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## CONSIDER THIS BEFORE STARTING A HOME BUSINESS

If you prefer to start a home business working as a representative for an existing company, there are plenty out there to choose from. There are things you should think about beforehand, however. Too many people make the mistake of jumping into the first opportunity they see. Do your homework before signing on the dotted line! Here are some things to consider about your prospective opportunity:

**Are you passionate about the products/services?** - Be honest with yourself on this, it's the most important question. Don't sign up with a company because others are doing well with them, or because your neighbor says it's the wave of the future. Can you really get excited about what you're selling? If yes, you will have a much better shot at success.

**Is the company legitimate?** - How long have they been in business? Are they a member of the Better Business Bureau or the Direct Selling Association? This doesn't necessarily guarantee the company is "good", but it's a good starting place. Also do a search for the company name along with the word "scam." Do a lot of complaints come up? Most companies will probably have a few, but if there are many, you might want to think twice.

**Start-up Cost** - How much does it cost to become a representative, and what is included in your start-up kit? Most business opportunities have a start-up cost that can range from a few dollars up to hundreds of dollars. However, you should actually receive something for this money being spent.

**Product or Service** - Is there an actual product or service being sold to customers? If there is no product or service, run far, far away! That is called a pyramid scheme, and it is illegal.

**Training** - Do you receive any training and support from the company? Ask how this training is presented. Is it online training? Telephone conference calls? One on one mentoring? Audio files? Printed booklets? Make sure you clearly understand what support and training materials will be provided for you.

**Ongoing Costs** - Are there any ongoing costs to running your business with this company? Some companies require that you purchase a certain amount of products each month, or they charge monthly webhosting fees or administrative fees.

**Marketing Materials** - Will you need to purchase your own marketing materials like brochures, catalogs, order forms, business cards, advertising or prospecting leads? Find out if the company offers any of these to you for free, or if they have low cost alternatives.

**Quotas** - Will you have any sales quotas you need to meet each month or year? Any other requirements you must meet to keep your business active?

**Online or Off** - Would you prefer to run your business mostly online, or off? Would you enjoy doing home parties? Some companies offer the option of both, and some do not. Find out exactly how you will need to run your business and make sure it's something you won't mind doing.

**Website** - Does the company give you a free website, or one that you pay for? Can you sign up customers and representatives at the website, or do you have to do it manually by phone or fax? Some websites are given for marketing and lead generation purposes, but you still have to sign up the prospects yourself. Others have more automated systems set up.

**Product Delivery** - Who delivers the products your customers order? Does the company ship them out for you, or will you have to do that?

**Realistic income** - What can you expect to earn, and how is the bulk of your income earned? Do you need to recruit other representatives in order to earn? Or can you sell product to earn a commission. Some companies offer both options. Don't fall for the hyped-up ads that claim you can earn \$20,000 in a month. It may be possible, but be clear on exactly what would be required of you to earn that much money. Will you need to recruit a certain number of representatives per month, or sell a certain amount of products per month? Are you willing to do that?

When you finally choose a company to partner with, be prepared to work hard and be committed. So many ads out there make it sound so easy -- you just sign up and the money starts rolling in. Nothing could be further from the truth. You will need to show up each day and do the work, just like a job. You will need to stretch yourself outside your comfort zones and work on improving yourself, personally and professionally.

The good news is that YOU are responsible for your own success. There are no limits if you truly believe in yourself and the company you represent.

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