FREE
Start Up Guide
for Local Small Businesses





Taking Your Local Small Business from Concept to

"Open for Business"





Start Your Dream Now!



Before You Start

The Secret of Getting Ahead, Is Getting Started ~ Mark Twain

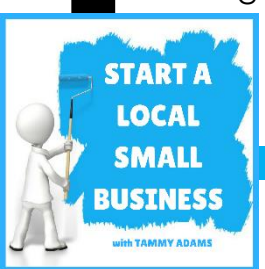
Starting a business can be a bit scary. However, it can also be extremely rewarding. Opening up doors that you never knew you had.

This guide is meant to help you get started. Will it have everything? No. But it will help direct you in the right direction on the questions you need to ask and the resources you need to seek.

If you discover anything along the way you feel should be included for other future small businesses owners, shoot me an email at tammy@localsmallbusinesscoach.com and I'll take a look and see if it should be added for future versions.

We are in this together and appreciate any help you might want to pass along.

Tammy



Ready, Set...Hold Up!

So you are ready to make the leap and start your own local small business.

Maybe you want to start a Dog Grooming Business or maybe you want to be a handyman, plumber, or barber? You might be opening up a brick and mortar business, setting up a mobile business or just working from your home and a pick up truck.

You have a great business idea, but you have no idea where to start or you worry you might miss an important step.

Have No Fear!

While I can't guarantee 100% of what you need will be in this guide, it should get you from concept to "open for business"! We will hit the majority of what you will need to start a successful business.

Use this guide as a checklist for you to use as you move from one phase to the next. Some areas you may have already done but you might want to make sure you didn't miss anything.

Avoid the temptation to just start "doing" the business and then back tracking to these items. It might cost you money or worse…get you in trouble with the government or local laws.

If you are ready, let's dive in and get this new business going from Concept to Open for Business!



Do You Have What It Takes?

Passion & Skills Needed to be a Local Small Business Owner?

- **Does this Sound Like You?**
  - Passion for the area you are about to go in to?
  - Love of people – Customer Service will be the key to your success!
  - Desire to learn – You will need to constantly stay on top of what is going on in your new profession.
  - Go Getter – You will need to hustle. Especially in the beginning when trying to build your client base
  - Pushes through Fear – Let's face it. There will be fears along the way. Are you the type of person who will push through these fears?
  - Not afraid of hard work - You want to make sure you truly love what you are about to jump into. Remember, you will be doing this business for 8 to 12 hours a day, possibly 6 or 7 days a week.

    Just because you can do it, it doesn't mean you LOVE doing it. So please make sure you enjoy what you are about to commit to for several years. The love of doing the job may not mean you love the "managing of " that same job.

Finally – You understand you will work both "in" and "on" your new business. There will be paperwork, billing, planning, marketing, etc

Do Your Homework

Make Sure to Study Your Competition

- ❑ **Do some research on those in the community currently doing this business (both mobile & brick & mortar)**
    - ❑ What are they doing right?
    - ❑ What could they improve?
    - ❑ What is their reputation in the community? Online?
    - ❑ What services to they provide?
    - ❑ What do they charge?
    - ❑ What is their service area?

Please do not skip this section. It is important that you know what your competition is doing. ***Both good and bad.*** They are in business because they are doing something right. You want to make sure you do those same things. However, you also want to know what will be your competitive advantage. So what are they doing poorly that you could improve upon?

DO NOT: Allow what you find to deter you from your plan. Trust me, the business is there. You just have to provide excellent customer service, do a fantastic job on what you deliver and strive to make your business a step above the others.

GET THE FULL FREE RESEARCH CHECKLIST

Do Your Homework

Make Sure to Keep Up the Research

- **There are a tons of other stuff you will need to research**
  - What will your trade area be?
  - Leasing and build outs for any brick and mortar businesses
  - Costs for mobile business for vehicle and other related costs like gas
  - Products & equipment needed
  - Costs of the products & equipment needed
  - Marketing Ideas & Costs to Get Word Out that You Are Open
  - Brainstorm all other aspects of your business. Create your own list based off specific needs of the business

***DO NOT:* Skip this step. This is where you save money and come out the shoot running and gunning and having early success**

Don't forget to listen to episodes 6 & 7 of the Start a Local Small Business Podcast where we dive in deeper into doing your research



Make it Legal!

What Are the Legal Requirements for You New Business?

Do you need a license? Do you need any specialized training? Certifications?

Since each state, county and city is different, please make sure to check your local area. One great resources is the SBA (Small Business Association) They have a page that links to all states: **Click Here**

Go down to your City Hall and find out your minimum requirements. You will at minimum need a business license.

