



November's Profile

Who: Laura Kronen

What: [Baby is a Star, Inc.](#)

Years in Operation: 4

Number of Employees: 2 general, 6 sales representatives, and a number of distributors.

Start up cash: \$100,000: half raised by taking a home-equity loan and half raised by friends who have since been bought out.

Number of kids: 2 boys: Jesse, 3.5 and Brett, 1.

Why we love it: It's not often that you see a company thinking of mom's pre-natal and post-natal needs at the same time.

Laura Kronen is the owner of Baby Is a Star Inc., a company that creates and manufactures maternity and children's products. The two newest products are Belly Ups and Baby Road Trip. Belly Ups are a suspender-like clothing accessory that makes donning your favorite jeans and slacks possible. Baby Road Trip is a children's entertainment DVD collection that takes our smallest members of society enriching and fun trips around the world- all from your living room.

Our Interview with Laura Kronen

Mommy's Company (MC): How did you come up with your business idea?

Laura Kronen (LK): Well, I guess you can say both of my brands were inspired by my 2 children. The concept for Baby Road Trip was conceived in 2002 on a road trip with my (then) 10 week old. We were traveling from NYC to Florida when the idea just jumped out at me to develop a travel video series for babies and toddlers that introduced them to real world places with music themed for each destination. There are currently 4 videos in the series. They have won over a dozen awards.

The concept for BELLY UPS came about when I was pregnant in 2005. All of my low-rise

maternity pants kept falling down as I walked. It was really frustrating! I created this suspender that attached on each side of my body, from my bra to the top of my waistband, and started wearing them everyday. My doctor (and all the nurses) noticed at my prenatal appointments and thought it as a genius idea. I did some focus groups with other expecting moms and realized that this idea was something every mom-to-be NEEDED and WANTED. BELLY UPS was born!

MC: How did you make your vision a reality?

LK: WORK WORK WORK. I had a full time job (as a PR Director for a fashion company) at the time of my first venture. My days consisted of working there from 8 am till 6 pm, coming home and spending time with my son till 10 pm, putting him to bed and then working until 2 am. EVERY NIGHT. For 2 years. And all of my weekends were spent working. But my son and husband were always a part of it. They were my sidekicks. After I left my full time job in early 2005, when pregnant with my second son, I developed BELLY UPS. Truthfully, I don't even know how I do it. Believe it or not, I do not even have a babysitter!

MC: What was your most exciting entrepreneur moment?

LK: I think the most exciting moment for me is actually seeing an idea come to fruition. Its one of those moments that almost makes you cry. All of your hard work finally pays off! And of course, seeing your product in stores for the first time is also very exciting to me.

MC: What was your biggest obstacle?

LK: I have had SO many, it's actually hard to choose. I would have to say dealing with dishonest people and negative personalities who do not have my best interests in mind. Luckily, for all the bad people there are in this world, there are just as many good.

MC: How did you overcome the obstacle?

LK: Believing in myself. Not taking "no" for an answer, and really learning how to remove myself from getting emotional about things and taking things personally. Being an entrepreneur, your heart, soul, and often a lot of money is tied up in your product or service - so it's easy to get emotional about things - but you have to look at it as a business.

MC: What surprises you most about being an entrepreneur?

LK: My passion. It is never ending in both my professional and personal life.

MC: What advice do you give to entrepreneurial moms just starting out?

LK: You must have incredible amounts of motivation. Almost superhuman. Also, whatever you are setting out to do, you must do it better, or different, than everyone else. You have to set yourself apart from your competition.

MC: What book has inspired you?

LK: Definitely "The Alchemist" It is a novel that bursts with optimism and basically tells you that everything is possible as long as you really want it to happen. A quote from the book that I love is "when you really want something to happen, the whole universe conspires so that your wish comes true". All entrepreneurs should read this book!

MC: What product could you not live without?

LK: Sadly enough my One Touch Blood Kit Monitor. I am a Type 1 Diabetic. But on a more upbeat note, probably my Kiehls Lip Balm - I'm addicted!

MC: What is your first thought in the morning?

LK: Do I have enough time to shower before the kids wake up?

MC: What do your kids think of your business?

LK: As long as my 1 year old is sitting on my lap, he is happy. My three year old is a bit harder. He always wants to play. And so do I, so I try to take a lot of breaks during the day to "build houses" and do art projects and go to the park. When I really need to work, he is usually coloring or reading in my office with me.

