



## Ten Minutes With... By Kathleen Palmer

Traci Bisson, developer of [www.themomentpreneur.com](http://www.themomentpreneur.com)

**Personal:** Traci Bisson, 39, lives in Barrington with her husband, a land surveyor, and two sons, ages 9 and 4½.

**Professional:** Bisson is President and Senior Publicist of Bisson Barcelona, a marketing and PR firm she started in 2000 for authors and artists. She then developed The Mom Entrepreneur, a comprehensive resource organization and Website designed to support and link together self-employed moms.

### **Q: How did the Mom Entrepreneur come to be?**

**A:** During the first quarter of 2008, her company, Bisson Barcelona ([www.bissonbarcelona.com](http://www.bissonbarcelona.com)), was experiencing some financial difficulties, Bisson explains. Owed several thousand dollars from clients, she faced the prospect of laying off employees. Instead, she cut back on overhead by taking her son out of daycare and establishing a home office.

"Unable to network in person," she says, "I turned to social outlets – Facebook, Twitter, etc. The Mom Entrepreneur was established within the next 30 days."

"I think that's the true trait of an entrepreneur," Bisson says. "The ability to make lemonade out of lemons."

In April of last year, Bisson began blogging about the challenges and successes she experienced as a female business owner. Looking for blog fodder and support, she sent a query out through two news channels – HARO ([www.helpareporter.com](http://www.helpareporter.com)) and ProfNet ([www.profnetwork.com](http://www.profnetwork.com)), resources for professionals in journalism looking for sources and leads – looking for tips on balancing family and business. She anticipated she would connect with a few other mom entrepreneurs, interview them and post their stories on her blog.

"In less than 48 hours," she says, "I had received 400 e-mails with more than 1,000 tips from mom entrepreneurs all over the world." Overwhelmed and very excited, she began in earnest the process of getting The Mom Entrepreneur up and running, adding an online support group in June. "Our site is a meeting place for mom entrepreneurs, to ask and answer questions, and connect with others," Bisson says.

### **Q: The Website is amazing. Did you develop it?**

**A:** Bisson did indeed create and design her info-packed Website, [www.themomentpreneur.com](http://www.themomentpreneur.com). "I started it and got it done over Christmas break week" of last year, she says. The site includes links to her blog, the support group sounding board for mom entrepreneurs, services and resources, and a co-op shop of support group members.

Bisson says she is currently overhauling the site, expecting to relaunch a more one-stop shopping style of site before fall. "Right now it's a portal," she explains. "Currently, you have to click away to the vendors' individual sites to make purchases, for example," she explains. "We want to offer easier, direct check-out [at the main site]." She also notes that the site uses several different servers, like Google groups, all with their own limitations. She wants to have it all under one umbrella server.

### **Q: What is the co-op shop?**

**A:** Bisson brings together mom entrepreneurs from around the country, giving them the opportunity to advertise and sell their wares and services. In order to be a vendor in the co-op shop, you must join the support group, and be a woman, preferably a mother, with a specific business pursuit. "Our site primarily

attracts women interested in the balancing act of business and raising a family,” Bisson says. “About 98 percent are moms.”

There are three tiers to co-op participants, she explains: stay-at-home moms who casually pursue a little extra income; true work-at-home moms, with an office (at home or elsewhere), possibly employees; and a smaller contingency of big companies owned by moms. Each business pays a rate to participate in different promotions – this year; Bisson started with a Valentine’s Day focus with 35 members participating, and now has an Easter/Earth Day promotion going with 52 members.

For promoting the vendors in the co-op shop, Bisson harnesses the power of national media lists, doing advertising and press releases, as well as being heavily involved in Twitter. “We’ll have ‘Twitter parties’ where we’ll have a one-hour, deep-discount sale available only to our Twitter members,” she says.

**Q: What’s the best thing about your business?**

**A:** “The support group has such a great ‘pay-it-forward’ mentality,” Bisson says. “People are just so willing to give information and feedback, knowing that it’s reciprocal.” She recounts one discussion board posting by a member who was devastated when her child was diagnosed with ADHD. She received many responses, support and information from the other members. “From potty training to Twitter,” Bisson says, there are over 600 members ready to relate and share on any topic affecting mom entrepreneurs.

Bisson’s site is always looking for more members. And with the current economy, more women may take the entrepreneurial route for generating income and enabling them to spend more time with their children. “Moms are so creative,” she says. “If they want the flexibility to stay at home with their kids, they’ll figure out a way.”

*Kathleen Palmer of Nashua is a mom and freelance writer. Go to her blog at [www.blogs.nashuatelegraph.com/themotherofallblogs](http://www.blogs.nashuatelegraph.com/themotherofallblogs).*