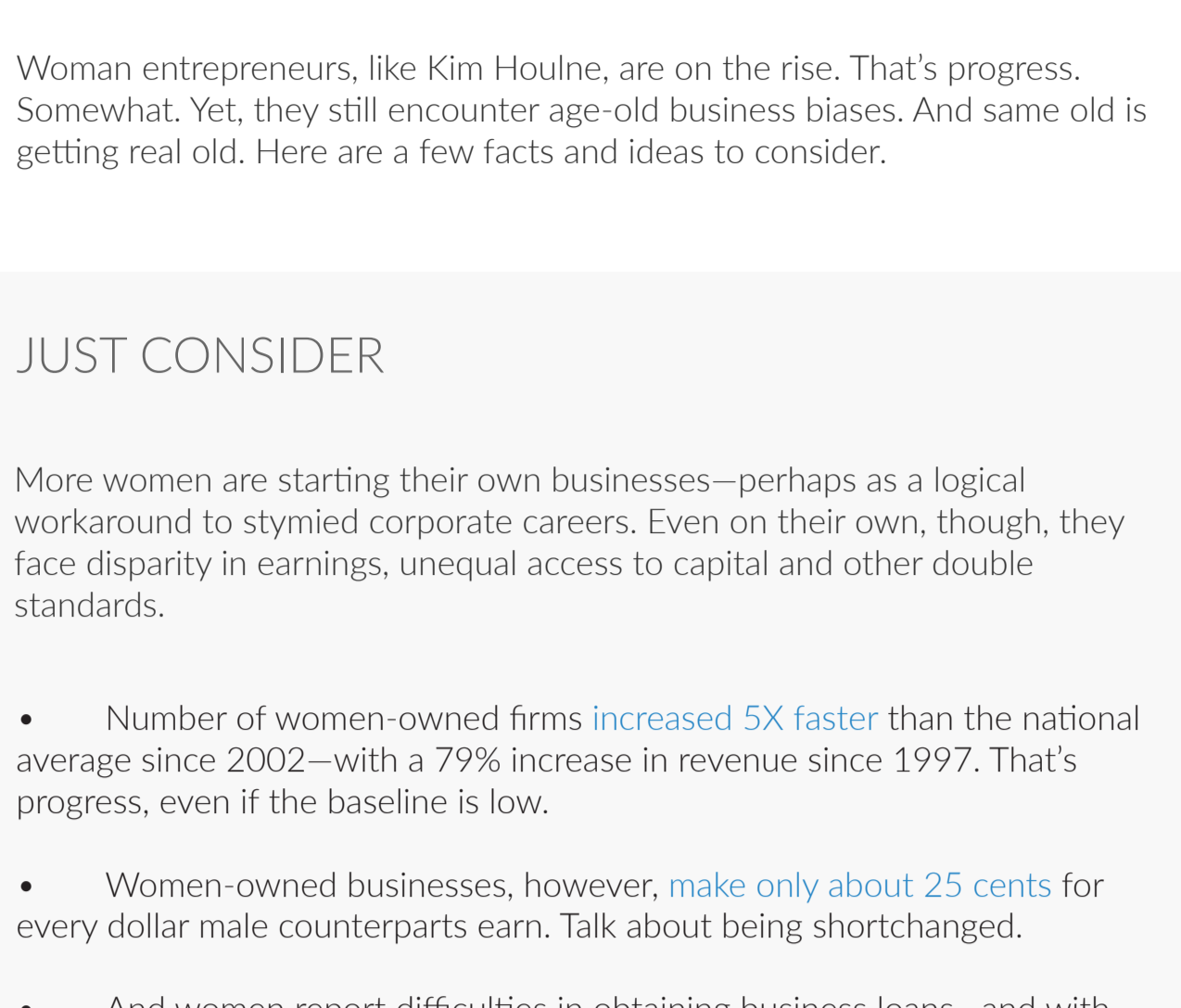


Media Kit

WOMAN-OWNED BUSINESSES: LESS TALK. MORE TRACTION.

