

You might need a photobooth for your daughter's wedding reception. Maybe you need to satisfy your sweet tooth. Or maybe you just need time to relax at a bed and breakfast. Today, more than 27 million small businesses operating within the U.S. are meeting a multitude of market needs. We caught up with Hankamer alumni who are involved with small businesses, which impact a variety of industries from food, hospitality, consulting, event services and recreation, to providing sustainable solutions for people in other countries.

**SMALL**  
**BIZ**  
**BEARS**  
**BY KRISTIN TODD STIRES**

## "MS. HOSPITALITY"

**about your business:** We have a 155-acre guest ranch with 10 cabins. Each cabin is private, secluded and offers a hot tub and fully furnished kitchen. Guests can enjoy activities like horseback riding, swimming, hiking, archery and animal watching. We host weddings, corporate events and chuck wagon dinners, too.

**inspiration:** We had always dreamed of running our own business and being our own boss. The hospitality industry seemed like a natural fit for us, as we love to travel and enjoy customer service. Plus, we thought it would be a great career as we raise our four children.

**how you got started:** We were living in Colorado in 2004 and began searching for ranches in Texas (I was missing the good ol' Lonestar state). We found this ranch for sale as an existing business with five cabins and decided to take the plunge! It has taken seven years to build and grow the ranch into what it is today—it's been a blessing. We love sharing our ranch with guests!

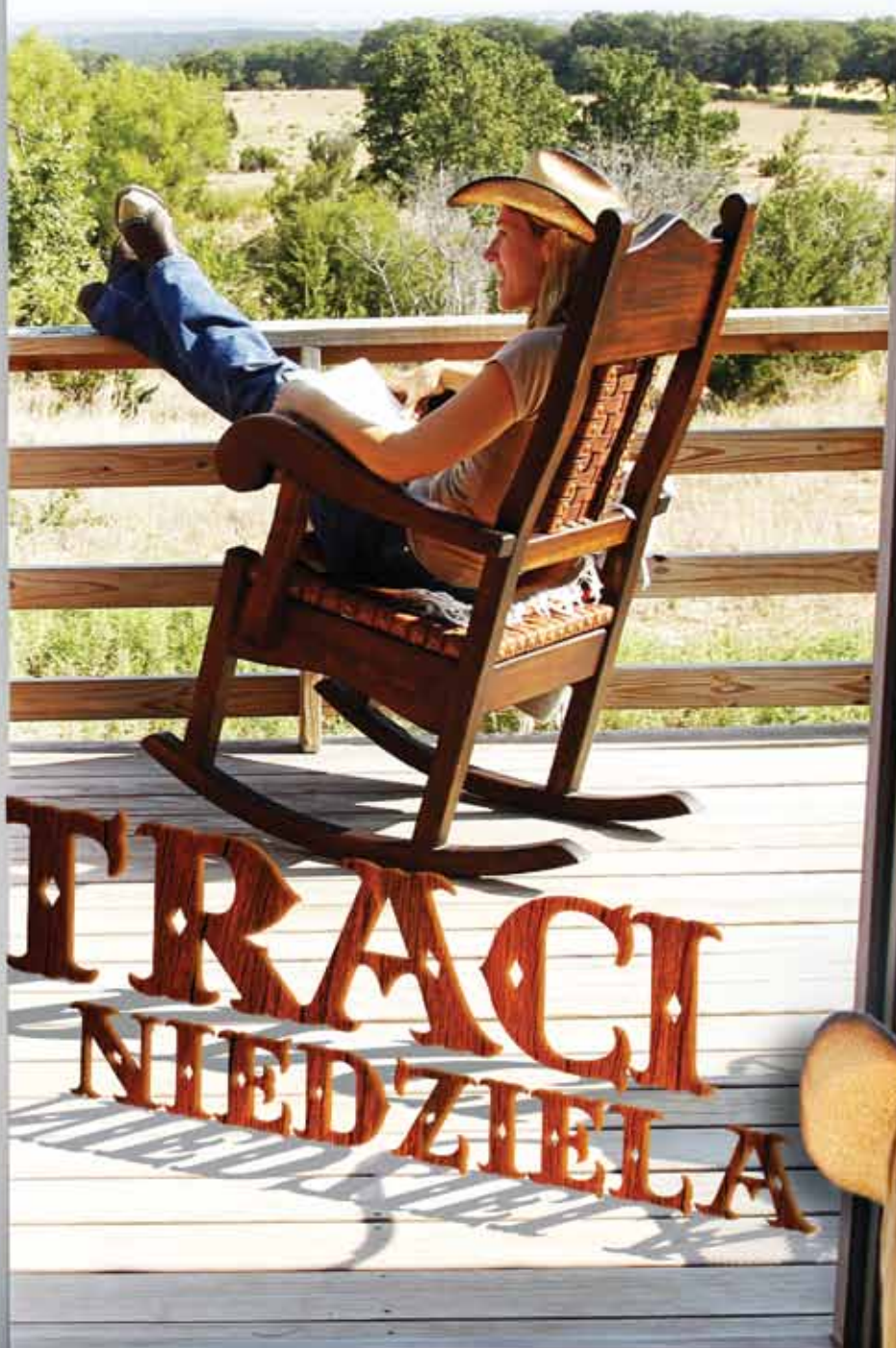
**biggest challenge:** Balancing our professional life and our family life. Since we live (and work) on the property, it's hard to separate the two. Keeping God the center of our lives (just like the wheel from Baylor's Welcome Week) helps us accomplish that!

**best moment:** Being recognized two years in a row by BedandBreakfast.com as an industry leader. Also, all of the glowing reviews that our guests post give us a real sense of accomplishment and peace.

**words of wisdom:** Going into debt is NOT a prerequisite for owning your own business. If you are creative and resourceful, you can accomplish your goals without the burden of debt.



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AND RETREAT, BLUFF DALE, TX**

