

Checklist for Starting a New Photography Business

Background Work

Personal

- Assess your strengths and weaknesses
- Establish personal business goals

Financial

- Assess your financial resources
- Identify the financial risks
- Determine start-up costs

Research Market

- Decide on your business location
- Do market research
- Identify your customers
- Identify your competition
- Determine product line

Write your business plan

Checklist for Starting a New Photography Business

First Steps - Legal

- Consult attorney
- Chose entity
 - Sole proprietorship
 - Partnership
 - Corporation
 - LLC
- Check with city and state licensing offices to determine if a license (i.e., occupational) or permit is needed to conduct your business; obtain any required licenses.
- Review local zoning regulations to determine if you can operate your business at your intended location.
- Check with Florida Department of Revenue to see if you need a re-seller's permit (i.e., sales tax); obtain permit if required.
- File fictitious name statement with county clerk (sole proprietor).
- Contact Florida Secretary of State if business name is valid (corporations).
- If applicable, prepare and file incorporation papers with Florida of State.
- Apply for identification number (EIN) from IRS and check to see which tax forms you will need.

Checklist for Starting a New Photography Business

First Steps - Financial

- Consult with accountant (CPA).
- Select a bank and open business account.
- Obtain business credit cards.
- Set up bookkeeping system.
- Familiarize yourself with financial statements and their use.
- Review business plan financials.

First Steps - Optional

- Register with the state employment department if you intend to hire employees or assistants.
- Obtain workmen's compensation insurance (applies only if you become an employer).
- Set up payroll system with accountant (applies only if you become an employer).

Checklist for Starting a New Photography Business

First Steps - Operations

- Design and order letterhead and business cards.
- Line up vendors.
- Order start up inventory and supplies.
- Purchase telephone, fax, and answering machine.
- Set up on-line communications, including web site.
- Acquire necessary equipment.
- Secure business liability and equipment insurance.
- Join appropriate local business and professional organization(s).
- Set up workflow system.

Set starting date.