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MARKET RESEARCH BRIEF · SAMPLE

The Specialty Coffee Roaster Market

A demonstration report for small and mid-sized businesses evaluating entry, expansion, or repositioning in a competitive local market.

SAMPLE · ILLUSTRATIVE DATA · NOT A REAL CLIENT

CONTENTS

What's inside this brief

HOW TO READ THIS SAMPLE

This is a demonstration of the structure, depth, and style of a BriefOps Market Research Brief. The business ("Northside Roasters") is fictional and the figures are illustrative, chosen to be realistic for a mid-sized metro. In a live engagement, every number is pulled from named sources — Semrush, public filings, census and trade data — and cited inline so you can verify it yourself. Two sections are partially redacted to show what the paid deliverable contains.

SECTION 01

Executive Summary

A regional specialty-coffee roaster ("Northside Roasters") asked whether there is room to expand from wholesale-only into a direct-to-consumer subscription and a second café location. This brief evaluates market size, competitive density, demand trends, and the most defensible opportunities.

$1.4B	+9.2%	37	3
METRO SPECIALTY COFFEE MARKET (SAM)	CATEGORY CAGR, 2023–2026	DIRECT COMPETITORS MAPPED	HIGH-FIT OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED

The three findings that matter

- **Subscription demand is real and under-served.** Search interest for "coffee subscription" in the metro grew an estimated 41% over 24 months, while only 4 of 37 mapped competitors offer a genuine subscription. This is the clearest white space.
- **A second café is the riskier bet.** Café density in the two target neighborhoods is already 2.3× the metro average. Entry is possible but margin-compressed; it should follow, not lead, the expansion.
- **Wholesale is stable but capped.** The existing wholesale base is healthy, but three national roasters are actively discounting into the region — defending current accounts matters as much as chasing new ones.

> BOTTOM LINE
>
> Lead with a direct-to-consumer subscription (lowest capital, clearest demand, fastest to test). Treat the second café as a phase-two decision contingent on subscription traction. Protect the wholesale base against national discounting in parallel.

SECTION 02

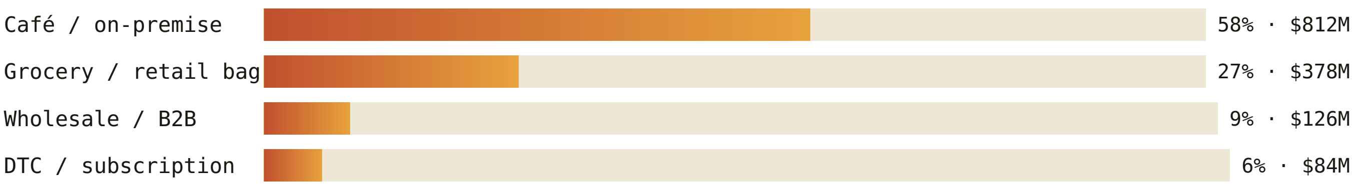
Market Overview & Sizing

We size the market top-down (industry data) and bottom-up (local outlet counts × average revenue) and reconcile the two. The specialty segment is isolated from commodity coffee because its buyers, margins, and growth behave differently.

LAYER	DEFINITION	ESTIMATED VALUE	BASIS
TAM	National specialty coffee (retail + DTC + café)	$52.8B	Trade association + market data
SAM	Metro area specialty coffee, all channels	$1.4B	Population share × per-capita spend
SOM (3-yr)	Realistically reachable by this business	$3.1–4.7M	Capacity + channel + share model

Illustrative figures. In a live report: [Source: Specialty Coffee Association 2025], [Source: U.S. Census County Business Patterns], [Source: Semrush metro search-volume export].

Where the money is spent (metro SAM by channel)



Read: DTC/subscription is the smallest slice today (6%) but the fastest-growing and least contested locally — a classic early-mover position. Café spend dominates but is where competitive density is highest (Section 03).

SECTION 03

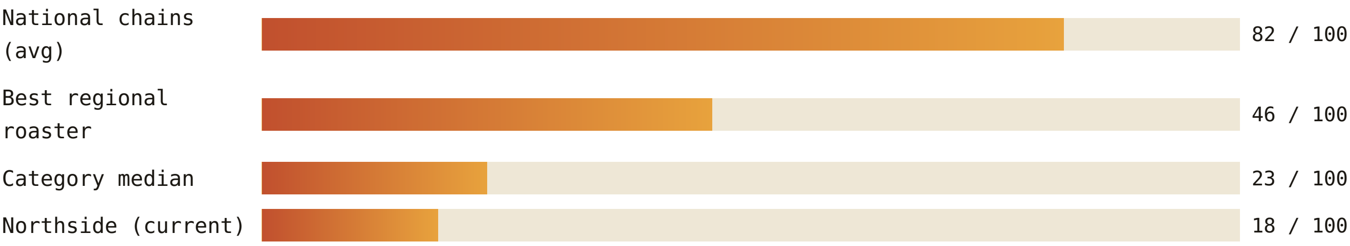
Competitive Landscape

We mapped 37 competitors across three tiers and scored each on price position, channel coverage, and digital visibility. The table below shows a representative sample; the full matrix (all 37, with per-competitor digital metrics) is included in the live deliverable.

