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**BEST**

*of the Best*  
Readers' Choice Awards

THE NEWS-HERALD  
[www.News-Herald.com](http://www.News-Herald.com)

Thursday, August 28, 2025



# The Best of the Best Award Goes to...

The votes are counted, but not before it took a many people weeks to go through every ballot. When the dust settled, we had our winners, a few close races and our readers' choices for the best in 65 different categories. In addition to bragging rights for the next year, each winner will receive a plaque in the coming weeks, to demonstrate their excellence.

The News-Herald thanks all our loyal readers for their participation - without your votes, there would be no contest and no winners. Special thanks also to our advertisers who made this 17th Annual "Best of the Best" competition possible.

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# WELCOME TO THE REC!



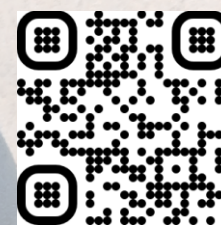
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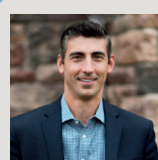
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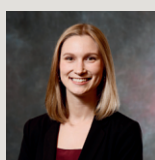
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Ophthalmologist/  
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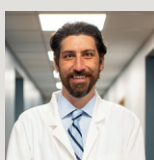
**Aidan Johnson, MD**  
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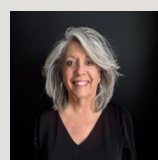
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## Tips for starting a home-based business

Starting a home-based business can be a viable way to gain financial independence and pursue a passion. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, 50 percent of all businesses start at home. The SBA also reports that 60 percent of all businesses without staff are home-based.

While the process of starting a home-based business may seem daunting, it can be broken down into manageable steps. Here's how to navigate the journey successfully.

- **Identify a business idea.** Individuals can assess their skills and passions as a starting off point for developing a home-based business. Then these passions can be paired with market research to determine if there is sufficient demand for the product or service.

- **Consider feasibility.** It's important to evaluate if a business idea can be realistically run from home. Certain business ideas, such as freelance writing, are much more conducive to being done from home than a wedding catering business.

- **Compile a business plan.** Every business should have a well written and concise business plan. A plan should

include a summary of the mission and goals of the business, a detailed description of the business and its legal structure, target audience, a clear explanation of what is being offered to customers, and an estimate of costs, income and expenses.

- **Set it up legally.** Even though the business may be home-based, this doesn't mean one should take shortcuts around the proper channels for establishing the business. Decide if the business will be a sole proprietorship, partnership, limited liability company, or a corporation. These designations come with different implications for taxes, liability and administrative complexity. Next, register the business name with the appropriate agencies. An Employer Identification Number likely will be needed for U.S.-based businesses. Licenses and permits, including a sales tax permit if products will be sold, also may be required.

- **Secure your finances.** Decide what capital will be used to start the business, whether it is personal funds or from investors or a loan. Also, it is wise to open a dedicated business bank account and credit card to help separate



personal and business finances. This will make accounting and filing taxes easier.

- **Reassess insurance policies.** One might consider business liability insurance to protect assets and the home from potential risks. A home insurance policy may not cover business-related incidents, even if they are at home.

- **Develop a marketing strategy.** As with any business, a home-based business requires a marketing plan. Devel-

op a strategy to promote the business and reach the target market.

- **Retrofit the home.** While many home-based businesses can work seamlessly without home modifications, others may require some changes and a dedicated space. Assess needs and then make changes accordingly.

Home-based businesses can be viable ways to make money and turn a passion into a profession.



## Shop Local

### Keep money in your community

Shopping locally not only means getting to see the same friendly faces each time you patronize a nearby business, it also means keeping money in your community. A 2018 study from American Express, the company that founded Small Business Saturday (which is celebrated the day after Black Friday), and the National Federation of Independent Business found that roughly two-thirds of every dollar spent at a small business ultimately stays in the local community. That boils down to 67 cents out of every dollar. The American Independent Business Alliance also references the "local multiplier" regarding local spending. This occurs when people spend at a locally owned and independent business instead of chain stores or mega online retailers. Although the exact amount of dollars recirculated by locally owned businesses varies due to certain unique criteria, retail studies conducted by Civic Economics has found a person's dollars at these locally owned businesses recirculate through the local economy two to four times more than money spent at non-local companies. This money helps generate more local wealth, charitable contributions and jobs.







# *Thank You for Voting* **Brown Barn** **TAVERN**



*“Best Restaurant” and “Best Bar & Grill”  
in Geauga County*



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