



# A Guide to Kinky Gigs and Side Hustles

## Introduction

I spent decades in IT, specializing in financial software, before running a small construction business with my family. We weren't suited to construction, and after a tough winter, we closed it down.

I wasn't ready to retire, but wasn't sure what came next. I didn't want to return to construction, and my software skills were outdated. Plus, my age was another barrier.

Many in my situation start businesses, and that made sense for me - but what business?

We were already working several successful kink-related and kink-adjacent gigs. My partner Liz (mtn grrl) has built a thriving clothing-optional yoga business. We give regular presentations and classes on kink, BDSM, and sex-positivity. People come to us for BDSM mentoring and relationship coaching. When a sex temple owner we worked with moved away, she let us start our own, using her membership and activities.

I still had capacity for more work, so Liz suggested freelance bookkeeping for small and mid-sized companies. It fit my background, and I enjoyed accounting systems.



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Despite following best marketing practices, I understand the market is saturated, which can be discouraging, but also shows the need for niche expertise.

Liz suggested choosing a niche by targeting adult-oriented businesses. We know the industry, and many financial professionals avoid these clients. With 20+ years of lived experience in the kink economy and community, we're qualified to go beyond bookkeeping and offer business advisory services.

It took me quite a while to get to the point where I could earn a living entirely from doing what I really love. If you are contemplating setting up your own kinky business, I hope this guide helps you make it work in a matter of months, not years.

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## Kinky Gigs and Side Hustles Need a Special Guide

The term “kinky” is used throughout this guide to describe a variety of non-traditional forms of expression and interaction. It encompasses fetishes, BDSM, and non-normative sexual behavior.

Many books have been written detailing businesses suitable for side hustles and independent gig work. At the core, every kinky business is just a business and follows standard models - for example, selling sex toys on Amazon is e-commerce. But a special guide is necessary because most entrepreneurs don't have to cope with the business obstacles imposed by stigma.

Adult-oriented businesses can encounter issues with opening a bank account, applying for credit, processing payments, finding rental space, and engaging kink-savvy professionals. There are safety concerns that definitely aren't discussed in standard courses. The concept of consent takes on a philosophical meaning not seen elsewhere. This guide addresses those issues directly.

## You Will be in Business for Yourself

If you have a side hustle or do gig work, you conduct business on a freelance basis rather than being on payroll, with your benefits, taxes, and other deductions managed by the employer.



Selling merchandise without receiving direction from another person is clearly being in business for yourself. However, when services are provided, it becomes more complicated.

Independent contractors differ from employees in several ways.

- An independent contractor's customer has the right to dictate the kind and quality of the work to be performed, but not the means and methods. Furthermore, the customer does not set working hours for an independent contractor.
- An independent contractor pays for all their business expenses, including insurance and their own equipment. They must make periodic estimated tax deposits and pay the matching Social Security contribution.
- Often, they are focused on projects rather than routine day-to-day tasks.
- They typically have multiple customers rather than working for just one. In fact, when an independent contractor works full-time for one customer, there is a strong suspicion that the independent contractor should be classified as an employee.

## The Three Main Approaches to Freelance Work

The terms "side hustle", "monetized hobby", and "gig work" are also used throughout the guide to distinguish the three main purposes of going into business for yourself.



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## Side Hustles

Side hustles are activities people do for supplemental income in addition to their traditional jobs. Business is typically conducted outside of working hours. There usually isn't an office or place of business outside of the home. The activity isn't necessarily considered fun or fulfilling, but it can be. (The goal of this guide is to pick something you find enjoyable rather than a chore.)

## Monetized Hobby

A monetized hobby occurs when someone starts trading in the tangible aspects of their pastime. It often involves collectible items, but making a market in the supplies and/or equipment used in the hobby is also a common approach. The practical goal is usually to make the hobby pay for itself, maybe earn a little extra money, and have some fun in the process.



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## Gigs and Gig Workers

The slang term “gig” was first used by musicians between 1925 and 1930 to describe a professional engagement. A hundred years later, it retains much of its original meaning - a gig is any project or part-time engagement someone undertakes as an independent contractor. A person who regularly performs such jobs is a gig worker. Many gig workers make a full-time living from these jobs. It is not uncommon for them to have been employed on a W-2 basis in their field before striking out on their own. (Their former employer sometimes becomes a baseline customer.) Both a freelance bookkeeper and an independent computer consultant qualify as gig workers, even if they don't think of it that way.

There are no firm rules for determining when a gig worker can be considered a small business owner if the work scales up. However, once one or more full-time employees have been hired, the term becomes less appropriate.

## Economic Turmoil Creates More Need for Gig Work and Side Hustles

Inflation driven by tariffs and high fuel prices, the threat of layoffs, and uncertainty about the effects of artificial intelligence on the workplace make taking on gig work or developing a side hustle more attractive than ever.

For some, adding a side hustle to their full-time income is a way to maintain the lifestyle they have become accustomed to. For others, it may be necessary just to afford necessities.



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When money becomes tight, many people review their spending to see where cuts can be made. Hobbies are an expense that receives scrutiny. Monetizing that hobby can help justify keeping it, especially if the income not only covers it but also provides some extra cash.

Some have lost their full-time positions and are facing a tough job market. Picking up gig work can help bridge the gap between jobs, and sometimes can be parlayed into a permanent break from working for someone else as an employee.

Starting your own business right after graduating from college, before you've had much real-world business experience, may not be ideal. Still, fresh graduates are facing intense competition amid hiring freezes. Entry-level positions, traditionally filled by inexperienced candidates, have been especially affected. Some graduates aren't bothering to apply for full-time jobs to focus on the startup.

