

RISTORANTE PESCADOR "OUR SEAFOOD, YOUR BEST OPTION TO ENJOY WITH THE FAMILY."

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Group, family, and gourmet style dining has been an important part of daily life in Guatemala. Ristorante Pescador's management was striving for excellence from the beginning of the cuisine experience to the end with the preparation of top-quality products. Don Pedro, the business owner, wanted to make a difference when comparing his cuisine to others in quantity, quality, and service. All his dishes were 80% seafood and 20% other accompanying ingredients. While his menu selections were very attractive to his customers, he believed that his version of fish cuisine could be more efficiently prepared and delivered to his customers if he had a better facility and organizational operation.

INTRODUCTION

I didn't know what to do. My business was booming but my home life was a mess. I needed my job and my business to support my family but operating my business from my home just wasn't a good idea. My wife was upset with the smell of fish throughout the house, our kitchen was always occupied with people, supplies, or some other activity. Everything focused on the business, not much on family things. There was limited space in the house because most of the business equipment and supplies were in and around the kitchen. I shared my frustrations with my partner Jose, but he did not have a suitable solution either. As my business grew, I needed more space. I had two choices, I could either expand my home location to accommodate my business and give the house back to my wife and family or seek a storefront location in the community. Jose thought we should add on to the house while I thought we should find a different location. I sought to find a solution so I could have stability in my work and homelife.

BACKGROUND

Don Pedro's week began when he and his partner Jose Quaderno ventured to their suppliers to purchase the raw materials needed to create his custom-made fish cuisines for his growing business. Once the supplies were purchased and stored in the small area of his family home, Don Pedro, and Jose began to plan the menu and home deliveries for the weekend. Since the business grew so rapidly, Pedro had to order more supplies and spend more time in the family kitchen. Don Pedro recognized that as his business grew, he could continue to function out of his family home. Don Pedro and Jose worked each day not only to keep his business operating, but to envision its future. They believed that to accommodate his same business activities and compete with his competition at the same pace, he needed more operating space.

Don Pedro initially thought the creation of his restaurant business was impossible. Since then, he and his partner Jose have demonstrated to the public and especially his community that they could produce fish cuisine products that were incredibly attractive. As they continued to work hard, innovate, and meet all their customers' needs, Pedro wanted to create a restaurant business that would service his neighborhood customers. Pedro had limited resources, so he and Jose had to do all of his cooking and food preparation from his home. While this seemed to be efficient, it was not socially suitable for his family. Just imagine living in a home where each day the kitchen and other parts of the home have become part of the daily operation of a business.

Without question Pedro's family was not happy with this arrangement but it was his dream to have this business which allowed him to put to use his superior cooking skills and his ability to attract customers to his business. Everyday Don Pedro and Jose were thinking about how they could change the cooking and business operation so that it was not intruding on his private family life. Since Pedro did not have a lot of working capital, he had to stay in place for an extended amount of time.

During the pandemic, Don Pedro's business had boomed. This was because the government and public health agencies instituted "lockdowns" where people could not go to restaurants. As such, the "take out" business had emerged and became substantial. Since his business was all delivery oriented to begin with, this style of operation was extremely suitable for many families who could not venture out to get food. It was safer, more convenient, and better for the entire community. As the pandemic faded away, Don Pedro thought of how he could make his business sustainable and comfortable. He believed he had to move his business out of his home because it was causing comfort and privacy issues among his immediate family. The acquisition of a more stable location such as a storefront would be ideal.

Such a move would be challenging both physically and financially. Don Pedro had a broad plan regarding the move, but he needed the working capital and a suitable location near his home. He wanted a target market that was not too large but rather sufficient to give himself, his partner, and his family a steady and suitable income.

BUSINESS TYPE

Pedro's business has been classified as a small business. In Guatemala most of the businesses have been called MSME or micro, small, and medium size enterprises with many having informal structures. Don Pedro's Family fish restaurant has easily fit into the Micro business type.

Ristorante Pescador was a food delivery business in Guatemala City, Guatemala. Shellfish was its specialty dish. In 2012, Don Pedro and his partner Jose, joined together to form a cuisine business, specializing in cooking savory dishes. The initial idea was to sell cuisines to people who wanted a menu that included salty and sweet dishes. Because Don Pedro and Jose were experienced cooks of salty meals and have an exceptional understanding of how to prepare seafood. They believed they could prepare and sell shrimp ceviche by the liter. The shrimp ceviche recipe is their own, and the customers have liked it very much.

For Don Pedro and Jose, working from home was convenient, but it has not been at all the most efficient or effective place to run a business that requires food processing and limited storage of products for distribution. While a key reason for working from home was financial, there were other benefits like flexibility and accessibility that could have added to the business operation. In the beginning there was limited need to hold inventory; lots of space was unnecessary. All the supplies were bought one day and sold within two days after purchase. Also, there was no need to have elaborate equipment nor was there a need to travel to a different location to pay rent for a food service facility. However, because Pedro's business was rapidly growing, he had no space to expand the business. This was causing Don Pedro to worry about his ability to meet his customer's needs.

With the limited space it was often difficult to invite potential workers into the business because they must have gone through the privacy of the home environment. Moreover, his wife, and children were living without the privacy of their home. Operating a take-out business from home has created tension among family members and does not allow 'away time' from the business. Don Pedro and his family had to give up a lot of privacy to support the business. These pressures were causing Pedro and Jose to consider alternative workspaces for the business. So, one of the main decision Pedro and Jose had to make was whether to add on to the house or find a storefront restaurant type location that would have been suitable to accommodate the growing business.