Kim Houlné, founder and chief executive of Working Solutions, has a question: "In business, what's the difference between woman-owned and woman-owed?" The answer: "A little—and a lot." As she explains: "For all the workplace studies, businesswomen still come up short. While there are exceptions, they're not the rule. To be fair, women are owed more to equal both the playing and paying fields. It's a hand up, not a handout."



STORY IDEAS

Woman entrepreneurs, like Kim Houlné, are on the rise. That's progress. Somewhat. Yet, they still encounter age-old business biases. And same old is getting real old. Here are a few facts and ideas to consider.

JUST CONSIDER

More women are starting their own businesses—perhaps as a logical workaround to stymied corporate careers. Even on their own, though, they face disparity in earnings, unequal access to capital and other double standards.

- Number of women-owned firms **increased 5X faster** than the national average since 2002—with a 79% increase in revenue since 1997. That's progress, even if the baseline is low.
- Women-owned businesses, however, **make only about 25 cents** for every dollar male counterparts earn. Talk about being shortchanged.
- And women report difficulties in obtaining business loans—and with less favorable terms. Why are **some loan officers gun-shy**?

IDEAS FOR STORIES

OVERCOMING AGE-OLD ROADBLOCKS: FORGET THE DETOURS.

Biases that bog down women in companies continue as more start their own businesses. Roadblocks—such as **limited access to capital** or markets—detour success. Women must **become their own Rand McNallys**, charting more direct routes to long-term leadership.

BUSINESSES IN THEIR OWN IMAGES: WHO NEEDS PERMISSION?

Women bring distinct points of views and perception to business. So why limit themselves to a male mindset? Who better than women entrepreneurs to introduce ideas? There's no better place to start than among themselves—**"the world's most powerful consumers."**

OUR THOUGHTS

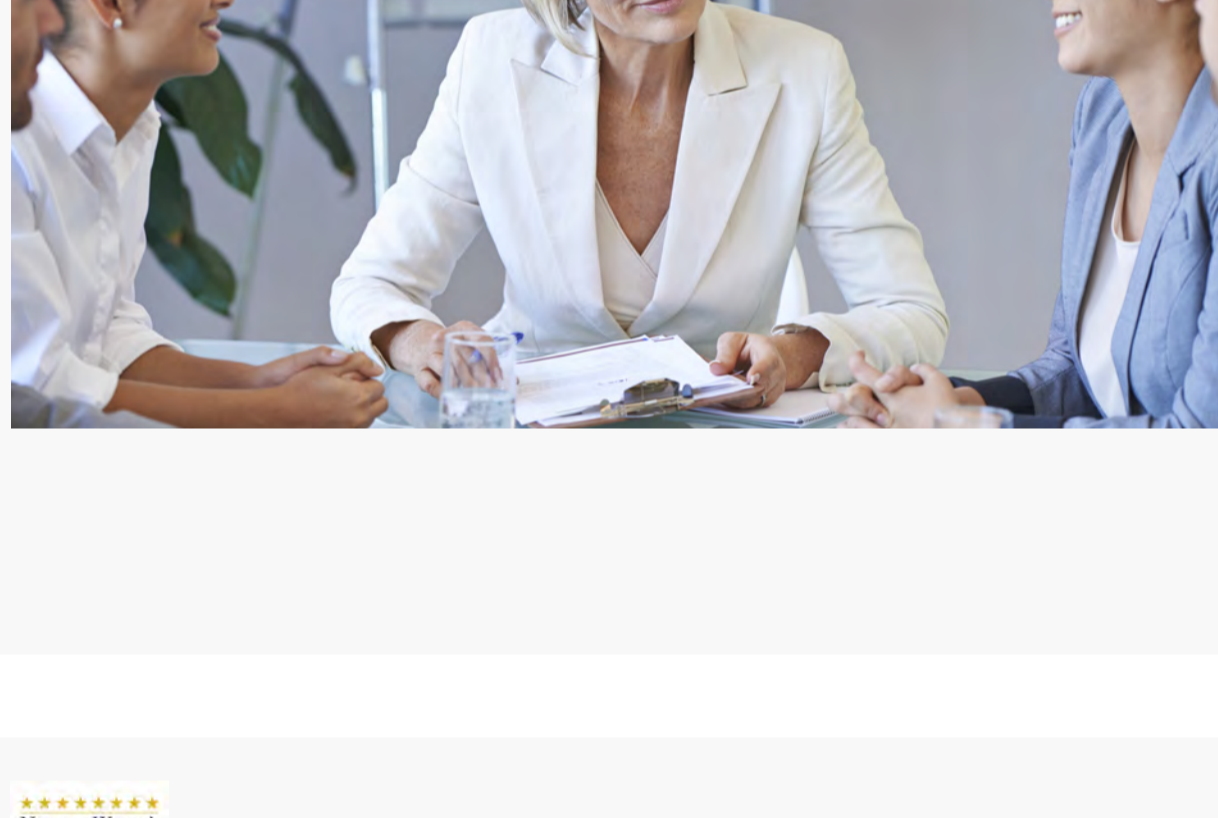
With \$1,000, Kim Houlné started her distributed workforce company—turning the idea of remote contact center outsourcing into an industry. She's pleased it took hold. Kim now wants woman-owned businesses to make as much

