

Mom Incorporated: The Survival Guide for the Entrepreneurial New Mom

...for work-at-home and work-out-of-the-home women with babies or babies-to-be!

- *Nearly one in ten American women is a business owner – over 10 million women!*
- *41% of women business owners are under the age of 45 – that is, child-bearing years.*
- *Women business owners are having babies and facing unexpected entrepreneurial challenges that aren't being addressed in business books.*

Mom Incorporated: The Survival Guide for the Entrepreneurial New Mom offers practical tips, anecdotes, lessons learned, and solid advice from moms who've had children while running successful businesses and from experts who have seen it all. This book includes the more personal issues you rarely see in entrepreneur guides – issues that are particular to a new mother's experience as she tries to continue running her business.

Topics include:

1. When to take maternity leave and how to do it without guilt or regrets.
2. The effects of labor and birth on your entrepreneurial brain.
3. Getting through the haze of your first months post partum with your sanity and business intact.
4. The mixed emotions – and mixed results – of returning to work after childbirth.

5. The critical search for babysitters, day care, and other essential helpers.
6. Finding and building the support networks you need to survive.
7. Feeding baby while working: breastfeeding, breast pumping and other feeding acrobatics.
8. Physical recovery from labor and its effects on your work.
9. Post partum hormones gone awry and the impact on your business.
10. Resisting the temptation to do it all to overcome the Supermom Syndrome.
11. Celebrating your baby and business milestones.
12. Rediscovering your identity as a woman, business owner and mom.

About the Author

Aliza Sherman Risdahl – <http://www.mediaegg.com>

Aliza is a successful serial entrepreneur who had her first child at 41 after over 20 years in the business world. She was single and child-free when she started the first woman-owned Internet company, Cybergrrl, Inc. and the first women's Internet networking group, Webgrrls International during the Internet boom.

Her baby boom didn't happen until she was running her fourth company, Moonbow Productions, Inc., then all hell broke loose. Nobody told her she wouldn't recover physically from labor for almost seven months and would still be suffering from post partum depression a year later, not to mention failing at breastfeeding, dealing with a

revolving door of babysitters, and trying to figure out how to be a mother on top of keep clients happy. She (and her baby and husband) somehow survived that first year.

Mom Incorporated: The Survival Guide for the Entrepreneurial New Mom is filled with the lessons and topics nobody ever talks about until everything seems hopeless. This book will help prevent women from having to learn the hard way how to manage both baby and business.

Aliza is the author of seven books including *PowerTools for Women in Business: 10 Ways to Succeed in Life and Work* (Entrepreneur Press); *The Everything Blogging Book* (Adams Media) and the upcoming *StreetWise ECommerce* (Adams Media). She has been featured numerous times in *USA Today*, *US News & World Report*, CNN, CNBC, and been profiled in *People*, *Time*, among many others. When she started her Internet company Cybergrl, Inc., *Newsweek* named her one of the "50 People Who Matter Most on the Internet."

In addition to being an Internet expert and Web pioneer, she is a television producer (produced, wrote and narrated a 12-part documentary television series for Wyoming Public Television) and radio producer (has filed stories for "Marketplace" as well as Wyoming Public Radio and Alaska Public Radio Network), avid blogger on over 6 blogs, and mother of a 13-month-old daughter. She lives with her husband, daughter and two dogs in Alaska.

The Market

According to the Center for Women's Business Research, "rather than withdrawing from the economy and shutting down their ambitions, an extraordinary number of women have taken direct control of their destinies through business ownership. In fact, **today there are more than 10 million women who own and lead businesses!** During the past 20 years, the number of majority women-owned firms has continued to grow at two times the rate of all businesses, and currently there are 10.4 million woman-owned firms in the US that represents 4 in 10 privately-held businesses...According to the US census bureau, **forty-one percent of women business owners are under the age of 45 compared to 36 percent of men business owners—suggesting that business ownership is a definite option for women who may have children at home.**"

Mom Incorporated: The Survival Guide for the Entrepreneurial New Mom is for these millions of women who are having babies while trying to run their businesses.

Other Business Books

A book that addresses the entrepreneurial mom from a small, independent publisher of "mom writers" is:

The Business Mom Guide Book: More Life, Less Overwhelm for Mom Entrepreneurs by Terilee Harrison (Wyatt-MacKenzie Publishing (Sept 2006, ISBN 1932279369) – #1, 824, 087.

