

How To Make Extra Money With A Delivery Service

If you have a truck, motorbike, van or even a small trailer, you can use it to deliver messages or make light deliveries. Contract with stores and businesses to deliver their messages and or packages on a retainer plus trip basis, such as \$50 per month or year retainer and \$4 per delivery (within the city) or 20 cents per mile.

DELIVERY SERVICE

Many businesses either have a need to deliver or have customers who need delivery service.

Examples are merchandise for handicapped or elderly people, phone-in orders and catalog store deliveries of merchandise that comes in several days after it is ordered.

Maintaining a delivery service can be very expensive for local merchants. They must have a truck, commercial insurance, pay and insure a driver -- expenses that may be out of the question for a small business.

This is why some would be happy to contract or refer delivery chores. Even businesses that have their own services can never predict how busy they might be at any particular time and may need help with backlogs, especially during high sales seasons.

People who buy a new vacuum today do not want to wait a week to have it delivered -- some will even cancel the order if it is not delivered on time!

Deliveries are not limited to merchandise; they can be packages of important papers, picking up items for shipment or going after a part for a mechanic.

Your delivery business can be oriented to retail or wholesale customers, or even both. Retail is the most profitable, but it is less dependable and may not support a good business by itself.

For retail business, keep an ad in the paper and make sure you have good signs on your truck that display your company name, service and how to reach you. Some of your most effective advertising is when people see you performing your service and note your name and phone number. They then associate need (theirs) with the solution (you).

If there are other delivery services in your area, you might call find one that will agree to reciprocal back up -- you call him when you need assistance and vice-versa.

Be prepared to enter into wholesale agreements, where your services may be need on an irregular basis... The contract may be for a set schedule, or it can be for up to a certain mileage and/or number of calls per week or month. The agreement should state what you get for deliveries, mileage or hours over and above that called for in the contract.

You might also agree to display the client's sign (magnetic signs are good for this purpose) when making deliveries to his

customers - and, you should assure your clients that you will represent their interests professionally on their behalf.

When you deliver for Smith Drug Store display their sign, you ARE Smith Drug Store as far as the customer is concerned.

A variation of the above plan is to have a referral agreement with the stores. When customers need something delivered, the store recommends (and even calls) you. The main difference with this alternative is that you are working for the customer, not the store.

The customer pays you. You are responsible for the item being delivered while in your possession.

This variation works nicely with a retail delivery business and requires the same type of insurance. With this arrangement the store could hire you to pick up things for them too (as a retail customer), but you can give them a discount for volume of trips.

The delivery service business needs advertising to make every potential customer knows who you are, what you do, and how to find you.

Put signs on your truck, notices on bulletin boards (the supermarket is great for this), keep a small ad in the local paper, and if you can afford it, a listing in the yellow pages.

Have some business cards printed and leave them with every business or potential customer you can. If you can't afford business cards, get a rubber stamp and make your own (use the same stamp to "imprint" your receipts).

Print copies of your rates where you can. Call on businesses in the area and ask them to try your services. Inform the Chamber of Commerce, banks, real estate offices and the bus station (many packages come in there and some may need transportation) of your services. Leave your name and number with travel agencies, depots and furniture stores.

MESSENGER SERVICE

This is closely allied with delivery service but is a little more complicated. Messages and small packages (often of very important papers) that are sent by messenger are almost always expensive or urgent (or both). They can be deed that is needed to transact an important real estate deal, a note that is being paid off, a package of valuable bonds that are being traded, or an affidavit that must be signed immediately and gotten back to the broker.

A messenger service generally requires more speed, accessibility, reliability (human and vehicle than a delivery service).

In a smaller town environment , it should be sufficient to have a beeper system, where the office can alert messengers in the field to call response time.

A defense lawyer in court may not be able to wait 30 minutes for a messenger on an errand to call in. In the larger cities a radio telephone will become a must in order to compete with the "big boys."

In preparing for your messenger service, plans can be made to "get by" until the business is established, but long range plans should include a system to provide almost instant response in order to be the best service in town.

As mentioned above, messengers frequently are called upon to handle not only important packages, but also expensive ones--as in the case of negotiable bonds, and partially completed documents concerning ownership.

Each messenger should be bonded -- not only to deter theft, but to ensure potential customers that their important papers and valuables will be handled only by bonded personnel -- a major point with some organizations.

Bonding can be obtained through most any insurance agency and is usually not very expensive.

Another important consideration is scheduling and the establishment of priority procedures.. The messenger must know which deliveries (or pickups) take priority over others -- and that you, as a company must be able to explain this policy to customers.

If a delivery is delayed, the customer whose package is late has much right to know the reason as the one who gets priority treatment. The easiest way to solve this dilemma is to establish your rates based on priority (it is also the most profitable solution).

For example, you might charge \$5 to pick up and deliver a package up to 2 pounds that calendar days; \$7.50 to do it before noon, and \$10 to "drop everything" and do it now.

Remember, however, that the \$5 jobs still have to be done the same day -- they CANNOT be postponed without serious damage to your reputation. If you EVER have to do that, be sure and inform your clients in advance! Remember the old, but same advice: Surprise people with GOOD news, not bad.

There are distinct similarities in delivery and messenger services, and there is no doubt that the two could be combined in the less populated area where there is not much competition.

A new business could also provide both types of service initially, and then "gravitate" towards whichever seems to be the best. In either case, it is necessary to build a reputation for honesty and dependability.

The biggest chance for major problem in either would be an accident (or incident) that was not adequately insured. If you have the necessary insurance, do a good job and advertise your service well, you have an excellent chance of building your service into a very rewarding business.

BUSINESS SOURCES

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION, Box 684, Washington, DC 20004.
United States regulatory service for delivery and messenger

services. Write for information.

QUILL CORPORATION, 100 Schelster Rd.,Lincolnshire, IL 60917-4700,
312/634-4800. Office and computer supplies.

NEBS, 500 Main St.,Groton, MA 04171, 800/225-6380. Office and
computer supplies.

ZPS, Box 581, Libertyville, IL 60048-2556. Business cards (raised
print - \$11.50 per K) and letterhead stationery. Will print your
copy ready logo or design, even whole card.

IVEY PRINTING, Box 761, Meridan, TX 76665. Write for price list.

SWEDCO, Box 29, Mooresville, NC 28115. 3 line rubber stamps and
business cards. Write for catalog.

WALTER DRAKE, 4119 Drake Bldg.,Colorado Springs, CO 80940. Short
run business cards and stationery. Good quality; no choice of ink
or style.