
From Golden Curls To A Magical World

Joanna Meiseles brushed aside her fears about starting a new business, and created a magical place that's clearly a cut above the rest.

By Bert Bodeewes

With a diaper bag, video camera and oversized purse tugging at one shoulder, and her 3-year-old son, Ben, clinging to the other, a very pregnant Joanna Meiseles somehow managed to squeeze into her local salon in anticipation of her toddler's very first haircut back in 1994.

"As most moms will tell you from experience, this is a very important event. My family lived across the country, so I wanted to commemorate the occasion by taking a video of my child's first haircut. That way, we could all share in the excitement of this special moment," she recalls.

Expecting a salon full of people to ooh and ah over her little boy, Meiseles was quite puzzled when the stylists quickly retreated to the back room "It was as if nobody wanted to cut my son's hair. I really couldn't believe it," she says.

Finally, the manager coaxed a stylist back to the floor and asked her to do the haircut. As the nervous young hairdresser gingerly snipped away at Ben's head of beautiful golden curls, the toddler sat quietly in the chair. Meanwhile, his mom scurried about with one hand on her video camera while the other hand was frantically reaching out to catch those precious wisps of gold that she hoped to forever preserve in her little boy's scrapbook.

"Most of the customers in the salon weren't too happy about a pregnant lady shuffling around and making a fuss of things," she recalls.

When the haircut was complete, Meiseles was not a relaxed and joyous mom with a video tape full of memories. Instead, she was a frustrated patron with some pretty honest opinions.

"While it wasn't a terrible experience, it wasn't quite what I had hoped for. I was expecting a fun, positive event. Instead, it was what most moms are used to if they don't have an alternative," Meiseles says.

Deep down inside, she knew there had to be a better way. Suddenly, something wonderful happened. She had an "ah-ha" moment.

"I thought to myself, I should open a children's hair salon. And I'll make it a fun place where kids and parents will want to come back again and again."

With a renewed sense of excitement, and an idea that had nowhere to go but up, Meiseles scooped up her son and walked straight out of the plain and ordinary, and created Snip-its (www.snipits.com), a magical world filled with imagination, happiness and some of the best looking kids' haircuts in 57 locations across America.

Millionaire Blueprints sat down with Meiseles and discovered how she went about finding success with her dream.

If you're thinking about starting a hair care business, Meiseles might just have some useful "snip-its" of information to help you on your way.

Where are you from?

I'm originally from Los Angeles, and I grew up there. Being accepted to Duke University sent me to the East where I met my husband, Brad. We were college sweethearts. Now I live in the suburbs of Boston with Brad and our four children, Brandon, Justin, Jacquelyn, and, of course, Ben, who was the inspiration behind Snip-its. I never thought we'd stay in Boston, but when I signed the lease for my first Snip-its location in Framingham, Massachusetts, that sealed the deal for us to stay in this area.

Did you have any entrepreneurial influences growing up?

Well, there was definitely something magical in the family. My grandfather was Jack Benny, the actor and comedian. Although he died when I was only 9, I still have wonderful memories of him taking my brother and me to dinner in a limousine, and of people asking for his autograph. He was so much fun to be with. But I don't think we really understood what it was like for my mom, being his only child. She grew up with a dad who was probably the most famous



person in Hollywood at the time. My mom actually wrote a book about what it was like to grow up in Hollywood. My father was also in the film industry. He was a producer and was responsible for the 1960s movie, *Yours, Mine and Ours*. My brother is a successful public speaker in the computer industry. He gives technology presentations in front of thousands of people, and he's pretty good at it. I guess it all kind of adds up, because whenever I do a presentation on Snip-its, people always tell me I have a good stage presence.

How old is Ben now?

He's 16 1/2 now, and I think he's very proud of Snip-its. He's not afraid to tell his friends that his mom is the Snip-its lady.

After your "ah-ha" moment, did you know what you wanted Snip-its to be?