Some books that address "stay-at-work" moms, but not necessarily business owners are:

How She Really Does It: Secrets of Success from Stay-at-work Moms by Wendy Sachs

(Perseus Books Group, April 2006)

This is How We Do It: A Practical Guide for the Working Mother by Carol Evans

(Plume, March 2007)

Other books address ways stay at home moms can make money such as:

The Stay-at-Home Mom's Guide to Making Money from Home by Liz Folder (Three

Rivers Press, March 2000)

Or work-at-home mom issues surrounding working from home:

The Work-At-Home Mom's Guide to Home Business: Stay at Home and Make Money

with Wahm.com by Cheryl Demas (I'm Expecting, July 2000)

Mompreneurs Online: Using the Internet for Work at Home Success by Patricia Cobe

(Pedigree Trade, Sept 2001)

Mompreneurs: A Mother's Practical Step by Step Guide to Work at Home Success by

Patricia Cobe (Pedigree Trade, June 2002)

I Love My Life: A Mom's Guide to Working from Home by Kristie Tamsevicius (Wyatt-

MacKenzie Publishing, Sept 2003)

Mom Incorporated: The Survival Guide for the Entrepreneurial New Mom is not a guide for stay-at-home moms or working moms. It is specifically for the woman business owner who has a baby while running her company. Issues faced by both entrepreneurs at home and entrepreneurs working out of the home are addressed. . This is not a "how to work from home" advice book or a "how to go back to your job" guide. The women who need and will read *Mom Incorporated: The Survival Guide for the Entrepreneurial New Mom* are not working for other people or opting out of work entirely. They own their own companies and don't want to give them up just because they've had a baby.

Marketing Opportunities

Taking a multimedia approach to marketing Mom Incorporated will yield better results than sticking to only traditional marketing avenues.

MomIncorporated.com

There should be a promotional Mom Incorporated Web site and informational blog to attract readers and encourage women to meet to discuss the book and provide support to one another in the "real world." Aliza has already reserved MomIncorporated.com if that is the final title but another appropriate name could also be reserved.

Aliza Sherman's Promotional Venues

Aliza's own Web sites and blogs where promoting Mom Incorporated includes:

MediaEgg – www.mediaegg.com – Site promoting Aliza's work and writing

Aliza Sherman Rants & Raves – babyfruit.typepad.com/mediagirl – Blog discussing work, technology and lifestyle issues and trends.

Babyfruit – babyfruit.typepad.com/baby – Blog discussing miscarriage, pregnancy and motherhood.

In addition to her own Web sites and blogs, Aliza also blogs at:

WorkitMom.com – www.workitmom.com – A blog called "Entrepreneur Mom" discussing entrepreneurial and small business issues.

Motherhood Later...Than Sooner - www.motherhoodlaterthansooner.com – A blog for about being an older mom – for moms 35+.

Working Mother - www.workingmother.com – Blogging to professional moms about being an older mom.

All of these sites and blogs are additional promotional venues for the book.

Mom Incorporated and Social Networking

There should be a Mom Incorporated should take full advantage any appropriate social networking site for moms or businesswomen including, but not limited to:

MySpace.com

Friendster.com

Gather.com

MayasMom.com

CafeMom.com

Momspace.com

Aliza Sherman has been at the cutting edge of social networking and online marketing since the mid 1990s and can bring her expertise and skills to develop compelling, effective ways to building community around the book. She currently has over 25 social networking pages and accounts including:

Twitter – www.twitter.com/alizasherman

Jaiku – alizasherman.jaiku.com/

Pownce – www.pownce.com/alizasherman

Tumblr – alizasherman.tumblr.com

Maya's Mom – www.mayasmom.com/profile/babyfruit

CafeMom – www.cafemom.com/home/alizasherman

Facebook – www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=562805152

Friendster – www.friendster.com/alizasherman

LinkedIn – www.linkedin.com/in/mediaegg

MySpace – www.myspace.com/mediaegg

Vox – alizasherman.vox.com

Each of these sites and others produced by Aliza can be valuable promotional tools online for the book.

Mom Incorporated Podcast and Videocast

With the ease of multimedia publishing and the proliferation of multimedia hosting sites from YouTube.com and Veoh.com for video to iTunes, Audioblogger.com and OurMedia.com for audio, producing and distributing podcasts and videocasts is a great way to build buzz, a loyal audience and promote a related book.