It is always a good idea to have more than one source of income. In these uncertain times, having gig work or side hustles as a backup is *prudent*.



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## Important Caveats and Warnings

Before starting to make plans for your kinky gig work or side hustle, we want you to be fully informed regarding how this works in the real world.

Freelance work comes with risks, uncertainties, and complications, whether the gig is kink-oriented or not. This guide is designed to help identify issues and address them before they become harmful, but only so much can be anticipated.

Please consider these important caveats and warnings when deciding whether to take on a side hustle or become a gig worker.

1. While we've worked hard to ensure the information presented here is as complete and accurate as our resources allow, we make no guarantee that everything in this guide is error-free.
2. This guide is intended to provide basic information and a framework for decision-making; we make no guarantee that using the guide will result in a successful business.
3. Estimates in this guide are for illustrative purposes only; your experience may differ significantly. Rankings may reflect our subjectivity; your opinion may differ significantly.



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4. Almost all gigs have downsides, such as weekend work or a lengthy development process before having something to sell. Ensure the positives outweigh the negatives based on your situation and risk tolerance.
5. Watch out for fads and bubbles. It is easy to get caught up in an exciting new (or “rediscovered”) product that gains popularity and rapidly increases in value. Fads fade, and bubbles burst.
6. Be certain there is a solid demand for what you’ll be offering. Verify that there is at least one viable marketing channel.
7. Making your product or service market-ready may take longer than expected and earn less than you had hoped. You may need to revise your plan or start over with a new idea if this happens.
8. Your plan might be undeniably logical and intuitive, but the legal and tax rules governing it may not be. If you are unfamiliar with these rules, consult a professional before investing your time or money.
9. If your side hustle is the same as your “day job”, you run the risk of objections from your full-time employer if you aren’t careful. Conduct yourself as if your employer already knows about your side jobs, if they don’t already. Unless you know otherwise, you should refrain from taking calls while on the clock, never borrow equipment even when the business is closed, and needless to say, don’t take supplies or materials. Maybe nobody will miss it, but maybe they will - do you want to get caught in a lie?



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## Special Issues Kinky Gigs & Side Hustles May Face

In addition to the challenges any gig worker might face, you may encounter obstacles to business imposed by companies you depend on due to the stigma attached to adult-oriented pursuits.

1. Adult-oriented businesses are often classified as high risk by financial institutions. This can affect your ability to open a checking account or use payment processing services.
2. Social media will likely be a part of your marketing. You may need to choose the right platforms and temper your message to avoid being banned.
3. If your gig involves renting space, you may be considered an adult business by your local government, which can limit where you can legally operate.
4. E-commerce sites have terms of service that restrict the types of adult-oriented merchandise that can be listed, the wording used to describe the items, and how you can advertise. These standards vary from site to site and can change without notice.
5. Depending on what your work entails and the type of company you keep outside of the kink community, you may need to speak euphemistically about what you do if it comes up.



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## What's Included and How to Use It

1. This guide you are reading now is your main resource. It describes the characteristics of nine kink-oriented gigs and side hustles in a standardized format to help you determine which could be a good fit for you.
2. A fillable worksheet you can use to help identify what type of gig will work best for you.
3. A straightforward Excel worksheet suitable for tracking income and expenses. It is designed to match the lines on Schedule C, the IRS form most small businesses use to report their income taxes. You must resolve to track the flow of money for your side hustle or gig from the start!



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## Consider Marketing Your Vanilla Goods or Services to Your Local Kink Community

While this guide is intended to help you find kinky gig work and side hustles, there is one twist on that idea to consider: market your vanilla skills to your local alternative lifestyle community.

There doesn't have to be a practical reason for a person who is involved in fetishes, BDSM, or sex-positivity to prefer doing business with another kinky person. As people who are often misunderstood, marginalized, and stigmatized, we can support each other in a non-judgmental, industry-savvy fashion.

Another simple reason a kinky person might prefer to hire another kinky person to do work for them at their dwelling is to avoid having to hide their sex toys, dungeon equipment, provocative artwork, BDSM gear, or other items that some people might find offensive.



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If there is a practical, kink-oriented need that you can fulfill, all the better. Some hypothetical examples are:

- A craftsperson leaves their job at a remodeling company for full-time gig work, creating private sex rooms and dungeons.
- A professional event planner's hobby is attending BDSM, swinger, and cosplay conferences on her off weekends, and to reduce costs, she works as a consultant to the conference producers in exchange for waived registration and lodging fees.
- An accountant has a side hustle helping exotic dancers, escorts, and other sex workers file their taxes to ensure maximum deductions and minimum scrutiny.



## Risqué Tabulation's Compilation of Nine Unique Ideas For Kinky Gigs and Side Hustles

In our research, we identified nine ideas for kinky gigs and side hustles suitable for solopreneurs, including those just getting started.

- None of them fall into legal grey areas
- The public-facing part of most pursuits can be “sanitized” for presentation in the vanilla world
- None of these activities requires a large initial monetary investment, industry connections, or certifications

All of these ideas can be scaled up to the point where they can no longer be called gig work, but it is perfectly legitimate to pursue them with no intention of growing a larger company.