Right then, I really didn't have a concept for Snip-its. It was more like the germination of an idea – that there should be a salon that caters to kids. I wanted it to be a happy place where kids and parents wanted to visit and where everyone had fun.

Did you feel like there was a market for your idea?

At the time, my whole world revolved around young children, so I was always thinking of things I could do to benefit children. Once I had the Snip-its idea, I would see kids everywhere. And everywhere I saw kids, I saw customers. I would go to the beach, the mall, the park, all the places that kids go, and there would be children playing everywhere. While I was watching them, I would be thinking of ways to make haircuts better for kids, because eventually they could be Snip-its customers.

It sounds like you were convinced you could get them all into Snip-its?

Of course! Why wouldn't they want to go to Snip-its? If they had a choice between an adult salon and a children's salon, what parent and child wouldn't choose a salon that caters to children?

How did you come up with the name for Snip-its?

After my son's first haircut, I went home and shared the story with my husband. I said to him, "I should open a children's hair salon." And he looked at me and said, "And you should call it Snip-its." It was like he already knew the name before I ever had the idea. So right away, I had an idea for a business and a name for my idea. After that, I just couldn't get it out of my head.

Do you consider yourself an entrepreneur?

I think I'm kind of like a serial entrepreneur. I have ideas all the time, but most of them are way out there. I have a degree in African Studies, but before Snip-its I had no business experience.

Did you write a business plan before you started your company?

Yes, I did. But I had never written one before. Even if you go to school and learn how to write one, it's only a hypothetical business plan. It's not the same as when you're writing a business plan that's actually going to be executed in the real world. I had to learn about kids, parents, cutting hair, demographics, how to raise money, how to form a company – all those kinds of things. It was overwhelming. I doubted whether I could really pull it all together every step of the way.

Did you have any help with your business plan?

Before I went out looking for capital, I had some professionals review it to make sure I had everything right. One gentleman I met with, who also happened to be a friend of ours, looked it over and starting asking questions like, what my EBITDA (Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortization) margins were going to be. I had no idea what he was talking about, and I left the meeting practically in tears. A week later, I received a package from him. Enclosed was a copy of my business plan, a \$10,000 check and a note that said, "Good luck." He's still an investor in the company today, and a big supporter of Snip-its.

Did the fact that you had no business experience bother you?

It did bother me a bit, but it didn't stop me. I went through periods of time where I doubted whether I could do this or not, but I kept on going. You have to want to succeed.

Where did you obtain the start-up money for Snip-its?

Through my business plan, I determined that I would need approximately \$300,000 to open my first Snip-its salon. So I formed a limited partnership, and I began selling units of the company for \$10,000 each. I ended up raising the \$300,000, and it was all from family and friends. I had no institutional or outside investors.

What did your investors get in return for their investment money?

We hope the value of each Snip-its increases over the years.

Did you do any research before you opened your first Snip-its location?

I did a lot of research. I interviewed quite a few parents, and I utilized my own children and their friends as kind of a kid "litmus" test for everything. I also created a survey, gave it to parents outside of a Toys "R" Us, and asked them to fill it out. I think that was a very good experience because there is a very broad demographic of parents who frequent Toys "R" Us.

What types of questions did you ask on the survey?

I asked questions such as: If you had the choice of going to a salon that was closer to your home, or to a salon that was farther away but that also catered to kids, how much farther would you be willing to drive? Would you prefer a children's salon to a family salon? If so, how much farther would you be willing to drive to a children's salon? How much more would you be willing to pay to frequent a children's salon? Lastly, what are the three most important things you would expect to get from a children's salon?



Children of all ages are eager to have their hair cut in the kid-friendly, magical world of Snip-its. Low-cut, open back chairs with seatbelts make it comfortable for the kids and easy for the stylists to do their job.



Did you consult with any stylists to get their opinions?

