



Going Independent

Everything You Need to Know About Becoming an Independent Salon Owner

(Sponsored by Sola Salon Studios)

- Intrigued by the idea of being your own boss?
- Curious about what it takes to run your business in a salon studio?
- Wondering if the solo artist life is right for you?



Here are the answers to help guide you!

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The Self-Employment Revolution

When it comes to the salon employment picture, the landscape is vastly different than it was 20 years ago. At that time, salon professionals basically had one option when it came to work: apply for a job at a salon and work on salary, commission or a combination of both. Nowadays, the options have expanded. Then, the options expanded with self-employment models such as chair rental and booth rental entering the mix.

Now the booth rental has evolved and today, we see a proliferation of the salon studios concept. In this model, a beauty professional rents space to run his or her business alongside other like-minded beauty professionals. Some companies, such as Sola Salon Studios, also offer educational resources, technology and business support.



Why the Self-Employment Surge?

- **Technology.** Thanks to technology, it's easier than ever to run your own business. If you're an independent salon owner, your clients can book appointments and you can manage your business online. You can use apps on your phone to accept payments.

Everything You Need to Know...



How Do You Know If a Salon Studio Is Right for YOU?

If the idea of self-employment appeals to you, you may be leaning toward exploring a salon studio. Every decision to become an independent salon owner must start with an honest gut check. Self-motivated beauty pros choose salon studios for a variety of reasons: to create their one-of-a-kind salon culture, build their ideal clientele, grow their business and enjoy the control, freedom and benefits of salon ownership.

It may help to partner with a company like Sola Salon Studios that empowers you by alleviating some of the risks associated with entrepreneurship, such as providing retail opportunity, furnishings, equipment and brand recognition. In many cases, launching your own business in a salon studio doesn't require a huge investment. But you will need creativity, courage and a loyal clientele.

Still Wondering if You're Studio Artist Material? Take This Quick Quiz:

Yes or No?

1. I like the idea of flexibility in my work days and hours.
2. I'm naturally independent.
3. I love the idea of steering and controlling my own business.
4. I want to be able to keep everything I earn.
5. I don't like answering to a boss.
6. I want to be able to choose the products I use and sell.
7. I'm willing and able to handle the business and marketing sides of a salon business.
8. I will be able to set aside regular hours to handle my own paperwork and record-keeping.
9. I am committed to understanding and paying the taxes required when owning a business.
10. I understand I will be responsible for paying all my business costs.
11. I'm happy to work in a private space without co-workers.
12. I'm very self-disciplined.



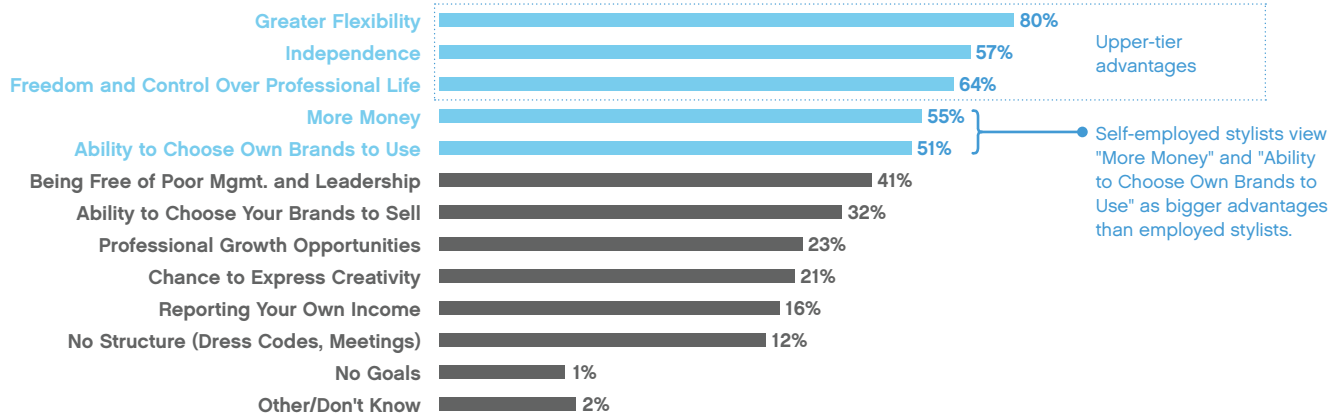
Yes



No

**If you answered yes to the majority of questions,
a salon studio may be the way to go!**

What Self-Employed Stylists Consider to Be Advantages



Source: Modern Salon Media "Rental Realities" report.



