



SO YOU WANT TO OPEN A ZERO WASTE STORE?

That's awesome!

We need so many more options in our current society to help guide people towards a life with less waste. We need people like you with the drive and motivation to help turn this world into a place that we can be proud of, and not one that we trash every day. So, THANK YOU!

Now, a few steps to get you started:

This business requires a very specific set of guidelines for yourself. *Know where you draw the line and know what you will and will not do for your business.* **First step: start a business plan.** This will help you lay down your foundation and help you decide what is important to you. Without a business plan, you are driving blind. This plan may change over time and that's ok. It is meant to be a guide so you are going in the right direction *from the start*. There are a ton of templates online that can help get you started.

What you will need to learn and find:

Who is your audience?

Every city is different. That means every demographic will be different depending on where you live or where you choose to open a store. This requires research so you know your audience and what exactly you should be offering and at what cost. There are some great websites to use to find this information out like:

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/data/interactive-maps.html>

<http://doc.arcgis.com/en/esri-demographics/data/data-browser.htm>

What will you sell?

Resourcing is important. This is one of the trickiest parts of this concept since there isn't a structure already set up for this. You will need to find each individual supplier that you want to carry and make sure they meet your requirements. ZERO market has several and we recommend you do too. If you are in this for the money and sourcing doesn't mean a lot to you, you may want to rethink as that means your business will not have that backbone that is needed for success. Contact these suppliers, talk to them. Develop a relationship so they know you and are willing to work with you and your needs. Find local! Supporting local is the best way to offer sustainable options for customers. You will need to have a resale license for the majority of wholesalers so make sure you have your business set up first.

Where will you be?

Location really is everything. This will vary depending on where you are so it is hard to give advice on this. We recommend somewhere with foot traffic or a place for people to easily stumble upon you. This concept is still relatively new and you will be most successful if you find unknowing customers as well as your loyal base.

What do you expect?

You need to know what your targets will be for you to be able to stay afloat. Find your minimum amount of product sales to support your rent, payroll, utilities, all other expenses. Get yourself familiar with spreadsheets and data tables. These are your friend. This is a great way to mock up some balance sheets, cash flow and projected profit/loss statements.

If any of this seems overwhelming or confusing, use the resources out there already.

-SBA.GOV has amazing bits of info for you to get a small business set-up and started, as well as funding options. They also have templates for business plans.

-Use your local library. If they have a business section, even better! They have a wealth of knowledge from industry research to market share data and demographics databases. It's another side of the library that most people don't know exist and it's incredible.

-Get a mentor. Someone who was in business before and knows what to expect and you can learn from their mistakes to avoid your own. Check out score.org to find a mentor close to you.

-Take an entrepreneurship class or a basic business class for start-ups.

There is so much to getting something like this started so it is not for the weak of heart. It took 3 years of research, saving funds and thousands of hours to get ZERO market started. It is a lot of sacrifice and hard work, but it is definitely doable. We started tiny, like 90 sq.ft. tiny. We now have 3 locations totalling over 2500 sq.ft. The world needs this right now and people are catching on.

After reading all of this (if you're still reading) and you still need more advice or insight, we do offer **franchising opportunities**. We cannot offer consulting for opening a zero waste store anymore as it has just not worked out for us in the past and we would rather welcome people into the ZERO market family as an owner instead of creating competing businesses near our future locations. If you want to be a part of this amazing adventure and grow with us, contact us to find out how you can start a ZERO market in your area with us supporting and helping you the whole way!