Aliza Sherman has experience as both a radio and television producer and owns both professional audio and video recording equipment so producing a Mom Incorporated podcast and even a Moms Incorporated is feasible and advisable to garner attention for

the book and reach busy entrepreneurial moms who may not have time to browse content-heavy Web sites.

Mom Incorporated Blog Tour

Aliza can be a guest blogger or be interviewed on countless blogs written by and for moms, female entrepreneurs and other relevant audiences who would be interested in reading *Moms Incorporated*. A blog tour takes place within a timeframe optimal for promoting the book and new posts appear on blogs worldwide during the course of the "tour." This is an extremely cost-effective way to market the book, particularly because the target audience for the book is more inclined to read blogs or blog themselves rather than read typical Web sites with longer articles.

Mom Incorporated Bylined Articles

As a regular freelance contributor to national publications, Aliza can compose relevant articles related to the entrepreneurial woman who is a new mom for publications ranging from *Parenting* and *Parents* to *Mothering* and *Brain, Child*. She is skilled in writing queries and landing assignments or placing articles and could contribute relevant content that can be published in diverse magazines to reach a wide audience and further promote the book

NPR Commentary and Radio Appearances

As a segment producer and occasional guest and guest host on several public radio affiliates as well as "Marketplace," Aliza is familiar with producing commentaries for

radio and has contacts to facilitate getting them aired. Radio is still a powerful promotional tool for books, and Aliza can get on the air and communicate a message in a compelling way that is promotional without being too commercial. Her years on the radio as both interviewer and interviewee make her radio appearances a success.

Television Appearances

In addition to being a "photogenic author," Aliza is comfortable in front of the camera. She is vibrant, articulate, personable and approachable – all qualities that lend themselves to a successful on air appearance. In the past, she has appeared numerous times on CNN, CNN-FN, CNBC, and MSNBC and has been featured on the CBS Evening News, the CBS Early Show and shows on the Discovery Channel, CNET and PBS.

Speaking Engagements

Aliza has spoken up to several times a week to audiences of professional women and entrepreneurs. She has appeared at major conferences across the country including the Governor's conferences for women in New York and California, Women in Technology Inc (WITI), National Association of Female Executives (NAFE), American Women's Economic Development (AWED), and numerous international women's business summits. She has also spoken at major universities including Harvard, Columbia, NYU, Simmons College Graduate School of Management, Rutgers, and Mills College for women. Aliza is a sought-after and popular motivational speaker covering topics ranging from business and Internet to women's issues.

Aliza Sherman can work creatively with the publisher's public relations team to come up with additional ideas for marketing the book. She will be available for media interviews and appearances to actively and enthusiastically promote ***Mom Incorporated: The Survival Guide for the Entrepreneurial New Mom.***

Sample Table of Contents

Introduction

- 1. Can Your Business Survive a Baby?**
- 2. Maternity Leave Matters & Mayhem**
- 3. Brain Drain After Birth**
- 4. The Baby and Business Mix**
- 5. Getting Back to Business**
- 6. Baby Care Blues**
- 7. Baby's Gotta Eat Sometime**
- 8. Your Body, Your Business**
- 9. The Hormone Whammy Cocktail**
- 10. Superwoman is for the Funny Papers**
- 11. Baby Means Business**
- 12. Your Baby, Your Business, Your Self**

Introduction

You own a business, and I'm sure you've heard the saying – or have even said yourself – that a business is like a baby. Frankly, your business is your babies. You've birthed the concept, nurtured an idea into a viable company, and your early stage business is a toddler while the more established business is an adolescent. Your business has probably even kept you up at night and consumed most of your life.

So now you're about to have or just had a baby – you know, a real life baby. So what's a savvy entrepreneur who has put all of her blood, sweat, and tears into her business to do? How will an actual baby fit into your life when your life revolves around your business? How will you juggle both babies so neither suffers and so you not only survive – but thrive – as well?

This book is the book I wish existed when I had my baby while running my business. I've run several businesses over the last dozen years and thought I had it all figured out. Then I had my baby and all the business rules and advice from the best business books went out the window because none of them addressed both business AND baby.

As business owners, we have responsibilities, we have priorities, and we have compartmentalized our lives to fit in the important stuff. As new moms, we just added a whole slew of really important stuff, but where does it all fit in? This book will help you navigate the intricate juggling act of baby and business. Notice how I didn't say "balancing act?" Because let's face it – it really is about keeping all those balls of life and

work in the air and even in the best of times, it never really does feel balanced. Going for balance could feel futile, but being able – over time – to manage all of those balls can be both a relief and a rewarding accomplishment.

