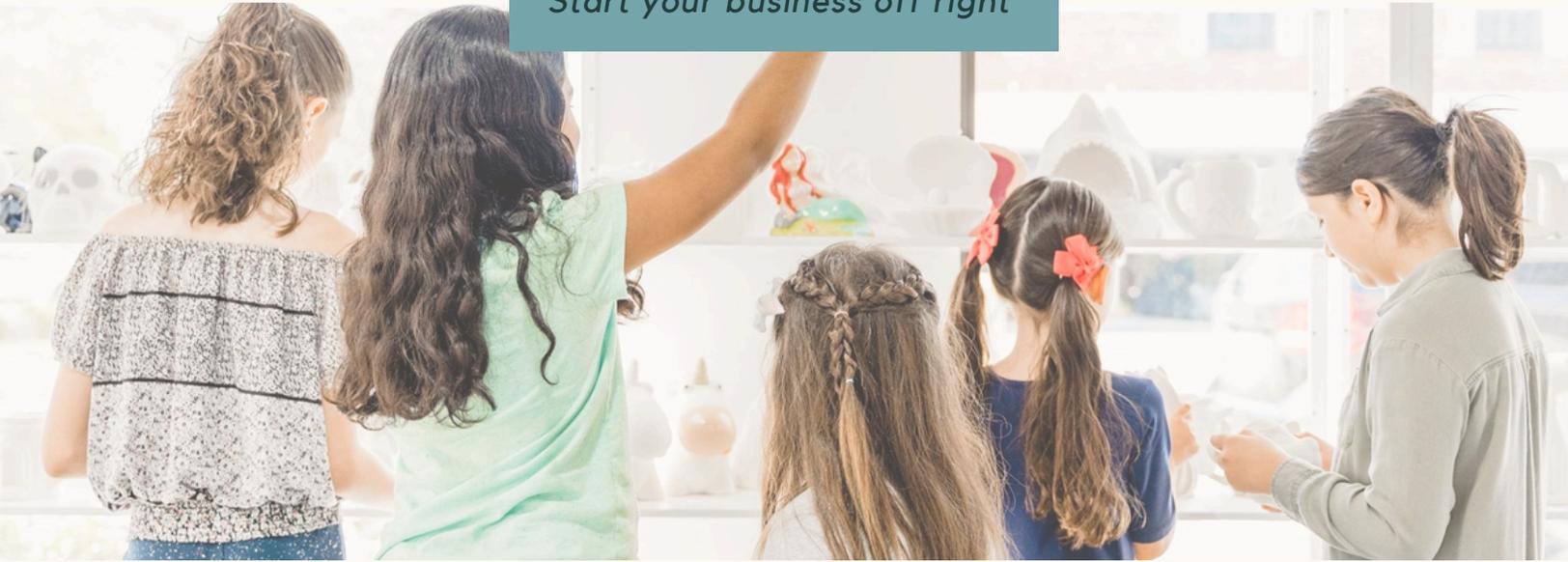


YOUR GUIDE TO OPENING A *Paint-Your-Own Pottery Studio*

Start your business off right



ABOUT OUR ASSOCIATION

The Contemporary Ceramics Studio Association (CCSA) is the official association for studios and suppliers in the fired arts industry. Opening a studio is easier than you think, and joining the CCSA is the ideal starting point for new and seasoned studio owners. Let our resources help you get started, and then grow!

GUIDE OVERVIEW

- Business Plan
- Product Mix
- Financial
- Startup Marketing

CONTACT US

 ccsaonline.com

 Palm Bay, FL

 1-888-291-2272



CREATE YOUR BUSINESS PLAN

Consider the following when creating your plan.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Determine the population of your marketplace as well as the median income in your area. You can look at census data, but keep in mind that it is only processed every 10 years. There are plenty of resources for urban areas online to determine this information, which can be used to analyze potential studio locations. Check <http://www.city-data.com/> to get some ideas.

COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

Look at other studios, and painting or ceramic arts businesses, that are in your demographic area. Determine what your advantage will be; Will you offer more services, extended hours, parties, etc. that the competitor will not provide? Price should not be considered a valid competitive advantage.

NAMING YOUR STUDIO

When deciding on a name for your studio, you should also be searching for web domain names to make sure that a domain to match is available. Your name should be descriptive of what the business offers to the public as a crucial part of advertising. You should also research the name online to be sure there are no conflicts with other businesses already operating with the name you wish to use, especially in your area. For example, if you used the name Jane's Creations, it is not apparent what your business does. Instead, you might consider Jane's Pottery and Mosaics with a website of janepotteryandmosaics.com.

CREATE YOUR BUSINESS PLAN

SPACE REQUIREMENTS

The average CCSA studio is 1600 sq ft. You will need between 1000 and 3000 sq ft depending on the services you wish to provide (kilns and other relative equipment take up space), and additional space for parties and events.

