

Other Equipment:

Photocopier

This used to be considered optional equipment for small businesses. But today, when you can get a unit that is a combination photocopier, fax machine, scanner, printer, and telephone for a few hundred dollars, you should consider getting one.

You are unlikely to need dozens of photocopies; you might need to make a copy or two of an agreement from time to time, and if you have the equipment right there, you won't have to go all the way to Kinko's to do it. And remember, time is money, especially when you have a lot to do and a lot on your mind. This business is fun, so keep excess stress as far away as you can — consider buying one of these things.

Calculator

A good desktop calculator or adding machine can make your job easier. One that makes it easy to calculate percentages would be nice. A credit-card sized calculator is nice to have in your briefcase, too, for working out charges on the spot.

You might even want to consider getting a small **calculator that prints**. These actually do come sized to fit into a briefcase, and having a paper tape of your calculations might come in handy later when you need an answer to a cost question for a client.

File Cabinet

You'll need to organize and store information you receive from vendors and keep files for each client and event. Lateral filing cabinets are terrific: they are shaped like a dresser, and the files are stored from side to side, rather than from front to back. They are easy to use and more attractive, usually, than the standard metal two- or four- drawer variety. But they are expensive, so you may want to just get serviceable cabinets to begin with and hold off on the lateral files until you make more money.

Stationery

Stationery is more than just a "supply." Your stationery will present **you**. Although these days we use e-mail more often, you will still need stationery for confirmation letters, inquiries from vendors, and reasons you cannot imagine right now.

You can print stationery right from your computer, and many people do. But consider this: you are in a creative business. It would be better if you had beautiful, **coordinated** stationery, envelopes, bills/receipts and business cards to promote your business whenever anyone receives something in the mail from you. And you might also consider adding to that a simple bi-fold brochure that describes your business and services.

Beautiful stationery can help reassure prospective clients that you have a good eye and that you can make their events look beautiful, too. Consider using heavy textured papers, raised printing, and a professional design. Check around for prices at print shops or office supply stores.

If your start-up finances are limited, you might want to consider getting free business cards from **Vista Print**. They offer color business cards on heavy paper stock, and a number of different designs are available. In return for the free cards (all you pay is shipping, which starts at around \$5) they print their logo and “Business Cards are free

at VistaPrint.com” on the back of the card near the bottom, so you still have room to write something on the back if you want to. If you don’t want anything printed on the back, you can get 250 cards for only \$29.95 plus shipping.

Vista Print <http://www.vistaprint.com>

This is a terrific value, and they are fast about getting the cards to you. Be sure if you do this that the design you choose (one of many standard images provided by Vista Print) coordinates with your stationery and/or the design you have stored in your computer to print as letterhead each time you need to send a physical document.

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