

# Entrepreneur Profile

## BARBARA MOSER

CO-FOUNDER, KAYE,  
MOSER, HIERBAUM LLP

**What it does:** Represents high-net-worth individuals in complex divorce cases, as well as complex estate planning and probate and trust litigation and administration.

**HQ:** San Francisco.

**2013 projected revenue:** \$1,500,000 or more.

**Employees:** Eight.

**Founded:** 1995.

**Source of startup capital:** Self-funded.

**Background:** After teaching deaf studies and sign language at Oregon State University, and working with deaf and disabled infants and their parents at University of Washington's Child Development Center, Moser decided to get her JD at University of San Francisco School of Law in 1990. She first practiced at Brobeck, Phleger & Harrison LLP in the tax department, where she met Susan Kaye.



SPENCER BROWN

**Residence:** San Francisco.

**Website:** www.kayemoser.com\*

### Big picture

**How's business:** Unbelievable. It is so busy, we are going out of our minds. We have to turn away clients, unfortunately.

**Biggest challenge for your business at the moment:** Staying small. We don't want to get too big.

**What's going to change at your company in the next year:** Nothing, I hope!

**Are you hiring? And if so, how many jobs and what kind:** We're constantly trying to decide whether to hire more people — it's been an 18-year discussion. We might hire one or two associates this year.

### Business moves

**Reason for starting business:**

When I was on maternity leave, Susan Kaye called me and said we need to start our own firm. At first, I thought it was impossible. Three months after maternity leave with my second one, I walked into her office and said, "Let's go."

**Most difficult part of decision:**

The scariness of whether you would have any clients.

**Biggest misconception:** I

thought it would take a long time to establish ourselves, as we were just associates at a very big firm, but clients came with us so it gave us instant credibility.

**Biggest business weakness:** We always wish we could be a

little more efficient. We can't always bill for everything we do because we do things as a team and work for individuals. We're not greedy, and life is good, but we spend a lot of time together on our cases and can't bill for every minute.

**Biggest risk:** We've never had our own space. We've sublet from other firms for our whole 18 years. And it's turned out well.

**Biggest mistake:** I feel like we've lived a charmed existence as a firm.

**Smartest move:** Deciding to sublet space from big firms because we've had relationships with the people at the big firms.

**Biggest worry:** I am up at night wanting things to go as perfectly as possible for our clients.

**What do you wish you had known from**

**Day 1:** I wish I had known how busy we were going to be — I might have started the firm with more people.

### Dreams

**Key goal yet to achieve:** Retirement.

**Five-year plan:** Susan and I have a second side business. I can't yet say what it is, but it is related, and in five years I hope it will be launched.

**Inducement to sell:** When we are ready to retire, we would like to sell.

**First choice for new career or venture:** One is the new project we're working on, the second would be training to be a chef.

### Personals

**Favorite pastimes:** I love to cook and spend time with my husband and two boys.

— Annie Sciacca ■

\*Originally published as www.kayemoserhierbaum.com. This version has been corrected for accuracy.