

Plan · Launch · Grow



**YOUR GUIDE TO STARTING AND BUILDING A
SMALL BUSINESS IN LIVINGSTON COUNTY**

In Livingston County, NY small business is big business!

Whether you are thinking about starting a new business or looking to grow your existing business in Livingston County, New York, this guide is a resource for all types of business owners and entrepreneurs.

You have enough on your plate... let us help you navigate the sometimes confusing maze of resources! Our team aims to provide you with solutions and ensure that your journey through starting, running, growing, or relocating a business in Livingston County is successful.

Plan, Launch, Grow will provide you with invaluable assistance, support, and information as you progress through the various stages of your business' growth. Please let us know how we can be of service - we are only a phone call or click away!



Livingston County Economic Development
585-243-7124 | growlivco.com

Icons in the Guide

Icons will appear throughout this guide to connect you with additional resources:



Contact Information: Ways to contact the office or individual listed.



Visit: Recommendation on who to visit for assistance with your business.



Click Here: Text is hyperlinked to a website that can help your business.



Note: Key information you need when building and growing your business.



Recommended Reading: Publications to increase your business knowledge.

DISCLAIMER

This guide is designed to provide useful information about starting and building a business in Livingston County, New York. The information provided does not constitute specific recommendations to be used for decision-making purposes by the individual reader. This publication is for the personal use and benefit of an individual or business. It is not intended for commercial sale.

PHOTO CREDIT

Special thanks to Beth Doty, Larry Tetamore, Dick Thomas, Lauren Wadsworth, and Silent Memories Photography for capturing the images of Livingston County, NY in this guide.

The most updated version of this publication is available at GrowLivCo.com/plan-launch-grow



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dansville, NY

- 5** **Welcome to Livingston County**
Review the towns and villages in the region
- 19** **Owner Readiness**
Evaluate your ability to pursue entrepreneurship
- 21** **Idea Feasibility**
Evaluate the potential of your business idea
- 24** **Choosing a Name**
Learn tips for selecting a strong business name
- 25** **Writing a Business Plan**
Explore resources and key points in developing a plan
- 29** **Market Analysis**
Understand the market you will be entering
- 32** **Legal Formations**
Decide on the business structure you want
- 34** **Codes, Permits, Licenses**
Understand local requirements for your business
- 36** **Business Signage**
Recognize the importance of a business sign
- 37** **Curb Appeal**
Learn tips for developing a welcoming business
- 40** **Marketing & Advertising**
Explore resources and tips for reaching customers
- 44** **Common Mistakes**
Learn ways to avoid messing up from the start
- 47** **Resources**
Access useful local, state, and federal information

GROW LIV CO

Livingston County Economic Development is dedicated to creating a business-friendly environment while preserving the quality of life that makes Livingston County a unique and attractive place to live and work. Whether you are a site selector working on behalf of a client, an existing business seeking information and assistance, or an entrepreneur looking for new opportunities, our goal is to assist by providing the most up-to-date information and resources through a coordinated and seamless process.

Contact or visit Livingston County Economic Development for assistance with:

- Finding a location
- Navigating the planning process
- Financing your business
- Accessing financial incentives and grants
- Connecting you with the right resources

 [Click here to visit the Livingston County Economic Development website](#)



Honeygirl Gourmet
Geneseo, NY



Dublin Corners Farm Brewery
Linwood, NY



Caffe Tazza
Dansville, NY



The Avon Inn
Avon, NY



Trail Otter
Leicester, NY



Boriken Restaurant
Mount Morris, NY

MEET THE TEAM

Livingston County Economic Development seeks to find solutions for our community through experience, creativity, and care. From small business startup grants to business retention and expansion, we are experienced in supporting the wonderfully diverse wants and needs of our businesses. We recognize that there isn't a one-size-fits-all approach to yield the partnerships necessary for continuous growth and opportunity.

We work hard for Livingston County, we work hard for you. Our office offers a variety of incentive and development programs for large and small businesses in Livingston County. Our projects extend beyond business development into community and cultural development. We are building a destination and a home. We believe that economic opportunity extends beyond fiscal success by finding new and innovative ways to provide Liv Co with a strong, adaptable workforce and quality of life.



Bill Bacon
Director



Maureen Wheeler
Deputy Director



Louise Wadsworth
Downtown Coordinator



Melissa Hughes
Director of Tourism



Molly Downey
Economic Development
Specialist



Tessa Taylor
Economic Development
Assistant

Welcome to Liv Co

Located on the western edge of the Finger Lakes in the heart of the Genesee River Valley approximately 25 miles south of Rochester and 60 miles east of Buffalo, Livingston County offers an easy-going way of life with the convenience of city life just a few miles away. The County has 17 towns and 9 well-defined Village cores with corresponding Main Street corridors. Over the past 15 years, Livingston County Economic Development has overseen the investment of more than \$10.5 million in historic building renovations in our nine downtown districts. With their growth and close proximity to one another, and to other year-round attractions, Livingston County's nine downtowns collectively create a vibrant, four-season economy with a strong quality of life for residents and visitors.

Proximity to natural assets - like Letchworth State Park (800,000+ visitors a year), Stony Brook State Park (200,000+ visitors a year), and the Finger Lakes (5.5 million visitors a year) - brings significant visitor spending, which increased by more than 8% from years 2015 to 2017. In 2017, \$22,700,000 was spent by visitors on food and dining and \$10,300,000 on retail and service stations. Many attractive qualities make Liv Co the ideal place to start a business.



Major Employers

1. Livingston County Government, 1257
2. SUNY Geneseo, 1064
3. NYS Correctional Facilities, 1038
4. Noyes Memorial Hospital, 591
5. Kraft Foods North American, 400
6. Coast Professional Inc., 389
7. American Rock Salt, 370
8. Livingston Associates, 361
9. Wegmans, 326
10. Hilltop Industries, 325
11. Star Headlight, 215
12. NYS DEC, 200
13. Gray Metal Products, 190
14. Walmart Stores, 175
15. Barilla America, 138
16. Arkema, 118



Geek Chic Floral Boutique
Avon, NY

17 TOWNS TO EXPLORE

There are 17 towns located in Livingston County. Within these towns, there are 9 villages, each with their own designated downtown district.

TOWN	CLERK	ADDRESS	PHONE	WEB
Avon	Sharon M. Knight	23 Genesee Street, Avon, NY 14414	585-226-2425	avon-ny.org
Caledonia	Seth Graham	3109 Main Street, Caledonia, NY 14423	585-538-4927	townofcaledoniany.org
Conesus	Annette M. McNinch	6210 S. Livonia Road, Conesus, NY 14435	585-346-3130	town.conesus.ny.us
Geneseo	Sarah Wright	4630 Millennium Drive, Geneseo, NY 14454	585-991-5010	geneseony.org
Groveland	Kimberly Burgess	4955 Aten Road, Groveland, NY 14462	585-243-1750	grovelandny.org
Leicester	Amy Neumann	132 Main Street, Leicester, NY 14481	585-382-3231	townofleicester.org
Lima	Jennifer Heim	7329 E. Main Street, Lima, NY 14485	585-582-1130	lima-ny.org
Livonia	Hayley Anderson	35 Commercial Street, Livonia, NY 14487	585-346-3710	livoniany.org
Mount Morris	Christie Murphy	103 Main Street, Mount Morris, NY 14510	585-658-2730	townofmtmorris.com
North Dansville	Timothy R. Wolfanger	14 Clara Barton Street, Dansville, NY 14437	585-335-2330	northdansville.org
Nunda	Kaytlyn Hall	4 Massachusetts Street, Nunda, NY 14517	585-468-5177	town.nunda.ny.us
Ossian	Steve Rauber	4706 Ossian Hill Road, Dansville, NY 14437	585-335-5675	townofossianny.org
Portage	Esther Howe	2 North Church, Hunt, NY 14846	585-476-2773	-----
Sparta	Sheila Duffy	8824 Route 256, Dansville, NY 14437	585-335-9290	sparta-ny.org
Springwater	Kim Warner	8022 S. Main Street, Springwater, NY 14560	585-669-2545	springwaterny.org
West Sparta	Marie Powell	8302 Kysorville Road, Dansville, NY 14437	585-335-7106	townofwestsparta.org
York	Christine M. Harris	2668 Main Street, York, NY 14592	585-243-3128	yorkny.org



If you are looking for land, industrial park space, or planning a major development project, contact Livingston County Economic Development.