ACCORDING TO AN AMERICAN EXPRESS REPORT, WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES AND THEIR REVENUES ARE INCREASING.

- Today there, are 9.4+ million female enterprises.
- They generate \$1.5 trillion in revenue.
- And they employ 7.9+ million workers.

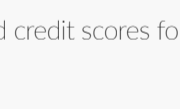
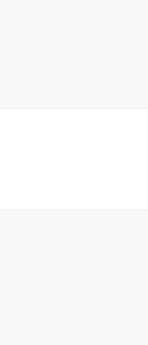
STILL A RAW DEAL

The numbers bear a closer look, believes entrepreneur Kim Houlné. They show each woman-owned business, on average, has less than one employee—with revenues of only \$160K. "That's not nearly good enough. We need double-digit improvements."



Kept Knocking

From the start, Houlné decided against equity funding—instead borrowing start-up capital from a bank. This occurred only after pitching the idea to eight lenders before one agreed to back her business.

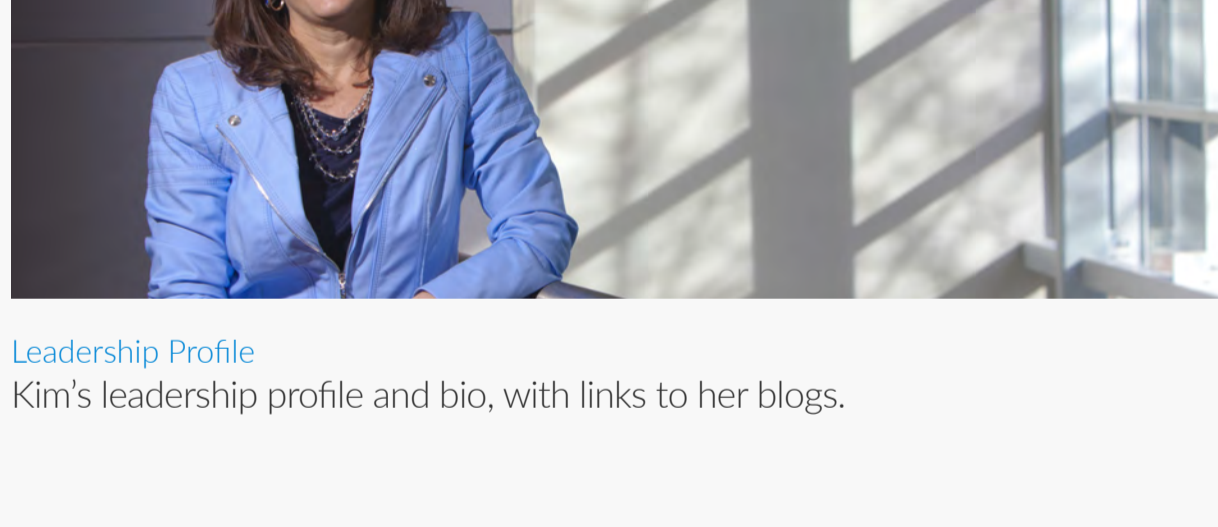


SELECTED RESEARCH

2016 STATE OF WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES EXECUTIVE REPORT (COMMISSIONED BY AMERICAN EXPRESS OPEN, 2016)

This report focuses on changes that have taken place since the 2007-2009 recession, providing information and intelligence that can inform the efforts of women entrepreneurs.

