

Locked down creatives spawn a new generation of ‘kitchen table agencies’

Submitted by: Green Row Communications

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Hordes of creative professionals are trading in their office jobs to start home-based agencies, according to the founder of a new virtual network.

The lockdown startups are flocking to The KitchenTable Community, a peer-to-peer support network that encourages its members to form commercial partnerships, share knowledge and generally root for each other.

Aimed at designers, web developers, marketers, video makers, events specialists, copywriters and the like, the project is the brainchild of John Ashton, who started the copywriting agency Write Arm from his kitchen table in 2012.

The Community has been overrun with enquiries for advice since the start of lockdown. Ashton says: “Once creatives get over the fear of starting a business, they realise that the kitchen table model is actually a great agency model. When you tap into the wider network of agencies you realise that there’s a wealth resources available.”

He adds: “Kitchen table agencies are succeeding because they tap into a huge and under-utilised well of talent, namely working parents. These people don’t work regular office hours, but they do as good a job – arguably better – than their office-based equivalents.”

“There’s a fantastic camaraderie among small agencies, which will give community its fuel,” say Ashton.

Ashton conceived the idea of the community three years ago, when he noticed that numerous creatives were starting home-based agencies that employed networks of freelancers rather than permanent staff.

Ashton believes that the Coronavirus lockdown will accelerate the trend.

“It’s the ideal business model for the post-Corona world,” he says. “Many people who have been forced to work from home won’t want to go back to the office and sadly many won’t have jobs to go to. During tough economic times kitchen table agencies should thrive because their lower overheads allow them to compete with larger agencies on price.”

Ashton’s 2019 book The KitchenTable Method set out his blueprint for running small, freelance-based agencies.

“Creative professionals are often intimidated by the idea of starting their own business. I was but then I did it anyway. So my message to them is that ‘if this idiot can do it, then so can you!’.”

Notes to editors:

1. The KitchenTable Community is at <https://kitchentable.community>
2. John Ashton's agency Write Arm provides writing services to agencies and direct clients in the UK, Europe and beyond.
3. Membership of the Community brings four benefits:
 - Peer-to-peer support
 - How-to content
 - Access to a marketplace where members trade services
 - Deals on products and services

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