BUILD-OUT COSTS

Many owners take a DIY approach to build-out costs but these can quickly escalate. Obtain three quotes from local licensed contractors to get an average of the costs that will be required. Don't forget to factor in the time and costs to obtain permits through the local building/zoning department. At a minimum, you will need a licensed electrician to wire and vent your kiln. Other build-out costs to consider include wall finishing and painting, flooring, lighting, plumbing, signage, and wall dividers.

SIGNAGE

When looking at space, you should determine where signage is available and get the details of any permits required or restrictions on signage for the location. Signage is crucial to bringing new customers to your studio, so you should budget an appropriate amount for your signage. If you have the opportunity for a lighted sign, it is usually worth the extra money. In some locations, you may need to research signage restrictions/permits/guidelines with both the landlord and the local zoning board, town planning office, or other governing entity.

ANALYZE TRAFFIC PATTERNS

Study the traffic patterns near potential locations by sitting outside and counting the number of walkers-during different times of day. You will also want to look at traffic counts if the studio has street visibility. Look at how easy it is from the street to get in and out of the location.

RETAIL SPACE ANALYSIS & NEGOTIATION

When meeting with landlords or property management, you should request information about space availability, build-out allowances, signage, and any restrictions. You should also inquire about common area maintenance (CAM) charges that may be assessed and the timing. Most leases will escalate the rent each year by a fixed percentage (3-5%). Some also have revenue-based clauses that look at the revenue for a particular month and if sales are higher, your rent is higher. These can be risky for seasonal businesses like ceramic arts so they should be avoided. You will also want to assess the number of parking spots and their convenience to your studio door. Think about weather conditions throughout the year and the effect on your parking.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Based on your space, demographics, and traffic patterns, determine the hours of operations for your new business. Look at the hours of operations for all businesses near you to determine the hours that your customers will most likely visit your studio. Be careful not to set your studio hours based on what is convenient for your schedule rather than your customers' schedules. Community demographics and traffic patterns will help you determine the best times to be open to maximize the operations of your studio. If you are not sure, go sit outside the studio location and take notes: count the number of people going in/out of neighboring businesses, look at the number of cars driving by at particular times of the day, etc. Care should be taken not to change the hours too often because this will confuse your customers and may hurt your business.



WHAT PRODUCTS WILL YOU OFFER

There are several mediums that fall under the PYOP umbrella.

SUPPLIERS

Determine which suppliers you will work with for ordering bisque and supplies. Look at shipping charges and timing of orders. You should also consult the CCSA benefits guide for details on supplier discounts as a part of your membership.

TYPES OF CERAMIC ARTS TO BE OFFERED

Each studio will determine what mix of products and services fits best in their area. Here are some examples of services offered in Ceramic Arts studios:

- Paint-Your-Own Pottery
- Glass mosaics
- Glass fusing
- Clay sculpting
- Wheel throwing
- Canvas painting
- Candle making
- Beading
- Wood sign art

WHAT PRODUCTS WILL YOU OFFER

KILNS AND EQUIPMENT

Research how many kilns you will need to purchase to meet the demand. What other equipment is needed? Reach out to your suppliers to get advice on what equipment would be best to suite your needs.

INCLUSIVE VS. STUDIO FEES

When determining pricing, studio owners must decide if their pieces will be sold inclusive of studio supplies, firing, and painting or if they will charge a separate studio fee as a sitting fee and price their pieces lower. There are pros and cons of each and neither has been a clear winner so far - it is a situationally based solution.

DETERMINE CLASSES/EVENTS TO BE OFFERED

If you are looking to have a party or event space, determine an initial plan of classes and events to be offered. Use these to generate interest in your studio and invite new customers in to learn more about your studio. Types of events to consider include birthday parties, ladies nights, school spirit nights, canvas classes, etc.



CREATE A FINANCIAL TEAM

SELECT AN ADVISORY TEAM

Find experts to assist you with your startup and ongoing business needs.

- Attorney
- CPA
- Banker
- Insurance agent
- Financial planner

As a CCSA member you will have access to service suppliers and vendors that are familiar with the industry. They will help develop and grow your business while offering discounts to CCSA members.

PROJECTED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

These are needed to determine capital needs. Work with your CPA to project the cash flow that will be needed to get your studio up and running. This should include things like build-out costs, initial inventory purchase, rent, labor costs, and utilities.

CCSA sells **The Retail Guide to Opening and Running Your Own PYOP** that may provide a good resource for you here too: <https://bit.ly/3lhnAly>.



BREAKEVEN ANALYSIS

Your CPA can also help you determine how much revenue you will need to break even, where your expenses will be covered by the incoming revenue. Once your revenue exceeds this number, your studio will begin generating a profit. CCSA Supplier Member Donna Bordeaux, CPA, of Bordeaux & Bordeaux, CPA, offers services to assist you with preparing projections for cash flow as well as balance sheet and income statement to help you. These are also necessary if you will be requesting financing from outside lenders.