I talked to as many as possible about why they didn't like cutting kids' hair. It was just something that I didn't understand. I wanted to know why they had this stigma about cutting children's hair. Most stylists like children, and many of them have children, so why do a lot of them run to the back room when you walk into the salon with a child?

What were their reasons?

The number one complaint I heard was that they felt like they were trying to cut hair on a "moving target," and that they had a fear of injuring the child with sharp scissors. Many mentioned that crying and fussing about the haircut could make it pretty stressful.

Were there any other complaints?

I also found out that stylists consider their chairs to be one of the most important tools they have. Several of the stylists I interviewed had worked with children before in places that had

specialized children's seats, like pony seats and taxi seats. They admitted that the seats were cute, and that the kids loved them. However, they told me that these chairs were totally non-functional and very difficult to work around. What they needed was regular chairs in order to function properly.

Did you do anything to improve on the old chair design?

I came up with a list of things that the stylists would want in a chair. For example, it has to be just like an adult cutting chair, but smaller, with a low-cut, open back. It also needs a seatbelt to keep the kids from bouncing out of the chair. Plus, there should be a parent seat nearby, so the children feel safe and secure.

Was interviewing stylists an important part of starting Snip-its?

Absolutely. The stylists are very important to me because, without them, there is no business. As a matter of fact, the first thing that I came up with

while I was working on the concept for Snip-its was what I call our "triangle of success." The triangle of success is like a three-legged stool. It doesn't stand strong unless all three sides are supported. The three sides that make up the triangle are the children, the parents and the stylists. Unfortunately, it's easy to forget the stylists' side of the triangle. I'm not a stylist and, even if I was, there is no way that I could expand my business the way I want to without participation from the stylists. The bottom line is that the stylists are the front line, and they deliver the magic to the customers. They are vitally important to our business.

A Snip-its salon is a pretty amazing experience. How did you come up with the concept?

This is another area where the stylists were invaluable with their advice. The environment of a regular adult salon is not really conducive to cutting kids' hair. The stylists are usually trying to keep the kids occupied by giving them a perm rod or something else to play with

that is not meant for children. So part of my concept for Snip-its was to create a place with distractions to keep the kids entertained, thus making it easier for the stylists to work on the kids' hair.

Tell us what magic awaits inside a typical Snip-its location?

The inside of a Snip-its salon has a sort of cartoony, "Disney meets Dr. Seuss" quality that's wrapped around a rainbow of bold, vibrant colors. It's a happy, cheerful place that kids really look forward to coming to because it's like being in a Saturday morning cartoon. We've got computer games at every station so the kids can play while they get their hair cut. We also have an animated Magic Box where kids can trade in a lock of their hair for a prize at the end of their haircut. Prizes can range from a Snip-its temporary tattoo, to stuffed animals or little miniature rubber ducks – things like that. However, the star of the show is our entire ensemble of larger-than-life animated characters designed to look just like hair care implements.

What inspired you to create an animated world within Snip-its?

My inspiration came from the movie *Beauty and the Beast*. In the movie, the household objects literally came to life, like "Lumiere" and "Mrs. Potts." When I saw the movie, I thought, wow, what a great idea for Snip-its! If I could have animated hair care implements, like a wholesome pair of scissors, walk into the room, then the kids would be less afraid of the scissors and more at ease with getting their hair cut.

How did you create the initial design of the characters?

The first character I wanted to create was the scissors character,

"Snips." So I put together a written description of "Snips" and hired three different artists to sketch some samples for me. In my description, I used words like wholesome, friendly, welcoming, rosy cheeks, rounded edges, Disney-quality, and a twinkle in his eye. My goal with the words was to try to explain the feeling that I wanted to portray in this character. All three of the artists came back to me with their versions of what "Snips" should look like, and they were all terrible.

Did you hire another artist?

