

Entrepreneurial Hand-Book

Personal Assessment

The first -and most important -thing you should do is a self-evaluation. Being a business owner can be challenging. Knowing your strengths and weaknesses helps you focus your initial efforts on the things you do best, while finding ways to improve upon or compensate for your weaknesses. To test yourself, click below to take the U.S. Small Business Administration's "Is Entrepreneurship for You?" self-evaluation test.

http://www.sba.gov/starting_business/startup/areyouready.html

Find and evaluate your business idea

Certainly you have already discovered a product, which might seem very promising to deal with. Nevertheless, before starting up your business on it, verify if you can agree to the following questions:

- Would you **personally** use you product?
- Do you find **10+ people** who are willing to pay for it now?
- Do you **love to work** with it every day from now on?
- Are you ready to **dedicate all your time** for the next 1-2 years to it?
- In what way is it **creative**, innovative and unique?
- What makes your product **different from** your competitors' ones?
- Customers will only buy a simple product. Can you **explain** your product in one sentence?
- Is your **target market** big enough to create a real business out of it ?

Prepare a business plan

Prepare a [business plan](#) that outlines your business goals, operating procedures, competitors, as well as the company's current and desired funding.

Your business plan will become your **road map** in starting your business. There are a lot of model business plans available at the public authorities, credit institutes and online. We propose this one in order to give you a first overview off he most important aspects you should include.

<http://articles.bplans.com/how-to-write-a-business-plan-in-under-an-hour/>

Garrett's Bike Shop



We offer high-quality biking gear for families and regular people, not just gearheads.

Value proposition

Our Opportunity

Problem worth solving

It's hard to buy a good bike in this town without being an "Insider" cycling expert.

Our solution

Garrett's is a snob-free zone where regular people can get top notch gear and expert advice.

Market need & your solution



Target Market

- Young families 53% (\$2M)
- College students 19% (\$700K)
- Trail enthusiasts 19% (\$3.5M)
- Commuters 8% (\$450K)
- High School Students 1% (\$60K)

Market size: \$6.7M

Competitors	How our solution is better
Local bike shops	Welcoming, family-friendly space
Big-box retailers	Higher quality gear and expert advice
Online retailers	Ability to test drive and local repair

Target market & Competition

Funding Needed

\$100K

We'll use this money to complete construction on our brick and mortar store and to supplement revenue for the first month.

This is not an offer to sell or a solicitation of any offer to buy any securities.

Funding needs & use of funds

Sales and Marketing

Sales channels

We sell bicycles and accessories directly to customers through our bike shop. We also sell via our online store and at special bike enthusiast events.

Marketing activities

- Partner with Travel Northwest
- Advertise in local publications
- Grand opening w/deals, contest, etc.
- Host social media pages and website
- Attend outdoor enthusiast trade shows

Sales & marketing tactics

Financial Projections



Budget & sales goals

Milestones

- Validate your target markets
Dec 4, 2013
- Develop Q1 budget
Dec 4, 2013

Milestones

Team and Key Roles



Garrett McKenzie
Founder/Owner
After a successful run as a mortgage broker, Garrett will apply his business acumen to leading a company he is passionate about.



Jill Bloom
Shop Manager
After a decade of bike-shop experience and 5 completed triathlons, Jill will anchor the service side of the business.



Tom McKey
Advisor
Tom is a CPA with twenty-five years of experience advising dozens of startups and small businesses.



Heather Gibson
Investor
Heather is an avid cyclist and small business investor. Her expertise is in small business expansion.

Your team & people you need to hire

Partners and Resources



Accountants
Our CPA firm serves as our business advisers. They help us with budgeting/forecasting and KPI tracking.



The Great Outdoors
The Great Outdoors is a local chain of stores who sells gear for outdoor enthusiasts and amateurs alike.



Travel Northwest
Travel Northwest is the best resource for information, events and activities in the great Northwest.



Cycle Parts "R" Us
Cycle Parts "R" Us is a bicycle manufacturer that specializes in innovative cycle design.

Your business partners



Appoint advisers

Most businesses need some level of external advice. For some, a basic bookkeeping service may suffice, whereas others will need a full array of solicitors, accountants and other advisers. It is worth investing some time in researching and selecting a team of advisers that you will be comfortable working with, and who are likely to be able to meet the needs of the business both at start-up and over the longer term.