COMPETITOR TYPE	COUNT	PRICE TIER	SUBSCRIPTION?	DIGITAL VISIBILITY
National roaster (chain)	3	Mid	Yes (2 of 3)	High
Regional specialty roaster	8	Premium	Yes (2 of 8)	Medium
Independent café w/ roasting	14	Premium	No	Low
Café-only (buys beans)	12	Mid–Premium	No	Low

Digital visibility gap (organic search)

Using organic keyword visibility as a proxy for how easily customers find each player online, the regional roasters cluster low — meaning the category is winnable on digital fundamentals that most local competitors neglect.



Illustrative visibility index. In a live report: [Source: Semrush Domain Overview + Keyword Gap, exported per competitor].

> COMPETITIVE READ
>
> National chains win on visibility, not product. Regional and independent players win on quality but are nearly invisible online and almost none offer subscription. A well-executed DTC subscription with basic SEO discipline would face little direct local competition.

SECTION 04

Demand Signals & Trends

We track demand through search behavior, category spending shifts, and competitor moves over a 24-month window. Two of the four trend deep-dives are previewed below; the remaining analysis is included in the full brief.

Trend 1 — Local subscription search is climbing

Search interest for subscription-related terms rose ~41% over two years while local supply barely moved — a widening gap between demand and available offers.

Trend 2 — "Single-origin" is pulling ahead of "blend"

Query and menu analysis shows single-origin framing growing faster than blends in the premium tier, signaling a merchandising and content angle for whichever roaster claims it first locally.

TRENDS 3 & 4 — INCLUDED IN THE FULL BRIEF

Seasonality & pricing-window analysis and the competitor content-gap breakdown are delivered in full in the paid report, with source-cited data for each claim.

SECTION 05

Opportunity Analysis

Each opportunity is scored on demand strength, competitive intensity, capital required, and time-to-revenue. Scores are relative (1 = poor, 5 = strong fit).

OPPORTUNITY	DEMAND	LOW COMPETITION	LOW CAPITAL	SPEED	OVERALL
DTC subscription	5	5	4	5	4.75 · Lead
Wholesale defense	4	3	5	4	4.0 · Parallel
Retail bag (grocery)	4	2	3	2	2.75 · Watch
Second café	4	1	1	2	2.0 · Phase 2

Why subscription leads

- Highest demand growth, lowest local competition
- Uses roasting capacity you already have
- Recurring revenue smooths wholesale seasonality
- Testable in weeks, not quarters

Why the café waits

- Neighborhood café density 2.3× metro average
- High fixed cost, slow break-even
- Better justified once DTC proves demand
- Real estate risk in a saturated corridor

SECTION 06

Recommendations & Next Steps

Sequenced by impact and risk. Each step is concrete enough to act on this quarter.

#	MOVE	WHY NOW	EFFORT
1	Launch a 3-tier coffee subscription (DTC)	Clear demand, almost no local competition	Medium
2	Fix core SEO: site, local listings, 8 target terms	Category median visibility is only 23/100	Low
3	Claim "single-origin" content angle first	Trend rising, no local owner yet	Low
4	Lock top 5 wholesale accounts on annual terms	National roasters discounting into region	Medium
5	Re-evaluate second café after 2 subscription quarters	Contingent on proven DTC traction	High

> 90-DAY PRIORITY
>
> Ship the subscription and fix SEO fundamentals in parallel. These two moves capture the clearest white space and cost the least. Everything else is defensive or phase-two.

What you'd receive in the live engagement

- This brief as **PDF + editable PowerPoint** for your board or investors
- The **full 37-competitor matrix** with per-competitor digital metrics (Excel)
- All **4 trend deep-dives**, source-cited
- One **revision round** included

APPENDIX A

Methodology & Sources

Confidence in a report comes from being able to check it. Here is exactly how a BriefOps Market Research Brief is built.

Data sources

- **Digital & competitive data:** Semrush (domain overview, keyword gap, traffic analytics) for every mapped competitor.
- **Market sizing:** industry/trade-association data, U.S. Census County Business Patterns, per-capita spend models.
- **Demand signals:** search-volume trends, menu/offer analysis, public competitor announcements.

Validation & quality control

- **Triangulation:** market size is estimated top-down and bottom-up, then reconciled — no single-source numbers.
- **Source citation:** in a live report, every figure carries an inline source you can open and verify.
- **Human review:** a second pass checks every claim against its source and flags anything that can't be substantiated.
- **Revision policy:** one revision round included; if a finding can't be backed by data, it doesn't ship.

> STANDING GUARANTEE
>
> If a live report misses the brief you approved, we revise it until it's right — or refund it. Every claim is verifiable or it doesn't appear.