- Covers most recent trends in status of women-owned businesses.
- Shows number of firms, general and industry growth rates, revenue growth, industry concentration.



"ACCESS TO CAPITAL BY HIGH-GROWTH WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES"

This report looks at factors affecting access to capital for high growth women-owned businesses and reprises some data (2012) from the U.S. Census Bureau.



"WOMEN ARE OWNING MORE AND MORE SMALL BUSINESSES"

This article highlights the growth of women-owned businesses and underlying factors, but cautions not to celebrate yet.



BIZ2CREDIT STUDY

This study surveys annual revenues, profits and credit scores for women-owned businesses.

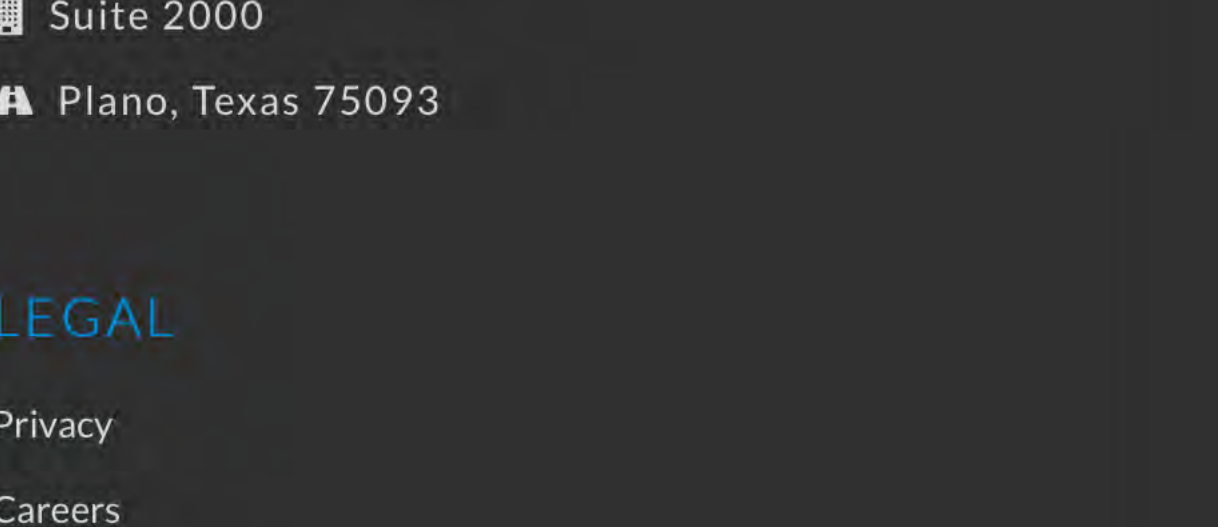


"THE TRUTH ABOUT THE GENDER WAGE GAP" (ARTICLE FROM VOX.COM, AUGUST 2016)

The highest-paying jobs disproportionately reward those who can work the longest, least flexible hours.

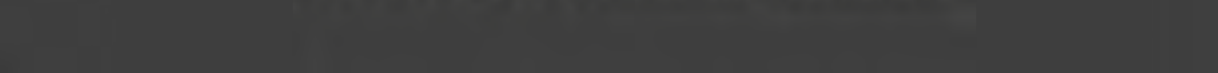
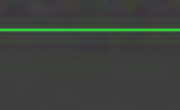
RELATED RESOURCES

At age 30, Kim Houlné started Working Solutions. Twenty years later, it employs nearly 100 professionals, with a network of 110,000+ independent agents—70% of them women. Here are resources about its caring culture, leadership and success.



Leadership Profile

Kim's leadership profile and bio, with links to her blogs.



Creating a Caring Culture

A blog by Tamara Schroer, Working Solutions vice president, Education and Development, on the benefits of creating a caring culture and fostering emotional intelligence.

[VIEW MORE >](#)

ABOUT

With 20 years of success, Working Solutions is a recognized leader in home-based contact center solutions.

Fast and fluid, our workforce of sales, customer service and technical experts is on demand for your brand.

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