Bellissimo Boutique
Caledonia, NY

9 VILLAGES TO VISIT

Each of our 9 villages has a traditional downtown business district where the majority of retail businesses are located.

VILLAGE	CLERK	ADDRESS	PHONE	WEBSITE
Avon	Heather Randall	74 Genesee Street, Avon, NY 14414	585-226-8118	avon-ny.org
Caledonia	Ann Marie Grattan	3095 Main Street, Caledonia, NY 14423	585-538-6565	villageofcaledoniany.org
Dansville	Marissa Shay	14 Clara Barton Street, Dansville, NY 14437	585-335-5330	dansvilleniy.us
Geneseo	Aprile Mack	119 Main Street, Geneseo, NY 14454	585-243-1177	geneseony.org
Leicester	Kirstie DeGraff	52 South Parkway, Leicester, NY 14481	585-382-3699	villageofleicester.org
Lima	Elissa Sackett	7329 East Main Street, Lima, NY 14485	585-642-2210	villageoflima.us
Livonia	Cindy Pfeifer	36 Commercial Street, Livonia, NY 14487	585-346-3100	livoniany.org
Mount Morris	Lisa Torcello	117 Main Street, Mount Morris, NY 14510	585-658-4160	mountmorrisny.us
Nunda	LeRoy Wood	4 Massachusetts Street, Nunda, NY 14517	585-468-2215	villageofnunda.org

Each village is one-of-a-kind so spend time visiting them all before deciding where to start your business. Look through pages 9 through 17 for more information about each village in Livingston County.



Contact Livingston County Economic Development for a complete list of available spaces in the downtown districts.

Recommended Reading: Our Towns by Jim + Deb Fallons
A vivid, surprising portrait of the civic and economic reinvention taking place in America, town by town and generally out of view of the national media.



WHY DOWNTOWN?

SMALL TOWNS, BIG DEALS

The downtown districts of Livingston County are the “Front Porches” of our communities. They are one of the many aspects that make living in Livingston County unique. These downtown districts are where the community gathers for special occasions, festivals, and parades. Our downtowns are filled with historic architecture and commercial buildings clustered together to create walkable, pedestrian-friendly districts.

It was with an understanding of the importance of downtown that the County established a Main Street revitalization program – the Downtown Partnership – with the goal of preserving and enhancing the businesses, buildings, and public spaces that are emblematic of what “Living in Livingston” is all about. The mission of the Downtown Partnership is to promote and enhance the unique, authentic, and vibrant villages of Livingston County. Combining a mix of innovative incentives with the presence of a full-time downtown coordinator has resulted in a commitment from both the public and private sectors that is visible in renovated buildings, new storefront businesses, apartments, and increased activity in the downtowns.

The Downtown Partnership enhances economic growth through programs and assistance in:

Downtown Revitalization +
Community Development in
Nine Villages



Preservation + Enhancement
of Historic Downtown
Buildings



Entrepreneurship
Development + Recruitment
of Businesses



Integrated Marketing of
Existing Businesses +
Community



AVON

VILLAGE POPULATION

3,394

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$63,803

MEDIAN AGE

43.1

TRAFFIC COUNT DOWNTOWN

9,653



The Village of Avon is located on Routes 5 + 20 in northern Livingston County. History is rich in downtown Avon with recently completed renovations to the Opera Block, the Avon Inn, the Park Theatre, and the Avon Free Library. A charming collection of buildings house a local art and gift shop, a florist, a cake maker, and casual dining. A park in the center of a roundabout creates an intimate and pedestrian-friendly district where locals gather during quintessential small-town events like the Corn Festival and the Avon Holiday Spectacular.



Avon, NY

CALEDONIA

VILLAGE POPULATION

2,201

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$59,067

MEDIAN AGE

46

TRAFFIC COUNT DOWNTOWN

7,450



The historic village of Caledonia is located on the “authentic American Road” Routes 5 + 20. A fascinating cluster of antique shops, home furnishings stores, art galleries, and boutiques along with the Peddler’s Market events, make Caledonia an art and shopping destination. The Genesee Country Village + Museum, a hugely popular destination for history buffs and families, is just minutes north of Main Street in Mumford. Add the Big Springs Museum and the Caledonia Fish Hatchery and you have the perfect place for a fun and educational family outing with something for everyone.



DANSVILLE

VILLAGE POPULATION

4,719

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$40,474

MEDIAN AGE

42.9

TRAFFIC COUNT DOWNTOWN

8,844



The Village of Dansville, located between exits 4 and 5 of Interstate 390, is the southern gateway to Livingston County. Main Street, which runs along Route 63, is permeated by a grand scale and rich architectural character. Historic storefronts house a movie theater, a brewery, an art gallery, several restaurants, and retail shops where you can buy upscale gifts, locally made products, and so much more! The Dogwood Festival, the New York State Festival of Balloons, and Winter in the Village are just a few of the events that bring this family-friendly community together each year.



GENESEO

VILLAGE POPULATION

8,031

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$45,006

MEDIAN AGE

23

TRAFFIC COUNT DOWNTOWN

6,218



Along Route 20A, the Village of Geneseo, a designated National Landmark Village, is comprised of a dense and diverse collection of historic homes. Nestled on the hillside of the Genesee River Valley, Main Street runs along Route 39 and borders the campus of The State University of New York at Geneseo. Famous for its sunsets and close college-community relations, this village enjoys a steady stream of pedestrian traffic throughout the year. Promotional events and annual parades drive traffic downtown on a regular basis including the May Day Wine Stroll, Main Street Bash, and Chocofrolic to name a few.



LEICESTER

VILLAGE POPULATION

468

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$55,009

MEDIAN AGE

46.1

TRAFFIC COUNT DOWNTOWN

5,299



The Village of Leicester is on the way to everywhere! Located on Route 20A, between Perry and Geneseo, and Route 36, between York and Mount Morris, this small village is home to the most popular entrance to Letchworth State Park, with over 800,000 visitors a year. The heart of the village is their extensive downtown park complete with a bandstand and concerts all summer long. A restored train depot serves as an artisan gallery and coffee shop for locals and visitors alike. In recent years, Leicester has seen a resurgence of activity with over \$400,000 in downtown renovations and a thriving new retail business located in the largest downtown building.



