

When is a Good Time to Open a Second Location of Your Bar or Restaurant?

By Rieva Lesonsky



Has your bar or restaurant concept taken off to the point where you can barely handle the crowds? Are your customers begging for another location? That's a great problem to have, but where should you locate your new store depends on your goals. Perhaps you need another location in the same town, or maybe you're attracting customers outside your area, indicating demand for your concept in a neighboring city.

How do you know if you're ready for a second location? Ask yourself the following questions:

- Are you financially stable enough to open another location?
- Will expanding help you lower your costs overall and increase your profits?
- Are your competitors expanding?
- Is there enough demand for your restaurant or bar concept?
- Are you emotionally ready to make the move?
- Are you willing to put in the extra hours to get a new location off the ground?

If you want to run your expansion ideas and concerns by an expert, start with making an appointment at your local [SCORE](#) office for personalized advice.

If you've decided to go for it, opening a second location means you'll need to be bouncing back and forth between locations until the new one is up and running. Opening closer to your current location could be simpler in that regard. Being in the same city also means you'll be familiar with all the local ordinances and fees required.

If you're looking for a similar community outside your area in which to start your second location, try [ZoomProspector](#). You can input information such as community type, population and labor force requirements, and ZoomProspector will find similar communities and even list locations open for lease. On the other hand, if you're looking for a different city to expand (with possibly an even better target market and economy), start with [City-Data.com](#). Search on any city and you'll discover information such as population, gender, residents' ages, median household income, home prices and more.

Also check your state and city's websites for more business location information. You can tell if the city seems inviting to new businesses if they are offering incentives to move there and if there are programs to help businesses succeed. Before making a decision, make an in-person visit and talk to local business owners to get their opinions. Talk to local commercial realtors; they should have all the traffic numbers, car counts and demographics for different locations.

Do it right, and adding a second location can be the first of many steps to even greater success for your bar or restaurant.

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