THEN TO NOW

From 2015 to 2020, the business has continued to operate but only irregularly due to the owner's neglect. From May 2019 to March 2020, Don Pedro stopped running the business and reactivated operations in March 2020. In 2020, the pandemic, operations were restarted, and sales increased because of home delivery. This was especially attractive to customers because of restrictions imposed by the government, restaurant closures, and capacity limitations. The home delivery concept became very popular, and Don Pedro began to capitalize on people's opportunities to stay at home.

In 2021, advertising on social networks was resumed, including Instagram, to boost sales, but the expected results were not obtained in the short term. The possible causes of the business's performance during this time needed to be analyzed. Unduly the continued pandemic, the economic situation of certain consumer groups, the competitors, and the lack of advertising time all contributed to the brief slowdown in sales. Despite the slowdown in actual sales, the products continued to be sold.

OPERATIONS – FOOD PROCEESING & PRODUCTION FACILITIES

As mentioned earlier, the business operates from Don Pedro's home using his kitchen and storage spaces to prepare food orders. This preparation area lacks sufficient space for production however he and his partner make do with what they have had. Additionally, there was a lack of support staff in the kitchen to help prepare the food. While many orders were coming into the kitchen, preparing the food promptly was challenging.

The food preparation process began on Tuesdays and Wednesdays when Pedro and his partner bought the ingredients to prepare the food to sell on weekends. Care and attention to the purchase of suppliers were of utmost importance. Seafood suppliers provided the fish products used in the cuisines. Wholesale produce vendors offered fresh vegetables and produce. Other specialty wholesalers supplied the containers, packing bags, cookies, juices, napkins, and other supplies. All the ingredients for the dishes were prepared and cooked in advance to save time during the preparation process (all the inputs were pre-cooked). The plates were made at the time the customer requested their order.

The cuisines were produced on Fridays. This process began from the early afternoon and working till midnight. These activities included the packaging and refrigeration of the Ceviche (type of fish). Every effort was made to prepare and pack the food in a satisfactory way according to the customer's order. The next day's task was to oversee the distribution of the orders among various sectors of the capital city. Pedro always sought excellence in the preparation of each order.

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION

Shrimp cocktail ceviche, which is a South American dish of marinated raw fish or seafood, has been typically garnished and served as an appetizer. Don Pedro's product was based on a particular ingredient prepared in and with shellfish. Some of the popular servings included the following: Ceviche and Cocktails: cocktail style, Peruvian style, Chapin style (Guatemalan national recipe).

FINANCIAL PLANS

The following financial disclosure statement provided a glimpse of the weekly, monthly, and yearly financial commitments needed to operate the business.

EXHIBIT 1

Financials

Accounts	Week	Month	Year
Sales	8,000.00	32,000.00	384,000.00
Fixed Costs			
Water	25.00	100.00	1,200.00
Electricity	25.00	100.00	1,200.00
Social Media Advertising	200.00	800.00	9,600.00
Advertising banner or Blanket			800.00
Business cards			800.00
Gas-stove	25.00	100.00	1,200.00
Telephone and Internet	75.00	300.00	3,600.00
Company vehicle fuel	250.00	1,000.00	12,000.00
Wages (driver)	725.00	2,900.00	34,800.00
Kitchen Assistant (1)	500.00	2,000.00	24,000.00
Kitchen Assistant (2)	500.00	2,000.00	24,000.00
Cleaning assistant	225.00	900.00	10,800.00
Lunches used (assistants and drivers)	300.00	1,200.00	14,400.00
Sub-totals	2,850.00	11,400.00	138,400.00
Variable Expenses			
Supplies Seafood	1,185.00	4,740.00	56,880.00
Vegetables	325.00	1,300.00	15,600.00
Salsa inglesa	5.00	20.00	240.00
Juices V8	60.00	240.00	2,880.00
Cookies	70.00	280.00	3,360.00
Tamalitos	40.00	160.00	1,920.00

Sub-totals	1,685.00	6,740.00	80,880.00
Other Expenses			
Containers	60.00	240.00	2,880.00
Chili Containers	5.00	20.00	240.00
Gloves	5.00	20.00	240.00
Aluminum Trays	50.00	200.00	2,400.00
Round aluminum trays for salad	20.00	80.00	960.00
Bags	10.00	40.00	480.00
Napkins	10.00	40.00	480.00
Cutlery	10.00	40.00	480.00
Aluminum foil roll	5.00	20.00	240.00
Plastic roll film for packaging	5.00	20.00	240.00
Disinfectant	15.00	60.00	720.00
Soaps for dishwasher, floor disinfectant, chlorine	20.00	80.00	960.00
Adhesive tape	5.00	20.00	240.00
Sub-totals	220.00	880.00	10,560.00
Grand Total	4755.00	19,020.00	229,840.00
Profit	3,245.00	12,980.00	154,160.00
U.S. Dollars = approx. 7.7Q = \$1.00	\$421.42	\$1,685.71	\$20,020.78
**All amounts are in Quetzals or Q			

Quetzals is the Guatemalan currency denomination.

Don Pedro and Jose have been working diligently to not only sustain the business but expand it, so the future has some threats and opportunities.

CONCLUSION

Ristorante Pescadores have been operating successfully even with limited staff and an unsuited production arrangement for the efficient delivery of the products to its customers. Pedro has learned a great deal and has recognized the potential of his business. Over the years, Pedro has used his expertise in cooking as the leading force for keeping the business relevant and operational. He realized that more structure and more business-oriented decision-making was imperative. As such, Pedro has initiated plans to open a business operation in his neighborhood (barrio)

that would provide a better production facility and a more efficient overall process. With his ambitious nature and help from his family, Pedro was determined to make his business one that was recognized as the best in his specialty.