LIMA

VILLAGE POPULATION

2,139

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$53,583

MEDIAN AGE

42.6

TRAFFIC COUNT DOWNTOWN

6,260



Traditionally known as the “Crossroads of Western NY”, the Village of Lima is located at the intersection of Routes 5 + 20 and NYS Route 15A. With easy access to Rochester only 20 minutes away, Lima is a family-friendly community with over 50 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places and a 57-acre park with miles of trails. Downtown Lima is home to several restaurants and taverns, a popular live entertainment venue, a pharmacy, and antique and collectible shops. Among these is the American Hotel, a cherished destination business serving comfort food to travelers and locals alike. Annual festivals such as the Lima Crossroads Blues Festival and the German Festival have a large following from the surrounding region and the farmer’s market is one of the best attended in the county.



LIVONIA

VILLAGE POPULATION

1,409

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$65,563

MEDIAN AGE

43.1

TRAFFIC COUNT DOWNTOWN

10,340



A close-knit, walkable community, the Village of Livonia is located along the well-traveled Route 20A between Hemlock and Geneseo. Perched above popular Conesus Lake, several restaurants in the village are destination businesses that draw from a wide area, including Rochester. Livonia supports a full-fledged music store, a thriving maker space, an ice cream shop, a barbershop, and a diner. The recently expanded library in the downtown district is a center for community events. One of the reasons Livonia has seen an increase in population in recent years is its excellent school district and proximity to Rochester.



MOUNT MORRIS

VILLAGE POPULATION

2,986

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$40,172

MEDIAN AGE

43.9

TRAFFIC COUNT DOWNTOWN

12,109



The Village of Mount Morris sits proudly at the northeastern entrance to Letchworth State Park, the "Grand Canyon of the East". Main Street runs along Route 36, parallel to the Genesee Valley Greenway, and is intersected by Route 408. Antique shops, handmade goods, local eateries, and an old-fashioned candy shop make Main Street the perfect destination for a day to stroll and shop. Glory Days – which celebrates Mount Morris local Francis Bellamy, author of the Pledge of Allegiance – brings families downtown each year, as does a weekly farmer's market, and the annual Italian Festival.



NUNDA

VILLAGE POPULATION

1,377

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$43,106

MEDIAN AGE

43.4

TRAFFIC COUNT DOWNTOWN

4,950



Off the beaten track but adjacent to the magnificent waterfalls and extensive hiking trails of Letchworth State Park, the Village of Nunda is a hidden treasure. Located at the junction of Routes 408 + 436, visitors to popular destinations such as Swain Ski Resort, the Maple Tree Inn, the Genesee Valley Greenway, and Letchworth State Park travel right through the heart of Nunda. Surrounded by rolling hills and pastoral views, this historic village is proud of its heritage and “Mayberry” quality of life. The quaint village square, abundant with flowers in the summer, serves the community with a locally owned pharmacy and gift shop, several casual restaurants, a florist, and a liquor store. Annual events such as Nunda Fun Days and Christmas in the Village draw locals from the surrounding area to the downtown district.



Nunda, NY

PLAN

YOUR BUSINESS AND
ASSESS YOUR OPTIONS

ARE YOU READY TO OWN A BUSINESS?

ASSESS YOURSELF AS A POTENTIAL BUSINESS OWNER

Select "Yes" or "No" for each question:

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you a leader? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you confident? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you like to make your own decisions? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you handle responsibility well? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you thoroughly plan projects from start to finish? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you self-disciplined and independent? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you flexible? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have the emotional strength and good health to handle the workload and daily schedule that owning a business will require? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you prepared to temporarily lower your standard of living until your business is firmly established? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your family prepared to support you? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have experience working in a managerial or supervisory role? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have experience hiring or firing people? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have experience working in a business similar to the one you are considering starting? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have business training? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you understand business financing and cash flow management? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you aware of the record-keeping requirements expected in managing a small business? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you understand the fundamentals of marketing and market development? |

If you decide to continue with plans to establish a business, you should resolve to change each "No" to a "Yes". A partner may provide balance for some weak areas, thus changing a "No" to a "Yes". However, if there are a significant number of "Nos", overcoming these problems may require more development on your part.



Recommended Reading: Write It Down, Make It Happen by Henriette Klauser

A simple and effective guide to turning your dreams into reality by taking matters into your own hands, filled with down-to-earth tips and easy exercises to help you set goals.

Recommended Reading: Flourish by Martin E.P. Seligman

Tells inspiring stories of Positive Psychology; how corporations can improve performance and employee well-being; exercises to explore attitudes and aims.



S.W.O.T YOURSELF

(STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS)

Understanding your personal characteristics and the demands of business ownership are critical in helping find the business best suited for you. Assessing yourself will help determine what you need to do to proceed with your business idea.

Identify three of the most important interests, skills, or previous work experiences you've had and what opportunities they've led to:

Describe the time commitment are you willing to make to get your business off the ground?

What are your expectations and goals for the business?

Ask someone you trust to identify your strengths and weaknesses below. Compare answers:

STRENGTHS YOU IDENTIFIED

WEAKNESSES YOU IDENTIFIED

STRENGTHS IDENTIFIED BY SOMEONE
WHO KNOWS YOU

WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED BY SOMEONE
WHO KNOWS YOU

IS YOUR BUSINESS IDEA FEASIBLE?

ASSESS YOUR BUSINESS CONCEPT

Select "Yes" or "No" for each question:

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is there a real market for the product or service? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Can you access the market? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is your product or service competitive with others? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the risk manageable? Can you personally survive a failure? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is the cash flow from operations adequate? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Will your income be adequate? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have your family's support to start your business? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Can you obtain the necessary financing? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is there a reliable supply of materials to make the product or perform the service? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Can you find enough strong employees to staff the business? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Can you obtain the required professional and technical assistance when necessary? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have adequate knowledge to manage the business? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you work well with customers and employees? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Can you work comfortably with regulations, government permits, and restrictions? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Has this business been tried before? If not, are you sure it can be done correctly? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you know your competition and can you successfully deal with them? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Would customers buy from you rather than from your competition? |

If you decide to continue with plans to establish a business, then you should resolve to change each "No" to a "Yes". Some adjustments may provide balance for weak areas, thus changing a "No" to a "Yes". However, if there are a significant number of "Nos", overcoming these problems may require more development of the business idea.



Recommended Reading: Put Your Intuition to Work by Lynn Robinson

Offers numerous compelling stories from entrepreneurs and executives about how they successfully use intuition in their daily lives; a practical guide to helping you make successful decisions when you don't have all the facts and discover the many ways to listen to your "inner CEO".

WHAT IS YOUR UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION?

Before establishing your business, you must be able to answer the question:

Is there a pain or problem that you are solving?

If there is no market need for your business, your idea is likely not feasible.

How is the world surviving without your product or service today? Describe the status quo:

Explain how the status quo is inadequate:

Describe the market need for exactly the type of product or service you are offering:



Recommended Reading: 168 Hours by Laura Vanderkam

With a little examination and prioritizing, you will find time to accomplish all your goals without giving up quality time for work, family, and other things that really matter.



CONCEPT FEASIBILITY

One of the first steps to planning your business is gathering information. You will want to read articles and books as well as visit existing businesses in the area. Taking time to explore your concept will help you identify those specific factors that make your business unique.



Visit with SCORE of Greater Rochester to work with seasoned business mentors who can guide you through idea generation.