I had almost given up on being able to get these characters created when a friend of mine saw a bedroom that had been designed by an artist in Florida named Bruce Barry (www.wackyworld.tv). She said, "Joanna, you have got to see this bedroom. You've got to get this guy for Snip-its. He seems perfect." So I called him and explained what I wanted "Snips" to look like, and gave him those same words I gave the other artists. He seemed to understand, so I flew him up here for a meeting. At lunch, he sketched this character on the back of his napkin, and it was like I was meeting "Snips" for the very first time. In my opinion, Bruce is a brilliant animator and designer, and the whole Snip-its salon concept reflects his creative genius.

Do the kids enjoy the animated hair care characters?

They really do. The characters have really cute names. Of course, there's "Snips," the star of the show. Then there's "Flyer Joe Dryer" and "Maranga Mirror." There are also the Clip-ette sisters, "Marlene" and "Charlene." Finally, there's "Curly Comb" and "Jean Luc le Spritz." But, even though

we have the animated characters and this wonderful world of imagination, we still have some screamers at Snip-its. Fortunately, all our beauticians are trained to deal with that.

Aren't most cosmetologists trained to work with kids?

You'd be surprised how many aren't. Most states require 1,000 hours of beauty school to become a cosmetologist, but many of these programs don't have a single class or a lecture that focuses on kids' hair. So, stylists have no training with kids' hair care needs whatsoever. At some point in every stylist's career, a child's hair will have to be cut.

What kind of training do you give your stylists?

We offer all kinds of training like safety, technique, and speed – all the things that make it easier to work on kids' hair. We also conduct training on first haircuts because mothers are especially attached to their baby's first curls. Once a stylist cuts them off, the curls generally don't grow back. So we offer a photo for moms, along with a certificate of bravery and a lock of hair to commemorate the occasion. Overall, at Snip-its, we do quite a bit of continuing education to make sure our existing stylists stay sharp with their skills and stay current with the industry.

When did you open your first Snip-its salon?

I opened my first salon in Framingham, Massachusetts, in 1995. I chose that location mainly because it was close to where I lived at the time. It was in a market that I was familiar with, and I knew what interested the moms and kids in that part of town. Of course, it just so happens that this particular shopping center is probably one of the

“ I think it's very important to talk about your ideas with as many people who will listen, because all of the good ideas for my company were somebody else's. ”

highest volume, highest traffic shopping areas in the Northeast. It was in my backyard, so it was the perfect place to open a salon.

How long did it take from your “ah-ha” moment to the opening of your first Snip-its?

It took about three years, and I had another child during that timeframe. I think it’s important that you give your vision time to develop into a concept. The concept changes when you don’t do anything but just think about it and talk about it. There’s a lot of detail that goes into starting a business, and it doesn’t come from reading one article and writing a business plan and saying, “OK, today I have this idea for a children’s hair salon and I’m going to open it next month.” You just can’t do it that way. If you’re buying a franchise, you can make that happen because all the work has already been done for you. But trying to start an original new business just takes time.

Didn’t you worry that somebody might do something similar in that time?

I did actually worry. But, fortunately, there wasn’t a lot of competition in the market I was getting into. Plus, my Snip-its concept has a proprietary look and feel that really makes it difficult for just anyone to go out and do what I’m doing. Today, everything is copyrighted, so it’s all protected.

Do you think it’s important to discuss your ideas with others?

I think it’s very important to talk about your ideas with as many people who will listen, because all of the good ideas for my company were somebody else’s. I came up with the idea to open a children’s hair salon, but my son was the inspiration for that, and my husband dreamed up the name. It was the stylists who said, “Don’t put in these kinds of chairs; put in this other kind. You should put in a chair for the mom to sit at the station with the child.” Everybody I talked with gave me little pearls of wisdom. Even the people with bad ideas helped out because it made me think of what I shouldn’t do.



Snip-its entertains children with wonderful characters like “Maranga Mirror” and the Clip-ette sisters, “Marlene” and “Charlene.”

What was your first year of business like?

