

# Professional Organizer

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Organization is essential to success, however many otherwise successful people simply don't have the time or ability to properly organize their lives. Organization professionals often choose areas of specialization and can be found organizing anywhere from offices to outdoor spaces and bedrooms. If you're organized by nature and can create a system out of any chaos then this is the business for you.

## Before The Start-Up, Let's Not Get Ahead Of Ourselves

No formal qualifications are required. You will however need to be an especially organized person and have a talent for creating systems and improving efficiency. Depending on your area of specialization you will also need some in depth knowledge. If for example you plan on specializing in office organization you'll need a thorough knowledge of office furniture, supplies, products and accessories.

Depending on where you live there are certifications available for professional organizers. Whether you are a seasoned veteran or just starting out, it's worth investigating this; certification adds credibility to your business and lets clients know you're serious about what you do. The [N.A.P.O.](#) (National Association of Professional Organizers) in the U.S. offers certification, find out more [here](#).

## The Start-Up

There isn't much required to get started, you'll need a name for your business, logo, letterhead, invoice and business cards. As a consultancy you won't be selling a tangible product, this makes marketing that much more important. Make sure you logo, business cards and other stationary are clean and professional. Consider hiring a designer off [Elance.com](#) or taking advantage of one of their packages.

Since you'll be working away from home for a large part of the day a mobile office is a must. You'll need a cell phone and laptop and that's all! It's really useful to be able to work online no matter where you are; consider getting a 3G cell phone or data card for your laptop. Finally, complete your mobile office by going paperless and sending your invoices by email. Some clients prefer to get all their invoices in PDF format, use [Open Office](#) to convert documents to PDF or go professional and buy Flash Paper or Acrobat Professional.

There are numerous niches to choose from when starting-up your business. Professional organizers work in the following areas:

- **Space Planning:** Organization of furniture, lighting, noise and foot traffic in both the home and office environments
- **Storage Design:** What most people think about when you mention the word professional organizer; this includes organizing cupboard, closet, draw and any other storage space
- **Time Management:** Organization of both personal and professional time, including scheduling, delegating, goal setting and prioritizing
- **Paper Management:** Organizing the flow of paper documents in the office
- **Clutter Control:** Putting the proper systems in place to quickly deal with any unexpected

clutter that accumulates in both the home and office

Depending on your skill set and interests you should pick one or two niches to specialize in. The entire structure of your business will revolve around your target market so it's best to decide before doing anything else. Gear your logo, company name and marketing materials for your chosen niches.

On average professional organizers charge \$25 to \$40 (USD) per hour. Do comparative research to find out what other organizers in your area charge before deciding on your own rate.

## **Making It Work**

Many people would rather be taught how to organize their own lives rather than hire a consultant. Make sure you don't miss out on this portion of the market and consider expanding your services into education. The easiest way to start teaching is to offer your services to an existing college or organization. Do research online and make enquiries at places that offer organizational lectures or courses. Such places might be a continuing education college or an educational series at your local library. If you live in the U.S. check the [N.A.P.O.](#) site for more information on instruction opportunities.

## **Marketing**

Build your brand by networking within the industry and beyond. If you specialize in office organization you might network with IT companies or network specialists, if on the other hand you specialize in home organization you might network with interior designers, painters, builders and anyone else doing non essential work on homes.

Get the word out by advertising in local newspaper classifieds, on websites like [Welcome Wagon](#), in local community publications and by expanding your business into education.

Finally consider getting a website developed. Hire a designer to develop a simple four page lead generation site for you. Make sure your site is simple and attractive, with a strong focus on the contact form. Drive traffic to your site using a pay per click service such as Google Adwords. Adwords can be a little tricky in the beginning but it is a skill worth learning and a valuable asset to any business. We recommend [The Definitive Guide to Google Adwords](#) to get started.

## **Don't Forget**

As a professional organizer you will have very low monthly expenses. Don't let this lull you into a false sense of security. Travel expenses and cell phone bills are easy to accumulate and can drastically reduce your bottom line. Keep an accurate record of your travel expenses. Irregardless of whether you charge a flat rate or hourly fee its important to make sure you travel expenses are covered in your price. Finally make sure you have a cell phone contract that best suits your needs.