

Chapter 1 : The Complete Idiot's Guide to Starting a Food Truck Business : Alan Philips :

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Starting a Food Truck Business and millions of other books are available for Amazon Kindle. Learn more Enter your mobile number or email address below and we'll send you a link to download the free Kindle App.

The good news is there are many examples of entrepreneurs that have successfully built their own trailers and trucks without any formal experience. This post is intended to help you avoid some of the common mistakes entrepreneurs make when trying to build their own mobile food unit and provide an outline for accomplishing this massive undertaking. But first, we recommend being honest with yourself on your own ability to pull this off. But do you really want to? The other negative is that it will take you a lot more time to do it yourself than hire it out. Take our previous interview with The Boiler Monkey for example. We recommend listening to the full-interview if you plan to build a vehicle yourself. The Boiler Monkey enlisted help from friends sorting out the complex electrical wiring and borrowed tools from neighbors. The Boiler Monkey also took a full 3 months to convert their bus into the food-service machine they dreamed of. They did not have full-time jobs at the time either. Regular breakdowns are an unfortunate reality for many food trucks. Still determined to build a truck yourself? Determine Layout and Equipment In step one, you will determine the type of food truck you want, along with the equipment needed to serve the food. After all, if you decide you want to start a coffee truck you will have very different space and equipment requirements than a burger bus. Get a piece of paper or open a Word document and begin to write down each piece of equipment you need to include on your future truck. This could include a refrigerator, deep fryer, freezer, heat lamp, and storage space to list a few of the basics. After you get the list of equipment created the next part will be to determine how much space you need. Make sure to get the specifics of each piece of equipment you want to put into the truck and design a layout of where you want each piece of equipment to be placed. Take your time when determining the layout of your truck. You want to develop a truck layout that allows you to conduct food prep in an efficient way. This is critical since the more meals you can get out the service window per hour the more profit you can make. Make a list of the equipment you need. Determine how much space the equipment will consume. Determine the desired layout or blueprint of the kitchen based on your requirements. There are plenty of entrepreneurs that have converted school buses, vans, and even mobile homes to suit their needs. These out of the ordinary vehicles can even serve as a differentiator for your brand. Before investing in any type of vehicle, be sure that you bring along a friend that understands mechanics and can conduct an inspection of the vehicle prior to purchase. Some desirable elements is to find out if the truck was part of a fleet: When buying through a dealer, determining how the vehicle has been treated in the past will be more difficult. Pierson has years of experience converting pre-owned vehicles into food trucks. Food Truck Versus Food Trailer – Click here to learn about some of the unique advantages each option possesses. You can use a Sharpie marker to outline where all the equipment will be placed. You will also want to identify and mark the location of any outlets and fixtures, determine the location of the wall that separates the kitchen from the driver, and determine where you will position the propane tank and generator. Short video demonstrating the process of building a concession truck. Setup the Electrical Wiring This step is extremely important and can be more complex of an issue than it seems initially. For example, the X brothers began to assemble the Boiler Monkey they discovered there were enormous electrical problems with their truck. Getting the electrical wiring assembled the right way is extremely important because the operation of your future business depends on it. The electrician will need to run wire to all circuits and to the back panel. In some cases, electrical boxes may also need to be installed. When you build a house, you typically create a frame using wood to build the foundation to support wall of a home. Aluminum is highly recommended due to it being light-weight and extremely durable. That means any sort of wood should not be used in any area. Next install installation panels on the ceiling and walls of the vehicle and insulate the outside walls using Styrofoam more details on the specifics in the video below. Then the sub-walls and finish walls go into the truck. You will also want to install the floor at this time. Ask representatives at your city and local fire department for help positioning the gas tanks on your vehicle. After

