[Your business name] — Business Plan

Vending machine business in [Your city] · Startup plan

Executive summary

[Your business name] is a new vending machine business in [Your city] offering snack and drink machines placed in workplaces and apartment buildings; healthy and specialty vending for gyms, schools and clinics; restocking, cleaning and repairs on a fixed route; and cashless payments and remote inventory monitoring. The model is machines placed only where foot traffic pays, cashless readers on every one, a tight restocking route, and growth one good location at a time.

Startup budget: $20,200 across 10 items, with funding still to be decided.

Twelve months from now, success looks like this: [What success looks like twelve months from now]

Products and services

[Your business name]'s core offer is snack and drink machines placed in workplaces and apartment buildings. Locations get a machine placed for free or on commission under a written agreement, every machine takes cards, and the products in each one are chosen from what it actually sells.

- Snack and drink machines placed in workplaces and apartment buildings
- Healthy and specialty vending for gyms, schools and clinics
- Restocking, cleaning and repairs on a fixed route
- Cashless payments and remote inventory monitoring

Market analysis

The customers are the workplaces, buildings and facilities that want an amenity without the hassle — and, through them, the people who buy a snack or a drink every day.

- Offices, warehouses and factories with 50+ people on site
- Apartment complexes, laundromats and hotels that want an amenity for free
- Gyms, schools and clinics that want healthier options
- Property managers who'd rather one operator handle several buildings

Marketing strategy

Most locations will come from direct outreach and word of mouth among property and office managers — the pitch is a free amenity and a reliable operator. Google and a website with the machines, products and the placement offer confirm the business is real when a manager checks.

- Direct outreach to office and property managers — the location is the sale
- Word of mouth among property managers and business owners
- Google Business Profile and Google — “vending machine services” plus your city
- Partnerships with commercial cleaners, coffee services and property-management firms
- A website with the machines, products, the free-placement offer and an enquiry form

Operations plan

The owner places, stocks and services every machine in year one on a fixed route, tracks sales per machine, drops the products that don't move, and adds machines only in locations that clear the bar.

- Machines placed only where the foot traffic justifies it — the location decides the profit
- A fixed restocking route, with products chosen from what each machine actually sells
- Cashless readers on every machine; cash-only machines lose sales and invite theft
- Products bought wholesale at club stores or distributors, tracked per machine
- A commission or free placement agreed in writing with each location

Startup costs

What it will take to open the doors, with funding still to be decided.

Startup costs

ITEM	AMOUNT
Machines: two to five, used or refurbished	$11,500
Cashless card readers and telemetry	$1,150
Opening product inventory	$1,250
Vehicle costs: a hand truck, and a van if you outgrow the car	$2,550
Business registration, LLC, sales tax permit and local permits	$350
General liability insurance (first year)	$800
Website and Google Business Profile	$0
Route, inventory and invoicing software (first year)	$0
Machine delivery and placement	$600
Working capital (first two months)	$2,000
Total	**$20,200**

Typical range to start a vending machine business in the US: $5,600–$36,900. Your list is what you decided to spend — replace estimates with real quotes as you get them. Website and Google Business Profile: Your Zarla plan includes the website and walks you through your Google Business Profile — a designer typically charges $1,500 or more to build one. Route, inventory and invoicing software (first year): Your Zarla plan includes invoicing and a customer list with your website; machine telemetry comes from the card-reader provider.

Financial plan

The numbers below come from your own startup list and typical monthly costs for a small vending route in the US. Machines and product are the costs; sales per machine and the number of good locations decide the income.

Typical monthly operating costs for a vending machine business: $615–$5,360 a month, before the owner's own pay.

Add a monthly sales target and the plan will show how long it takes to recover the startup budget.

Typical monthly operating costs

COST	TYPICAL RANGE
Products (roughly 40–55% of sales)	$400–$3,000
Location commissions (0–25% of sales, where agreed)	$0–$1,000
Card-reader fees and data plans	$30–$300
Fuel and vehicle costs for the route	$100–$500
Insurance	$35–$100
Route and invoicing software (included with Zarla)	$0–$60
Repairs, parts and shrinkage	$50–$400

US ranges for a small operation; replace with your own figures as you learn them. Lines marked (included with Zarla) are what those tools cost separately — with Zarla they are part of one monthly plan.

Risks and honest downsides

Every vending machine business plan should say out loud what can go wrong. For [Your business name], the real risks are:

- A poor location earns nothing and still needs stocking — the placement is the whole bet
- Locations can end the agreement and ask you to remove a machine at short notice
- Theft, vandalism and cash handling are real; cashless readers cut most of it
- Products expire and sit; buying what you like instead of what sells is the classic mistake
- It scales slowly — real income needs dozens of machines and a route that fits in a day

Licenses, permits and insurance

What [Your business name] needs before it can legally trade in the US. Rules vary by state and city — confirm each item with your local licensing office and an accountant.

- Business registration and EIN — Most operators form an LLC; register a DBA if you trade under another name.
- Sales tax permit — Vending sales are taxable in most US states, sometimes at special vending rates — register with your state.
- Vending or food-service permits — Some states, counties and cities license vending machines, especially for perishable food; check your local health department.
- General liability insurance — Not always legally required, but most locations demand proof before placement.
- Location agreements — A written placement agreement with each site covering commission, access and what happens if either side ends it.
- ADA and labeling rules — Machines in public places must meet accessibility rules in the US, and some jurisdictions require calorie labeling on vended food.

Milestones: the next 30 days

The first month's to-do list for [Your business name], in order:

- Make a list of 30 possible locations with enough daily foot traffic and pitch the free-placement offer
- Register the business, get an EIN, a sales tax permit and a business bank account
- Get general liability insurance and check local vending and health permits
- Buy one or two used machines and fit cashless readers
- Set up a free Google Business Profile and put a website with the free-placement offer live
- Place the first machines, stock from a club store, and track what sells per machine
- Restock on a fixed weekly route and drop the products that don't move
- Ask each location manager for a Google review and a referral to another building

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Appendix: what a lender will ask for

This plan tells the story and shows the numbers. If you take it to a bank, expect to be asked for these documents as well:

- Two years of personal tax returns and a personal financial statement
- A month-by-month 12-month cash-flow projection built on machines placed and sales per machine
- Signed location agreements and proof of insurance
- Sales history per machine if you already operate any
- Quotes for the machines if you're borrowing for them
- Your credit report and the machines as collateral

Template: replace every [bracketed] line and every estimate with your own figures. Written with Zarla's free business plan generator — zarla.com/business-plan-generator writes it from five questions.