1. Sell Kinky Digital Products
2. Mentor/Coach
3. Create and Maintain Websites For Adult-Themed Sites
4. Start a Kink-Oriented Blog
5. Start a YouTube Channel
6. Rent Out Useful Kinky Items You Already Own
7. Become a Boudoir or Fetish Photographer
8. Sell Your Handmade Kinky Goods on Etsy
9. Sell Kinky Collectibles From Second-Hand Sources on eBay



## Standard Information Collected and Reported

The same format is used for our analysis of each gig to facilitate side-by-side comparisons. We want to reiterate from our caveats above that:

- Estimates are an approximation and can vary significantly; your results may vary
- In some cases, we are making a subjective determination on a matter that can be up for debate, so your opinion may vary

**Examples:** Either links to actual items for sale online or hypothetical but plausible scenarios are offered.

**Skill level/learning curve:** Description of any prerequisite experience or knowledge required; sometimes, the scope is limited enough to learn in a few weeks or months.

**Capital investment:** Estimate of any upfront costs, usually for equipment,

**Market saturation:** Description of the types and concentrations of competition in the marketplace; varies depending on your skill level, the marketplace you target, etc.

**Income potential:** Rough and usually very broad estimate.

**Target audience:** Description of the type of client you are appealing to, an important marketing consideration

**Payment processor risk:** Likelihood that payment processors such as Stripe or PayPal will restrict or refuse to handle payments for this type of gig; generally, if online sales are not necessary, this is easily resolved

**Advertising strategy:** Ideas for ways and places to market what you are offering



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**Scaling:** How much additional effort is required as sales increase

**AI Risk:** Our best guess of how much disruption this gig might experience as AI proliferates

**Other Considerations:** Relevant information that didn't fit the above categories, authors' opinion



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## Sell Kinky Digital Products

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| Examples                   | Actual products for sale: <a href="#">Artistic needle play templates</a> , <a href="#">erotic coloring book</a> , <a href="#">spanking how-to guidebook</a> , <a href="#">erotica</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Skill level/learning curve | Creating basic digital products requires modest technical skill, but standing out in a crowded market requires strong branding, writing, design, or subject-matter expertise. You must be careful when using AI to develop your product, and you definitely can't use unedited output as a substitute for human-created work. In a saturated market, creators or their editors need advanced skills to compete effectively. |
| Capital investment         | Usually minimal. Most creators can begin using existing home equipment and low-cost software.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Market saturation          | This gig is at the top of the list because of the low barriers to entry and minimal operating costs. The problem is that it comes to the top of <i>everyone's</i> list of side hustles. Because of the ease of entry, the market is very saturated.                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Income potential           | \$300-\$3,000+/mo, create once and sell repeatedly                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Target audience            | Since digital products cover such a wide variety of needs and interests, almost anyone is a potential customer. Due to high market saturation, targeting niche markets can reduce competition.                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Platform censorship        | If sold on one or more mainstream e-commerce platforms, such as Amazon, eBay, or Etsy, the platform's Terms of Service (TOS) must be checked to determine whether your product is restricted or prohibited. The product description must also be worded to remain compliant with the TOS.                                                                                                                                   |
| Payment processor risk     | Most payment processors classify adult-oriented products as high risk and may restrict services, impose higher fees, or terminate accounts without notice. If you list your work on e-commerce platforms, they will likely process your payments under their agreements with the provider. If they have restrictions, you have to make arrangements with a company that specializes in high-risk clients.                   |



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| Advertising strategy | Options partly depend on the type of product and sales channel; possibilities are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote it on social media</li><li>• Have your own website with robust SEO</li><li>• Approach niche communities</li><li>• Gather names and maintain email lists</li><li>• Engage in creator collaborations</li><li>• Advertise on an e-commerce platform</li></ul> |
| Scaling              | Digital products scale in volume with very little additional effort.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| AI risk              | AI is expected to reduce demand for some human-created digital products over time. Creators who use AI without proper oversight risk publishing inaccurate information or obviously AI-generated material, which many customers react negatively toward.                                                                                                                                      |
| Other Considerations | The digital products space is crowded, but it comes in many forms. Once you find something that works for you and sells well, you are generating passive income for as long as your item remains in demand.                                                                                                                                                                                   |



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## Mentor/Coach

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| Examples                   | Hypothetical ideas: Help people just opening up to multiple partners navigate polyamorous relationships; review ideas for consent agreements or Master/slave contracts; plan and deliver a private deep dive for an individual serious about certain hard skills you excel at.                                             |
| Skill level/learning curve | Coaches should have a strong grounding in the areas in which they claim expertise, including both real-world experience and academic knowledge of best practices. Previous experience, even if unpaid, with creating/delivering presentations, working with mentees, and other coaching-adjacent experience is helpful.    |
| Capital investment         | Minimal.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Market saturation          | Many people offer kink-aware coaching online. While there is room for more, distinguishing oneself is a challenge. At a local level, the market is contained and trust-based. Some communities might have established coaches with strong reputations, while others have no one to fill that need (until you came along!). |
| Income potential           | \$30-\$100/hr live, passive income potential from publishing courses                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Target audience            | Many people could use a coach at some point in their journey, but few actually engage one. Most types of coaching can be done remotely. Still, if you live in a larger metropolitan area, you may have better prospects locally, where it is easier to show demonstrated discretion and credibility.                       |
| Platform censorship        | N/A                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Payment processor risk     | This gig does not require e-commerce and has a low transaction volume, so using a payment processor is optional. If you do want to use one, create a business entity with a neutral-sounding name and use that company to apply for an account. You probably won't experience any problems.                                |