- ❑ **State / City / Government To Dos**

  Yes, it is a necessary evil. You must make sure your new business is legal.

  - ❑ Research your state and city on if you will need an LLC or business entity or if you can do the job via a dba (doing business as)
  - ❑ Verify name is available to use via the state commissioner website
  - ❑ File Company paperwork if you are forming an LLC
  - ❑ What licenses do you need?
    - ❑ City, local?
    - ❑ For the actual profession – Does it require one?
    - ❑ Do you need a contractor's license or other special license for the business?
  - ❑ Set up your Tax ID / EIN #
  - ❑ ***What else does your research show you need?***



Your Business Plan

What Do You Do With All That Research?

- ❑ **Start a Business Plan / Success Blueprint**

  Ok, so doing a business plan isn't the most exciting thing for most of you. But right now your head is spinning with tons of great ideas and things to do isn't it?

  A business plan is typically used when seeking financing or with a franchise or possibly when seeking a lease. However, for most of you, a simple Success Blueprint will work.

  A success blueprint is great for getting those ideas out of your head into a semi-formal format. You will use this success blueprint to not only outline your next steps but also to revisit over the next year the great ideas you had in the beginning. I promise you, they will begin to fade away as you get knee deep in the weeds of your business.

- ❑ **What is in a Business Plan / Success Blueprint?**

  It is a document that will capture the who, what, where, why and how of your business. What are you about? What tools do you need? What will your marketing plan be? What is your vision? Financial Goals. Stuff like this.

See the next page for an idea of what will be in your success blueprint or business plan

Your Success Blueprint

Let's Break the Business Plan / Success Blueprint Down

- ❑ Mission / Purpose of your new Business
    - ❑ What do you want people to know about your business? To Remember?
- ❑ Who is your target customer?
- ❑ What Problems will you solve for your clients?
- ❑ What products or services will you provide?
- ❑ What is your initial marketing plan?
- ❑ What equipment or tools will you need?
- ❑ What Specialized Training Will You Get or Need?
- ❑ What costs are involved in first 90 days (break it down)
- ❑ What you discovered about your competition
- ❑ Goals & Next Steps

Click the link below to get a basic PowerPoint I put together for you to at least capture the key areas you will want to identify. Or feel free to create your own. My feelings will not be hurt. I just care that you do it!

Get a FREE Success Blueprint PowerPoint

Financing & Bookkeeping

Show Me the Money!

- **Debt Free Business or Business Loans?**

  I encourage businesses to be debt free. I would rather you start slow and grow the old fashion way. Why is that?

  Your new business will be stressful enough trying to earn enough to support your family and pays the bills. The last thing you need is to owe on a loan payment and have the stress of not knowing where the money is coming from.

  Your new businesses may be able to start debt free by going mobile. All you need is your tools and vehicle. Remember, you can always move up and buy a trailer or van as you grow your business. Even $500 can get you up and going.

  Remember: Set aside a certain amount each month to reinvest back into your business to buy more tools, supplies or other items to grow your business.

  - If doing as a debt free business (preferred)...determine funds needed for start up **Don't Forget:** Your Success Blueprint earlier will help you create your financial goals and gameplan.

  - If Needing a small business loan - research SBA (Small Business Association) website. Also speak to local lenders on criteria (you will need that business plan)

***** Please consider doing as debt free as possible. You will thank me later***



Financing & Bookkeeping

Make Sure You Get the Money!

- ❑ **Bookkeeping / Billing**

For those of you that love what you do, you will hate this part of your business. However, this is a major part of your profit and success.

Losing money due to poor billing & bookkeeping is a major leak you will want to make sure your business doesn't have!

More small business owners lose money by doing late billing and not following up on outstanding bills. Remember, most people are not in a hurry to pay you, so you will want to have a strong system in place.

- ❑ Purchase QuickBooks or an Online Bookkeeping System like **Freshbooks** (recommended) or Quickbooks online
- ❑ Set up your invoicing process with this program
  - ❑ Not just the look of the invoice but how you will handing billing and following up
- ❑ Set up a separate business account – Keep your personal funds separate from your business transactions.

  VERY IMPORTANT for tax time
- ❑ Not your strength? Is there a family member or friend who can help with this? Many business owners have someone helping with this piece of their business.

Check Out Resource: **Freshbooks** an online billing and bookkeeping system designed for small business owners

People & Protection

Will You Have Employees?

- ❑ **Employees / Temp Help / Or Solo**

  Depending on if you go solo as a mobile business or go brick and mortar, you may or may not have employees. Please keep in mind that having employees adds a whole new level of accountability and rules / laws you will need to follow.