It was definitely a learning experience. I’m not a stylist, so I couldn’t cut hair. I worked at the front desk full time talking to the customers and stylists, and refining the details of the business. It was pretty much a year of acquiring customers, doing a lot of marketing and spreading the word about Snip-its. We also tested things like taking appointments versus walk-in service, how I paid my stylists – basically every aspect of running a business.

Was it the kind of year that you expected?

I assumed that I was going to get everything right the first time and that Snip-its was the greatest thing since sliced bread. I thought that there would be lines of kids and parents wrapped around the block just waiting to come in, and that I wouldn’t have to do advertising because I was in this great location where everybody would know about Snip-its. It was just going to be this huge, instant success. Of course, reality hit pretty quickly when we opened our doors and didn’t have any customers. The few customers we did have said, “We didn’t even know you were here. We couldn’t find you. We tried to find you, but we couldn’t find you.”

What kind of mindset do you need to survive your first year of business?

You have to have a “live and learn” kind of attitude. I had to learn how to manage my employees during my first year. I was warned before I started that, on the first sunny day, all my stylists would go to the beach and not come into work. I said, “No, no, that’s not going to happen.” And, of course, on the first sunny day, they all went to the beach and I was left with no one to cut hair. You have to get your feet wet, for better or worse. I mean, people can tell you things but they can’t do it for you. The first year is all about zeroing in on an economic model that works for you, building a customer base, and developing a staff that’s going to stick with you.

Were your prices competitive the first year?

We did quite a bit of experimenting with different prices during the first year. I think we started a little bit high. As a result, we ended up lowering our prices. We’ve obviously brought our prices back up, and now we’re at a premium price again. We’ve kind of earned it.

Do your stylists make pretty good money?

We’re maybe slightly above what a high-volume walk-in salon would pay



Snip-its does a variety of really fun events like Glamour parties and “Style-a-Doll” parties where Snip-its supplies all the essentials such as cake, juice, party favors and a special gift for the birthday child.

one of their stylists. Where my stylists differ is in their tips. If a stylist treats the kids well and connects with the parents, they will typically take home \$100 a day in tips. But if the stylist doesn't really engage with the kids, they may make \$50. It makes a huge difference in their overall income level to make sure that they're giving great customer service. If the kids are happy, then the parents are happy. Then everyone's happy, and the customer comes back again.

How many employees are in a Snip-its salon?

Typically, a salon has six to eight stylists, a couple of receptionists and a couple of party planners. We also do a variety of really fun events like Glamour parties and “Style-a-Doll” parties where Snip-its supplies all the essentials such as cake, juice, party favors, a special gift for the birthday child, and a whole lot of fun for everyone.

Do you carry any products in the stores?

We have our own line of wonderful fruity-smelling hair care products that are designed so that the kids will want to use them. They're packaged in slim, unbreakable bottles for small hands, and have easy flip tops so children can open them. The products have fun names, like “No Yellin’ Melon Crème Conditioner,” “Funky Spiker Gel,” and “Bananarama

Tearless Shampoo and Body Wash.” They're all natural, tear-free and ultra-gentle. It's just a really nice product line. In addition to the hair care products, we also allow the stores to sell any variety of toys, games, books, clothing, etc., that they feel meets our standards and criteria.

On average, how many kids' haircuts a year are done in a successful store?

A successful store, on average, may do 20,000 kids' cuts a year. Not all of our stores are doing that because we have many new locations, but hitting that number for all would be great.

Do you have an age requirement for the kids?

No, we don't have a cutoff as far as age goes. But generally, it stops at about age 9. At that age, the kids self-select and move on to more grown-up establishments.

What kind of advertising do you do today?

We combine print advertising with public relations to increase customer awareness. We also have a Web site (www.snipits.com) for customers to find the latest news. We're aggressive with grass-roots advertising where we literally hit the streets and pass out coupons and flyers at daycare centers, pre-schools, gymnastic schools, karate

centers, and soccer camps – basically any place where there are kids. We're big into direct mail, like the Valpak coupon books (www.valpak.com) and similar actions like that. We have a great spot cable commercial that a lot of our franchisees like to run in their demographics too.