the governing bodies give you their instructions for setup, install a gas manifold for equipment, connect the manifold to the propane tank and install the regulation. Finally, you will need to fabricate and install the tank rack to hold the equipment. Setting up the Interior Hood Next you will need to install the interior hood within the vehicle. This is an area where you will want to check with your local laws to confirm everything is up to code based on the city you plan to operate in. Interior hoods aid in the ventilation of the vehicle. Here are a few examples: After you complete this step, the vehicle will really start looking like a food truck. Complete Electric Work At this time you will finalize the electrical work by installing light fixtures, outlets, switches, breakers, panels, and connect the land wires to the breakers. Load Cooking Equipment Now is the time to load up and install the rest of the cooking equipment. This means everything from the refrigerator to the kitchen sink, cash register, and other tools required to deliver memorable food moments to your future customers. If it goes onto the truck, make sure to install it now. Plumbing Hiring an experienced plumber is recommended to setup this step and ensure everything is flowing sufficiently for the long term. While most veteran plumbers can probably figure out how to setup the plumbing in your vehicle, anticipate the charges to be 2 - 3 times the original estimate. At this time the plumber will connect the sinks to the fresh water tank, install a dump valve, and conduct other work that is required by your local ordinances. You will also need to connect the generator to the panel and transfer switch. Also, make sure the generator is installed in a well ventilated area of the vehicle. These things get hot! This is not something you want to do yourself since the first thing potential customers will see is the outside of your vehicle. Make sure you look like a pro. Each truck is a little bit different and has unique kitchen equipment needs. You might even be surprised that any friends that are plumbers, electricians, or mechanics will be happy to help you out with this interesting project. Also, follow food truck owners can also be an incredible resource. They understand the local laws and might have built their own truck as well. Here are a few additional resources we recommend checking out as well: Signing up for this forum is free, but before you start asking questions try entering your question into the Search Box located in the upper right hand corner of the website. This forum has been around a long time and your question might be answered in a previous thread already. Ultimate Food Truck Case Study - Check out this epic series of audio interviews to see how Anthony Salvagno started his food truck business. Everything from finding a food truck, to writing a business plan, and raising capital is discussed. If you enjoyed this post, please share it and browse our growing list of food truck entrepreneurship interviews!

Chapter 2 : How to Build a Food Truck Yourself - A Simple Guide

The Complete Idiot's Guide to Starting a Food Truck Business by Alan Phillips € Everything readers need to know to start up and operate a wildly popular mobile food business € Includes crucial marketing expertise from a successful food truck entrepreneur.

This can be so inspiring for a chef on the rise, especially one who wants to join the growing trend of starting a food truck business. Much like starting any business, though, there are things aspiring food truck owners need to know before burning asphalt. Start-up costs There are so many factors that go into being able to determine start-up costs for a food truck business. There are also one-time costs, as opposed to recurring start-up costs, and costs that can vary by location. One time startup costs could consist of things like purchasing your food truck, register or point-of-sale POS system, truck wrap, website design, office supplies, advertising and PR, and any professional, legal or consulting fees. While that list is not comprehensive, it gives potential food truck owners an idea of the things that will need to be paid for up front. Then there are the recurring costs such as payroll, equipment rental, credit card processing equipment and fuel. Every new food truck business will also have to obtain proper licenses and permits, which vary depending on location. Other startup costs to think about: Insurance business and vehicle Payment processing hardware, processing agreement, mobile data plan Commissary fees professional kitchen rental for prep work Truck appearance paint, wraps, lighting, etc. The first goal should be to put together a solid business plan. You should also make sure to have good personal and business credit, as this will increase your chances of receiving a business loan. If traditional financing is not an option for you, there are other, more creative ways, to get funding for your new food truck business. Here are some ways to start your business with minimal funding: Talk with someone who already owns a food truck and negotiate a lease or rental agreement. Start with a low-cost, used cart or trailer. If your truck idea includes providing a public service or benefit to the community, look to obtain sponsors. You may qualify for a processing advance loan if you are already contracted with a payment processor. Looking for business financing? This is a good option because used trucks are cheaper, and if they are local you can easily inspect them. While this is the most expensive option, it is the best way to ensure that your truck is up to codes and standards, and can be customized to your specifications. You may be able to find a local truck to lease, or from a national truck leasing company. Or, you could franchise a truck from an already established company. Here are some places to hunt for your perfect food truck:

Chapter 3 : Step Plan for How to Start a Mobile Food Truck Business

This book does a great job of describing in detail the ins and outs of running a food truck business. The author goes in depth into all that is required, from developing the initial concept, to structuring the business, to marketing, to hiring staff and expanding - all the way to describing the kinds of results and earnings some food truck businesses generate, and much more.