So What Exactly is a Salon Studio?

Think of it this way—when you rent a salon studio, you are presented with a more turnkey approach to salon ownership. You rent your space and your equipment, and you run your own show. Sola Salon Studios provides resources to make it as easy as possible, offering much more than just a space to rent. It strives to provide a seamless transition to salon ownership by offering move-in-ready salon studios alongside all the educational resources, cutting-edge technology and support needed to run your own business.

Everything You Need to Know...



"It's just you and your space and your energy and your clients. It's completely transformed my life as a stylist."

Kayla Valario, Studio V
at Sola Salon Studios in Attleboro, MA

Here Are Some Things to Look For When Considering a Salon Studio:

- ▶ Building and grounds maintenance, utilities and Wi-Fi are included
- ▶ Studio layout flexibility for your business—whether you do hair, nails, skin care, massage therapy or makeup
- ▶ High-end cabinetry, shelving and storage are provided
- ▶ Comfortable client chairs, shampoo bowl and sink are already installed
- ▶ Privacy and security for yourself and your clients
- ▶ 24-hour access to dictate your own schedule



"Given the coaching, support, and education—plus all-around good vibes you get from Sola Salon Studios—it's really hard not to be successful."

Mahogany Plautz, Carve Salon
at Sola Salon Studios in Minneapolis, MN

What Else?

Some salon studio companies go the extra mile. Beyond the physical structure, you also get the support you need for your business, your skills and even your soul! At Sola Salon Studios, for example, professionals receive:

- **Pro Support.** An exclusive Sola app called Sola Pro features educational training videos that range from business and marketing, to inspiration and motivation, to artistic programs, notifications of exclusive specials from partner brands and local class listings. The app also has all the latest articles from the Sola blog, the ability to update and manage your own Sola website, and exclusive deals available to Sola professionals from top brands in the industry.
- **Tech Support:** Another app created by Sola called SolaGenius is an all-in-one scheduling and payment processing platform that offers competitively low rates. Its features include 24/7 online booking, a simple calendar interface, notifications and reminders, text message marketing, client notes, analytics and reports, and reliable customer support. Sola professionals using SolaGenius are also featured on Sola's revolutionary online booking search engine, BookNow, which allows consumers to search, discover and book directly on solasalons.com.
- **Soul Support:** Sola-exclusive education events called the Sola Sessions bring some of the industry's most influential artists and educators to the Sola community. Sola professionals are invited to network and learn with hundreds of others in the Sola community, gather valuable takeaways to elevate their skill sets, sip cocktails, snap selfies with stage presenters, and leave with prizes and giveaways.

Are You In?

You've been dreaming about owning your own salon, about the flexibility and autonomy of being your own boss, in a place where YOU get to make all the decisions, including setting your own schedule, picking what products to carry, and decorating the space to fit your personal style. Sounds pretty good, right? Follow these six simple steps to turn your dream of salon ownership into a reality.

Step 1: Choose Your Location

Ideally, your new salon should be close to your current salon and to where your clients live. It's also a nice perk if that salon is convenient for you as well. Consider a place conveniently located near major intersections and within shopping centers and retail areas. This means access and parking will be easy and amenities will be nearby—a real plus for clients!

Step 2: Set Up Your Systems

When you're on your own, you'll have new responsibilities, from managing your appointment book to understanding your numbers. Consider working with a salon business technology app to help you keep track of the details. It should include features that allow you to accept bookings 24/7, manage clients and track their history, streamline your personal calendar, build a following, accept payments, access analytics and run reports. It's so important to put the right systems in place so you can work smarter, not harder. Salon software has been designed to increase the success of independent salon owners by increasing client retention, frequency of visits and productivity through features like text and email marketing, automated reminders, client note keeping, and analytics and reporting.