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| Advertising strategy | Locally: Word of mouth, directories, and community boards kept by alternative lifestyle groups, local groups on Fetlife<br>Online: Create educational webinars, podcasts, and YouTube presentations<br>Events: Workshops regarding your areas of expertise                                                                                       |
| Scaling              | Effort increases in direct proportion to how fast you are growing your clientele.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| AI risk              | Low risk. AI can assist with research, but is still not sophisticated enough to have empathy - it cannot read or convey body language, factor in emotions, or recognize that "now's not a good time". Read more at <a href="https://www.risquetabulations.com/ai-wont-take-your-job">https://www.risquetabulations.com/ai-wont-take-your-job</a> |
| Other Considerations | Explicitly state whether or not you are licensed for your location. You must ensure you are truly an expert before offering coaching; otherwise, you may cause more harm than good.                                                                                                                                                              |



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## Create and Maintain Websites For Adult-Themed Sites

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| Examples                   | Hypothetical ideas: Website for a local dungeon or event venue; site for a fetish photographer or pro domme; membership site for educational content, e-commerce storefront for fetish gear, kink-aware therapist's informational site.                                                                                                                                 |
| Skill level/learning curve | Creating basic websites requires modest technical skill, but standing out in a crowded market requires strong writing, design, or subject-matter expertise. In a saturated market, creators or their editors need advanced skills to compete effectively. You must be familiar with the problems that are unique to adult-industry entrepreneurs and propose a solution |
| Capital investment         | Minimal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Market saturation          | Basic website creation is highly saturated due to DIY site builders and freelance platforms. However, niche specialization and knowledge of adult-industry restrictions will differentiate you from other developers, who, at best, can only claim "kink friendly."                                                                                                     |
| Income potential           | \$50-\$120/hr or \$1K-\$5K/project                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Target audience            | The niche market for adult-oriented websites remains active, but only highly specialized merchandise sells well because major e-commerce platforms offer greater variety and pricing options.                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Platform censorship        | Your knowledge of the problems stigma can impose on a client is important; you can help them avoid being called out, perhaps even refused service, by understanding the standards the hosting provider imposes on content and how to word ads to avoid censorship.                                                                                                      |
| Payment processor risk     | As with platform censorship, all major payment processors might label companies that provide adult-oriented goods or services as high risk and subject them to special rules, higher fees, and, often, service refusal. Engaging an alternative processor specializing in high-risk clients may be necessary.                                                           |



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| Advertising strategy | Ways to reach prospective clients include referrals, a website with optimized SEO, niche directories, and networking in alternative communities                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Scaling              | Effort increases in direct proportion to each new client and project.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| AI risk              | Medium Risk: Website builders are easy to use, robust, and widely available, which means less work at lower levels. AI analyzes SEO, generates graphics, writes content, and provides layout and navigation advice. A web developer must learn to leverage AI, as it is replacing humans for routine work.                                                      |
| Other Considerations | The market for individuals who create and maintain websites will shrink as automation and content wizards improve. Still, you can stay relevant by being familiar with the problems unique to the adult industry, such as prohibitions, ever-changing lists of trigger words, and financial institutions that are more lenient about adult-oriented businesses. |



## Start a Kink-Oriented Blog

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| Examples                   | Hypothetical ideas: A pro domme writes posts dedicated to knowledge sharing, inside jokes, and emotional support for other pro dommes, monetized with ads and affiliate links. A professional traveler blogs about BDSM conferences, dungeons, and kinky B&Bs, promoting his travel guides in sidebars. <a href="http://Badgirls bible.com">Badgirls bible.com</a> has a great BDSM blog here, <a href="#">Bad Girls Bible - BDSM</a> .                                                               |
| Skill level/learning curve | Blog hosting sites and standalone applications make it easy to customize, maintain, and post to a blog. The hard part is maintaining the discipline to post regularly and the patience to cultivate a community. Someone who has never blogged before can become proficient in a relatively short amount of time.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Capital investment         | Minimal.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Market saturation          | Relatively low within this niche. General blogging is highly saturated, but specialized kink niches probably still have room for distinctive voices and expertise.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Income potential           | \$0-\$5,000+/mo, long ramp-up but builds a real asset                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Target audience            | <p>Ultimately, you want to appeal to those whose interests fall within the niche you've chosen to feature. People searching on subjects related to fetishes, BDSM, and sex-positivity can be casual - perhaps due to voyeuristic curiosity, a desire to explore fantasies, or simply to see something different.</p> <p>Others know what they want and are seeking education, relationship insights, ways to connect with like-minded people, guidance on reaching the next level, and new ideas.</p> |
| Platform censorship        | Independent blogs are not as carefully scrutinized as mainstream e-commerce sites are. Still, all along the way, you may see pushback in several different forms, including hosts, social media promotion, SEO keywords and content setup, email providers, and the ad networks you hope to use for monetization.                                                                                                                                                                                     |



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| Payment processor risk | Monetization is typically achieved through advertising and affiliate links rather than subscriber fees, so it is their payment processor, not yours, that decides whether or not to do business with you. Many use Stripe or PayPal; both are strict about adult content. You may not be allowed to substitute another processor. |
| Advertising strategy   | An SEO-enhanced website, reciprocal links, and social media work well. The mainstream ad providers will not allow adult-oriented sites to use their service.                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Scaling                | Work increases with more traffic and depends on how much effort goes into a prospective customer, but how and when you respond is up to you                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| AI risk                | Moderate-High: Bots can tend and feed blog content, but users are becoming more critical when this is obvious.                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Other Considerations   | Many high-quality blogs are maintained by companies that sell kinky goods or services to attract traffic and aren't directly monetized. If you have the patience to keep plugging away and find your tribe, you can become an influencer and make a difference in your corner of the kink ecosystem.                              |



