

Repair Business



The focus of the repair business model is to provide opportunities for products and materials to enjoy a long, useful life and keep materials out of the landfill. Options for this business range from developing a retail establishment where customers bring in items for repair, to running a business out of your home or garage, to operating a mobile repair service. Some of these recommended services require local management of items and some specialty skills, such as bookbinding or book repair. These may warrant an online business presence and a nationwide customer base. Consider offering a few different types of repair service as an option.

Operating a repair business requires certain skills such as small engine repair, sewing or upholstery skills, furniture wood-working, book repair, electronic equipment repair or electrical repair skills. Many of these skills can be gained through local community college courses or online correspondence training.

Adding a repair service to an existing business can be a nice revenue-generating addition. A thrift store or Habitat for Humanity ReStore can look at expanding their services to include repair. This can be offered either as a fee-for-service to the public or the store could develop an in-house repair shop that allows items coming into the shop needing repair to bring value. Repaired higher value items can be sold at the store or perhaps could reap even higher value to collectors via specialized e-commerce websites, such as Ebay.



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Types of Repair Services

- Small Engine
- Appliance Repair
- Computer and Electronics Repair
- Furniture Repair and Recovering
- Clothing or Shoes Repair
- Bookbinding and Repair
- Electric Appliance or Lighting Repair
- Bicycle Repair
- Repair Cafe

Repair Options

- Offer repair service as a retail establishment
- Offer repair from home-based business
- Offer repair as a mobile service
- Locate and repair items that can be sold for a profit through e-commerce or local consignment
- Develop a specialty repair service or skill that will support regional or even online utilization of your business

CNN Money lists “Electronics Repair” as 1 of 9 Hot Businesses You Can Start Now!



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Repair Business Options

Small Engine Repair

For those that are mechanically-inclined and handy with repair, starting a small engine repair business could be a great local enterprise. Training on repair is also readily available at local community colleges or through correspondence courses. Small engine equipment includes lawn mowers, outboard motors, gas trimmers, lawn tractors, snowmobiles, snow blowers, leaf blowers and chainsaws. Another revenue opportunity is to buy used outdoor power equipment that needs repairing or a good clean-up and then sell it for a profit either at your store or through online e-commerce venues such as Craigslist or Ebay. A third revenue source would be to rent outdoor power equipment and tools.

Furniture Re-Upholstery and Repair

If you have sewing skills and are handy repairing wood furniture, a business focusing on giving new life to furniture is a great opportunity. Adding service such as antique furniture restoration could be a logical complement. Upholstery repair can serve the RV, automotive and boat sectors as well.

Appliance Repair and/or Used Appliance Sales

Starting a business around used appliances has two opportunities. One aspect is to provide mobile repair services or storefront repairs. The second aspect is to purchase secondhand appliances that need some repair or freshening and then re-selling these items for a profit. Having repair skills, a heavy-duty dolly and a pick-up truck or utility trailer will be essential. Target markets to sell to, include: homeowners on a budget, restaurants, and owners of rental properties or second homes.

Repair Cafe

By merging an existing business establishment such as a coffee shop, thrift store or Habitat for Humanity ReStore, a new concept of a repair café has emerged. This model uses volunteers to help customers with repairs. Tools and repair books are provided in a communal space for folks to fix what needs fixing in a supportive environment. This space could support a tool lending service, as well. Sell warm drinks and snacks to provide supplemental revenue.

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Best Practices

Assess what repair businesses are already in place in your community and see if there is a niche needing to be filled. If you have and want to learn certain repair skills, but would like to partner with an existing business, such as a furniture sales store, your complementary repair business can be a value-added service to customers coming in to that business. Networking with businesses that sell your repaired products will be a natural fit to ensure that retailers recommend your services to potential customers.

Be sure to secure all required licenses and insurance.

