

**Q: I am a new mom and would like to quit my job and start my own business so that I can be with my son more. I have never started a business before, so this seems doubly challenging. How do other moms do it?**

**Melissa**

**A:** Well, *how they do it* differs, but *why they do it* seems very, very similar. In anticipation of this past Mother's Day, I spent the last week talking to and learning about various moms about how and why they started their own business.

What I have found is that not a few women go into business for themselves because, like Melissa above, they want the flexibility and ability to spend more time with their families.

It is rare that I ever meet a man who started his business for that reason; in fact, I can only think of one male entrepreneur I have ever met who went into business due to family considerations.

The good news for the mompreneur is that from what I have seen, the plan works – by and large, for women, owning your own business means you can (mostly, and not always) prioritize and juggle all of your different commitments a bit easier – mom, wife, self, parents, business, etc.

Here are but a few examples of some of the great women I have had the chance to learn about during this past week's mompreneur intensive:

**The women who hosted the Pope:** Could there be a better gig for a small event planning business than to help organize Pope Benedict's recent visit to the United States? If so, I can't imagine what it is.

But that is precisely what Eden Capuano and Olivia Immerman and their business [Voila!](#) Meetings and Event Management were chosen to do.

Eden and Olivia started their business for the reasons stated above: Eden was a new mom, and Olivia had a teenage son. Both wanted to work closer to home. And while their entrepreneurial plan worked quite well, Eden does point out, "you have to work darn hard to find that balance!"

But beyond their family concerns, like any great entrepreneurs, what really drove the two partners was that they saw a need in their industry and knew they could fill it. Specifically, they saw that they could fill a niche by offering superior customer service and personal attention to all event details, from start to finish.

By being very involved from the beginning of the sales cycle all the way through the event planning and execution details, Voila! Is able to offer clients a service unlike that of many competitors.

And that is how they came to host the Pope.

Having worked with the United States Conference of Bishops on smaller programs over the years, when the time came to organize a trip for the Pontiff, Voila!, having proven itself, was the natural choice.

This global event was a huge success, and Eden and Olivia's business was no small part of it.

**The fit mom:** Helene Byrne started her business, [BeFit-Mom](#) when, after giving birth to her son, she could not find the right fitness program to get back in shape. But that's where being a dancer and fitness expert helped, and so she created her own system in 2002 to help new moms tone up.

Using Google AdWords to promote her classes and system, Byrne's business grew quickly, and sustains a 30% a year growth clip.

**The ex-retail buyer:** It was after Brooks Lively had her first child that she decided that she did not love the styles of clothes that were out there. And, having been a retail buyer for 8 years, Ms. Lively realized that she could probably successfully venture off on her own.

Not only could she offer clothes she believed in, but doing so would also offer her the stay-at-home flexibility she so desired. And so it was that Carrot Top Clothes was born.

**Lessons learned:** What I see is that mom entrepreneurs are both just like any other entrepreneurs yet also are a unique breed unto themselves:

They are like all other entrepreneurs in that, to succeed, the first step is to see a need and figure out how to fill it.

Yet they remain unique in that 1) The need they see often has to do with their experience as a mother, and 2) Starting a business helps them not only fill a need in the marketplace, but one in their own home as well.

Way to go moms!

**Today's Tip:** Need some help for your women-owned business? Check out [WomenOwned.com](#), [Womenbiz.gov](#), and [BlueSuitMom.com](#).