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## Start a YouTube Channel

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| Examples                   | <p>Hypothetical ideas: On her very popular channel, a professional girlfriend talks about serving her well-to-do clients and the complex polyamorous lifestyle she maintains outside of work. She keeps subscribers engaged by offering clever anecdotes, vivid descriptions of the great sex Friday night, how romance factors into poly, and what happened when her conservative aunt started asking about boyfriends. The goal is to have subscribers emotionally invested in her polycule and anxious for the next installment</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Skill level/learning curve | <p>Posting to a YouTube channel requires creating a professional-looking profile, writing engaging content, setting up the recording environment, and making the videos. You must have discipline to post regularly and patience to cultivate a community.</p> <p>Your subscribers may come for news, but they stay for the personality. You will need to decide how to present yourself, ensuring your approach appeals to your target audience. Self-confidence, adherence to facts, strong opinions, and an appearance of authority, while open to others' input, are valued traits. Unless you really are that person, this persona must always be maintained - breaking character breaks the spell.</p> <p>That said, success requires more than appearances. To project deep knowledge, you should pick a niche and resolve to become <i>the</i> authority on the subject. Whether you achieve that goal is not as important as how you project that authority.</p> <p>If you are succeeding, you will receive questions, comments, and challenges from your audience. The best practice is to respond to each message appropriately. That means more than addressing the issue or answering the question. It also includes never losing your composure in the face of criticism and never being condescending, regardless of how naive the question or comment is.</p> <p>All of this can be an emotional drain, and there may well be times during your journey, especially at the beginning, when you wonder if this is worth the trouble. As odd as it sounds, be prepared with an answer to that question.</p> |
| Capital investment         | <p>Viewers expect high quality. You will need to have a professional recording setup, but you're not outfitting a full-on production studio. Expect to spend \$500-\$1500, with under \$1,000 probably sufficient, especially to start.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |



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| Market saturation      | While the market is saturated, there is always room for more good content that appeals to a niche.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Income potential       | \$0-\$5,000+/mo, long ramp-up but builds a real asset                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Target audience        | Ultimately, you want to appeal to those whose interests fall within the niche you've chosen to feature. People searching on subjects related to fetishes, BDSM, and sex-positivity can be casual - perhaps out of voyeuristic curiosity, a desire to explore fantasies, or simply to see something different. Others know what they want and are seeking education, relationship insights, ways to connect with like-minded people, guidance on reaching the next level, and new ideas. |
| Platform censorship    | YouTube actively checks for high-risk, adult-oriented (or just plain pornographic) content, and if you aren't diligent about your presentation, your channel might be suspended or canceled outright.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Payment processor risk | Monetization is typically achieved through advertising and affiliate links rather than subscriber fees, so it is their payment processor, not yours, that decides whether or not to do business with you. Many use Stripe or PayPal; both are strict about adult content. You may not be allowed to substitute your own processor.                                                                                                                                                      |
| Advertising strategy   | SEO-enhanced website, reciprocal links, social media                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Scaling                | As subscriptions increase, the work required to produce your videos will not expand as fast, but any follow-up you do will increase.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| AI risk                | AI can generate content you can build upon if you need low-effort informational videos, generic explainers, narration, and captioning. Your channel should rely on lived experience, empathy, emotional expression, and an intimate understanding of human interaction, none of which AI is capable of.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Other Considerations   | Much of a creator's success depends on consistency, charisma, timing, and luck. Some channels take off quickly, while others grow slowly over the years despite high-quality content. Don't assume slow growth means failure. If you enjoy the process, build genuine expertise, and connect authentically with your audience, creating content can still be personally and financially rewarding even without becoming a major influencer.                                             |



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## Rent Out Useful Kinky Items You Already Own

|                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| Examples                   | Hypothetical ideas: The fetish play space in your home, dungeon equipment, sex furniture, BDSM gear, corsets, and upscale fetish costumes.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Skill level/learning curve | You will have to determine a fair price that the market will bear, with few models to compare. Check-out/check-in/damage-observed forms and procedures will need to be established. You should be able to give expert advice about anything you offer for rent.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Capital investment         | Unless you purchase items to rent, it's minimal.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Market saturation          | This is not a commonly considered business, and you might be one of a few people offering this service in your community. However, it is a highly specialized niche appealing to a limited customer base, so predicting revenue is tricky.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Income potential           | \$200-\$2,000+/mo is possible, nearly passive after setup.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Target audience            | Since this service involves picking up, returning, and inspecting tangible items, your local kink community is the natural source of customers. Certain individuals or small groups could enjoy specialized equipment without making a larger investment in an infrequently used plaything. Also, lifestyle venues sometimes offer a crossover event - many swinger clubs host a BDSM tasting night, which is another opportunity. Local shops featuring adult-oriented items might partner with you. You will have to do some marketing so people know such a thing even exists. |
| Platform censorship        | Depending on your local jurisdiction, what you are offering for rent, and how explicit your descriptions are, you may experience censorship or service refusal, particularly when placing advertising.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Payment processor risk     | This gig does not require e-commerce and has a low transaction volume, so using a payment processor is optional. If you do want to use one, create a business entity with a neutral-sounding name and use that company to apply for an account. You probably won't experience any problems.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |



