

How to Start a Cleaning Business: A Guide in 8 Simple Steps

Although you might disagree, most people find cleaning their homes to be stressful and even painful. By starting a cleaning business, you are tapping into an enormous market with plenty of clientele. There will always be a demand for cleaning services, which keeps you in business and keeps every client's home spotless. Below is a complete guide on how to start a cleaning business from the ground up.

1. Do the Initial Cleaning Jobs Yourself

When you consider how to start a house cleaning business or how to start a maid service, you might feel tempted to begin with staffing, but one of the best ways to start is actually by doing most of the work yourself. After all, you need to learn the business before you can successfully run it from afar. One way to land your first few clients is by asking friends and family either for references or to clean their houses.

Committing to sourcing and working for your first few clients on your own will ensure you keep your costs low as well. Instead of investing money in hiring workers, you can pay yourself a reasonable wage while you work out any kinks in your business model and determine best practices for your company.

By taking care of clients yourself, you also earn a positive reputation and maintain control of your business image. Once the business begins to pick up, you can start contracting help with bigger cleaning jobs. You might decide to outsource employees to service regular clients while you work on other aspects of the business or you may hire employees in-house.

2. Set a Reasonable Cleaning Business Budget

Some questions that many potential cleaning business owners ask are – Can I start a cleaning company with no money? How can I keep my costs down? Is starting this type of business expensive? The answer is it will take some money, but it can be a lot less expensive than you might think!

Performing most of your cleaning jobs solo will help keep more money in

your pocket, but budgeting is about more than how many hours you work. After all, you will need to invest in some supplies for your business to succeed, as well as track and cover vehicle maintenance and fuel costs.

Determine a reasonable budget for your business, including the replacement of products and equipment as necessary. Factor hiring and payroll costs into the equation if you outsource labor, but also keep in mind you need to set aside money for taxes and insurance as a business owner.

Aim to pay yourself an hourly wage, set aside money for cleaning equipment, and calculate estimated taxes so you can prepare for successful business ownership. If you neglect to set money aside for taxes, your business budget will quickly disappear.

3. Decide What Cleaning Equipment to Purchase

Think about the types of materials and cleaning products you need for cleaning clients' homes and businesses. You will need cleaning solutions and spray bottles, sponges and scrubbers, protective gloves, disposable or reusable towels (or both), and housekeeping tools such as mops and brooms.

Consider what type of cleaning products to buy: will you use bleach and other traditional cleaners in clients' homes, or are you planning to use environmentally friendly or other "green" products? Determine how you will prevent cross-contamination between client homes—whether through using disposable materials or adopting stringent sanitation practices—and plan accordingly when it comes to purchasing equipment.

4. Choose a Brand Name for Your New Cleaning Company

Any startup cleaning business needs to establish a brand. Choosing a brand name might just be the most enjoyable part of owning a cleaning business. You can use a play on words, part or all of your name, a quirky or fun nickname, or something based on your geographical location or the specific type of cleaning services you offer, whether it's residential cleaning or commercial cleaning.

- You should aim to choose a title for your business which:
- Accurately describes the company

- Is easy to spell and remember
- Is not already in use
- Sounds good and reads well
- Can grow with the business

While deciding on a business name, you should search online for the names you like. If another company already has the same name as you, you should find out sooner rather than later. Legal issues with using another business' name—even if you do it unintentionally—can cost you.

5. Setup Proper Licensing for Your Cleaning Business

Once you choose a business name, you need to register the name to prevent others from using it. The requirements vary based on your state and local legislation, so check to make sure you follow your local ordinances for businesses.

You will need a license and possibly permits for your business, especially if you opt for a name other than your own to operate under. Depending on your state law and other local requirements, you may need to apply for a business license and pay a fee.

Two popular options for business licensing are limited liability corporation (LLC) and sole proprietorships. An LLC reduces the amount of liability you have as an individual and instead puts the company assets on the line. A sole proprietorship is typically cheaper to establish, and you have total control over your business. However, a sole proprietorship can put your assets at risk if the business is not profitable.

If you are choosing a brand name for your cleaning company, you will also need to file a DBA—Doing Business As—license. The license establishes your fictitious business name and ensures your company operates legitimately.

You will also need to determine whether local law requires you to have business insurance, liability insurance, or other protections. Working in clients' homes is not always free of risks, so business insurance can help protect both you and your clients in case something goes wrong.

6. Start Marketing Your New Cleaning Company

After you decide on a name for your cleaning business, file the proper permits and licensing documents, and purchase all your cleaning supplies, it's time to find clients. Marketing for a cleaning company can be as simple as word of mouth or as complex as running advertisements in your local paper or online.

You might print fliers to advertise your services, start a website or email campaign to get the word out, invest in digital marketing, or post signage on your property or other locations (with permission). If you have one or two clients already, you can ask for referrals from satisfied customers. You can even offer referral coupons or discounts to encourage existing clients to direct more work your way.

7. Make Customer Service a Top Priority

Cleaning is a straightforward occupation: you remove dirt and make surfaces shine. But in customer service roles, you need to put client needs first, and that means being available to potential and existing customers, responding promptly to service and quote requests, and following up with clients to ensure repeat business.

To effectively manage the technical side of your cleaning business, you need a means of communication with your clients. Tools such as voice mail and phone service, an email account, a website, social media pages, or all of those combined can help enhance your company's outreach and customer satisfaction.

8. Get Organized with Cleaning Software to Run Operations Smoothly

Doing the house cleaning work, filing permits and paperwork, and replenishing cleaning supplies can take up much of your time as a cleaning company owner. But in addition to catering to clients' needs and stocking up on supplies, you need to track your budget, oversee employee scheduling, process client invoices and record pertinent account information, and plan for taxes and other business fees.

Cleaning software can help you organize and oversee your business with less stress than a pen and paper method. Imagine even trying to keep your employee or contractor schedules, customer list, account notes, and payments info in a spreadsheet? It gets cumbersome and confusing really fast, even with systematized sheets. An all-in-one software removes all of

that confusion.

Professional cleaning business management software also helps enhance your image when it comes to marketing your cleaning business with features for requesting reviews, marketing automation, customer surveys, & more. Keeping your branding streamlined—from the software you use to the uniform you and your employees wear—can do wonders for your new company's image.