Boy, have times changed. Now, popular chefs, successful restaurateurs, and quirky foodies are all getting in on the act. Some of the most successful owners report hour work weeks. If these goals and working style draw your attention, consider this ten-step plan for food truck success. Cities have various requirements, including health department certificates, truck permits, and parking restrictions. Every city has its own policies, so contact your local government to get the facts. Be prepared for obstacles. New York City, for example, puts a cap on the number of truck permits that they will issue. Why are they so expensive? Health departments have the same rules for food trucks as they do for restaurants, so your vehicle will need expensive specialty equipment. If, on the other hand, you can prepare food in advance in your home or commercial kitchen, then you can just keep your wares warm in a cart or smaller truck. Picture the hot dog vendors who keep their dogs warm in their sidewalk carts. Because this will be the largest expense in your new business, you need to get it right. The key to success in this new and improved business sector is finding your own niche and becoming the top expert. For example, some food truck vendors find success in combining costumes and quirky language to enhance their image. **Get Financing** After you know what you need to spend, create a finance plan. You may find an owner-financing option for your truck, or you may need to go to other places for capital to finance your small business. You can take out a loan from a bank or credit union, utilize peer-to-peer lending networks like Lending Club or Prosper, or borrow from friends and family. If this is your first time writing a business plan, take a look at the U. Talk with an agent, and describe exactly what purpose the truck will serve. You should only have to pay for standard car insurance, but your agent will need to take your special circumstances into consideration when designing your policy to account for other risks and liabilities. For instance, will your neighborhood association let you park it in front of your home? If you have off-street parking, will it be safe overnight? In addition, some health departments require that vendors park only in approved facilities with refrigeration and electricity. Many vendors also generate brisk business by catering special events and corporate functions. Event planners will pay you to be on their property during an event so the attendees will have access to good food and a high-profile brand name. If you already have connections in the municipal and business world, then you have a head start. Cultivate those contacts and ask them for contracts. Join local associations and organizations that cater to business owners in your community, like the Chamber of Commerce. Use your networking skills to meet the people who can pass along your name as a recommended caterer. You can keep followers informed of your location through your Twitter feed, or use smaller niche networks to attract new customers. Other tools give you an opportunity to interact with your fans and supporters by allowing them to vote on new menu items, choose the color of your truck before you repaint, or pick your next weekly special. You can sell t-shirts and promotional items online and in person. The bigger your brand and the more unique your idea is, the more willing your customers will be when it comes to advertising for you by wearing a cool sweatshirt or cap. **Final Word** The food truck business has changed incredibly over the past few years, becoming one of the hottest new businesses. If it sounds like your dream job, check with your city officials to see what options you have. And if you want to test your food idea on the public, tell us about it in the comments below. You just might get the kind of feedback that will spark the idea that launches you to the top of the industry! Do you have dreams of starting your own food truck business? What are some of the biggest challenges that you envision facing?

Chapter 4 : A Guide to Starting a Food Truck Business

A guide to starting a food truck business features information and advice on the industry, menu trends, creating a

business plan, advertising techniques, hiring the best employees, health and safety issues, and building clientele.

Chapter 5 : The Complete Idiot's Guide to Starting a Food Truck Business (Complete Idiot' | eBay

Food-industry observers claim that the food-truck business is increasing largely in response to the slow-growing economy. People are seeking inexpensive breakfasts and lunches.