When considering the following questions, write down answers to each and try to identify potential problems:

- What product or service will you provide?
- Do you have the capability to provide this product or service?
- Who will buy your product or service?
- Why will your customer buy from you?
- When will your customer buy from you?
- How will your customers know you have products or services available?
- How much will your customers pay for your product or service?
- What will be your competitive advantages?
- What will be your competitive disadvantages?
- What competition already exists in the area?
- If there is little or no competition, why not?
- Are there emerging opportunities in the market?



Recommended Reading: The Reinventors by Jason Jennings
Reviewed 22,000 companies around the world as great examples of reinvention; your road map to successfully pursuing continuous change and keeping your business relevant for years to come.



Questa Lasagna
Mount Morris, NY



Suzea's Gluten Free Bakery
Mount Morris, NY

YOU MUST HAVE ANSWERS TO ALL THESE QUESTIONS AND HONESTLY IDENTIFY POTENTIAL PROBLEMS BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH YOUR BUSINESS.

CHOOSING A NAME

Choosing a name for your business is a critical decision, it can make or break your business. It has to fit and feel right for your brand and business identity. Your name also needs to be registered properly to protect your business long term. Some points to consider when choosing a name include:

1

POSITIVE RESPONSE

The right name should evoke an idea of what your business stands for and the emotional meaning you'd like to convey.

2

TEST IT OUT

Share the name with colleagues, friends, and family and see how they respond. Be objective and pay attention to critiques.

3

SHORT IS SWEET

No one remembers a long business name and making it into a domain name can be impossible. Imagine what the name will look like on a sign.

4

AVOID RANDOM NAMES

Avoid untraditional spellings or obscure words. Customers will not know about your past. Remember your target market and the service you're providing.

5

UNDERSTANDABLE

The right name should give customers a sense of what your business does. The goal is making things as easy as possible for customers to ensure a positive experience.

6

RESEARCH OTHERS

Research your competitors and compare their names to your own ideas. Don't mimic or copy a competitor, this creates confusion in the minds of potential customers.

7

UNCLAIMED ONLINE

Google the name to make sure no one else has claimed it or is using the domain name. Repeat the process on social platforms like Instagram and Facebook.

8

CHECK TRADEMARKS

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office has a trademark search tool to expedite your search and help avoid any possible trademark infringement.

Registering your business name involves a process known as filing for a "DBA", also known as your "Doing Business As" name. For more information on filing your DBA through the Livingston County Clerk's Office, see page 32.

Consider applying for Trademark Protection. A trademark protects names, symbols, and logos that distinguish your products or services. Your name is one of the most valuable business assets, so it's worth protecting. You can file for a trademark for about \$300.



Register for a trademark with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. [Click here to register on their website.](#)

WRITING A BUSINESS PLAN

Developing a business plan is a “must-do”. A business plan serves as a roadmap for decision-making and helps focus on the core mission and goals of the business. It’s a living document – something that should be reviewed often, updated as the business environment changes, and transformed as the business grows. If you’re a first-time entrepreneur, chances are you might not have enough capital to start a business on your own. This means you will have to rely on financial help from lenders or investors to get things off the ground. A business plan is a way to convince potential backers that you’ve thought things through. Even if you’re confident that you have enough capital to get started on your own, you still need a business plan. The process of writing down your plans in detail will help you find hidden business flaws and make you think carefully about each phase of your business. There are several agencies that can assist with writing a business plan. See page 26 for three options you can contact for help.



Note: Consider signing up for LivePlan, an online software that helps you easily write a business plan, secure funding, and get insights to help you reach your goals. You can access it via the LivePlan website and build your comprehensive plan within their platform.



Recommended Reading: The Loyalty Effect by Frederick Reichheld

Demonstrates the power of loyalty-based management as a highly profitable alternative to the economics of perpetual churn; even a small improvement in customer retention can double the profits of a business.



Dogwood Trading Company
Dansville, NY



Boriken Restaurant
Mount Morris, NY

KEYS POINTS OF A PLAN

Most business plans can be broken down into sections similar to those listed below. SBDC, SCORE, and SBA all have templates for business plans that you can use to organize your ideas and points. The order of sections and their titles might vary, but this list will give you an idea of the general format:



Executive Summary: One to two pages briefly explaining your business and what is included in the rest of the business plan. Highlight the most important parts of your plan because it is your first opportunity to grab the attention of a potential investor.



Note: The executive summary should actually be the last part of the plan you write. You won't know what the summary is until the rest of the plan has been created.



Business Description: A high-level review of your business. Describe the nature of your business, your products or services, and your customers. Explain how your product meets the needs of your customers and any competitive advantages you have.



Market Analysis: Your chance to show investors that you have researched the market. Illustrate your knowledge on the competition and customer base.



Organization & Management: An outline of your business' organizational structure. Include an organizational chart, details about ownership of the company, and profiles of your management team.



Service or Product Line: A description of the product or services you will offer to your customers. Emphasize the benefits of your product or service and the customer needs that they meet.



Marketing & Sales: A strategy for selling your products and services. Explain how you will advertise your products or services and how you plan to get them to market for your customers to buy.



Financial Projections: Include all necessary financial documents in this section, for example, your balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement.



Appendix: An optional section where you can include any additional information you think is necessary or supplemental.




Recommended Reading: Listen by Lynn Robinson

Demystifies intuition and reveals the secrets of how to listen to one's inner voice and interpret feelings, symbols, words, and physical sensations; learn how to move safely through the inevitable crises of life, and steadily toward hopes and dreams.

SBDC

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

 Click here to visit the SBDC website

Small Business Development Center (SBDC) can assist with:

- Accounting including record-keeping systems
- Finance including ratio analysis and cash flow projections
- Marketing including pricing, advertising, and promotions
- Operations including production and inventory control
- New Venture Planning including start-up information


CONTACT INFO:

1 College Circle, Doty Hall, Room 119
Geneseo, NY 14454
585-245-5429



SCORE

SERVICE CORPS OF RETIRED EXECUTIVES

 Click here to visit the SCORE website

SCORE of Greater Rochester can assist with:

- Connecting you to over 100 mentors who can provide assistance and expertise in a variety of areas
- Growth strategies and guidance for existing businesses
- Frequent free workshops and seminars
- Networking with thousands of businesses nationwide


CONTACT INFO:

100 State Street, Room 410
Rochester, NY 14614
585-263-6473



SBA

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

 Click here to visit the SBA website

Small Business Administration (SBA) can assist with:

- Step-by-step guidance on starting and growing a business
- Finding information on funding programs including loans, grants, and investment capital
- Counseling and assistance with federal contracting
- Accessing an interactive learning center for entrepreneurs
- Creating a strong business plan

CONTACT INFO:

answerdesk@sba.gov
800-827-5722



MAKING A GOOD BUSINESS PLAN BETTER



- Be specific when describing the products or services your business will offer
- Identify and explain your niche, describe how your business will do one thing well
- Identify the needs of the market that your competitors are already meeting, the needs of the market that are not being met, and explain how you will fill that gap
- Make sure there are no misspellings, typos, or errors in your presentation
- Make sure your business plan is neat and organized
- Use understandable language, a layout that is pleasing to the eye, and charts or graphs to explain difficult concepts
- Review the plan with the critical eye of an outsider who does not know your business
- Acknowledge your weaknesses as well as your strengths
- Get your staff to participate in the development of the plan, they will work harder to support something they helped create



Recommended Reading: Change Your Day, Not Your Life by Andy Core

Offers a proven strategy to become energized at work designed as a resource for work-life balance to help increase productivity, fuel employee communication, and curriculum to keep everyone working at their best.



