



Time Out Spots

Owner: Heather Sievers

Business address: Fountain Valley

Telephone: (714) 856-6889

Web site: timeoutspots.com

Type of business: Retail, timeout rugs for children

When opened: Got my sellers permit in March 2005; the Web site became live in July 2005.

Describe your business: It is an online store selling Time Out Spots (rugs) for children. I also sell wholesale to more than 50 boutiques in the U.S. and Canada.

Where did you get the idea for the business? My son, Hayden, was 3 years old at the time and we did his timeouts on a little wooden stool. We had just remodeled our home and now had wood floors. That stool became more of a problem, as he would scoot it across the room, scratching up the floors. I had a problem that needed a solution. I then thought of the Time Out Spot, a rug with a nonskid back that is a safe alternative to a timeout stool or chair. Because it is flat on the floor, children are safe from flipping over. They are machine washable.

How long did it take you to get from the idea to open doors? About five months.

What did you do during that time? I worked with my Webmaster to build my Web site. I also found models to photograph (my child and some friends' kids). I figured out my packaging and spent hours on the Internet printing out lists of children's boutiques to target when my product was complete.

Whom did you seek for advice? My husband and father, who are both self-employed.

How are you marketing yourself? I have placed ads in various places including Martha Stewart Kids, Kids Directory, online kids sites, and more. I have also attended some wholesale expos. More important, I have been pounding the pavement contacting anyone I can think of to help spread the word.

The biggest thing you did not think of before you started: After just a few months I have over 50 retailers. This is a lot of work for just one person!

- Doris Benavides/The Register

TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THIS COLUMN

Your enterprise should be no more than 4 years old.

Write: Spotlight, The Orange County Register,

P.O. Box 11626, Santa Ana, CA 92711-1626