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**Concierge service helps busy people with everyday tasks**

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Kym Smith works from her Xtra Pair of Hands home office in Snellville.

Have you ever wished you had a clone that could take care of some of those truly annoying tasks?

Who really has the time to spend two hours in line at the Department of Motor Vehicles? Or to sit at home between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. waiting for the cable repairman to show up? And wouldn't it be nice if you didn't have to battle the crowds at the grocery store every single week?

That's where Snellville woman Kym Smith comes in. Her new personal concierge service, Xtra Pair of Hands (<http://www.xtrapair.com/>), takes care of running errands and doing everything else busy executives and single parents don't have time to do. While there are several personal and business concierge services located in Atlanta, Smith says her business is the first of its kind in Gwinnett.

"We went from working 40 hours to 50 or 60 hours a week. People are so busy, but they still need to do the grocery shopping and run errands," Smith said. "When you call the cable company, they never tell you a specific time. They'll say 'between 9 and 12' and then you have to take a whole day off." Smith will do your grocery shopping, pick up your dry cleaning, make your hotel and airline reservations, address and mail your holiday cards and even wait in long lines at the tag office.

"As long as it's legal, we do it," Smith said.

One of the more unusual requests to Xtra Pair of Hands came earlier this week, from an Atlanta businessman stuck in a meeting in Miami. He'd just found out his stepfather had died, and needed a suit ASAP. The gentleman also wasn't so sure on his suit size. So Smith ran out, bought suits in two sizes and shipped them out later that day.

Single mom and post office worker Tiawanna Jackson just wanted one week off from the grocery store. Between working eight hours a day and shuttling around her 7- and 12-year-old children, the Snellville woman almost never has a spare minute. So she passed along her weekly grocery list, consulted with Smith on her favorite brands and sent Smith off to

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Kroger.

“It gave me a break from the hustle and bustle. I can’t say I’ll use it every time, but I’m going to try to fit it into my budget once every two weeks or so,” Jackson said. “It’s just a treat for me.”

### Working from home

Smith started Xtra Pair of Hands two months ago. As a frequent traveler, she’d gotten used to helping friends and family members set up hotel stays and airline reservations, and wanted to carry those skills over into a full-time job. She runs the business out of a spare bedroom in her Snellville home.

On a typical day, Smith wakes up at 5 a.m., works out in her basement gym, and starts taking calls at about 6. She’s on her cell phone constantly until 7 p.m., when she turns the phones off. Mornings are typically the busiest time of the day, because people wake up and realize they don’t have the time to run the errands they have planned.

Smith can tackle most errands the day someone calls, though she does ask for at least two hours’ notice. She charges \$30 per errand.

Smith runs most of the errands for Gwinnett County clients, and she has sub-contractor helpers to run errands in Fulton and Cobb counties.

Eventually, she’d like to have about five employees.

Although Xtra Pair of Hands targets clients in some of Gwinnett’s most affluent neighborhoods with fliers and postcards, much of her business comes from people calling the number she has printed on the side of her car. A lot of callers aren’t clear on what exactly a “personal concierge” does, though.

“A lot of people think we’re a dating service,” Smith said.

While Smith isn’t helping those looking for love, she does have a passion for her job.

“I’m getting paid to do the stuff I love. I love to shop and I love to travel,” Smith said. In fact, grocery shopping trips rank among her favorite errands to run. But not everything is so enjoyable. Her least favorite job?

“Waiting at the DMV,” Smith said. “They’re so mean there!”