

## **How to open the successful salon.**

If your dream is to open a hair salon, now might be one of the best times to do it. The salon industry is growing steadily and is projected to continue growing. If you are planning to start a hair salon, this guide will give you the details you need to get started. Plus.

It's important to have a plan in place before you open your salon. Here are a few things you'll want to do before you open:

### **Create a business plan**

No business can function properly without a **business plan**. A business plan acts like a roadmap, a document that will guide your business to success. But, business planning doesn't have to be a long drawn out process. In fact, you've probably already put together a lot of the information mentally, or even scribbled a few notes on paper. The point of a solid business plan is to figure out what your business is, how it will be successful, and how you'll troubleshoot problems.

### **Figure out funding**

Whether you're seeking a traditional bank loan or borrowing money from friends and family, you need to figure out how much money you need to get started, and where it will be coming from. Most likely, you'll be doing a combination of multiple funding methods, and you may be using your own money and bootstrapping your business. Regardless of what route you take, it's important to have a clear idea at the outset of where the money is coming from.

Our **funding guide** gives an overview of your options if you aren't yet sure what funding options are right for your salon

## **Find a mentor**

As you're planning your business, it's a great time to find a business mentor. It's best to find someone in the salon industry that can answer questions for you as you start and grow your business.

## **Put an accounting and inventory program in place**

To keep track of your money and project growth, you'll want to implement an accounting and inventory program. On the accounting side, you'll need a program to track your revenue and expenses. You'll also need to figure out how you'll pay, so it's a good idea to sit down and chat with an accountant to help you get started. You'll also need a way to track inventory; Salon Today has some great tips on this particular topic.

## **Hunt for the right location**

Choosing the right location is the difference between success and failure. The successful owner admits that if he could go back and pick a location for his first salon, he probably wouldn't pick the same spot. You want to select a spot with good traffic, high visibility, and is located where your target demographic shops or lives. They advise being fussy about your location, as it's vital to the success of your salon. Aside from touring around various locations with a realtor, others suggests driving through the areas that you want to be located in and look for vacant properties. Just because there isn't a "for sale" sign in the window doesn't mean it's not available. In his experience, people sometimes hang on to a property for sentimental reasons and are willing to rent it out if the right opportunity comes along. It never hurts to call and ask the owner if an arrangement can be made. You don't just want the right storefront. So, do your homework. Know the demographics, the local competitors, and think about how your customers will get to your salon. Is there ample parking? Is a construction project planned on your block? You want to know everything you can about the area before you select a location.

With the planning stages complete, you'll move on to the nitty-gritty details of actually opening your salon.

### **Build your salon brand around the clientele you want**

Before you start painting the walls and picking out furniture, make sure that your brand vision matches the kind of clientele you want to attract. So accordingly this is one of the most important lessons he has learned. You want your customers to feel comfortable in your salon, so make it a place they want to visit. This means taking what you know about your target market, and working to create a brand for your salon based on their interests, tastes, and habits. Don't overlook the importance of **building a brand** for your salon; the idea of "branding" might feel like something only big businesses do, but it's necessary to tailor your look to your intended client base, and creating a brand is a key part of that process.

### **Provide excellent customer service**

After you've created an environment that your clients will love, you have to follow through by offering excellent customer service. Provide an experience for your customers, not just a service. The overall experience is what keeps customers coming back. Consider thinking through your customer service strategy early on, including hiring for emotional intelligence, rather than just skill set. And, you may want to look into tools to help you deliver better customer service, like a shared inbox tool to manage inquiries and booking requests.

### **Set aside money for marketing**

To be successful, you need clients. To attract clients, you need a solid marketing plan. The successor suggests setting aside some money to market your business; without it, you'll struggle to be able to really execute a marketing strategy.

## **Create an attractive, well-thought-out website**

For starters, you need a good website. The successor suggests hiring a professional to create your site if you can afford it. That said, if you're tight on cash, there are plenty of DIY website platforms out there. Your site should be attractive, easy to navigate, and ideally include helpful information for your customers, such as hours, location, contact info, and pricing. As most salons use an online booking system nowadays, that's also an important element to look into (or you may lose customers to salons who do offer this convenience). When designing your website, it's important to return to your brand vision and what you've learned about your target market. Your site is an extension of your brand, so it should be cohesive and match the image you want your salon to present to customers. If you're building your website then you should check some famous websites.

## **Find creative, low-cost marketing ideas**

You want to get the word out about your salon, and getting involved in your community is a great way to do that. Consider hosting an event like a ribbon cutting or a small charity event to attract more customers—for example, sponsor a school play or have the staff volunteer at a local baseball game. For more marketing strategies that can be relatively low-cost and will help you build your presence within your local community.

## **Set up and utilize social media accounts**

Social media is an important component to your marketing plan, The successor says, If you wish to set up accounts on a variety of platforms, it's not a bad idea to do so. However, make sure you can confidently say whether or not your target market uses the platforms, and that you have the bandwidth to post content on multiple platforms before you commit. At a minimum, it's a good idea to build your presence on Instagram, as it lends itself well to a visual business. Start by getting a sense of what hashtags are popular within your niche and

creating a content strategy, as well as following other local businesses and encouraging your customers to tag your salon when they visit.

### **Don't assume product lines will generate huge revenue**

As an owner, you'll need to select a product line. There are lots of options to choose from; while some shop owners sell a variety of product lines. Some shops sell a lot of product, but we suggest you shouldn't look at it as a big revenue source. You'll spend money up front to buy inventory, and even though you'll sell it at a price to make a profit, that money usually goes right back into purchasing more product. So, it's smart to consider starting small, and perhaps focusing on one product line in the beginning. Once you've thought through all the details of how to open your salon to the public, you'll turn your attention to how to grow your business. Here are some areas you'll want to keep in mind.

### **Hire staff based on personality**

When you're first starting out, you might be the only employee. But hopefully, your shop will be so popular that you'll need to hire additional help, as well as bring on more stylists. When that happens, We suggest hiring someone based more on personality than skill. You want your clients to enjoy coming in. Of course, you want someone who is good at what they do, but you shouldn't base your decision on skills alone. Personality matters.

### **Plan for finding new customers and retaining them**

When a customer finds a stylist he or she likes, they usually become repeat clients. However, this doesn't mean you should let up on your marketing efforts. Even if you have a steady stream of customers, you should build on the marketing efforts that you're already using. We don't believe in depending on any kind of business. New client acquisition should be a full-time job and should never be overlooked. Contentment will kill a salon.

## **Revisit your business plan regularly**

A business plan should always be viewed as a work in progress. With each passing month, you learn more about your business and your customer base. It's a good idea to go back to your plan, read it over, and make sure you're still on track. A monthly plan review meeting can be helpful, as can running a SWOT analysis on your business.

## **Look for ways to save on overhead**

When you first open your doors, you may have splurged on a few things that you thought you needed, but really don't. With your business established, review your inventory and see if you can make any changes or cuts to save money. Take a look at your monthly expenses too—is there anything you can trim back or get rid of? Maybe you can downgrade your internet service, or cut back on the amount of product you're buying each month. Opening a salon is a bold endeavour. As with any new venture, it's important to plan as much as you can and be willing to adapt as you learn what works best for your business. You'll spend a lot of time and money to get your salon off the ground, but there is nothing like running a sought-after, successful salon