

SMALL BIZ SURVIVAL – Small-business Ownership: It Gets Easier! OR NOT?

by Glenn Muske / *Reprinted with permission from: Small Biz Survival*

Getting a business up and running takes a lot of hard work.

Trying to decide what business to start, determining if there is an audience, and getting your systems in order takes a lot of your effort. And these initial tasks happen at a time when you have only yourself or, at best, limited help available.

As I talk with startup-business owners, they often comment about looking forward to getting beyond the startup stage when they won't have to work so hard.

Thinking it gets easier, though, is somewhat of a myth.

Yes, certain things do get easier. You have a market of regular buyers. Certain aspects of the business become routine. Your business has an established presence, it's visible. And you have key employees performing some of the key tasks.

Probably one of the biggest things is that money is coming in and you have established a cash flow that can be used to pay bills and expenses. Plus that cash flow is allowing you to pay yourself and pay off some of the debt you probably took on when you started the business.

But while certain things get easier, new tasks come along and existing tasks get harder.

One of the biggest challenges is how to keep things new and fresh for you existing customers. It is much easier to sell to someone who has already purchased from your business. However with all of the competition, it can be hard to keep the customer coming back to your store.

Keeping things new means not only updated products and services but bringing on new products and product lines. It means new means of service. New ways to market and even new ways for customers to pay (think near-field communication or payment through an app) are now your challenges. New regulations come along. Finally, your cash-flow issues don't go away. They change to finding ways to allow for your growth and to increase wages and benefits.

The bottom line, as reported by existing business owners, is that running a business gets different but it doesn't get easier.

This should not stop you and your pursuit of a dream. Small-business ownership offers great opportunities and rewards. Just understand the realities and then enjoy the ride.