LICENSES AND PERMITTING

Visit your local municipality or city offices to determine what permits are necessary to open a retail location. You will also need to contact your state Department of Revenue to set up sales tax and withholding/unemployment accounts for payroll.

STARTUP MARKETING

Show the community what you have to offer!

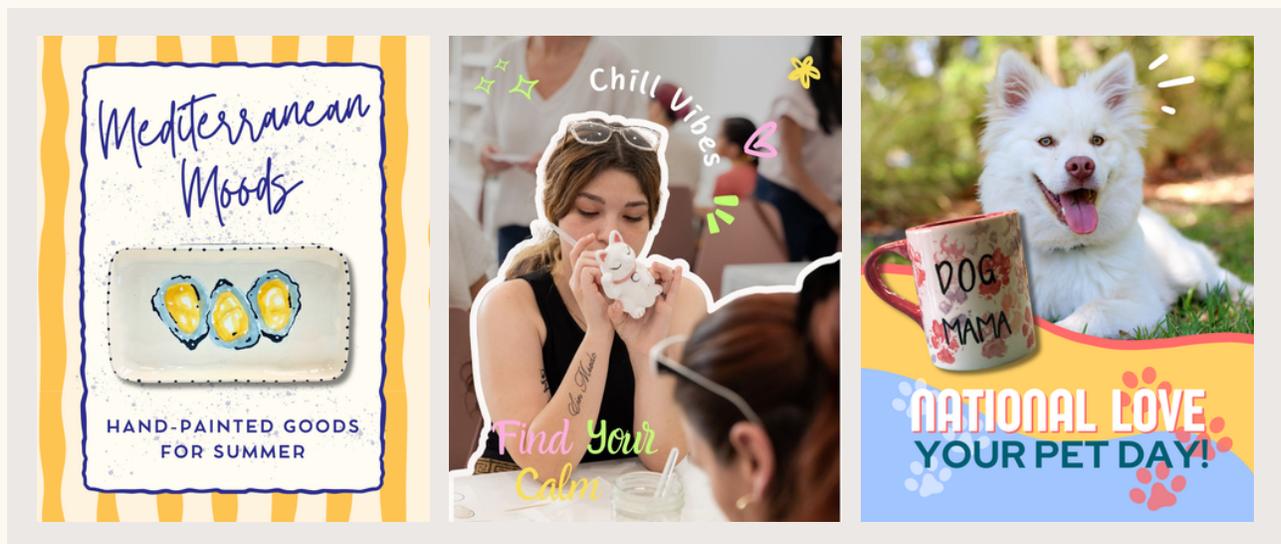
TRADE ASSOCIATIONS, LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS, CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

Determine local associations that you may want to be involved in to promote your studio. Keep in mind that you will need to participate in these organizations also to maximize your return on investment. CCSA is a must and provides you with discounts and valuable knowledge to pay for itself!

GRAND OPENING EVENT PLANNING

Plan a calendar of your grand opening and determine if you will have a soft opening period (not publicized) for training employees before promoting a large public event. Hard opening events can be difficult to manage if your staff is not well trained, but can provide a great boost to your opening sales. Determine the budget and types of advertising that will be used to promote your opening. Don't forget guerrilla marketing techniques and getting your employees involved in the efforts.

- CCSA provides Customized Marketing materials, including new monthly marketing graphics editable in Canva, marketing reels, monthly marketing calendars, yearly marketing calendars, and technique videos.
<https://www.ccsaonline.com/studio-membership>
- See below some examples of marketing graphics shared with our members monthly.



ADVERTISING PLAN

Determine your initial marketing budget and plan for the first six months of operations. Avoid hit-or-miss advertising that is not traceable. All advertising results should be tracked to determine which advertising is providing solid results worthy of your marketing dollars going forward. Track your advertising efforts by monitoring the discounts and offers redeemed from each marketing effort. If printing an offer, use a specific code associated with that ad and track it in your POS (set it up as an item or discount code).

WEBSITE, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND DOMAIN

Secure your domain early. Avoid .net and other domains not using .com. To determine what website domains are available, visit the service you intend to use to purchase the domain. If you don't have one, try GoDaddy's domain search at <https://www.godaddy.com/domains/domain-name-search.aspx>. Determine if you have the skills to set up the website or if you will hire someone to set this up. The most important aspects of your website deal with search engine optimization and helping people find your website. Professional assistance can provide great results if it is bringing new visitors to your website and store.



CONTEMPORARY CERAMIC
STUDIO ASSOCIATION

For more information on the Contemporary
Ceramic Studio Association or to become a
member, visit ccsaonline.com.

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