slowly... but surely.

2.3.4 Getting Beyond "Mom"

Now let's talk about you. Not "you" as in "Mom", "Wife", "Cook", "Teacher's Aid", "Choir Member", or "Team Mom". Just you.

What's on your wish-list that's just for you? What are your wants and dreams? Do you get to share your hobbies and passions with other interested people on a regular basis? Or has that part of you gone on hold, as the important job of raising a family takes precedence?

*Sure, money's nice, but a large part of this for me is doing something where I shine.
Jennifer*

After all, don't we all just want to spend our time doing the thing we are passionate about? This is what "hooked me" as a WAHM, and as someone with some serious passions that are yet to be fulfilled. Nicole

You recognise the pride your kids feel when they come home with a star for behaving well in class? You've seen the grin on your husband's face when he's just received a raise or pulled in a new client. Perhaps you remember moments, pre-kids, when you felt that warm glow of achievement, too.

Where's your applause now?

Of course, you feel great when you look at your kids. We're not suggesting that bringing up a family is anything but a fantastic achievement. But we are suggesting that there can be even more than that in your life.

WAHM-IT!, The Masters Course

Building a content-based Website lets you tap into your passions, show off your skills, share your ideas, receive recognition for your expertise... that's your gold star. Not only will you learn new skills, challenging yourself on a regular basis, you'll find "you" again.

Or discover a whole new person.

I saw this time (motherhood) as a perfect opportunity for a change in direction. I knew I would have some spare time at night or nap time that I could use to study or learn something new. Kellie

The Internet doesn't care if you hold a college degree or graduated from high school. It doesn't know if you live in Outer Mongolia or the Big Apple, or give a hoot if you're the queen of gourmet dinners or the crockpot mom. On the Internet, everyone has the same chances and opportunities to get to the head of the class.

It's a place where you can shine.

Find the you that goes beyond "the mom". Use the satisfaction you gain now, to build choices into your future.

And it's all very do-able. We know, because that's how we work. Not only do we enjoy the benefits of staying home with our children, but our "beyond mom" needs are fulfilled, too. What could be better than earning money... on our time, doing work we love?

So now, for the details on how we do it, let's move on to Step 4.

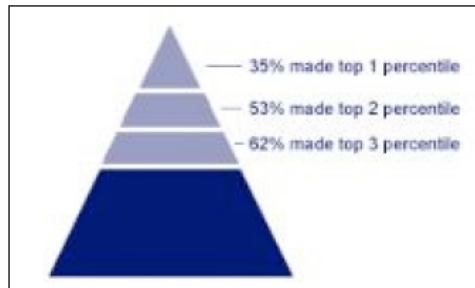
2.4 Step 4: The "How To" Answer... The C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M Process

Building our Websites, and making money from them, is exciting, creative and, above all, **very do-able**.

You don't need loads of technical knowledge. You don't need to be an Internet whizz, understand html, be great at design, or have a higher degree. If you do already have some knowledge, you can put it to good use. But it's by no means essential.

All you *do* need is the willingness to work at it, and the ability to follow a clearly set-out process, at your own speed. Do that, and your site can join many others, in the top 1% of over 100 million sites on the Internet, as measured by Alexa.com, the leading traffic-measurement company on the Internet. (Alexa is owned by Amazon.com and powered by Microsoft.)

WAHM-IT!, The Masters Course



Will it be easy? We say, not exactly *easy* – there's no such thing as get-rich-quick – but very possible.

SBI! saved my life. It gave me something to get excited about beyond wiping noses and doing the hundredth load of laundry. It gave me confidence to see a business project through to successful completion. It opened a whole new world of people like me who aren't afraid to work hard to create something wonderful, useful, and yes, economically successful. Patricia

2.4.1 Introducing the **C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M** System

How do we do it? We follow this step-by-step process that *you* can easily learn, too:

CONTENT ➡ TRAFFIC ➡ PRESELL ➡ MONETIZE

Hmmm, you may be thinking. What does that mean?

Let us talk you through it.

STEP 1) Build **CONTENT** by loading your site with fascinating, valuable information and solutions that people are searching for on the Internet.

STEP 2) Your carefully focused content means your site is well-ranked by search engines, which direct streams of visitors – **TRAFFIC** – to your site.

STEP 3) Overdeliver top-value information to your visitors *without* pitching to them – that is, **PRESELL**. You do this through the way you write the content on your site. (We'll tell you more later on.) Content written to PREsell puts your visitors into a positive mindset, so that they like your site and feel as though you are a trusted friend.

STEP 4) At that point, because you've established your credibility, you can get your visitors to generate income. In other words, you **MONETIZE**. We explain the numerous ways you can do this later in the chapter. In time, you'll use a mix of methods, to build a thriving, diversified business.

CONTENT ➡ **TRAFFIC** ➡ **PRESELL** ➡ **MONETIZE**

That's all there is to it.

Now that you've seen the underlying concept, let us tell you a little more about each stage. Because we know you're pressed for time, our aim here is to give you the big picture.

2.4.2 Content: The Crucial Element

Why is **content** so important?

Do you know anyone who's thrown up a Website, sat back and waited for the money to roll in, then been disappointed and disillusioned when it hasn't? Maybe you've done that yourself. It's an easy mistake to make – we know. But a Website won't succeed unless it has visitors. And it's content that attracts motivated visitors.

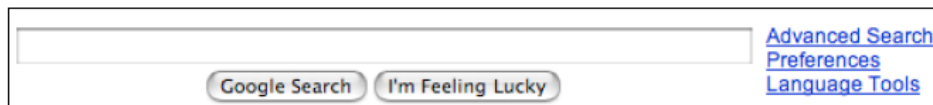
After all, a Website doesn't have a shop window, or a prime site in the local shopping mall. In the mall, it's easy for stores to pull in customers. You take your kids in there and before you know it, you're dragged into a toy store, a candy shop, a computer games store...

On the Web, you can't press your nose to the shop window, or handle the goods. There's no such thing as passer-by traffic.

- **Understand what people want on the Web**

Successful Websites use high-value **information and advice** to pull in their customers.

Think about it. When you surf the net, you search for **information**, for **solutions** to whatever was on your mind at that moment. You want cloth diapers, a new stroller, an online kids' game? You're looking to book a vacation, bake a cake, sort out your house once and for all? For each need or wish, you search the Internet for the answer, for the **information** you want.



And **information** is what our sites provide. We build them around tightly focused themes, and then we pack them with in-demand **CONTENT**.

You can learn to do this, too, and do it in a way that search engines such as Google, Yahoo! Search, Live Search, and Ask so they give you a higher search ranking, and