MISTAKES TO AVOID IN A BUSINESS PLAN

- Including outdated financial information, empty claims, or unsubstantiated assumptions
- Overestimating financial projections or proposing unrealistic loan repayment terms
- Adding gimmicks
- Putting too much focus on collateral, the emphasis should be on cash flow
- Making the document unnecessarily long
- Including rumors about the competition, stick to the facts instead
- Using superlatives and strong adjectives like the words “incredible,” “amazing,” “outstanding,” “unbelievable,” “terrific,” “best” and “fabulous”
- Having overly optimistic time frames, you'll face delays you do not know about yet

MARKET ANALYSIS

A market analysis is a comprehensive review of the business climate where the company will compete. This analysis will help the business owner identify their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOTs) and determine whether the business offers an attractive opportunity.

There are four P's of marketing that should be considered when conducting your market analysis. A thorough examination of the four P's will not only help you define your market and prospective buyers but will also assist you in targeting customers and developing a successful go-to strategy.

THE FOUR P'S



Place

How and where will your product or service be distributed? Are there limitations?



Product

What is being sold? What makes it different from others in the market?



Price

How much will you need to charge to recoup your costs? Is your price in line with competition?



Promotion

How will you promote your product or service? What will promotion cost?

It is important to research these concepts:

- The Industry: How many other businesses are already offering your product or service? What are the barriers to entry?
- Competitors: How many direct competitors will you have?
- Business Climate: Research market conditions and demand for the products and services within your chosen market area and industry.



Recommended Reading: *Loyalty Rules!* by Frederick Reichheld

Using vivid stories from successful companies to illustrate how superior leaders create networks of mutually beneficial, trust-inspiring partnerships between customers, employees, suppliers, and investors.



The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) can run analysis reports to understand the market you hope to pursue.



Sunrise Bouldering
Geneseo, NY



Trail Otter
Leicester, NY



The Livonia Inn
Livonia, NY

BUSINESS CHECKLIST



Tracking your progress is important! Use this checklist to evaluate the steps you need to consider when planning your business. Use the notes section to keep yourself up-to-date with tasks that still need to be completed.

PLAN YOUR BUSINESS

- Evaluate your potential as a business owner
- Assess the feasibility of your idea
- Determine your unique selling proposition
- Choose a location
- Pick a name for your business
- Prepare a business plan
- Conduct market analysis

JOT DOWN NOTES

Gatherings at the Depot
Leicester, NY

A man with grey hair and a blue polo shirt stands in the center of a rustic brick shop. The shop is filled with various goods, including pottery, glassware, and food items. There are wooden tables, shelves, and a glass display case. The walls are made of red brick, and there are arched windows. The floor is made of stone tiles. The overall atmosphere is warm and inviting.

LAUNCH

YOUR BUSINESS WITH
RESOURCES AND ASSISTANCE

LEGAL FORMATIONS

Before launching your business, you will need to make a decision on how you want to structure it. Your options for your business structure will include Sole Proprietorship, Partnership, Corporation, or Limited Liability Company. Each structure has its own advantages and disadvantages so you should base your decision on the specific needs, resources, and objectives of your business:



Sweet Arts Bakery
Geneseo, NY



SOLE PROPRIETORSHIP

An unincorporated business owned by an individual. Legally, it does not exist apart from the owner. If you choose this structure, your business assets and liabilities will be your personal assets and liabilities, and vice versa.



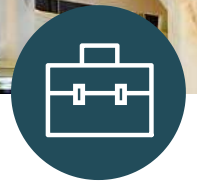
PARTNERSHIP

An unincorporated business is much like a sole proprietorship except with two or more owners. Each owner contributes resources to the business, assumes the liabilities, and in return, has a share of its profits or losses.



LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY (LLC)

An unincorporated association of one or more owners, called members, that is filed with the Secretary of State. Unlike a sole proprietorship or partnership, members are not personally liable for the debts of an LLC.



CORPORATION

A business that is treated as its own legal entity. It is separate and distinct from its owners or shareholders. Incorporating a business allows shareholders to pool resources and protect themselves from liability.

Each of these structures has its own tax requirements and legal implications. Therefore, it is a good idea to consult with a tax professional and an attorney before making any decision. They can help you file the appropriate tax documents for each structure and make sure you are properly protected. For more information, visit the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) webpage on Business Structures. Here you will find information on the necessary tax forms you will need to submit once you have decided on a structure.



Click here to learn more about legal formations with the Internal Revenue Service.

VISIT THE CLERK

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU STOP AT THE LIVINGSTON COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE BEFORE LAUNCHING YOUR BUSINESS!

The clerk can assist you with filing your business name. This involves a process known as registering a "Doing Business As" (DBA) name or Fictitious Business Name. This process should not be confused with incorporation and it does not provide trademark protection. Registering your DBA name lets the government know that you are doing business as a name other than your personal name or the legal name of your partnership or corporation.

You will need to check that your business name is not already in use before registering. The clerk will assist you in ensuring your business name is available using on-site records of past business names.



CONTACT INFO:

Livingston County Clerk
6 Court Street, Room 201
Geneseo, NY 14454
585-243-7010

Codes, Licenses, & Permits

There are a variety of licenses and permits a business might need depending on the type, location, and services of the business. Be sure to visit the village or town clerk and code enforcement officer where your business is located to ensure you are in compliance. A couple of common ones include:

SIGN PERMIT

Check regulations and secure the written approval of your landlord and the County before having a sign designed and installed.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT PERMIT

If you plan to sell food, either directly to customers or as a wholesaler to other retailers, you need a County Health Department Permit.

BUILDING PERMIT

Required for most tenant improvements and building construction work, including fences reaching certain heights and larger accessories or storage buildings.

SALES TAX LICENSE

Any business selling taxable goods and services must pay sales taxes on what it sells. Be sure to register to collect sales tax by applying for each place of business you have in the state.




Note: You'll need to contact the clerk of the village where your business is located to work with the code enforcement officer. If your business is located in a town, work with the code enforcement officer by contacting the town clerk (contact information on page 6).

VILLAGE	CODE OFFICER	ADDRESS	PHONE
Avon	Anthony Cappello	74 Genesee Street, Avon, NY 14414	585-226-8118
Caledonia	Mike Burnside	3095 Main Street, Caledonia, NY 14423	585-538-4150
Dansville	Tammy Saylor Malone	14 Clara Barton Street, Dansville, NY 14437	585-335-6955
Geneseo	Craig Wadsworth	119 Main Street, Geneseo, NY 14454	585-243-1177
Leicester	Charles Cagle	52 South Parkway, Leicester, NY 14481	585-382-3699
Lima	Charles Floeser	7329 East Main Street, Lima, NY 14485	585-624-7911
Livonia	Adam Backus	35 Commercial Street, Livonia, NY 14487	585-346-2098
Mount Morris	Chuck Cagle	117 Main Street, Mount Morris, NY 14510	585-721-2857
Nunda	Mark Mullikin	4 Massachusetts Street, Nunda, NY 14517	585-519-3321

Other considerations you will need to make when launching a business include business insurance, opening a bank account, paying taxes, and obtaining an identification number for your business. You must contact an attorney and accountant to work with you on these steps. See the following page for more information.