Do you do any search engine type advertising?

We definitely do search engine optimization as much as possible to help bring people to our Web site. A lot of our customers find us through the Web, and then they visit our Web site to find the location nearest them. So if you Google kids' haircuts, or any combination of kids' haircut-related words, you'll usually find our site.

How soon after your first store did you open others?

We opened our second location in 1997, the third in 1998, the fourth in 1999, and the fifth in 2002. In 2003, we moved into franchising.

Why did you decide to begin franchising?

I was looking for ways to grow this company, so I attended a seminar on franchising thinking that it would be a good option. I learned that Snip-its was a great candidate for franchising. I had opened five salons in the last six years, and all five of them were successful and profitable, so franchising seemed like a smart move to me.

What did you do to get your franchising program off the ground?

I wrote a business plan targeted specifically at franchising, and then I met with lawyers to work out all the legal documents and draw up a Uniform Franchise Offering Circular (UFOC).

What exactly is a UFOC?

A UFOC is a document that is required by the government for all companies that offer a franchising program. It provides as much information as possible to potential franchisees so they can make an educated decision as to whether they want to go ahead and buy a franchise.

What benefits did you see in having a national franchise program?

I saw it as an excellent way to grow my business with less capital. Franchisees pay for their own stores. So to open 100 stores with company-owned expansion, you'd have to have a lot of operating capital. I really didn't want to go out and raise venture capital and try to go that route.

How can you be sure a franchise is going to be successful?

Choosing the right franchisees is critical to the overall success of the franchise program. Good franchisees "get it" and, with great training and support from corporate, they run excellent operations.

What kind of people buy into your franchisees?

We get people who are more of that entrepreneurial mindset and who want to do something on their own, but who don't want to go through all the process of building a business from scratch. A lot of them have children, and have experienced the Snip-its world firsthand, so they know what a really great place it is for kids. And it's a wonderful career opportunity as well.

What qualifications do you require for a franchisee?

We have a minimum financial requirement of \$50,000 liquid, and \$300,000 net worth. It's very important that the franchisees are well capitalized so they can weather a storm. That's the financial end of it. We also look for certain personality traits and have a checklist of skills that fit a franchisee. Some franchisees that we accept don't score perfectly in every category, so we tailor our support to help them qualify and succeed because it's not a one-size-fits-all approach. For example, some franchisees may come with a strong background in HR or marketing, but others might need more hand holding. As an entrepreneur, franchisees have to wear many hats and perform multiple different functions from recruiting and training to retail operations, providing leadership and management, marketing, bookkeeping, technology, customer service, maintenance, etc. At Snip-its,

we don't assume that our franchisees are experts in all areas, so we provide the appropriate coaching, training and mentoring they need.

What's the process of buying a franchise?

Get in touch with our sales director, and fill out an application. This can be done online, or on paper. Once approved, Snip-its will send a copy of a UFOC for the applicant to read and understand. After reviewing it, applicants travel to Boston, where our corporate headquarters is located, for what we call Discovery Day.

Tell us about Discovery Day.

It's an event we have where potential franchisees come and visit some of our salons. We do a really nice presentation that tells you all of the information you need to know about the franchise, what your commitment to us is, what our commitment to you is, and what's involved overall. If, after Discovery Day, you're ready to sign, we send you your execution documents.

Where can I open a Snip-its franchise?

Almost anywhere. There are quite a few territories that are already taken, but if you're willing to travel outside another territory and farther from your hometown or designated area (30 to 45

minutes) Snip-its can find a location for you. None of our large territories are locked up yet.

Is Snip-its involved in any charitable programs?

