

Keep your new pizzeria operation working at peak levels by choosing the right equipment

From ovens and POS systems to sheeters and washware, PMQ offers a list of the basic equipment required for any pizza restaurant.

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If you're thinking of opening your own pizzeria, you already have plenty to consider. Do you want to buy or lease a building? What will the menu offer? How can you successfully market the business? But you'll also have to think of other logistics—including what equipment you'll need to get up and running. We spoke to industry experts and restaurant consultants to create a list of the basic equipment required for making the leap from aspiring owner to pizza entrepreneur.

Know Your Concept

On the subject of opening a pizzeria, experts agree on one crucial tenet: Know everything you can about your business before you think about equipment. "You'd be surprised how many people don't have their menu put together but have already ordered equipment, and they often overbuy," says "Pizza Paul" Nyland, a consultant based in Grand Rapids, Michigan, who worked for Gordon Food Service for more than 30 years. "Create your menu first, get together with your distributor and distributor's salesperson, and then determine what equipment you'll need."

Danny Bendas, managing partner at Synergy Restaurant Consultants in Irvine, California, agrees that an owner must have a complete understanding of the brand before purchasing equipment. "What's the size of your menu and the size of your pizzas?" he asks. "Will you have a build-your-own concept or offer a high-end menu with fewer choices? Determine the concept to develop and design a space plan. How much square footage is needed? Will you have seating or offer delivery only?" Bendas calls this first step the "discovery phase"—when future owners develop the concept to make way for more detailed plans on how everything will flow in the restaurant. "You can't do anything until you have a complete understanding of the brand, including niche, concept and target demographic," he says.