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Mom Entrepreneur Feature: Gail Smith

Mompreneur: Gail Smith**Business:** Hidden Creations & Shake-n-Grow**Website:** www.shakeandgrow.com, www.shakengrow.com, www.gailshiddencreations.com**Contact:** gailshiddencreations@comcast.net

I admit, I don't naturally have a green thumb, but I'm pleased to introduce Mom Entrepreneur Gail Smith, owner of the companies [Shake-n-Grow](#) and [Hidden Creations](#), who absolutely has what it takes to grow plants and a business! I live in Arizona where growing conditions are not the best; believe me I tried and failed miserably. Meeting Gail and learning of her products gives me gardening hope. So check her out! And, better yet, Gail is offering readers \$1 off her 14 oz. bottle and \$3.00 of 2 of 14 oz. bottles. Email Gail directly at gailshiddencreations@comcast.net to take advantage of this offer!

LC: Tell us a bit about your business and the inspiration behind it. Since I was a young child I have always been an entrepreneur at heart! Over the years I have looked for ways to help bring in additional income for the family while still being able to stay home and raise our 7 children (most our now grown and I have 3 beautiful grandchildren). I have two businesses: Hidden Creations and Shake-n-Grow. Last summer, my husband Frank, a family friend and I were sitting on the back patio enjoying some fresh air. We started talking about "our secret" that we use on all of our flowers, vegetables and trees. We have friends and nurseries that use our product and they have been so impressed with the difference in the size and quality of their plants that they always came back for more! Not all of our friends have green thumbs. Some of them have brown thumbs like myself. Shake-n-Grow makes all of us equal and turns a brown thumb into a green thumb. Our friend mentioned to us that, "Maybe Hidden Creations should try selling our plant food supplement on the internet". And so we launched our new entrepreneurial business venture, Shake-n-Grow!

LC: How long did it take for you to go from idea to business launch and reality? When we started to talk about the possibility of selling our plant food supplement Shake-n-Grow it was the first of May 2008. Our daughter was getting married at the end of that month. It was an extremely busy time but we knew we needed to get moving and start developing a strategy! We worked quickly and gave out samples to wedding visitors from all over the U.S. to start getting the word out. During the next couple months we applied for registrations and fertilizer licenses, tested packaging and worked with a wonderful graphic designer and developed both a label and a website. By 8-8-08 we launched our product!



LC: How did you find manufacturers for your product and how did you select the ingredients you use? Our product is a patented product. We use a manufacturer in the U.S. that produces Shake-n-Grow exclusively for us for home and garden use!

LC: What is your most prized fruit/vegetable/flower that you've grown with Shake-n-grow? We live in California so we are blessed with a long growing season! When you walk in our yard we have a rose garden with over 20 different varieties in all kinds of beautiful colors! We are also working with a Giant Pumpkin Grower that produced a pumpkin last year that was over 922 pounds. The picture above is a 600 pound baby that still has 2 1/2 months to grow! We hope to see the "Great Pumpkin" rise out of the pumpkin patch this year and blow away the competition!

LC: What were your business start-up costs and how long did it take for you to become profitable? Shake-n-Grow is only a year old and start up costs were around \$20,000 the first year. Shake-n-Grow is still in the growth stage, and we are continue to reinvest back into the business as it expands and grows!

LC: How did you finance your business (personal contributions, loans from friends & family, loans from bank, credit cards, outside investors?). Start up expenses can be higher the first year. We had an outside investor, personal contributions and family loans.

LC: What has been a major challenge for you and how did you overcome it? I look at challenges as opportunities and we our a totally new and unique product so getting exposure has been a challenge. We hired an excellent Sales Director part-time and started using Sales Associates in several states to help us make contacts with local nurseries. We have also started a Young Entrepreneur's program for kids that helps them learn about business and raise money for their group or organization. We also have a fan page on Facebook ShakenGrowPlantFoodSupplement and our websites www.shakeandgrow.com and www.shakengrow.com

LC: Is there a resource that proved to be invaluable that you would like to share with other Mom Entrepreneurs? I have a few resources that have helped me expand my business.

- Family support is very important, many of my family members are involved with our business in one way or another!
- Look for a great mentor, Jan Duke (leader of our Kennedy-Glazer Insider's Circle/Mastermind Group) has helped me realize I am in the marketing business and has given me an abundance of ideas that have resulted in growing my business and generating income!
- Look for experts in your field, Master Gardener Deborah Doty has written lots of articles for both my website and newsletters.
- Talk frequently to other Entrepreneur's. D! Alexander of Let's Celebrate! and I often bounce business ideas off each other even though our businesses are totally different!
- The local Small Business Development Center-SBDC helped me develop a business plan and set realistic goals!
- Check out your local LeTip Group. This is a group of business owner's that help you to generate leads for your business!

LC: How do you market and advertise your business? Do you sharing a few cost effective strategies? Network, network, network! We are using our Sales Associates to help market to nurseries and other businesses in their area. With the Young Entrepreneurs Sales Program for Kids, the kids have become an extended sales force for our company. Shake-n-Grow is sold on eBay. I talk with other business owners that have a positive ideas and outlook.

LC: What are your future business goals? We are looking for Sales Associates and distributors in other states especially those that are already involved in the nursery business. We would like to develop some additional products and expand our Young Entrepreneur Sales Team around the U.S

LC: What advice do you have for new Mompreneurs? I have few words of wisdom to share. Remember to pray for your business! Whenever we have a meeting of any time we always start with a prayer for our business ! I always have told my kids "Be sure to do a job you love"! This makes things alot easier when you are patient about your business! As a wife, mother, grandma and business owner, time management is so important! Schedule not only what you have to do that day but give it a time limit. This little tip has helped me to be more productive in my business!

Thank you Gail for sharing your inspiration with us and giving personally giving me a renewed hope in developing a beautiful garden. So be sure to check out shakeandgrow.com and gailshiddencreations.com and take advantage of her special offer. \$1 off her 14 oz. bottle and \$3.00 off 2 of 14 oz. bottles. Email Gail directly at gailhiddencreations@comcast.net for the discounts!

Casting Call for Mom Entrepreneurs. I want to hear your story and share your inspiration with others. If you want to be a featured Mompreneur and share your business with others, email your interest to mail (at) mybusinessadventures.com. A new Mom Entrepreneur will be featured weekly.

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One Response to Mom Entrepreneur Feature: Gail Smith

1.  [Ros-Ficklets.com](#) says:
[August 13, 2009 at 7:28 am](#)

Great post Gail. Like LeNesha, gardening is way out of my element. I couldn't grow anything to save me and sad to admit I resort to silk flowers and artificial trees to decorate with. I definitely have to look into Shake-n-Grow as these "brown thumbs" need desperate help.

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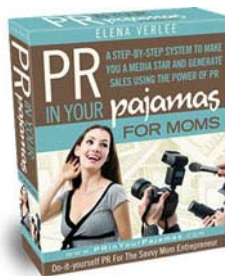
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