The main thing we do with all the salons is donate the hair from ponytails to a charity organization called Locks of Love (www.locksoflove.org). Locks of Love creates wigs especially for children who have had hair loss due to a medical condition. If someone wants to donate their ponytail, and it measures 10 inches or more, we'll even do the haircut for free. When it comes to giving back to the community, our philosophy is that no matter how big Snip-its gets, each salon is a local business. As such, each salon is involved and active with groups that are meaningful to the franchisees and to the community it serves.

What have been some of the most difficult challenges for you in building this business?

The biggest challenge I face today is making sure we're giving the franchisees the kinds of suggestions and ideas that add value to their business model. They're smart people, and know what works for them. Our job is to analyze the businesses of all the salons and cultivate benchmarks and best practices to pass onto the individual franchisees. They learn from their



Snip-its carries its own line of fruity-smelling hair care products that are designed so kids want to use them. They're all natural, tear-free and ultra-gentle.

shared experiences. It's easy to say, "We like this, or, we don't like that." But Snip-its needs to have the data to back up claims and recommendations. To help our business succeed, we are conducting more pilot testing before rolling out new initiatives system-wide.

Has your husband been supportive throughout the whole Snip-its journey?

He's been very supportive, and it makes a huge difference. Having him by my side is the biggest reason why I never gave up. It's so easy to let people who aren't supportive weigh you down and make you think that you can't do it, or that it's going to be too hard, or that you're not going to be successful, or that you're not going to raise the money, or whatever the reasons might be. I'm lucky to have that one person in my life who said, "Just go for it. Just try it if you really want to do it. And if it doesn't work out, we'll move on. Don't worry about it." My husband is that person. Just having him say that to me, and knowing that's how he felt about it, made it a lot easier to look past all the naysayers.

Do you have any advice for someone who might want to start this kind of business?

If you have a vision, follow that vision and stick to it. Don't let people tell you that your idea isn't good, or that you can't do it. And don't let your doubts about whether it's going to work out make you decide not to do it. If you want to, just give it a try. But don't just go by faith. Do your homework and your research, and write a business plan. And finally, make sure you've got all your ducks in a row before you launch your business.

What organizations do you recommend for entrepreneurs and those starting a business?

There are several Web sites and one book that I would recommend, including:

The U.S. Small Business Administration
(www.sba.gov)

The Entrepreneurs' Organization
(www.eonetwork.org)

Moms Making Money
(www.momsmakingmoney.org)

The Secret by Rhonda Byrne.
This book can be found by typing the name in the search area on
(www.amazon.com).

International Franchise Association
(www.franchise.org)

Joanna's blog
(www.greatworkingmomadventure.blogspot.com)

The Center for Women and Enterprise
(www.cweonline.org)

Joanna Meiseles believes that you don't have to be an expert in anything to start a business. As long as you stay true to your vision, it's OK to have other people who are experts in their fields help you along the way. When building her first salon, she recalls the obstacles she faced as a result of having no experience in construction or architecture.

"It was daunting to try and be the leader of this team of people who had so much more knowledge than I did."

What kept her hopes alive were some heartfelt words from her late father, Robert F. Blumofe, an accomplished producer in the film industry, and a big influence in her life.

"I would call him frequently and cry on his shoulder about all the things I needed to work out but didn't know how to do."

His heartfelt advice was all the inspiration she needed to take her Snip-its idea from a dream to reality.

"That's what a producer does," he would say. "A producer sees the end result before it's there, and pulls together the team of people that you need to execute it. And when you're successful in your salon, you're going to be the one who is going up there to accept the Academy Award because you're the one who had the vision."

Today, Meiseles fondly remembers her father and his words of wisdom. And every now and then, she whispers to herself, "I'm a producer. I'm a producer. I'm going to win the Academy Award."

We think you already have, Joanna.

MB



“ Don't let people tell you that you don't have a good idea or that you can't do it. And don't let your doubts about whether it's going to work out or not make you decide not to do it. ”

JOANNA MEISELES RESOURCES

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT SNIP-ITS

The Snip-its Corporation
www.snipits.com
877.SNIP.ITS
877.764.7487

1085 Worcester Road
 Natick, Massachusetts 01760

Joanna Meiseles' Blog
http://greatworkingmomadventure.blogspot.com

FRANCHISING INFORMATION

Federal Trade Commission
www.ftc.gov
 This is the first stop to research all governmental rules and regulations relating to franchising. Type in "franchise" or "UFOC" in the search box.

