LAUNCHING YOUR DREAM STUDIO IN 10 STEPS

WORKBOOK



STUDIO GROW

To my aspiring Studio Owners,

Nobody starts a studio because they want to run a studio. And, if you don't know how to open a studio, you're gonna run into some big problems like....

- ***Overextending financially*** due to lack of a structured budget and unforeseen expenses, leading to a rocky start or, worse, premature closure.
- ***Wasting valuable time and resources*** on ineffective marketing strategies that don't resonate with your target audience, making it hard to fill classes or retain members.
- ***Facing operational chaos*** due to unclear processes and roles, resulting in a poor customer experience and high staff turnover.
- ***Struggling to build and retain a dedicated and qualified team***, leading to inconsistent class quality and a lack of leadership and mentorship within your studio community.

If you're wondering about what next steps to take, we've got you! We have helped 200 (and counting!) studios open profitably, and we know exactly where the sticking points are in each stage of studio growth. One things we've seen over and over again is that sometimes the stickiest parts really do come right before the biggest transformations.

Together, we'll make 2026 the year your business soars.

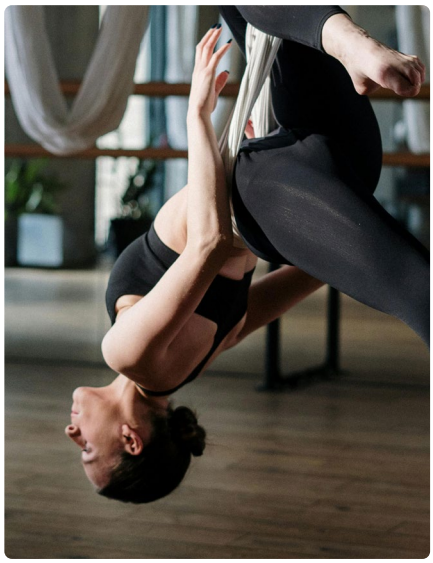
With grit and gratitude, Lise



"With Studio Grow, I opened profitably in September and by January had **8X-ed my first month.**" **- Jen**

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If you **plan appropriately**, you can expect to spend about $125,000 while opening your studio. **If you try to wing it, you might spend double that!**

We know that every dollar counts. That is why we are excited to share our checklist that has helped us open many, many studios profitably at Studio Grow.

This workbook will serve as your initial roadmap, guiding you through the foundational steps to turn your vision into reality. Remember, the path to opening a successful studio is as unique as your vision for it. Therefore, **consider this workbook a launchpad rather than an exhaustive manual.** It's designed to ignite your planning process, spark inspiration and outline the critical steps ahead.

STEP 1: Craft a Robust Business Plan

Crafting a detailed business plan not only clarifies your own path forward but is also essential for securing financing and partnerships. It's your first major step towards making your studio a reality.

Define Your Business Goals And Objectives

Determine what you want to achieve with your studio. Are you looking to offer a unique yoga or Pilates experience to your clients? Are you focused on catering to a specific demographic or fitness need? Be clear about your goals and objectives so that you can build a successful business that meets your needs.

Define Your Vision

What are the core values and mission of your studio? Write them down.

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Outline Your Services

Detail the classes and other services you plan to offer. Consider a mix that appeals to your target market.

Develop Your Financial Projections

Begin by estimating your startup costs, which should include everything from equipment purchases to rent, operational expenses and initial marketing efforts. Next, create a set of financial forecasts that include three-year projections for revenue, expenses and profitability. This will help you better understand your cash needs and financial requirements.

Outline Your Marketing Strategies

Begin to think about a marketing strategy that will best serve your business. Consider building a social media presence, partnering with other local businesses or gyms and offering a referral program.

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STEP 2: Conduct Thorough Market Research and Define Your Audience

Understanding the market you're entering is critical. This step dives deep into who your customers are, what they need and who else is offering similar services.

Deep Dive Into Market Dynamics

Explore the broader fitness industry landscape, including competitive analysis and identifying gaps in the market. This helps position your studio uniquely.

Identify Your Target Audience

Create a detailed profile of your ideal client. Consider demographics, interests and fitness goals. This will help tailor your marketing strategies and fitness programs to appeal to your target audience.

Analyze Local Competitors

Look at other boutique fitness studios in your local area to see what they offer, what sets them apart and how they market their services. What can you offer that they don't? Understanding your competition helps in positioning your studio uniquely.

Survey Potential Customers

Conduct surveys or focus groups with potential customers to gather information on their fitness needs, preferences and buying habits.

