Small Business Planning Resources

Business Resource & Innovation Center
Parkway Central Library, 1901 Vine Street, Philadelphia 19103
215-686-5394 │ bric@freelibrary.org

The Databases
To access the Free Library of Philadelphia business databases:
1. GO TO: freelibrary.org
2. In the blue “Find” box, CHOOSE databases instead of catalog
3. FILTER to SUBJECT – “Business & Entrepreneurs”
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
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: U.S. Businesses
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: OneSource: D&B Business Browser Pro
What It Does:
1. Find company information and market research, including RMA reports, in-depth company and executive profiles, and detailed financial information. Great for research on international and multinational companies.
2. Provide basic data about those businesses
Why You Should Use It:
1. This database is good for research on international and multinational companies.
2. Powerful resource for industry and market research

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: Mergent Intellect: First Research
What It Does:
1. Critical knowledge tools that equip you with the targeted understanding needed to engage key prospects.
2. “Knowledge Tools“ (Industry Profiles, Call Prep Sheets, State & Province Profiles) help you prepare for call preparation, presentations, and to learn key industry and company business issues.
Why You Should Use It:
1. This is a great tool to monitor industry profiles, news, trends, and issues
2. Sign up to receive Quarterly Industry Alerts to stay abreast of changes in the industries that are most important to you.
3. Use Call Prep Sheets to quickly prepare answers to key questions during calls and presentations
4. Use State Profiles to monitor monthly employment, business and real estate trends in every state
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 (in the BRIC, sign in at the reference desk, online at www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/)
1. North American Industry Classification System (NAICS codes; newer system)
2. Standard Industry Classification Manual (SIC codes; this is the older system, some books and databases still use)

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 (in the BRIC, sign in at the reference desk, also available online via Gale Virtual Reference Library)
1. Encyclopedia of American Industries (also available online via Gale Virtual Reference Library)
2. Encyclopedia of Emerging Industries (also available online via Gale Virtual Reference Library)
3. Market Share Reporter (also available online via Gale Virtual Reference Library)

Financial Ratios (in the BRIC, sign in at 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 (in the BRIC, sign in at 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. D&B Local Business Directory

Other Useful Print Resources:
1. NOLO Legal Guide for Starting & Running a Small Business (closed reference, ask for item at the reference desk)
2. Small Business Collection (in the BRIC, sign in at the reference desk)
3. Business magazines (many are also available on Zinio, accessible via Digital Media on the Free Library’s home page)
(We have a printed copy located in a closed reference cabinet, just ask for it at the reference desk). You can also access it from our website at freelibrary.org/bric under Sample Documents.

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