

## COMPANY FORMATION CHECKLIST

- NAME** Choose a name for your company that is not the same or confusingly similar to another business name. (For L.A. County, check Dabs at <http://regrec.co.la.ca.us/fbn/>; for California corporations, check with the Secretary of State <http://www.ss.ca.gov>)
- DOMAIN NAME** Check if your desired domain name is available, and if there are any conflicting state or federal trademarks. For domain name searches and registrations, [www.domain.com](http://www.domain.com) and [www.1domain-name-registration.com](http://www.1domain-name-registration.com) are among the many sites that provide this service. For trademark searches, use the Trademark Office search engine (“TESS”) at <http://www.uspto.gov/main/trademarks.htm>.
- DBA** File and publish fictitious business name statement, submit applications for state or federal trademarks if desired.
- ESTABLISH COMPANY** File partnership, corporate or limited liability papers with the Secretary of State’s office.
- TAXES** File state tax forms with Franchise Tax Board ([www.ftb.ca.gov](http://www.ftb.ca.gov)) or state tax authority.
- EMPLOYMENT** Obtain state employer account number from the California Employment Development Department (EDD) (downloadable registration form at <http://www.edd.ca.gov/de1.pdf>), or call (916) 654-8706.
- EIN** Apply for federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the IRS. Complete Form SS-4. A downloadable form can be obtained from <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/iss4.pdf> or from IRS or Social Security Administration offices.
- LOCAL PERMITS** Obtain any required local or state permits and licenses. (Check with City Hall for the city where you will be located, or for unincorporated areas in Los Angeles County contact the County Treasurer-Tax Collector at (213) 974-2011).
- INSURANCE** Obtain any required insurance (workers’ compensation) and any desired insurance (*e.g.*, general liability). Workers compensation insurance is normally obtained through an insurance agent or broker. Contact your local chamber of commerce for information, or in California, go to the Division of Workers’ Compensation website at [www.dir.ca.gov/](http://www.dir.ca.gov/).
- SALES TAX** If you intend to sell merchandise, apply for a permit from the Board of Equalization (<http://www.boe.ca.gov/>) in California or appropriate state agency in other states.

BANK ACCOUNT    Open a company bank account.

Excerpt from *Risky Business, Financing and Distributing Independent Films* by Mark Litwak, (Silman-James Press, 2004).