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STEP 3: Determine Funding Sources and Develop Your Financial Model

This step is about translating your vision and market research into numbers—identifying how much funding you'll need to launch and sustain your business until it becomes profitable.

Create A Budget

With your financial projections laid out in Step 1, the next step involves identifying the funding needed to bring your vision to life and keep it operational while you grow. Develop a detailed budget that outlines all the expenses associated with starting and running your studio. This may include leasing or purchasing a facility, equipment purchase or lease, staffing costs, marketing expenses and other overhead costs like utilities, insurance and maintenance fees.

Identify Your Funding Source

With a budget in place, you can begin exploring different funding sources. This could include traditional bank loans or lines of credit, crowdfunding platforms, private investors or government grants or loans.

Explore Financing Options

It's important to explore all of your financing options and choose the one that best fits your business model and long-term goals. For example, if you're planning to start small and grow organically, you may want to consider a small business loan or a line of credit from a local bank. If you're looking to scale quickly and need a larger investment, you may want to seek out private investors or venture capital funding. [Be prepared to provide detailed financial projections and a solid business plan to potential investors and lenders.]

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STEP 4: Navigate Site Selection & Lease Negotiations

Selecting the right location and understanding the basics of lease negotiation are crucial early steps in setting the stage for your studio's success. Even before you start looking at spaces, it's important to have a clear picture of what you need and what to watch out for. Here's how to approach this phase:

Define Your Ideal Location Criteria

Start by imagining the ideal location for your studio. Consider factors such as the demographics of the area, proximity to other businesses, ease of access for your clients and the general vibe of the neighborhood.

Learn About Lease Basics

Familiarize yourself with common lease terms and concepts, even before you engage with real estate professionals. Understanding terms like "gross lease," "net lease," "build-out allowances" and "lease term" will empower you to have informed discussions.

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STEP 5: Secure Permits and Licenses

Navigating the local legal landscape is a crucial step in opening your studio. Here's what you'll need to consider:

- **Business License:** This is the most basic license required for all businesses and allows you to legally operate your studio.
- **Zoning Permit:** Your location must be zoned for a fitness studio and meet specific requirements, such as parking spaces and the number of people allowed per class.
- **Health Permit:** You may need a health permit if you plan to offer services that involve physical contact such as massage or physical therapy.
- **Insurance:** You need liability insurance to protect your business and customers in case of injury or damage to property.

Research Local Requirements

Begin drafting a checklist of permits and licenses you'll need, including potential costs and processing timeframes. This will help you plan your timeline and budget more effectively.

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STEP 6: Develop a Compelling Brand Strategy and Marketing Plan

Creating a strong branding strategy and marketing plan takes time and effort, but it's worth the investment to attract and retain loyal customers. A strong brand identity and consistent marketing efforts can set your studio apart from competitors and increase customer awareness and loyalty.

Be consistent in your branding across all platforms for a cohesive look and feel. Make sure to track the ROI of your marketing efforts to determine what's working and where you can improve.

Define Your Unique Selling Proposition

What makes your studio different? Reflect on the unique benefits your studio offers that competitors don't. This could be your training methodology, community environment or any specialized services.

Develop a Brand Personality and Tone that Resonates with Your Target Audience

How do you want your brand to be perceived? Think about the tone and personality of your brand—whether it's empowering, nurturing, energetic or serene—and ensure it reflects in all your communications.

Design Your Visual Identity

Create a logo and choose a color scheme that reflects the essence of your brand. These elements should be memorable and consistently used across all platforms to create cohesion.

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Establish Your Online Presence

Build a strong online presence through a professional website, social media and listings on local business directories.

Formulate Your Merchandising Plan

Create branded merchandise such as apparel and water bottles to increase brand awareness and loyalty.

Create Content Strategy for Engagement

Develop a content strategy for your website and social media that highlights your unique offering and showcases your brand personality.

Provide Promotions & Partnerships

Offer promotions and discounts to attract new customers and retain existing ones.

Pursue Community Engagement

Partner with complementary businesses or organizations to leverage each other's audiences and promote events or products. Plan how you can engage with your local community beyond the studio walls.

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STEP 7: Recruit and Train Skilled Staff and Instructors

Building a team that resonates with your brand's mission and values is crucial for the success of your studio. Here's how to begin approaching this important step:

- **Strategic Job Postings:** Consider posting job listings on fitness job boards or social media channels to attract qualified candidates with relevant experience and certifications.
- **Seek Passion and Purpose:** Look for candidates who are passionate about fitness and have a desire to help others achieve their fitness goals.
- **Assess Teaching Skills & Knowledge:** During the interview process, assess candidates' knowledge of different exercise styles and their ability to create effective workouts for various fitness levels.
- **Certifications & Safety Training:** Ensure that all instructors and staff have up-to-date certifications and training in CPR and first aid.
- **Create a Culture of Continuous Learning:** Consider offering ongoing training and development opportunities to your staff to help them stay up to date with the latest fitness trends and best practices.