What is the EIN Number and how do I obtain one?

An EIN is an Employer Identification Number which you receive by submitting Form SS-4 to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). You must have an EIN to make federal tax deposits, file employment tax returns, and open a business bank account.

 [Click here to apply for an EIN with the IRS.](#)




Tony's Pizzeria
Dansville, NY




Creative E.D.G.E.
Caledonia, NY

What about business taxes?

The New York State Tax Guide for New Business outlines the procedures to follow with the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance. To save time and expenses in preparing tax returns, keep careful records, in paper or electronic form, for at least three years.

 [Click here to explore the New York State Tax Guide.](#)


If you are making sales that are subject to sales tax, you must obtain a Certificate of Authority from the State Department of Taxation and Finance. Be sure to contact an accountant to verify all the taxes your business must pay and what steps are needed to register.

 [Click here to register for NYS Sales Tax.](#)

What about insurance for my business?

Starting a business requires a significant investment, so you'll want to make sure that you're protected. Insurance minimizes your financial risks by covering your business during unforeseen events, such as natural disasters, employee injuries, or accidents on the business property.

Contact your local insurance agent to determine the type of insurance your business will require. Make sure you have the policies that are best suited for your needs. The Insurance Information Institute is a valuable resource to reference.

 [Click here to find articles and publications on policies from the Insurance Information Institute.](#)



Patchwork Saddlery
Avon, NY

BUSINESS SIGNAGE

Signage is the most critical aspect of your public appearance!

- Your sign is the first and most important impression your business makes
- A quality sign is your most cost-effective form of advertising - this investment will have an impact on your success for years to come
- Signs are continuous advertising working for you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week - no other form of advertising can do this
- Effective signage can reduce the amount of other advertising needed
- Have your sign professionally designed - it will be worth the investment
- Keep in mind that you will need to abide by our Design Guidelines for facade and signage updates in our downtown districts
- Apply for a sign permit before ordering your sign

A well-designed sign will:

- Clearly state who you are and what you have to offer
- Communicate your business brand using consistent imagery, logo, and color scheme
- Be bold, simple in message, and easy to read from a distance
- Be well-lit and visible after dark



Click here for information on grants and funding offered by Livingston County Economic Development.



Note: A business without a sign is a sign of no business.



Visit Livingston County Economic Development for assistance with designing your sign.



MAXIMIZE YOUR CURB APPEAL!



70% of sales are a direct result of curb appeal.

A customer's decision to walk into a business hinges on how inviting it looks from the outside. To ensure your business stands out and is consumer-friendly consider:

1. Creative window displays that are well-lit, draw the eye and can be seen from the street
2. Displays that have a consistent message or theme and encompass most of the window
3. Using vinyl lettering along the bottom of the display window to highlight products or services
4. Putting products outside the store to draw attention, make sure there is adequate room for pedestrians (usually 36 inches) and that displays are safely anchored
5. Adding attractive benches, planters, and awnings to complement and extend your storefront
6. Using outdoor lighting that can highlight your sign, doorway, and storefront
7. Always using "Open" flags that extend into the pedestrian realm, create movement, and are noticeable from the street (avoid neon "Open" signs)
8. Making sure your storefront, sidewalk, and windows are clean and well-maintained
9. Posting your hours on your door and making them consistent and easy to remember
10. Never using films that darken the window or curtains that obscure the view into the business



Note: You should not need a neon sign to indicate that you are open. The store should look open and welcoming using other elements such as flags and lighting.



Click here for video resources on the Grow Liv Co website.

BUSINESS CHECKLIST



Tracking your progress is important! Use this checklist to evaluate the steps you need to consider when launching your business. Use the notes section to keep yourself up-to-date with tasks that still need to be completed.

LAUNCH YOUR BUSINESS

- Decide on a legal formation
- Apply for a "Doing Business As" (DBA)
- Apply for an Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- Open a business bank account
- Obtain licenses and permits
- Determine tax obligations
- Create a business logo
- Prepare your marketing strategy
- Develop an advertising budget
- Secure a domain name and create a website
- Set up business social media accounts
- Find a lawyer and accountant to work with
- Plan a ribbon cutting or grand opening

JOT DOWN NOTES

GROW

YOUR BUSINESS USING
SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES



FOUR MARKETING MUST HAVES

1

Strong Branding

In order for your small businesses to succeed, you must create and cultivate emotional connections with your audiences through your messaging, marketing, and engagement. A strong brand will be your most valuable asset, and when it is done right, the benefits and ROI are measurable and immediate. Your brand assets should include:

- Logo
- Color palettes
- Typography
- Iconography
- Photography and graphics for marketing campaigns
- Style guide that explains appropriate logo usage and tone of voice, among other things

2

Website

An online presence plays a big part in creating credibility in today's business world. It is especially useful for startups and home-based businesses. To launch a website, you need to:

1. Choose a domain name
2. Sign up for web hosting and design an eye-catching website
3. Build and update your website regularly

3

Google My Business

A Google My Business account helps ensure your business shows up in search results when people are looking online. It's free, which makes it an affordable marketing tool for small and big businesses alike. Your Google My Business listing includes contact information, business hours, and other essential details. You can post updates to share that you've expanded services, temporarily closed, or fully reopened. Google business accounts have strong local SEO, so the information you share will rank above other sites.

4

Social Media

Being on social media is a must for businesses. An online presence will make your business easier to find through Google and reach new customers. There are many social media platforms that can be used, but you do not need to be on every single one. Sometimes focusing on one or two profiles will benefit you more than trying to manage four or five. Common social media platforms you can consider include:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Yelp
- TripAdvisor




Recommended Reading: Your Marketing Sucks by Mark Stevens

How to create an innovative, effective marketing campaign strategy; spend your marketing budget only in ways that will give you a measurable return on your marketing dollars.



Note: Marketing done well can tap into new consumer bases so ask for help if you are not sure what avenue to explore.

Livingston County Chamber of Commerce

 [Click here to visit the Chamber website](#)

The Livingston County Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to advancing business and community throughout Livingston County. They can provide:

- Access to their online learning center
- Scheduling and executing ribbon cuttings
- Opportunities to attend networking events
- Help with marketing and sponsorship


CONTACT INFO:

4635 Millennium Drive
Geneseo, NY 14454
585-243-2222



Boriken Restaurant
Mount Morris, NY

Adopt-A-Business

 [Click here to visit the Adopt-A-Business website](#)

Adopt-a-Business provides local businesses with access to free, one-on-one support in social media and digital marketing. Businesses will be able to work on campus or virtually with students through SUNY Geneseo's Small Business Development Center or receive support on-site. Adopt-A-Business works to enhance the existing ecosystem of technical assistance services for small businesses.


CONTACT INFO:

1 College Circle, Room 303
Geneseo, NY 14454
585-237-8079



Florence's Perpetual Estate Sale
Geneseo, NY

Letchworth Gateway Villages (LGV)

 [Click here to visit the LGV website](#)

LGV catalyzes economic growth and tourism-related market opportunities for communities that serve as "gateways" to Letchworth State Park:

- Increase visibility for attractions and businesses through an online and digital media presence
- Foster a shared identity that encourages collaboration and strengthens regional assets
- Develop a regional strategy specifically geared towards cultivating tourism-related opportunities

CONTACT INFO:

46 North Main Street
Perry, NY 14530
585-237-8079



Valley Oak Event Center
Geneseo, NY

KEYS TO ADVERTISING YOUR BUSINESS

Your Best Advertisement is Your Customer

Invest in every customer you interact with, each one talks to other potential customers, they will represent you beyond your store.

