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How to Research Locations for Your New Store

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Opening a new store is a major step for any business. Sometimes, it's about reaching new customers. At other times, it's about outgrowing your current space or maybe spotting a gap in the market. A new location means better visibility, lower operating costs, and more foot traffic. Whatever the reason, choosing the right spot matters – as does the research.

A great product in the wrong place will struggle, while an average product in the right place might thrive. Making the right choice could make or break your business. And that's exactly why careful research is needed before signing a lease or buying a property.

Below, you will learn three practical ways to research locations for your new store. Following this advice will help you avoid costly mistakes, too.

Visit the Location

Online research only does so much. It certainly won't replace being there in person. Visiting the location is a must. This lets you see what numbers and maps cannot fully show. You will have the opportunity to walk around the area at different times of the day. Is the location busy in the morning, but quiet in the evening? Do weekends bring more people?

Pay attention to who is passing by. Are they your target customers? A store selling office supplies might do better near a business park, but a boutique may benefit from foot traffic in a busy shopping district. Notice the nearby businesses, too. Complementary stores are a big plus, although it would be difficult **to stand out** with too many direct competitors around.

While visiting, try to think like a customer. Is parking easy? Is the area clean and safe? These small features shape how people feel about shopping at your store, usually without them realizing it.

Review the Property History

Before committing to a space, take the time to understand its past. Look into how long previous businesses stayed and the reasons they left. A red flag would be a high turnover rate. This might suggest issues with low foot traffic, management problems, and/or rent costs.

Check if the property has had renovations or repairs. Ongoing maintenance issues would become disruptive and expensive. It's also smart to review past zoning or permit issues, especially as these could affect how you use the space in the future.

If you are travelling from out of town during this research, stay nearby. This helps you get a real feel for the area. Some business owners will choose **short term stays using rentals in Mississauga**, for instance, to spend several days exploring neighborhoods, local customer habits, and traffic patterns. Doing so is crucial before making a final decision.

Look into Future Developments

What's already there is equally as important as what's coming next. Research planning developments in the area. This could include office buildings, new housing projects, and/or transit expansions. These developments could bring more customers and increase property value over time.

At the same time, remember to be cautious. **Major construction** might mean noise, road closures, and reduces access – sometimes for months or even years. Checking the city planning websites and speaking with local officials help you understand timelines and possible impacts.

To conclude, it takes time, patience, and effort to choose the right location. Completing solid research – as outlined above – will turn a good idea into a successful, long-lasting store.

Photo: Freepik via their website.

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