The Numbers Behind a Window Cleaning Side Business

A free field guide from Bytell Press. The figures come from our example financial model for a part-time, one-person residential window cleaning service. They are planning assumptions, not quotes for your market; the worksheet at the end is for your own numbers.

Window cleaning costs little to start, so the question is not whether you can afford the kit. It is whether your hours will pay what you want. This guide works that out.

1. How the work is priced

The example model quotes the customer a per-pane or flat price, and checks every quote against a target of **$50–$70 of revenue per productive hour**. The model uses these lines:

Price line	Model price
Per pane, inside and out	$4–$8
Typical single-family home, inside and out	$200–$350, about $250
Screen cleaning	$2–$4 per screen
Track and sill detailing	$30–$75 per home
Hard-water stain removal	$5–$15 per pane
Gross margin after supplies, before your own pay	**About 85%**

The margin is in the add-ons and in pricing to time. The model's sample job is 40 panes at $6, a $240 quote for about 3.5 hours, or roughly $69 an hour. A $40 screen wash lifts the ticket to $280 without adding much time. A neglected home goes the other way: the model quotes its first clean at $450 against $300 for the regular visit.

2. What it costs to open

The example model opens on about **$1,500** from savings, with no loan.

Startup item	Model cost
Water-fed pole with brush head	$300–$700
Pure-water tank and filtration	$150–$450
Squeegee kit, scrapers, cloths, extension pole	$120–$300
Extension ladder, if you do not own one	$200–$350
Setup, first insurance and starter marketing	$150–$400

Startup item	Model cost
Total, near the middle of the ranges	**About $1,500**

The model expects the first six to ten jobs to pay the kit back.

3. What it costs to stay open

There is no rent, no payroll and no debt in the model.

Monthly cost	Amount
Fixed costs (insurance, app, website)	$200
Owner draw at a steady month	$1,200
Total to cover each month	**$1,400**

Three costs move with sales: supplies at about 15% of revenue, card fees at about 2%, and marketing at about 6%.

4. The break-even: the one number to know

Break-even revenue = monthly fixed costs ÷ gross margin.

Card fees and marketing rise with every job, so take them off the margin first: 85% – 2% – 6% = 77%. Then $1,400 ÷ 0.77 = about **$1,818 a month**. At $250 a job, that is **7 to 8 jobs a month** to cover the fixed costs and a $1,200 draw.

Without the draw, the business breaks even on $200 ÷ 0.77 = about $260 a month, about one job.

5. Plan for winter before it arrives

The model starts at about $900 in the first month and takes roughly six months to reach $2,400. After that the season moves it:

Season	Model monthly revenue	Against the $1,818 break-even
Spring peak, at 1.3 times a steady month	About $3,100	Well above
Steady month	$2,400	Above
Deep winter, at 0.6 times	About $1,450	Below

A $1,450 month leaves about $917 after supplies, card fees, marketing and fixed costs. That is about $283 short of the $1,200 draw, for each of the three winter months. The model handles it by keeping the opening cash as a floor and letting the spring and fall surplus cover the gap.

6. Your numbers

Fill this in with prices from your own area before you buy the kit.

Question	Model	Yours
Average job in dollars	$250	_____
Revenue per productive hour	$50–$70	_____
Supplies as a share of revenue	15%	_____
Monthly fixed costs	$200	_____
Monthly draw you want to take	$1,200	_____
Break-even revenue (fixed costs and draw ÷ margin)	$1,818	_____
Jobs a month to break even	7–8	_____

If your break-even needs more jobs than your free hours allow, fix the plan before you buy the pole: raise the average ticket with add-ons, set a smaller draw for the first season, or cut a fixed cost.

This guide is general business information, not legal, tax, accounting or investment advice. The figures are illustrative assumptions from an example model and are not a forecast or a promise of results. Licensing and insurance requirements vary by state and are not covered here; check yours with the state agency.

Bytell Press publishes the full business plan, the editable financial model behind these numbers, and the operating playbooks for a window cleaning side business.

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