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| Advertising strategy | Reaching prospective customers without triggering censorship using mainstream options is a challenge. Word of mouth and listings with local kink-oriented organizations are good choices. If you are in a major metropolitan area with one or more brick-and-mortar stores specializing in some aspect of kink, you may be able to partner with them.                                                                   |
| Scaling              | Effort scales up directly with the number of items you offer for rent.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| AI risk              | Low risk due to the requirement of handling and possibly safety checking of tangible goods.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Other Considerations | Someone will need to be available at a time convenient for customers to hand over, take back, and inspect the rented items. Unless you have a separate storage space, customers will be coming to your home. There might be liability if someone is injured using the item. You need to consider how you will handle the issue if something is reported as lost or stolen, or if it comes back with substantial damage. |



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## Become a Boudoir or Fetish Photographer

|                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
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| Examples                   | Hypothetical ideas: The subject matter can range from someone posing in risqué lingerie to BDSM scenes to full-on pornography, and it is up to you to set and enforce your boundaries in this regard. You can offer services for hire, create images for freelance publication, or take pictures to be used in advertising for kinky products.                                                                                               |
| Skill level/learning curve | Superior photography skills are required to stand out in a saturated market. You must be comfortable directing people striking provocative poses. A high-quality portfolio featuring multiple sessions is essential and takes time to build. If you feel you need to take your skills to the next level before offering services as a professional, you can shorten the learning curve by studying respected guides and/or seeking training. |
| Capital investment         | If you don't already own the necessary equipment, or if it needs upgrading to be competitive, you'll have to make a substantial investment. A basic professional setup can run \$3,000- \$10,000, while a full set of lenses, lights, and accessories can cost \$10,000-\$30,000+.                                                                                                                                                           |
| Market saturation          | Many professional photographers work with exotic/erotic subject matter. If you are just getting started, it will be difficult to find customers who will pay for travel expenses, so you need to consider whether there is demand for another photographer like you in your area.                                                                                                                                                            |
| Income potential           | \$60-\$200 per hour; those charging at the upper range typically have a studio.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Platform censorship        | Photographs that are highly erotic or depict heavy BDSM themes certainly can trigger platform censorship. However, most of the time you will not be the party publishing the images, and the responsibility falls on the owner, not you.                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Target audience            | <p>A wide variety of people with many different types of needs may wish to hire a boudoir or fetish photographer.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Couples</li><li>• People exploring confidence/body image</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                             |



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|                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lifestyle participants</li><li>• Creators needing branding material</li><li>• Event/fetish-community participants</li></ul> <p>Sometimes you can set up at lifestyle events, of course, making arrangements well in advance.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Payment processor risk | This gig does not require e-commerce and has a low transaction volume, so using a payment processor is optional. If you do want to use one, create a business entity with a neutral-sounding name and use that company to apply for an account. You probably won't experience any problems.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Advertising strategy   | <p>First, create a digital portfolio that puts all of your talents on full display - without this, there is no credibility. Upload this album wherever you list your services. Some specific ideas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Referral networks</li><li>• Vendor booth at events</li><li>• Collaborations with models/performers</li><li>• Business directories maintained by local kink communities</li><li>• Instagram (care must be taken to stay within their guidelines)</li><li>• Fetlife</li><li>• Partnerships with dungeon/event operators.</li></ul> |
| Scaling                | The amount of work required to create and process your photography scales directly with the number of engagements. If you can publish and sell your work digitally, increased sales cause only a small amount of additional work.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| AI risk                | Low risk. The process of setting up the equipment and taking pictures from multiple angles is too physical, and much subtle human reasoning goes into staging a successful photo shoot.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Other Considerations   | Building a consistent stream of work based solely on boudoir or fetish work is challenging. This specialized type of photography is often just one of the services a full-time professional provides. If you don't already have professional equipment, it is hard to justify purchasing it, expecting to recoup the investment by doing this as a side hustle.                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |



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## Sell Your Handmade Kinky Goods on Etsy

|                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Examples                   | Actual products for sale:<br><a href="#">Master/Servant Ownership Agreement (Digital Download)</a><br><a href="#">Explicit "Reward Good Behavior With Sex" Coin</a><br><a href="#">French Antique Vibrating Massage Wand ca 1910s</a><br><a href="#">Needle Play Piercing Stencil</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Skill level/learning curve | <p>Ideally, you would already have a crafting skill that you could apply towards creating kinky products, but if you don't, why not learn something new?</p> <p>Etsy focuses on handmade goods within an ecosystem that supports sole proprietors and small businesses. They also allow hand-picked vintage and antique items.</p> <p>You will have to invest time reading Etsy's help pages and browsing listings to understand the market for kinky goods, learn how to create listings, and make sure you know what the rules are. They are very lenient about adult content as long as it is not pornography, used underwear, or fetish services.</p> <p>No advanced website or e-commerce skills are necessary to sell on Etsy. Your job is to take pictures of the item, write a description, set a price, and offer shipping options. Etsy manages the shopping cart, collects customer information, collects sales tax, processes payments, and offers the option to print shipping labels.</p> |
| Capital investment         | Setting up your store on Etsy costs between \$15 and \$29. You'll need to acquire the materials and possibly tools used to create your product. Packaging supplies are required, unless you already have them.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Market saturation          | Etsy is a saturated market with millions of active sellers, making competition fierce, especially for popular, easy-to-create products. Buyers are notoriously cautious about purchasing from new vendors, so you have to exercise patience as you build a reputation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Income potential           | Typically \$200-\$2,000+/mo but that varies widely based on the relative value of the items sold, popularity, personalization, and seller reputation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |



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| Target audience        | Etsy buyers are eager to support small businesses. They like to know who the seller is, expect timely and enthusiastic communication, and are often seeking product personalization not found in other markets. Free or low-cost shipping is highly valued. |
| Platform censorship    | Weaponry is forbidden, so some BDSM gear would not be allowed. Items can be erotic, provocative, and even outright explicit, but not pornographic. You will have to be careful to keep your descriptions and pictures within their guidelines.              |
| Payment processor risk | None. As long as the mature item is permitted, Etsy processes the payments.                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Advertising strategy   | You are allowed to advertise items tagged as mature on Etsy. You can also promote it on social media and link to it from your website or blog.                                                                                                              |
| Scaling                | Some efficiencies can usually be found, but in general, effort increases directly with sales volume. This is particularly true for personalized items.                                                                                                      |
| AI risk                | Low. You can leverage AI to streamline your workflow, write and edit listing text, and track correspondence. Still, it can't assemble the product, pack it for shipping, or understand the subtleties of human interactions.                                |
| Other Considerations   | If you can find something to make and market that resonates with you, then you can earn some extra money and enjoy yourself in the process.                                                                                                                 |



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## Sell Kinky Collectibles From Second-Hand Sources on eBay

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| Examples                   | Actual products for sale:<br><a href="#">Antique Electric Plug In Vibrator Massager - Medical Quackery Adult Toy</a><br><a href="#">Vintage 1970s Lot of 11 Black &amp; White 8 x 10 Photos Female Spanking</a>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Skill level/learning curve | <p>This gig involves building an inventory of kinky collectibles for resale by searching garage sales, estate sales, thrift stores, flea markets, store liquidations, and auctions.</p> <p>If you aren't already involved with kinky collectibles, you will need to take time to study the marketplace by browsing listings on eBay. It is important to understand what kinky items are allowed, as well as the rules that apply to all sellers.</p> <p>You will need to figure out a way to assess collectibles in the field to ensure they are worth buying. Depending on the item type, you may need additional research to set the price and describe it adequately.</p> <p>You will have to work harder to source kinky collectibles than you would for most collectibles due to their sensitive nature. People often don't put them out at sales because they are concerned about offending someone.</p> <p>No advanced website or e-commerce skills are necessary to sell on eBay. Your job is to take pictures of the item, write a description, set a price, and offer shipping options. eBay manages the shopping cart, collects customer information, collects sales tax, processes payments, and offers the option to print shipping labels.</p> |
| Capital investment         | <p>Your main expense is purchasing the collectibles for resale. \$100-\$200 is enough to start acquiring items one at a time.</p> <p>If you have the resources and are confident you know both 1) exactly what is allowed to be sold based on eBay's current policy and 2) what sells well based on historical sales, you could invest \$1,000-\$5,000, or even more, to buy a whole collection or accumulation.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |



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|                        | You will also need shipping supplies, which can be costly depending on the size and fragility of what you sell.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Market saturation      | Millions of people sell collectibles on eBay, and hundreds of collectible kinky items are listed. Still, you are not just selling a commodity - even common collectible items vary in quality, completeness, and provenance.                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Income potential       | <p>\$100-\$2,000+/mo, but varies widely depending on the relative value of the items sold and the margins you can realize.</p> <p>eBay deducts fees from the sale price, which can be 12-15% even without promotion, adding 4-12%.</p> <p>You must purchase wisely, with the expected gross margin always a critical consideration. 50% is the minimum, and at 70%+, you can be confident about making a decent profit.</p> |
| Target audience        | The advantage of using eBay over other, less robust sales channels is that potential buyers, many of them serious, will take the initiative to find you, not the other way around.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Platform censorship    | eBay has strict guidelines for adult items, but once approved, the listing is unlikely to be removed.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Payment processor risk | None. eBay will process payments for approved adult items.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Advertising strategy   | eBay allows sellers of adult items to promote them on-site, and you can set up off-site promotion for an additional fee. Other options are social media and from your website, if it is cataloged there.                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Scaling                | The effort required to trade in collectibles of varying sizes increases directly with volume.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| AI risk                | Low. You can leverage AI to streamline your workflow, write and edit listing texts, and track correspondence. Still, it has a limited ability to assess value and determine whether a particular item will be allowed.                                                                                                                                                                                                      |



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## Other Considerations

Searching for, cataloging, and selling collectibles is a satisfying hobby for many people. If that appeals, since you are trading in kinky items, it should be that much more fun.



## Gigs That Involve Provocative Performances

There are some edgier ways to make money on the side or as a gig worker that involve performances that overtly sexualize the performer. These pursuits are *mostly* legal in *most* jurisdictions. If you are considering any of these, then please research local codes and seek out detailed advice from a source you can trust.

There are many downsides, though, and the high-profile success stories you see with this work are newsworthy partly because of their rarity. You do read about creators who swear they are genuinely happy because they've monetized something they love doing anyhow, but the typical person experiences these gigs as just work.

- **Hardcore pornography** - There are ethical producers of pornography, but for the most part, the performers aren't treated with much respect. Some who have left the industry say they were frustrated watching vulnerable people being taken advantage of. For younger women, there is often pressure to take roles playing underage girls. Your chance of becoming that charismatic, financially successful, long-tenured, and publicly outspoken porn star is tiny. Most people only last a few months.
- **Stripper/exotic dancer** - Once you take a hard look at this sub-niche, you see it is not glamorous much of the time. Performers are typically classified as independent contractors who pay to use the venue for their act. Other performers, and sometimes the club's operators, might be involved in illegal sex work, if that is something that will trouble you. Problems with drugs and alcohol are common, not only as a personal health issue for the user, but also as a catalyst for outrageous



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behavior.

