

## Persistence offers many rewards

*Kathy Henhawk found her niche with a duct-cleaning service that helps customers breathe easier*  
[Final Edition]

---

The Spectator - Hamilton, Ont.

Author: MANDIE CRAWFORD

Date: Mar 13, 2006

Start Page: G.16

Section: Money

Text Word Count: 607

### Document Text

*(Copyright (c) 2006 The Hamilton Spectator, All Rights Reserved. )*

Decorating cakes does not prepare one for the business world.

However, for Kathy Henhawk of Hagersville, leaving her position of almost 20 years to run a business of her own was something to celebrate.

"I felt like I was in a rut, and I just needed to do something different," she explained.

Born in North York, Henhawk was raised in Hagersville. She worked for Farmers Gas and Bakery in Ohsweken, on the Six Nations Reserve, decorating cakes.

After working for someone else for what seemed like lifetime, she knew she needed a change.

Her son was her biggest motivator.

She wanted to look for a business that would help keep food on the table for the growing teenager.

Henhawk, 41, first thought about carpet cleaning.

She found a link to a website for a business in Texas that sold duct-cleaning tools.

The part that Henhawk found intriguing was that this machinery, while cleaning ductwork in homes and businesses, could video the process, before during and after.

The discouraging part was the price tag attached.

Henhawk would have to raise \$15,000 for the machinery alone.

"I approached some friends who together were able to lend me the money," she said.

The machine was delivered to her door with several videos on how to operate it-- and the adventure began.

Saddled with a large debt and no business training, she did the only thing she knew how to do -- put the shoes to the pavement. She opened Mohawk Duct Cleaning Services in May 2004 and has not looked back.

After practising and perfecting the craft of duct cleaning, Henhawk took to knocking door-to-door in Hamilton, looking for business.

"I had no idea that there were so many duct-cleaning companies out there," she admits.

"But our product is very different in that it uses a brushing and vacuuming system simultaneously to clean the ducts so that no dust gets into the house.

And, we are able to show videos of before and after -- proof that we get the job done."

Henhawk now employs herself as well as two others in her business.

Her first year of business brought in just more than \$30,000. She hopes to increase that by 20 per cent this year.

"We do a lot of business through word of mouth -- it seems to be our best advertising."

But business has not come without a few worried days and sleepless nights.

She admits to having done no market research as far as demand goes.

Luckily her gut instincts have helped her to make decisions that have made the difference.

She deals with a lot of people who have allergies and breathing difficulties and finds it very rewarding to see the pleased looks on her customers' faces when they see the before and after difference on video.

Mohawk Duct Cleaning Services works throughout the Hamilton, Niagara and surrounding regions and can be reached by calling 905- 389-9109.

Mandie Crawford can be reached by e-mail at [mandie@roaringwomen.com](mailto:mandie@roaringwomen.com).

#### Lessons learned

\* Ask for help. When Henhawk was having difficulty getting enough clients, she asked for referrals and help from friends and customers.

\* Persistence pays off. Door knocking is not for everyone. However, Henhawk's determination and persistence provided her with clients every day.

\* Co-operating with others helps you both. Henhawk now works with several cleaning companies and they all trust each other's abilities and services. They refer each other and help each other out finding business.

#### **[Illustration]**

Photo: Ron Albertson, The Hamilton Spectator / Business owner Kathy Henhawk with her van and the video equipment she uses for Mohawk Duct Cleaning Services.

Credit: The Hamilton Spectator

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction or distribution is prohibited without permission.

---

## **Abstract** (Document Summary)

Born in North York, [Kathy Henhawk] was raised in Hagersville. She worked for Farmers Gas and Bakery in Ohsweken, on the Six Nations Reserve, decorating cakes.

After practising and perfecting the craft of duct cleaning, Henhawk took to knocking door-to-door in Hamilton, looking for business.

Photo: Ron Albertson, The Hamilton Spectator / Business owner Kathy Henhawk with her van and the video equipment she uses for Mohawk Duct Cleaning Services.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction or distribution is prohibited without permission.