  If you will have employees

  - ❑ Set up workers comp
  - ❑ Order posters
  - ❑ Set up payroll
  - ❑ Get an EIN Number for taxes
  - ❑ Set up eVerify for hiring
  - ❑ Need Hiring Process
  - ❑ Need an Orientation Process
  - ❑ Need Employee Manual
  - ❑ There are many more items if you have employees. We will be putting together some materials to help you out. (more to come)

Remember, if you start solo and later add temporary helpers. You still need to ensure you are legally accounting for these folks. Typically owing a 1099 for amounts you pay them as independent contractors.

You will still want to keep good records of any independent day labor you hire or use. Plus you will account for this on your taxes.

Talk to an independent HR Consultant in your state for any laws & regulations you will need to follow if you use employees or help. More courses will be added in the future for employees.



Marketing Plan

Getting Ready to "Open for Business"

- ❑ **Marketing Items**
  - ❑ Create your logo (less is more…can they recognize what you do?)
  - ❑ Order your Business Cards
  - ❑ Will you use decals for Vehicles – highly recommend for mobile
  - ❑ Set up your basic Website with hours, your mission, what you do, etc (see our website for ideas)
  - ❑ Will you use other social media? Highly recommend Facebook and having a presence in community rooms
  - ❑ What will your marketing plan be? *(in your Success Blueprint)*
  - ❑ Network...Get in community...speak to anyone who has a pet business (like dog walkers, pooper scoopers, pet stores, etc. Let them want to refer you for example if doing a pet business)
  - ❑ Make sure you have a good customer contact follow up system

- ❑ **Sales Tracking / Business Growth**

  - ❑ You will want to create a tracking mechanism for sales, so you can use monitor each month and year over year.
    - ❑ Keep track of what works and doesn't.. Sales journal is a good idea
    - ❑ Seasonal Swings in Business
    - ❑ Specials that you ran – Track Hits & Misses
    - ❑ Track daily sales, monthly, yearly
    - ❑ Products or Services sold.
    - ❑ Cost / Margins of products / goods sold

Don't Forget These

Miscellaneous Items

- ❑ **Set up Insurance / Bonded**

  You want to protect yourself. You want to protect your customers. Make sure you investigate the type of insurance you need. Don't forget you need to change your vehicle insurance if doing mobile. Do you needed to be bonded? Make sure you hit any minimums your state and city requires of your business.

- ❑ **Brick and Mortar Items**

  - ❑ Do your homework on your location
    - ❑ Does it get good traffic? Can your customers find you?
    - ❑ Are there businesses near you that will help drive traffic?
    - ❑ What build out costs will you have?

  - ❑ Do your homework on your lease
    - ❑ What is the going price and terms in your area?
    - ❑ Will you have the business to cover this? Or do you have money saved?
    - ❑ What's included? Water? Electric?

  - ❑ Do you homework on your utility costs

  - ❑ Remember, your tools & equipment costs will go up as you will have more stations needed to maximize the space and sales



Want More?

The Learning is Just Beginning

If you are thinking that you want to proceed forward with starting a business, I do have a few more things to help get you going.

FREE: **VIDEO Course - Getting Your Business Going**

Get the Series --- CLICK HERE

ADVANCE TRAINING COURSE:

Get 25% off to Help Get You Started!

This course has 12 Modules, 50 Mini Videos & 13 Additional Tools & Resources to Get You from Concept to Open for Business!

Get the Course --- CLICK HERE

Keep Checking back at StartaLocalSmallBusiness.com for more



Before You Go

One last thought before we wrap this up….

Don't Forget the SERVICE in your Business!

No matter how much you love what you do. No matter how good you are at what you do. What will separate you from your competition is the quality of work you do and the level of service you provide your clients.

From being prompt, resolving issues, having great help that believe in the same service you do and remembering each & every interaction you have in the community will be watched and remembered. You want the folks in your town to associate you with excellent service!

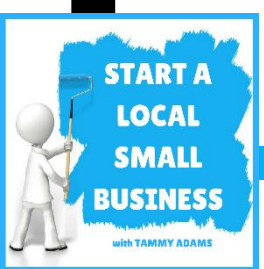
Also, Don't Forget to Listen to the Podcasts:





If you have any questions or ideas you would love to see in the future fill free to reach out…

tammy@localsmallbusinesscoach.com



Keep Checking back at StartaLocalSmallBusiness.com for more coming.

Then once your business is up and running, we have more tools at LocalSmallBusinessCoach.com

Finally...



Good Luck!

I know you will kick some major butt!!

Local Small Business Coach

TRAINING FOR LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

INCREASE PROFITS | BOOST SALES | IMPROVE PROCESSES | DEVELOP TEAMS

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