Step 3: Pick Your Products

When you're the boss, you decide what fills the back bar and the shelves. Products play a huge role in building your salon culture. Develop a relationship with your local sales rep; he or she will keep you informed about specials and new product intros. And don't overlook access to education and ongoing support—these are things that'll keep you at the forefront in a fast-paced industry.

Step 4: Get Down to Business

Before opening shop, you'll have to obtain salon and sales tax licenses and file your trade name registration. Once the legal requirements are met, you'll decide the services you'll offer and your hours and pricing. The Sola blog on solasalons.com has tons of information to help you form your business entity.

Step 5: Create Your Environment

For many beauty professionals, the most exciting thing about salon ownership is creating an environment that reflects their personality. It starts with choosing a salon name and decorating. When you're ready for finishing touches, hang your artwork, set up speakers to play the music of your choice, or put up a television. Remember, it's you and the experience you provide that drives repeat business.

Step 6: Spread the Word

In today's fast-paced market, tapping into marketing and social media is essential to the health of every modern business—especially small businesses. Set up a website page where clients can learn more about your salon and access contact information and a booking link—Sola provides this to you at no cost! Use your website to post plenty of photos of satisfied customers, add how-to videos, offer product recommendations, and run promotions on platforms like Facebook and Instagram. Need more marketing tips? Check out the Sola blog!



Four Solo Artists FAQs

1. What are some ideas for attracting new clients to my business?

Marketing is the key to your success, including digital marketing, social media, email, or print and direct mail. Consider...

- Sending out a text, email blast and/or snail mail announcement to let your clients know about your new salon. Offer a special incentive for those who visit your new salon within the first month of opening.
- Giving first-time clients a special gift.
- Handing out business cards with contact info to the other solo artist pros in your building. It's possible that you offer services that they don't.
- Creating social media accounts for your studio that are separate from your personal accounts, and start posting to attract your ideal customer.

2. How do I create a salon culture when I'm on my own?

When you move into your own salon studio, your salon's culture or brand is the most important aspect of your success. Branding goes way beyond a salon's name or logo. It includes the entire customer experience, in and out of your studio—everything from your web presence and social media content to the way you answer your phone, your décor, and the retail products on your shelves.

- What feelings do you want your salon to evoke in guests?
- What do you want your reputation to be?
- What are your goals and dreams for your business?

Once you've outlined your values and developed the right mission statement for your salon, you're on your way to creating your culture and brand.

3. Can I give my salon studio a name and a unique look?

You bet! Think of it this way—this studio is your business, so the name, the décor, the “vibe” and the culture should all reflect who you are, what you stand, for and how you want to be perceived by your clients. Your web page should look every bit as sophisticated as your physical salon, and your social media feeds should reflect this unique culture.

4. How should I decide which products to use and retail to my clients?

The products you use and recommend are critical to the success of your business. Here are key things to consider:

- The performance of the products.
- The price and whether they are within your guests' budgets.
- The image of the brand and whether it aligns with the image of your business.
- Education. Does the product line offer more than just product knowledge?
Will it support your growth as a stylist and business owner?



“The business model that has been created by Sola is true. You're in business for yourself, but you're not by yourself. It's great to have Sola as a resource. They have been consistent since the day I signed my lease and that was 11 years ago.”

**Lashonda Banks, Tress Elite Salon
at Sola Salon Studios in Atlanta, GA**

Conclusion

For independent, focused, creative beauty professionals who want the freedom and flexibility of running their own businesses, owning a salon studio is a viable option. Thanks to the evolution of technology that continues to simplify business and marketing, and the support of salon studio organizations like Sola, it's a business—and a lifestyle—that is more attainable for you than ever.

Sola Salon Studios provides all you need and more to experience the freedom and benefit of salon ownership without all the risks!

Don't just
dream, do!
Become a
salon owner
today.

Visit solasalons.com to start your journey!