Your Employees are Advertising

Take time to train and educate your staff to ensure they understand your business, reward them for excellence in customer service.

Position Your Business for Success

Understand why you went into business and how you want to be perceived, let those intentions influence the way you advertise.



Park Theatre
Avon, NY



Recommended Reading: Hug Your Haters by Jay Baer

Reconfiguring customer service to deliver knockout experiences; shows exactly how to deal with customers, drawing on meticulously researched case studies from businesses of all types and sizes from around the world.



Honeygirl Gourmet
Geneseo, NY

Communicate with Customers

Use your advertising to have a conversation with customers, portray that a fun experience awaits the customer visiting your business.

Spend Money to Make Money

Find a strong advertising medium and stick with it, be consistent with your messaging and advertise frequently to interact with customers.

No Offer, No Advertisement

Make sure there is an offer in every advertisement you run, it does not always need to be a discount, offers lead to benefits for your business.

Recommended Reading: Buzzmarketing by Mark Hughes

Guide to the art of successful buzzmarketing; draws on own real-world experience as an executive and consultant, as well as untold stories of some of the great buzz generators of our time.



GREAT CUSTOMER SERVICE IS A MARKETING TOOL

The experience a customer has with your business can make or break your business. One bad moment or interaction can reverse all the hard work and money you have dedicated to marketing and building your brand so it is important to prepare for when things go wrong.

NEVER BE AFRAID TO SAY I'M SORRY

Apologies are miracle workers. A simple "I'm sorry for your inconvenience" will often smooth a customer's ruffled feathers and make it easier to find a workable resolution to any problem.

UNDERSTAND WHAT WENT WRONG

Let the customer explain what happened and air their frustrations. If you don't listen, they'll find someone else who will. You need to know exactly what happened in order to prevent it from happening again.

DELIVER ON THE PROMISES YOU MAKE

Remember what they say about an ounce of prevention - if you meet your clients' expectations from the start, you can avoid problems in the future. Say what you mean and keep your promises.

EMPOWER YOUR EMPLOYEES

Nothing is more frustrating for a customer than to hear that nothing can be done to rectify the situation. Give your employees the power to make your customers happy and resolve their problems.

ADDRESS COMPLAINTS LIKE A FIRST RESPONDER

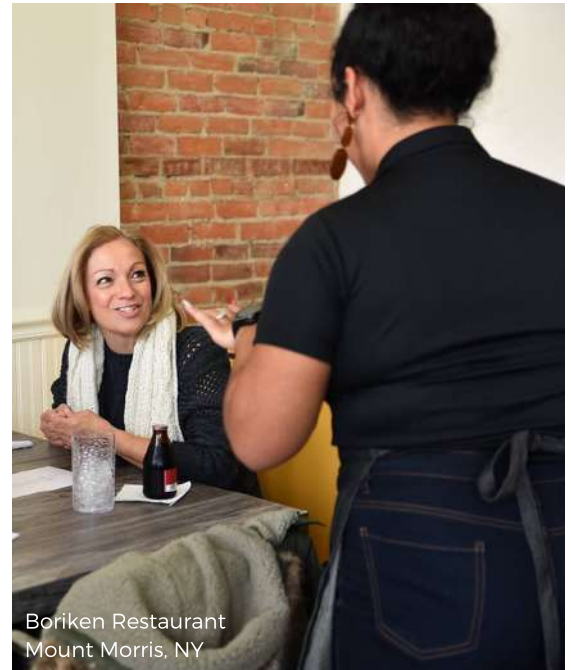
If you've got an unhappy customer at the counter and the phone rings, let someone else pick up the phone. If you receive a customer complaint on social media, don't wait three days to reply and take it offline to answer. Negative comments need your attention immediately.

OWN YOUR MISTAKES

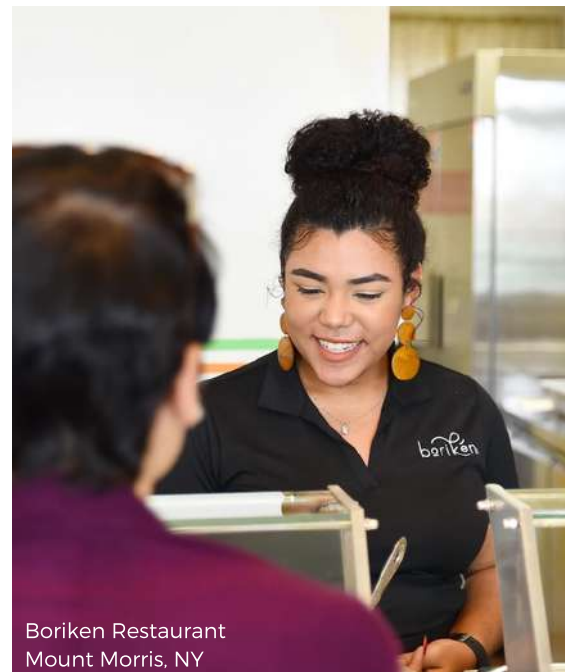
Never assume your customers are blind to what's going on behind the scenes. Don't blame others for your mistakes or make excuses for errors. Acknowledge the mistake and do what you can to make things right.

REALIZE SOME PEOPLE ARE NEVER HAPPY

Some customers will never be satisfied no matter how many ways you offer to fix the problem. Don't let these people affect the way you do business with the rest of your customers. Let go of what you can't change, and greet customers with a smile.



Boriken Restaurant
Mount Morris, NY



Boriken Restaurant
Mount Morris, NY

COMMON MISTAKES OF NEWBIE ENTREPRENEURS

Growing your business will not always be easy, you will run into challenges. However, there are mistakes that are often made that can be avoided from the start.

01

Not setting aside enough cash reserves to support yourself. Many businesses fail within the first few years not because the business model isn't viable, but because the finances are not sustainable.

TIP: Proactively set up a special fund intended to support yourself during the startup phase.

02

Using assumptions that are overly optimistic during planning. Entrepreneurs jump in quickly only to realize there are a few not-so-little details they failed to consider. Before they know it, that "no-brainer" business is hanging by a thread.

TIP: Find three to five completely objective people (not friends or family) and ask them to play devil's advocate for you.

03

Not properly evaluating your business model. It's easy to get held up on the concept of your business, but it's another thing to put pen to paper and objectively evaluate your business model and its profit potential.

TIP: Consider working with SCORE or SBDC to evaluate the business and offer expert advice. Their perspective could identify a more viable structure than what you've established.

04

Not being willing to work long hours during the early days. The simple truth is if you want to make it, most startup businesses have to hustle early on. This might mean working another job while you're starting up or doing some work for free to gain experience and exposure.

TIP: Before jumping into the startup world, really evaluate your current lifestyle and realize you will most likely be giving up a huge chunk, if not all, of your free time.

05

Forgetting to include your family in the equation. Consider the effect your business will have on your family. Are they willing to make the sacrifices involved? If you are a family person and do not have their support, you may find it difficult to persevere.

TIP: Think about the worst and best-case scenarios. Better to be prepared with a plan than simply hope for the best.