Your team will be responsible for delivering the experience that keeps your customers coming back for more. It's essential to invest in hiring the right people. Your staff should align with the culture and values of your studio.

Create Values-Aligned Role Outlines

Reflect on how each role within your team will contribute to your studio's goals and how you can support their growth alongside your business.

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STEP 8: Maximize Your Studio's Revenue Through Facilities & Equipment

Creating a studio that maximizes every square foot for revenue is an art and science, blending strategic layout planning with the selection of the right equipment. This step focuses on optimizing your space to enhance the client experience while ensuring efficiency. Here are some consideration

Evaluate Equipment Options

- Research different brands and read reviews from other fitness professionals and enthusiasts.
- Consider the specific needs of your clientele and the type of workouts you offer when selecting equipment.
- Choose equipment that is durable and easy to maintain.
- Seek equipment that has a warranty or guarantee.

Strategic Layout Planning

- Consider the flow of your space carefully. How will clients move from one area to another? How can you arrange equipment to maximize engagement and minimize congestion? A well-thought-out layout contributes significantly to the overall client experience and safety.
- Design your facilities to create a welcoming and motivating environment.
- Maximize your ROI. Focus on utilizing every square inch of your studio.

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STEP 9: Establish Partnerships with Other Businesses or Organizations

In this step, we dive into the process of identifying, approaching and nurturing relationships with potential partners, focusing on mutual growth and shared success.

Assess Potential Partners for Values Alignment

Look for businesses or organizations that share your values and target audience. For example, if you are a yoga studio, consider partnering with a local wellness center or natural products store. How closely do potential partners' values align with your studio's mission? Reflecting on this can help ensure that any partnership enhances your brand and resonates with your members.

Conduct Thorough Research

Learn more about potential partnerships by researching their reputation, services and customer base. You can also check their social media accounts and online reviews to see what their customers are saying about them. What do these sources tell you about their standing in the community and their compatibility with your studio?

Initiate Contact Thoughtfully

Craft a proposal that outlines the mutual benefits of a partnership. When reaching out, how can you clearly communicate the value each partner brings to the table? Think about the strengths of your studio and how they complement the strengths of your potential partners.

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Collaborate for Mutual Benefit

Once you've established a partnership, collaborate with your partners to create joint promotions and events. For example, you can offer a wellness package that includes yoga sessions, massage and natural supplements, all provided by your partners. How can these collaborations offer added value to your members and foster a sense of community?

Maintain Relationships

Keep in touch with your partners and maintain a positive relationship. Regularly communicate and discuss ways to improve your partnership and keep your customers engaged. Reflect on how you can maintain and grow these relationships over time. What strategies will you use to ensure regular communication and collaboration? How can you collectively address challenges and explore new opportunities for growth?

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STEP 10: Cultivate Exceptional Service and a Vibrant Community

This step encourages you to reflect on how you can actively engage with your members to ensure they have a rewarding experience every time they walk through your doors.

Social Media Engagement

How can you use social media platforms not just for promotion, but to foster genuine interaction and build relationships with your members? Think about the types of content that encourage engagement and reflect your studio's community values.

Responsive Customer Service

Responding to customer inquiries and concerns promptly and professionally is essential. Reflect on how you can establish a system for promptly and professionally responding to customer inquiries and concerns. How will this system ensure that all team members can provide consistent, high-quality service?

Personalized Services

Consider the variety of needs and goals within your member base. What personalized services could you offer (such as nutrition coaching or customized workout plans) to enhance their experience?

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Community-Building Events

Host events and workshops that focus on community building and provide value to you and your customers. What types of events or workshops could you host that would not only provide value but also strengthen the sense of community among your members? How can you ensure these events are inclusive and reflect the interests of your diverse member base?

Soliciting and Implementing Feedback

How will you actively solicit feedback from your members? Reflect on the processes you'll put in place to ensure this feedback is not just heard, but also acted upon, to continuously improve the quality of your services and the overall member experience.

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WANT TO GO DEEPER?

Studio Grow helps boutique fitness studio owners build smarter, more profitable businesses. We have worked with over **5,600+ studios across 49 countries,** and we have seen firsthand what separates the studios that thrive from the ones that struggle.

Find Your Growth Edge.

Book Your Call

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