So here's to incorporating your new baby into your busy world without letting your business – and the rest of your life – get the short end of the stick. You are Mom Incorporated! And this is your survival guide...

Chapter 1 - Can Your Business Survive a Baby?

Let's be honest here. Nothing anyone tells you and even nothing you read can adequately prepare you for having a baby. I bought dozens of pregnancy books, including the best sellers, and still felt unprepared for new motherhood, but at least I had a pile of books to frantically search through each time I met a new challenge.

The one thing the pregnancy and motherhood books didn't cover, however, was how to handle my company while preparing to have a baby. Some mentioned a few tips about when to tell an employer that you're pregnant and how to negotiate maternity leave, but what about those of us who are the boss? I needed to figure out when and how to tell my clients. And if I had employees – which I didn't at the time – how to tell them would have been another big question mark.

While I was in the throes of post partum and returning to work, my main concern was actually not "will my business survive a baby," but at that stage, it was more like "will I survive a business and a baby?" The biggest lesson I learned was that it was much more important to take care of myself first and foremost because without me in top form, the business might not survive at all. But as most career-minded, focused and ambitious businesswomen will attest, it is so much easier to pay attention to the business than to ourselves.

Business Before Baby

Before I had a baby – before I was even pregnant – my work was my life. I poured all my time, energy and attention into client projects and freelance assignments.

As a company of one, my business could only be as successful as the effort I put forth, and so I put forth a lot of effort to keep the income flowing.

Once pregnant, I didn't even consider slowing down, although at times, pregnancy tried to get in the way of my non-stop working by throwing in a few signs that I really should be taking care of myself and my baby-to-be. I should have listened to my body because I think half the battle of surviving and thriving as a businesswoman after a baby is to break old bad work habits and learn to take the time you need to handle the major changes in your post partum life.

Ways Pregnancy Might Affect Business As Usual

1. Relentless nausea that sends you running to the restroom mid-sentence.
2. Rollercoaster hormones that make everything a potential trigger for tears.
3. Breathlessness that can turn a walk down a hallway into a marathon.
4. Exhaustion like you've never experienced warranting catnaps at your desk.
5. Frustrating fashion challenges when looking for professional maternity wear.
6. Excessive swelling, high blood pressure, repeated spotting or bleeding. If you experience any of these, get to the doctor immediately!

Making a Plan

As with any aspect of running a business, you need a strategy in place to get through having a baby. For those who love to be prepared for anything, coming up with a plan for how your business will run once you have a baby even before you are pregnant is not a bad thing. For the rest of us who often fly by the seat of our pants, taking a few

hours to thinking the effects of maternity leave and early motherhood on our companies is just smart business.

There are several plans that I'd recommend working on and putting down in writing depending on your company size and situation. These plans will be covered in detail in the next several chapters:

1. Pre-Birth Maternity Leave
2. The Labor Plan
3. Post Partum Maternity Leave
4. Back to Work Plan

There will be some distinct differences between these plans if you are a company of one or a company with employees.

Make sure to tailor each plan to consider your personality type, household situation (dual versus single income family), and other variables, but don't think of running your company under these circumstances as "business as usual." If anything, having a baby while running a business is the epitome of "business unusual." Your new mantra is: Be flexible. No plan is written in stone, and no plan should be written assuming everything will go the way you planned.

Advice You Need (But Probably Won't Listen To)

1. Take off more time than you think you'll need
2. Ask for help
3. Accept all help offered
4. Sleep when the baby sleeps

5. Trust others to keep your business running well

Tale from the Trenches

Let's face it. We are all different. Every woman deals with each situation in our life and our work in our own unique ways. Personally, I like to hear how other women deal with situations similar to my own. I don't always learn how I'll handle something by hearing another woman's story. Sometimes, I learn how I definitely will *not* handle something. I'm very good at learning from other's mistakes. Unfortunately, I'm even better at learning the hard way by making the mistakes myself, so I'll be sure to share as many of those as I can in hopes that you can at least avoid the same ones.

When I asked Kristin M. about how her business survived her first baby, she admitted to doing all the things I won't advise in this book, but I share her story because she survived, her business survived, and her children are thriving. This falls under the category "Don't Do This At Home."