Choose a business name

You want a name that will stick in the heads of your target audience. Make sure that it is not already taken by another company. You may go online and use a corporate name search tool to see if the name you have in mind is unique.



Register a domain name


Get a matching domain to your business name. An AOL email address or a website with free hosting and a name like `mysite.wordpress.com` makes it seem like either (a) you are not running a real business or (b) you don't plan to be around long.

Incorporate / figure out legal structure

Incorporating your startup protects your personal assets. Talk over structure (corporation, LLC, sole proprietorship) with your bank accountant and/or contact person at the CIC and at the local government.

Get a tax identification number.

Obtain the necessary business licences and/or permits which are required by your municipality, county and/or state. Make sure that you meet all requirements.



During our project meeting in Andernach, we found out that there are already a lot of divergent legal structures and public authority demands. Please find the relevant survey in a chart attached .

Open a business bank account and obtain a business credit card.

Contact your bank about business banking requirements to ensure you have all the necessary paperwork. Let them check your business plan throughoutly.

Obtain business financing

Entrepreneurs often report that getting financing is the most challenging aspect of starting a business. There are both government and private-sector sources of financing that you can tap into to get your business off the ground. Many businesses fail for lack of capital. You need to be realistic about what level of investment the business will need and have some idea as to how it will get it. Many businesses find that a working capital line of credit is extremely useful, as it is sometimes difficult to match the timing of necessary expenditure to cash flow – but bear in mind that lenders frequently require personal guarantees for new businesses, even if they are to be set up as limited companies.


Funding Options • You will probably need some start up cash • This could come from savings, loans, grants, family or business partners or a combination of these • Grants are “free” money so always find out what's available • Remember if someone invests in your business they might want some say in the decisions you make

Set up your business accounting/bookkeeping.

Be prepared to account for all disbursements, payments received, invoices, accounts receivable/payable. Understand the basic of accounting.


Do you have a one-year cash flow projection prepared to ensure you can maintain ongoing liquidity? The free website for entrepreneurs at www.myownbusiness.org will show you how to prepare this as well as your business plan.

Setting Up Your Accounting System You will not know if you are making or losing money, over- or under-stocking inventory, etc. without maintaining records about your sales, inventory, expenses, and cash flow. These records will also allow you to compare your actual results to your projections and they will be necessary to file taxes at the end of each year. See http://www.sba.gov/starting_business/index.html or meet with a NYC Business Solutions Center business counselor for assistance.



Create a logo, business cards, letterhead, envelopes, etc., to build business identity

- **Create a website.** A company website allows you to establish your brand and will be the first opportunity to make an impression with customers.
- Remember to keep it simple. You have fewer than five seconds to grab someone's attention--otherwise they're gone, never to be seen again. Some important tips to keep in mind:
 - Choose one or two plain fonts on a white background.
 - Make your navigation clear and simple, and the same on every page.
 - Only use graphics, audio or video if they enhance your message.
 - Include an opt-in offer so you can collect e-mail addresses.
- Make it easy to buy--no more than two clicks between potential customer and checkout.
- Your website is your online storefront, so make it customer-friendly.




Create necessary document forms: contracts, service agreements and invoices so you can easily bill customers, track payments and keep records.

Choose a location for the business or make space in the house for it

Trying to decide where to locate your business and how to arrange it once you get there? Review these resources and consider your choice: store, commercial building, home office. me based business,

When you work from home, it's important to have a space that is comfortable and functional. Take the time to ensure your home office meets your needs.



Assess Your Real Estate Needs. Determine the type of space you need: square feet, properties' physical condition, layout suitability, traffic flow, parking, utility requirements, and cost. Pay particular attention to how the cost/square foot compares with other comparable locations. Take a look at our Simple Solutions "Zoning" document for more information.

Identify Your Vendors.

Identify those companies or individuals from whom you will buy the products and services you need. Consider their reliability carefully.

Sources: <http://www.canadabusiness.ca/eng/page/2851/>

<http://smallbiztrends.com/2013/04/startup-checklist.html>

<http://www.businessknowhow.com/startup/checklist.htm>

http://findlaw.co.uk/law/small_business/starting_a_business/500218.html<http://www.d2n2growthhub.co.uk/files/uploads/1363084024.pdf>

http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/nycbiz/downloads/pdf/educational/getting_started/startupchecklist.pdf