

Florist

Business start-up guide

Florist industry overview

Florists sell cut flowers and sometimes also potted plants by retail and wholesale to customers. Some florists also grow their own flowers and foliage and collect their own seeds. This industry typically includes traditional flowers (e.g. roses, carnations and chrysanthemums), other exotic flowers, wildflowers and Australian native flowers.

Mass merchandising of flowers in Australia began in the late 1990s. Today, customers are more likely to buy flowers from supermarkets or other mass-merchandising stores than from retail specialists. However, rising household incomes and competitive pricing has increased demand in the florist industry.

Starting or buying a florist business involves many essential steps. Legally, you must ensure that you apply for and receive the correct licences.

This guide explains how to start a florist in Queensland. It will help you understand the challenges and opportunities of entering the florist industry so you can make good business decisions.

Getting into the florist industry

Before you start a florist in Queensland, you need to understand how the industry works, what things you need to consider in your planning, and the legal requirements you must meet.

Finding a competitive edge in Queensland's florist industry

To win business as a florist, you need to compete on the following aspects:

- price
- quality
- number of products and flower varieties available
- speed of delivery
- reliability.

Establishing yourself as a recognised brand is also becoming increasingly important.

Finding your competitive edge among commercial cut flower and seed growers depends mainly on getting the most and largest wholesale and retail contracts.

Obtaining long-term contracts is particularly important as the rich supply of flowers on the domestic market means wholesalers and retail chains can easily switch suppliers.

Key success factors for a florist

To start a successful florist business, you need to:

- have good finance and debt management skills
- be able to deliver products quickly
- have an experienced workforce
- have appropriate climatic conditions for storing and/or growing flowers.

You also need to take seasonal availability of different flowers into account and modify your products throughout the year.

Florist industry entry barriers

There are some barriers to entry into this industry but even for small enterprises these are not significant.

Often operators enter the florist industry via some other agricultural activity or otherwise complementary activity.

The main barriers to entry for florists are the permits needed to gather native wildflowers and seeds.

(Source IBISWorld, March 2012)

Florist industry requirements

When starting a florist you need to satisfy the following requirements.

Selling goods from a vehicle while travelling in council areas

If you sell goods from a vehicle while travelling in council areas, you may need an Itinerant Vendor Licence from [your local council](#). Contact your local council to see if you need this licence and for more information.

Including alcohol in products (e.g. gift hampers)

If you include alcohol in your products, you may need a [Liquor Licence \(Commercial other\)](#). The Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation manages this licence. It is required to sell liquor, subject to the specified licence. This licence can be transferred.

Including food in your products (e.g. gift hampers)

To include food in your products, you may need a Food Business Licence from [your local council](#).

Sales Permit (Forest Products or Quarry Material)

You need a Sales Permit to collect forest products including quarry material from any land, certain freehold lands where the State of Queensland owns products as defined in the Forestry Act 1959 (including State Forests). Please contact the [Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry \(DAFF\)](#) for more information.

Legislation that may apply to your business

- *Food Act 2006*
- *Forestry Act 1959*
- *Health Act 1937*
- Health Regulation 1996
- *Liquor Act 1992*
- *Motor Accident Insurance Act 1994*
- *National Measurement Act 1960*
- *Sale of Goods (Vienna Convention) Act 1986*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*

To access copies of legislation, visit www.legislation.qld.gov.au.

Useful industry contacts

Business Support Unit

For more information on licences, regulations, market research, business planning and other support services phone 13 25 23 or visit business.qld.gov.au

Flower Association of Queensland Incorporated

Phone (07) 3824 9537

Visit www.flowersqueensland.asn.au

Floral Art Society of Queensland

Phone (07) 3341 5641

Visit www.floralartsocietyqld.org.au