After her doctor advised her that the stress she was experiencing at her place of employment was a bad thing for her pregnancy, Kristin quit the job and started her own freelance graphic design company from home. She took on one client doing all of their design work. Then she gave birth to her daughter, and took an interview with another company for more freelance work just four days after giving birth.

"I basically came home from the hospital and went back to work," says Kristin. "I even had an ad due for the client the day I came home." Kristin admits she didn't have the best plan. For the first few months of her daughter's life, Kristin went into her client's office a few times a week to pick up projects and then sent proofs back via email.

Says Kristin, "I was completely unprepared for the stress and exhaustion of motherhood, let alone not taking any maternity leave. When you are self-employed, it is financially difficult to go without pay for that long. No one else could do the work for me."

That was two years ago. Since then, Kristin gave birth to a son and continued to work for both of her clients through her pregnancy and the first weeks of his life. "Once again, I came home from the hospital and immediately went in to my office to start working on an ad that was due the next morning," Kristin recalls, adding that her client gave her an extra evening to get the work done since she was in the hospital. "I am amazed at how unaffected and selfish people can be when you have a baby."

Kristin didn't take a maternity leave for her second baby either, and she reluctantly admits that while she was in labor with her son, she was actually on the cell phone tracking down an ad for one of her clients.

I'm exhausted just thinking about how Kristin chose to manage her business and babies. She does say that if it were financially possible, she would have opted for an on-site caregiver so she could be available to her kids but still be able to focus on her tasks. Check out Chapter 2 (Maternity Leave Matters and Mayhem) for more Tales from the Trenches and some great tactics for managing client expectations.

No Judgment, No Regrets

One of the hardest things women face regardless of the choices they make in work and life is the judgment of others. Worrying what other people think about how you do things in your life is a waste of time and energy. If you can step back and assess your

situation honestly and if it works for you and for your family, then be confident in your choices and decisions. And if you come to realize you've made the wrong decision, don't hesitate for a moment to make the changes you need to feel right about your work and life. After all – it is your life, and it is your work. You're the one who will have to live with your choices every day.

No matter what you choose to do, always remember this old adage: *Nobody ever said on their deathbed: "I wish I had spent more time at the office."* Work will never be the substitute for family or even friends. But your work does not have to suffer irreparably either.

Remember – while balance sounds nice, it really is more of a juggle. You can choose not to juggle as many balls, but when it comes to business and a baby, those are two very challenging balls to keep in the air simultaneously. Let's get on with some more stories and tips to help you decide what balls to juggle and to figure out how to do them well.

Ask Yourself: Am I Workaholic?

Choose the answers that sound most like you.

1. When I have a large project, I:

- a. Delegate parts of the project to capable staff or outsource.
- b. Do everything myself.

2. When I'm approaching a deadline, I:

- a. Panic and work day and night to get the job done.
- b. Speak with the client about an extension or bring on extra help to meet it.

3. When I am overloaded with work, I:

- a. Look to outsource or delegate part of it.
- b. Take on just one more client because it is really good money.

4. When I plan out a project, I:

- a. Always pad the schedule with extra time to accommodate the unexpected.
- b. Try to stick to a tight schedule to get the job done and move on to the next one.

5. When I'm focused on my work, I:

- a. Sometimes forget to eat and maybe drink a little too much coffee.
- b. Remember to take a few breaks throughout the day to regroup and refresh.

6. For my maternity leave, I'm planning to take:

- a. Maternity Leave? What's that?
- b. Two to three months, but I'll prepare to take as much time as I'll need.

7. As I prepare for maternity leave, I'm:

- a. Identifying staff or independent contractors who I can trust to take care of things.
- b. Scrambling to get as much work done as possible before its too late.

8. After maternity leave, I plan to:

a. Ease back into work with a lighter schedule at first.

b. Maternity Leave? What's that?

Based on your responses, add up your points as follows:

1a-1, 1b-2

2a-2, 2b-1

3a-1, 3b-2

4a-1, 4b-2

5a-2, 5b-1

6a-2, 6b-1

7a-1, 7b-2

8a-1, 8b-2

8 points – Okay, so you are one of those rare people who probably does live a balanced life. The rest of us can't live up to that, but we'll admire you from afar.

9-12 points – You're human, you're normal. Just make sure you spend some time on a plan, don't be afraid to ask for help, and take good care of yourself.

13 points or more – Warning! Warning! You are neglecting your most valuable asset: YOU. Get some therapy, take a chill pill, set up a support network, do anything you can to break your bad work habits *now*. You'll be glad you did.