

# Cake Decorator

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From cakes to cookies; baked goods are always a popular choice for birthday parties and special occasions of all sorts. The demand is universal and spans almost all communities the world over. If you have a talent for baking or are just starting out your baking career; this is a work at home business worth considering.

## Before the Start-Up, Let's Not Get Ahead of Ourselves

No formal qualifications required here, just a passion for baking and plenty of experience both baking and decorating cakes. Don't worry if you aren't an experienced baker just yet. If you are serious about pursuing this as a business then take the time to expand your skill base and knowledge. Search on Amazon for the best selling baking and decorating books, take short courses at your local college and bake for friends birthdays and parties.

Don't rely on friends and family for constructive criticism. If friends and family are the only people you can get feedback from try the following. When you take your baked goods or cakes to a function or party, don't tell anyone they are yours. Then mention you are considering buying more from the baker, and ask them what they think of the quality. This way you'll get honest feedback that isn't clouded by loyalties or sympathy.

## The Start-Up

This work at home business requires little start-up capital. All you'll need to get started is a kitchen, oven, recipes and baking and decorating utensils. Depending on what country you live in, you might need to be aware of food preparation codes and permits. Be sure to do adequate research on this before getting started, there are usually hefty fines for breaking such legislation.

If your business is successful you might need to consider upgrading your home kitchen or moving into commercial premises. You might also need to consider buying a delivery vehicle. Until that time however, your home kitchen and personal vehicle will do just fine!

Finally, even small start-ups should give a little thought to branding. Spend some time initially coming up with an original name, slogan and logo. Have some inexpensive business cards and stickers made to put on your packaging. Word of mouth and referrals will often be your greatest source of new business, so getting your name out there along with your amazing baked goods and cakes is important.

## Making It Work

Demand usually isn't a problem in this market, but burn out is. Spend time initially planning your business system and baking processes. Being lazy in business is often a good thing. Look at everything you do, and ask, is there a way to do this faster, easier and cheaper.

To maintain a constant flow of business during all seasons you'll need to do some serious networking. Look for opportunities such as supplying cakes to coffee shops and other such establishments. Also work to build industry contacts, such as owners of catering companies who don't make baked goods or cakes themselves.

## **Marketing**

Networking, word of mouth, referral and return business, will with time take care of much of your marketing requirements. However until that time you're going to need to get the word out. Market your cake decoration or baking business in newspaper ads and classifieds, community newsletters and on community bulletin boards.

## **Don't Forget**

The easiest way to develop a price structure for your business is to look at what your competitors are charging. Once you have been operating for a few months you will have a better idea of the costs that your business incurs and can adjust your prices appropriately.