

I Want To Start My Own Business – Where Do I Begin? (3)

This is the first of a multi-part series aimed at all our small business owner-wannabe customers. Many of our customers ask us about starting their own businesses (and many have set up their businesses already), and while we can't give professional business advice, we can give some pointers on where to start.

Starting your own beauty care brand can be a fun, rewarding experience. Starting up your own business is also a big and brave step! If you're wanting to start your own brand and business, below are a few questions you should be asking and answering.

*Disclaimer: we are not offering professional business advice and we encourage everyone to do their own research and consult a professional adviser if necessary. These are merely some pointers to get you going in response to the many business-related questions we are asked.

Let's dive in:

Why are you doing it / your reasons why?

It is vitally important to have a reason why you are creating products, a brand and a business. Your reasons why are the whole basis for your brand and business existing. Sometimes your 'reason why' can even be a great selling point! Plus customers are always interested in the unique stories behind the brand.

Your Unique Selling Point (USP) and niche

What makes your brand and product unique and different? Why would someone choose to buy your brand over someone else's? Do you have a specific star ingredient in every product as a USP, or is it something else? Are you aiming for a niche market, eg. vegan skincare, pregnancy-safe skincare, etc?

What problem are you solving? What solution are you offering?

From your reasons why, USP and niche, chances are you are aiming to solve some problem. Is it acne, stretchmarks, aging, etc? What solution (ie. your product) are you offering for the problem?

Research, research, research!

One of the most important things to do when tackling any project is to research. Do your research and due diligence on every aspect of your product, brand and business. Make sure you cover all bases.

Do I need a lot of startup capital?

This is an important consideration and will depend on your product and how much capital you need or are willing to sink into it. There is no one size fits all answer to this. We suggest you start small and grow with time; this way you don't actually need a huge startup capital. Also consider having contingency funds in place.

Who is your target market?

Decide what kind of person and market your product should target. This may link back to your niche, USP and reasons why.

Your ethics

More and more brands now have strong ethics backing their products, as consumer behaviours have changed over time. What are your ethics? Are you aiming for cruelty free, organic, 100% natural, partially natural, sustainability, etc?

Accreditation

Do you want to be certified with any organisations?

If you are you going vegan, organic, cruelty free, or 100% natural, you may want to have an accreditation backing your brand.

Here are some links to certification bodies you may find useful:

BWC site: <http://bwcsa.co.za/>

Soil Association: <https://www.soilassociation.org/>

COSMOS/ ECOCERT: <https://www.ecocert.com/en-ZA/certification-detail/natural-and-organic-cosmetics-cosmos>

Leaping Bunny: <https://www.leapingbunny.org/>

You can rest assured that all of the ingredients and products we sell are 100% natural. We have our own strict ingredients policy that all products need to meet; if they don't then we don't sell them. Products listed as organic are certified organic, and we never test anything on animals.

Come up with a name for your business

This is a really fun part and is what identifies you, your brand and your business.

Suppliers & partners

Research this extensively. You will need ingredients, equipment, packaging, labels, potentially a delivery service such as a courier, marketing solutions, a sales platform or retail space, etc

Tip: Essentially Natural is a great supplier because we are a one-stop shop for all your ingredients, equipment and packaging needs: we sell all kinds of ingredients and equipment and have a great range

of packaging solutions. You can also purchase small amounts of ingredients to experiment with which requires little investment - we have no MOQs.

Make a business master plan

Set out everything in writing: summarise your business, your objectives, your marketing strategy, your financial strategy, your operating strategy, etc. Include all components of your business and flesh them out. If you are ever going to apply for loans or funding, your business plan will also come in handy (and may even be a requirement).

For Those Already In The Biz

Therapists

Have you ever considered supplementing your therapy practice by using tailor-made products in treatments, and then selling these treatments to your clients?

This means you can supplement your business with additional income, give your business a unique offering and an advantage over competitors, and it also opens up a new avenue for other products or if you ever wanted your own product line.

Beauty Salon / Mani / Pedi

How awesome would it be if you had customised cuticle oils, facial oils, hand or foot lotions or other complimentary products to offer your clients, in addition to their treatments?

Hair Salon / Hair Dressers

Hair dressers could offer customised hair spritzes, conditioners, shampoos, hair oils, etc to clients.

We hope you feel inspired to start answering all these questions and delving deeper into your business journey!

Next up: [2. Setting Up & Business Admin](#)