Franchise and Business Opportunities for Entrepreneurs
www.franchisegator.com/hair_salon_franchise.html
 A concise list of hair care and beauty salon franchise opportunities, including the Snip-its brand opportunity.

Street Smart Franchising
 by Joe Mathews
 A helpful book on franchising.

Franchising for Dummies
 by Michael Seid and Dave Thomas
 More information on franchising.

North Texas Small Business Development Center
www.ntsfdc.org/faq_franchise.html
 This Web site provides a wealth of franchise-specific information in an easy-to-use Q&A format.

Franchise Times
www.franchisetimes.com
 The definitive online source for franchising news and information.

Fradata
www.fradata.com
 Provides a myriad of unbiased franchise information to help you make a better decision before you jump in and purchase a franchise.

COSMETOLOGY

U.S. Department of Labor – Bureau of Labor Statistics
www.bls.gov/oco/ocos169.htm
 Cosmetology definition and national statistics.

National Cosmetology Association
www.ncacares.org
 The world's largest association of salon professionals.

Beauty Schools Directory
www.beautyschoolsdirectory.com
 Check out this Web site to find a cosmetology-related school in your area.

Getting it Right!: Milady's Survival Guide for Cosmetology Students
 by Alan Gelb and Karen Levine
 Survival tips for Cosmetology students.

How to Cut Kids' Hair
 by Nancy Hughes Clark
 Gives great tips on how to cut children's hair.

FUNDRAISING

Business Link
www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action_layer?topicid=1074429027
 An informative overview of why and how to sell shares in your company, which is commonly referred to as equity financing.

How to Raise Early-Stage Private Equity Financing
 by Gerald A. Benjamin
 A valuable book on equity financing.

Top 10 Steps to Starting a Retail Business
http://retail.about.com/od/startingaretailbusiness/tp/checklist.htm
 A great checklist to have handy when going into any retail money-making venture.

COPYRIGHTS AND TRADEMARKS

U.S. Copyright Office
www.copyright.gov/help/faq
 Everything you need to know about copyrighting your product idea.

ARTISTS

Bruce Barry
www.wackyworld.tv
 The artist responsible for bringing the Snip-its world to life.

craigslist
www.craigslist.com
 Find an affordable artist no matter what part of the country you live in.

Creative Talent Network
www.creativetalentnetwork.com
 A great place to find an artist to help with your creative project.

Guru.com
www.guru.com
 A huge online marketplace for creative talent.

SALON EQUIPMENT

SalonFurniture.com
www.salonfurniture.com
 Huge selection of salon and spa equipment online.

CCI Salon Equipment
www.ccibeauty.com
 Another big selection of salon and spa equipment.

SURVEYS

eHow, Inc.
www.ehow.com/how_16597_conduct-telephone-survey.html
 How to conduct a telephone survey.

Free Online Surveys
www.freeonlinesurveys.com/
 A free service to quickly create your own online survey.

DIRECT MAIL

United States Postal Service
www.usps.com/directmail
 Direct mail using the United States Post Office.

Cactus Mailing Company
www.postcardmailings.com
 Affordable direct mail in a one-stop fits all location.

Valpak.com
www.valpak.com
 A great way to advertise online or by using traditional print marketing.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Locks of Love
www.locksoflove.org
 A non-profit organization that provides hair pieces to children suffering from long-term medical hair loss.

Wigs for Kids
www.wigsforkids.com
 Another great non-profit organization that strives to provide hair pieces for kids with medical disabilities.

Millionaire Blueprints neither endorses nor recommends any of the companies listed above. Resources are intended as a starting point for your research.