

## **Know Why You Want to Start a Business**

If starting a business is in your plans, determining your primary reason for such an effort is vital.

“You may think that is an odd comment to make because people obviously start a business to make money,” says (Insert name and title) of (Insert county). “That’s true for some, but people start businesses for lots of reasons. Money is not always the primary goal.”

So what are some of the other reasons why people want to open a business?

High on that list is to be able to enjoy their passion. These business owners take one of two paths. They may open a business based around their passion. For example, they love music, so they become a private music instructor. Or they may take a completely different path, such as becoming mobile app developer. That job brings in an income so they can live and do what they love, perhaps skiing.

Another reason people want to start their own business is simply to be in charge. They want to be their own boss.

“Today we are having more people who start a business because they want to make a difference or are interested in social change,” says Glenn Muske, the North Dakota State University Extension Service’s rural and agribusiness enterprise development specialist. “It’s great when they can merge their desire with their passion, but sometimes they simply find an idea to make money that allows them the opportunity to give to a particular social cause and also have the time to get involved in it.”

TOMS, a shoe and eyewear company based in Playa de Rey, Calif., fits the former, but as it has grown, it is using its business idea as a means of producing money to support its nonprofit organization. For every pair of shoes TOMS sells, an impoverished child receives a pair of shoes, and when the company sells a pair of eyewear, part of the profit is used to save or restore the eyesight of people in developing countries.

People also start businesses because they see an opportunity or have an idea. This idea might fit with those who have a passion or those who want to make money. However, these people have a somewhat different drive than other small-business owners.

Owners who start a business because they think they can do it better - produce a better product or service, or they have a better production or distribution or management method - typically are much like those who see an opportunity.

“There is one final primary group of people starting business,” says Muske. “The people in this group are looking for a way to increase their household income.”

The businesses they start may be full time or part time. They may want to supplement their income or replace it entirely with a larger stream of cash.

The reasons why someone wants to start his or her own business are many and varied. And each reason is as valid as the next. Plus, each reason can lead to a successful outcome. But no matter the reason for starting a business, it must be profitable, according to (Insert last name). So making money must remain in your plans, at least as a secondary goal.

“It is possible to run a business and not aim to make a profit,” (Insert last name) says. “But in that case, you actually are enjoying your hobby and not running a business.”

Understanding what you want from your business will help you design and build something that make your dreams real. So take the time to determine your motives.

Contact your local Extension Service office at [insert phone number and email address] for help in building your business. Also visit NDSU’s small-business support website at [www.ag.ndsu.edu/smallbusiness](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/smallbusiness) and sign up for the monthly newsletter. Or check out Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/NDSUextsmallbiz> or Twitter at @gmuske.

Other resources include <http://powerofbusiness.net> and [www.eXtension.org/entrepreneurship](http://www.eXtension.org/entrepreneurship). The Small Business Administration and its related organizations, such as the Small Business Development Centers and SCORE, also can be valuable resources.

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