

## Scoping/Constraints

### Introduction:

A further consideration as part of the marketing strategy/business plan process is to focus on specific 'niches'. Just being a 'clockmaker' may not be sufficient. It can be important to specialise in some way. Whilst this is clearly important for advisory services, it is just as important for workshop services. It allows the workshop to be optimised for specific types of work, thereby increasing productivity. It reduces the capital spent, thereby increasing margins. It increases familiarity with certain processes, thereby improving the product. The trick is to find specialisms that the clients you are targeting want, *and* which fit with the services you want to offer.

This list considers ways of constraining the extent of services to focus down on a particular niche, the idea being that these constraints can be applied to any/most of the services listed in the service list. e.g. "I offer [service] for [constraint]".

### Caveats:

- *The list was drawn up to be useful to me* - research time was limited. It should not be considered exhaustive or definitive. *Use with caution.*
- *Scope* - The focus is on clock customers. Customers for watches or non-horological topics were considered out of scope. (Although many may be common.)

### Structure

This is a basic list of specialisms that seem to be 'out there'. It should provide a structure for deciding on, and structuring appropriate specialisms for the services chosen.

	Specialism	Pros and Cons
<b>Clocks</b>	↓	↓
<i>Clock Type</i>	One or more types of clock, e.g: Turret, long-case, lantern, dial, mantel, fusee/bracket, carriage, cuckoo, mystery, augsburg, chronometer, electromechanical, automata.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Efficient use of capital and workshop. Need to be stocked up for only a limited range of work, and practice will increase efficiencies.</li> <li>✓ Specialisation deepens experience. It is possible to produce a better quality output produced more efficiently by specialising.</li> <li>✓ For a very tight niche can be combined with thematic scoping.</li> <li>✗ Risks limiting both services that can be offered and the clients that can be served. Particularly those who require a broad-brush expertise.</li> <li>✗ Lacks variety in work, may become jaded.</li> </ul>
<i>Thematic</i>	↓	↓
<i>By period</i>	Clocks made in a specific historic period or periods, e.g.: Pre-pendulum, 'golden age", enlightenment, georgian, 19th century, 20th century.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Allows for a good understanding of the historical context, which supports Advisory and some other services.</li> <li>✓ Limits the range of techniques and equipment needed, hence increases proficiency and efficiency, whilst reducing costs.</li> <li>✗ Severely reduces the client base.</li> </ul>
<i>By mechanism</i>	Clocks that use a particular technology: electromechanical, deadbeat, platform, pendulum, Invar, gridiron etc.	
<i>By association</i>	Clocks that are associated with one or more other (ideally collectable,) topic. e.g.: Aviation, automotive, transport, cinema, maritime, railways, glassware, ceramics etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Such tight niches can be profitable and may have little competition.</li> <li>✓ Allows for a fuller understanding of the context to be established, which can support Advisory and some other services.</li> <li>✓ May open up specific routes to market based on the association - e.g. Automotive/railway fairs, glassware specialists etc.</li> <li>✗ If the niche is too small, costs of selling may squeeze margins.</li> </ul>
<i>By manufacturer</i>	Particular manufacturers or groupings of clock - regional or maker specialisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Contextual knowledge can be used to support advisory services.</li> <li>✗ Extreme reduction in the client base.</li> <li>✗ Does not necessarily reduce the range of techniques and equipment.</li> </ul>
<i>By style</i>	Clocks that are in particular decorative styles: e.g. Art nouveau, art deco, rococo, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Allows a fuller understanding of the historical and stylistic context to be established. This can support advisory and some other services.</li> <li>✓ May open up specific routes to market through other specialists.</li> <li>✗ Does not necessarily reduce the range of techniques and equipment.</li> </ul>
<b>Watches</b>	↓	↓
<i>Modern</i>	One or more brands of watches of recent production where spares are still available from the manufacturer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Good opportunities for full, or part time employment with existing retail businesses that have their own workshops</li> <li>✗ Huge capital outlay required to set up on your own. Many watch manufacturers will only supply components to people who a) have been trained by them, and b) have a workshop fully kitted out with the exact equipment they specify.</li> <li>✗ Large ongoing overheads as watch manufacturers require ongoing training as well as changes to their specified equipment to maintain the supply of components. Therefore any business has to be able to achieve significant scale in order to be profitable.</li> </ul>
<i>Antique</i>	Older watches (pocket and wrist) where spares can no longer be sourced from the manufacturer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Sought-after skills, reasonable demand, good niche.</li> <li>✗ Specific workshop facilities required.</li> </ul>
<b>Related items</b>	↓	↓
<i>Clockwork</i>	Non-horology clockwork items, e.g. Music boxes, gramophones, automatons, clockwork toys, camera accessories etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Easy extension to many horological services, shares techniques.</li> <li>✗ Calls for additional skills and possibly tooling over 'standard' horology.</li> </ul>
<i>Time Based</i>	Non-clockwork horological related items, e.g. ephemera, sundials etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Good extension to advisory and some other services</li> <li>✗ Demands different skills and equipment to standard horology.</li> </ul>
<i>Applicable techniques</i>	Items to which clock repair techniques could reasonably be applied, Barometers, model engineering, cameras etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Easy extension to many horological services.</li> <li>✗ Usually these niches are already being well served.</li> </ul>
<b>Ancillaries</b>	↓	↓
<i>Components</i>	Clock components, one or more of: - Mechanisms - gearing, castings, pallets etc. - Motive power - springs and weights. - 'Face' - dials, bezels, glass, hands, chapter rings. - Specialist - jewels, platforms etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ For some services it may pay to specialise this way, increasing margin whilst reducing capital outlay.</li> <li>✗ Tightly specialised, highly competitive market.</li> </ul>

	Specialism	Pros and Cons
<i>Tools</i>	Horological tooling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- New, specialist tooling.</li><li>- Old, tooling for use.</li><li>- Old, for decorative and other purposes</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ A natural extension to some services, particularly trading ones.</li><li>✗ Specialised, highly competitive market.</li></ul>