06

Not having a growth strategy. Most businesses think the goal is to win as much business as they can, but that isn't necessarily true. Sometimes, you can attract too much business and have a different challenge that threatens the viability of the business.

TIP: Think about how you want to develop a high-level growth strategy early on.

07

Trying to do everything yourself to save money. Your business will suffer because you don't bring sufficient expertise in every area. Think about where you must personally invest your energies. Utilize the skills of others to develop your website, make trips to the printers, and perform administrative functions.

TIP: The key is identifying what to outsource and what to keep. A good rule of thumb is if it's not part of your core competencies and there is someone else who can provide the service at a reasonable cost, consider outsourcing.

08

Not setting up a separate bank account for your business expenses, transactions, and purchases. Using a personal bank account for your business needs will make record-keeping confusing and difficult when tax season rolls around.

TIP: As soon as you receive your EIN set up a bank account for your business. Use a bank that is local to your area so you can easily contact them with questions or concerns.

BUSINESS CHECKLIST



Tracking your progress is important! Use this checklist to evaluate the steps you need to consider when growing your business. Use the notes section to keep yourself up-to-date with tasks that still need to be completed.

GROW YOUR BUSINESS

- Attend workshops and educational opportunities
- Consider when to bring on additional staff
- Ensure your business is verified on Google
- Post consistently to social media accounts
- Build your network to find new customers
- Become a member of the Chamber of Commerce
- Meet with your accountant quarterly
- Plan carefully for growth

JOT DOWN NOTES

MORE RECOMMENDED READING



Recommended Reading: On Fire at Work by Eric Chester

Highlights top-tier leaders of the world's best places to work to uncover their best strategies for getting employees to work harder, perform better, and stay longer.



Recommended Reading: The Humor Advantage by Michael Kerr

Features businesses from around the world that have built a brand advantage through humor; ideas on how you and your team can create an inspiring workplace culture.



Recommended Reading: Under the Radar by Job Bond and Richard Kirshenbaum

Offers a deeply probing and instructive look at the nature of advertising and marketing in an age of information overload; in-depth critiques of advertising campaigns.



Recommended Reading: Amaze Every Customer Every Time by Shep Hyken

Delivering amazing service requires everyone in your organization; the tools and tactics you need to transform your company into a seriously customer-focused operation that will amaze every customer every time.



Recommended Reading: PrimeTime™ Women by Marti Barletta

Comprehensive resource on practical applications to get into the minds, souls, hearts, and wallets of the Boomer generation; delivers strategic thinking and tactical ideas geared toward understanding and leveraging this influential market.



Recommended Reading: Find More Time by Laura Stack

Helps you organize your space, time, and information to reduce stress and create and sustain a productive home environment.



Recommended Reading: Reviving Work Ethic by Eric Chester

Points out actions that businesses can take to give their employees a deep commitment to performing excellent work.



Recommended Reading: Talk Triggers by Jay Baer

Compelling stories, inspirational examples, and practical how-tos about the power of conversation; case studies of extraordinary results.



LOCAL RESOURCES



Battle Street Brewery
Dansville, NY

RESOURCE

PHONE

WEBSITE

ABOUT

Adopt-A-Business

585-237-8079

geneseo.edu/cil/adopt-business

Free, one-on-one support in social media and marketing to small businesses.

Greater Rochester SCORE

585-263-6473

greaterrochester.score.org

Access to volunteer members who provide mentoring to small businesses in the Greater Rochester area.

Livingston County Area
Chamber of Commerce

585-243-2222

livingstoncountychamber.com

Fosters business development and provides opportunities for members to prosper.

Livingston County Clerk Office

585-243-7010

livingstoncounty.us/158/County-Clerk-DMV

Responsible for providing files, records, and indexes in legal actions and proceedings.

Livingston County
Economic Development

585-243-7124

growlivco.com

Offers help to entrepreneurs with location services, financing, and educational opportunities.

Livingston County
Environmental Health

585-243-7280

livingstoncounty.us/176/Environmental-Health

Issues permits, inspects restaurants and food vendors, and provides guidance to businesses.

Livingston County Planning
Department

585-243-7550

livingstoncounty.us/210/Planning-Department

Provides technical assistance in regulations, development, and environmental protection.

Small Business
Development Center

585-245-5429

geneseo.edu/small_business

Free and confidential advising service to new and existing businesses.

SUNY Geneseo School of
Business Internship Program

585-245-5367

geneseo.edu/business/internship

Reach out to the School of Business to learn about opportunities to work with college students.

STATE RESOURCES



Sunrise Bouldering
Geneseo, NY

RESOURCE	PHONE	WEBSITE	ABOUT
FastTrac New Venture Class	-----	fasttrac.org	Equips aspiring entrepreneurs with business skills, tools, resources, and networks to start and grow businesses.
New York Business Express	518-485-5000	business-express.ny.gov	Provides a step-by-step guide to starting a business in New York with custom checklists.
New York Business First	716-846-8200	nyfirst.ny.gov	Promotes a growing state economy, encourages business investment and job creation, and supports local economies.
New York Division of Minority and Women's Business Development	855-373-4692	esd.ny.gov/doing-business-ny/mwbe	Promotes equality of economic opportunities for MWBEs and eliminates barriers to their participation in state contracts.
New York State Department of State	518-474-3355	dos.ny.gov	Compiles state agency rules and regulations and publishes information on state documents.
New York State Small Business Development Center	800-732-7232	nyssbdc.org	Provides expert management and technical assistance to start-up and existing businesses across the state.
New York Tax Guide for Business	518-485-2889	tax.ny.gov/bus	Assists with tax obligations for businesses.
PathStone Enterprise Center	585-340-3385	pathstoneenterprise.org	Makes loans to small and micro businesses with a strong program of technical assistance to support growth.

FEDERAL RESOURCES



Dogwood Trading Company
Dansville, NY

RESOURCE

PHONE

WEBSITE

ABOUT

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	212-336-3670	eeoc.gov	Information regarding civil rights laws and regulations about discrimination in the workplace.
Government Publishing Office	404-605-9160	gpo.gov/customers/offices	Federal publications source.
Internal Revenue Service	800-829-4933	irs.gov	Tax and fraud assistance including ID numbers, business questions, and publications.
Immigration and Naturalization Service	800-375-5283	uscis.gov	Employee eligibility verification to work in the U.S.
IRS Small Business Tax Workshops	800-829-4933	irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed	Offers free small business tax workshops covering business tax returns, benefits, and obligations.
Library of Congress-National Reference Service	-----	bit.ly/LOC-ask-business	Business reference services.
US Occupational Safety & Health Administration	800-321-6742	osha.gov	Safety regulations + standards for working conditions.
U.S. Census Bureau	301-763-4636	census.gov	Provides data about population and economy.
U.S. Department of Labor	866-487-2365	dol.gov	Information regarding minimum wage requirements, overtime, and child labor laws.
U.S. Food and Drug Administration	888-463-6332	fda.gov	Information and registration for controlled substances.
U.S. Patent & Trademark Office	800-786-9199	uspto.gov	Intellectual property information.
SCORE - Counselors to America's Small Businesses	800-634-0245	score.org	Business coaching from industry professionals.
Small Business Administration	800-827-5722	sba.gov	Federal agency for small businesses.

**Thank you for building and growing your
business in Livingston County, NY.
We're here to help you!**



Livingston County Economic Development
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585-243-7124 | growlivco.com