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# Setting up a container self-storage business

Self-storage is a fast-growing market and CSTA members are available to provide guidance to new members and supply the required quality containers.

## Steps to build a self-storage business

### Business plan

Develop a business plan. Research all the many factors; the market, finance, accountancy, operations etc and decide if the business is viable.

Contact a **CSTA accredited member** who will provide information and supply the quality containers a self-storage business requires.

### Land

Perhaps you own suitable land or can lease or buy a site in a suitable location. The land should be accessible by road and after development free draining, flat and suitably surfaced for both the initial delivery of containers and access by rental clients

### Planning approval

Obtain local authority planning approval for the site and the business.

### Develop the land

The land should be flat, free draining, flat and suitably surfaced for both the initial delivery of containers and access by rental clients.

Rental clients require ease of access to the containers, often bringing their vehicle to the containers for unloading and loading

### Develop the site

Plan the layout of the containers carefully to both maximise the space and provide the storage experience the client requires

The layout of the site influences the potential clients. A well, thought-out neat arrangement of the containers provides a professional feel to the site, is important for the on-going business.

## **Perimeter security**

The site should be defined by a secure perimeter fence and gated. In part the storage containers can act as part of the perimeter barrier.

## **Container procurement**

CSTA members supply containers the new site needs. Take care to select an accredited trader who will ensure the containers are positioned and levelled on site.

Containers may be purchased outright or leased.

There are various specifications of containers with variances in locking bars, ventilation, floors, and condition.

Most sites utilise 20ft ISO containers at ground but there are options for 40ft ft and 10ft length containers and stacked containers.

***Discuss the container specification and procurement requirements with a CSTA member.***

## **Security**

Containers should be equipped with anti-theft pad lock shrouds and the client supplied with industrial pad-locks with a master key system.

## **Lighting**

Especially for sites with 24/7 access, a flood lit environment is required to illuminate accessible areas to facilitate the safety and security of site users and their stored goods.

Whereas motion sensitive lighting can be installed there should be provision to ensure that a user attending a storage container at night has at least sufficient emergency lighting on exiting the container before the range of the motion sensor activates.

Power cables and equipment should be installed in accordance with building (electrical) regulations.

## **Operations**

Develop the site management and back-office accountancy systems.

Contact a CSTA accredited member for IT systems and site management guidance

## **Contracts**

Create the client terms and condition

## **Equipment revenue stream**

In line with the business plan develop the equipment to be supplied such as pad-locks, ramps, shelving, dividers, condensation sheeting, desiccants and packaging, battery lighting etc.

## **Site management**

Arrange the on-site management which may be on-site during business hours or available on notice. Ensure the site is clean and tidy and the containers are properly maintained with free and easy door hardware, are free of debris.

## **Clients**

Rent out the self-storage containers

***Join the CSTA, become an accredited member - and benefit from the willingness of members to share best practice advice.***