

Small Business Planning Resources

Business, Science, and Industry Department, Parkway Central Library
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The Databases

To access the Free Library of Philadelphia business databases:

1. GO TO: www.freelibrary.org
2. In the blue "Find" box, CHOOSE databases instead of catalog
3. SCROLL DOWN to the "Business" section
4. CLICK ON the name of the database you wish to use
5. If you are accessing our databases from home, you will be asked to enter your library card # and PIN.

Database: Gale Virtual Reference Library – Business Books (*SCROLL DOWN to the General Research section*)

What It Does: You can access many useful business titles through this database, including sample business plans in the Business Plan Handbook.

Database: Reference USA

What It Does:

1. Search by "Geography" and "Business Type"
2. Provide basic data about those businesses

Why You Should Use It:

1. This database is good for doing your competition research, which may also affect your decision about where you want to locate your business.
2. In some cases it may give you useful basic information about businesses like yours.
3. If you are marketing goods and/or services to businesses this database can be useful for both marketing research and sales leads.

Database: Business Decision

What It Does:

1. Demographic Data & Market Research Reports by Geographic Area
2. Thematic Maps based on demographic, market, or traffic data
3. Shows businesses in your area & traffic counts

Why You Should Use It:

1. This is a great tool for doing your demographic research. You can generate reports for both demographic and spending in the area where you intend to locate your business.
2. Thematic maps are useful for viewing concentrations of businesses like yours or people you may want to market to in a given area.
3. Business Locator and Traffic Counts are useful in counting people who do not live in the area where you intend to locate your business, but who work near or pass your business location.

Database: Business Insights

What It Does:

1. Industry Reports
2. Case Studies

Why You Should Use It: This is your main source for industry research. You can access:

1. Industry essays
2. Market share reports
3. Rankings
4. News for your industry

Print Resources

Industry Codes *(on the shelves behind the reference desk)*

1. Standard Industry Classification Manual (SIC codes; this is the older system but many of the books and databases you will need for your research still use it)
2. North American Industry Classification System (NAICS codes; newer system)

Demographics, Income, & Spending *(on the shelves behind the reference desk)*

1. American Incomes (also available online via Gale Virtual Reference Library)
2. American Marketplace (also available online via Gale Virtual Reference Library)
3. Household Spending (also available online via Gale Virtual Reference Library)
4. American Buyers (also available online via Gale Virtual Reference Library)
5. Best Customers (also available online via Gale Virtual Reference Library)
6. Sourcebook of ZIP code demographics

Industry Research *(on the shelves behind the reference desk, also available online via Gale Virtual Reference Library)*

1. Encyclopedia of American Industries
2. Encyclopedia of Emerging Industries
3. Market Share Reporter

Financial Ratios *(on the shelves behind the reference desk)*

1. Annual Statement Studies : Financial Ratio Benchmarks
2. Almanac of Business and Industrial Financial Ratios
3. D&B Industry Norms & Key Business Ratios (also available online via Reference USA: One Source)

Local and Regional Directories *(on the shelves behind the reference desk)*

1. Pennsylvania Manufacturers Register
2. Harris Pennsylvania Services Directory
3. Harris Pennsylvania Industrial Directory
4. Harris New Jersey Manufacturers Directory
5. Harris New Jersey Services Directory
6. Delaware Manufacturers Register
7. D&B Local Business Directory

Other Useful Stuff:

1. How to Start a Business In Pennsylvania (*closed reference, ask for item at the reference desk*)
2. NOLO Legal Guide for Starting & Running a Small Business (*closed reference, ask for item at the reference desk*)
3. The Successful Marketing Plan (*Reference section 658.802 H531s3*)
4. Small Business Collection (*back left corner of the department*)
5. Business magazines (*Indexes table*)