- **Phone sex** - Even though most people carry a tiny video system (smartphone) everywhere, there is still a demand for phone sex. Platforms such as [Niteflirt](#) drive prospective customers to their sites, then pass them to providers in a way that hides both parties' contact information and addresses. Role-play is a huge part of the job. In just a few moments, you must be able to assess the caller's intent, find the right persona within you, and start delivering a credible improv performance. If you are thin-skinned, this is not the gig for you, because you will have to hear about, comprehend, and indulge some bizarre and unsavory fetishes. You might also encounter verbal abuse. However, if proper precautions are taken to protect your identity and location, there is no possibility of physical contact.
- **Sell your used underwear** - Collecting used underwear is a major fetish, and there is money in it if you are so inclined. One site claims over 1.5M sellers and almost 2M buyers. Several sites actively solicit used lingerie for resale - Sofia Gray, PantyDeal, and All Things Worn are the major players. There is plenty of advice out there, so please research it before jumping in. You are best off using a service rather than selling directly, despite the approximately 20% fee. The marketplace platforms drive buyers to their site, process payments for you, and have controls in place to protect your privacy.
- **Sell sex videos on specialized e-commerce sites such as PornHub.** The market for amateur and low-budget pornography has long been saturated, so standing out as a newbie is difficult. You may find that after investing time figuring out the platform, sketching out your performance, and creating the video, you'll be lost in the crowd with low sales and a huge blow to your ego.



- **Work to get subscribers for your kinky performances on sites like OnlyFans and ManyVids.** This is a saturated market where you compete against long-established creators backed by companies specializing in the business. It can be time-consuming, so it is hard to do it on a side hustle schedule. This gig, in particular, is quite well documented, so if you are interested, please seek out more information.
- **Become a pro domme.** Serious players spend months training for this kind of work. Purchasing equipment - which should be of high quality for safety and long-lasting useful life - can get expensive. Opportunities to advertise your services are extremely limited.

## Making Your Body the Product

The last type of gig we'll look at is the most personal of personal services - sex work. Included in this classification are prostitutes, escorts, sugar babies, sex surrogates, and masseuses who give "happy ending" massages.

Sex workers are probably the most stigmatized group within our kinky ecosystem. Of all the adult-oriented occupations researched, this is the only one where the work itself is illegal in almost every jurisdiction.

It is Risqué Tabulations official position that sex work is a legitimate occupation that should be licensed and regulated. We have permanent plans to promote financial literacy amongst sex workers. For more about this, you can read this article about how an



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accomplished CPA who became a \$10,000 a night “professional girlfriend” does just that: [Financial Literacy for Sex Workers](#).

Unfortunately, this guide can’t go into detail about the issues you might encounter, especially how to avoid or overcome them, due to legal risks. We can give you a sketch of what’s involved, though.

The top priority is *not* deftly evading law enforcement - you actually don’t hear much about that. Instead, guarding one’s privacy and personal safety is the primary concern. Understanding what measures you need to take is of the utmost importance!

Maybe you’ve heard the term, “sex work is work”. Providing the service itself is only part of the occupation.

Onboarding clients is more involved than you’d think. You have to communicate with prospective customers via calls, texts, website messaging, and email. That involves weeding out the psychos and those who will never follow through.

When you find someone you think you can work with, there is paperwork and payment to arrange. You might choose to conduct in-person interviews at a public place and/or provide outcalls, which involve travel time.

Most providers offer at least two service scenarios - the girlfriend experience or the porn star experience. You should be comfortable with role-play and reasonably good at improv.

As with any other occupation, best practices have been established, especially regarding safety. There is a very active Reddit community for sex workers - r/SexWorkers. While



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we can't recommend making this your side hustle or gig, if you are giving this some consideration, we definitely can recommend seeking more information before you do anything else!

## Conclusion

We hope this was informative and helps you decide whether you can realistically set up a side hustle or start doing gig work that feeds your kink. Please check out the worksheet designed to help you make a decision, especially if you have more than one opportunity to pursue. The income and expense tracker will help you monitor your financial performance during the initial stages of your business.

Don't be shy about contacting us with any questions! If your needs are more involved than a quick email, we can discuss doing a deeper dive into what you have in mind.

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## Links to Our Gigs

[CONudeYoga.com](https://www.conudeyoga.com) Liz, aka "mtn grrl", started the first pansexual clothing-optional yoga class on the Colorado Front Range in 2008. Although it is no longer the only game in town, her twice-weekly classes continue to thrive almost 20 years later.



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[KinkyIntimacy.com](http://KinkyIntimacy.com) Mark, aka “Fox”, and mtn grrl provide adult education and other services for people involved in or curious about kink, BDSM, or sex-positivity. This includes workshops, retreats, presentations, coaching, spiritual practices, and alternative forms of yoga. They are based in Denver, Colorado, but travel for events and can accommodate remote services.

[SexploratoriumDenver.com](http://SexploratoriumDenver.com) The Sexploratorium is one of just five sex museums in the U.S. and is the only one that provides education. Fox and mtn grrl regularly conduct classes and presentations there.

[RisqueTabulations.com](http://RisqueTabulations.com) Fox and mtn grrl provide bookkeeping and business advisory services to companies involved in adult-oriented goods and services. They have extensive lived experience operating businesses focused on kink and are comfortable providing services for both the BDSM and sex-positive communities.