

live it

Crib Notes

[HOME IS WHERE THE PAYCHECK IS]



What began as a hobby for the pair turned into a successful online infant apparel business called Suteccchi.com.



Photos by Steve Reed

Unless you're a lumberjack, a mortician or a racing-pig trainer, it's likely you don't actually have to be at 'the office' to perform your daily work tasks.

And the way technology is advancing, it's possible that virtual tree-chopping on iLumberjack.com isn't far away.

Yet toiling from home doesn't necessarily mean being shackled to a computer. For Suzanne Rombs, working out of her ultra-cool urban loft in the American Beauty Mill near downtown Dallas is a great source of secondary income.

Rombs is a full-time art director for Blockbuster Online. Her friend and business partner, Elizabeth Fenimore, runs a graphic design company from her own home office.

What began as a hobby for the pair turned into a successful online infant apparel business called Suteccchi.com, which they operate from Rombs' loft. Rombs and Fenimore craft handmade eco-friendly infant onesies with an Asian feel, using silk screening, fabric application and embroidery, for a devoted customer base.

"The apartment is in an old pasta mill that has been converted to lofts, so it has a very industrial, urban feel," says Rombs. "The large open space and abundance of natural light make it an ideal atmosphere for working from home," she says.

"Fortunately, my profession makes it possible to work anywhere and, from time to time, I'll work from home on Blockbuster projects," she says. "Sometimes you just need the peace and quiet of home to get the creative juices flowing."

Cruising over to Rombs' loft gives Fenimore a break from her own work-from-home routine. "Having lived in New York for a while, I just find being in a loft environment inspiring," says Fenimore. "There is something very creative about repurposing these old buildings." Rombs does have some sage advice for people looking to work from home, lest they think it's a free pass to sleep late and never bathe again. "Setting a schedule and sticking to it is important to maintain a healthy work-life balance," she says. "It's just as easy to get distracted as it is to forget to eat because you're so focused on what you're doing."

And when you work for yourself, the boss always knows what you're up to.

— Steven Lindsey

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