

Small Business Planning Resources

Business Resource and Innovation Center

Databases

To access the Free Library of Philadelphia business databases:

1. Go to: freelibrary.org/business
2. Scroll to "Databases & Digital Resources"
3. Click on the red link "premier business databases"
4. Click on the name of the database you would like to use (if you are accessing our databases from home, you will be asked to enter your library card number and PIN)

Database: Gale Virtual Reference Library - Business Plans Handbook

What It Does:

1. Access many useful business titles through Gale Virtual Reference Library this database, including sample business plans in the Business Plan Handbook.

Why You Should Use It:

1. Download, email, or listen to sample business plans for many industries.
2. Each plan is unique.

Database: Gale Small Business Builder (available at Parkway Central Library only)

What It Does:

1. Offers a guided approach to business planning and helps aspiring entrepreneurs and experienced small business owners plan, start, or optimize a small business or nonprofit. Only available at Parkway Central Library.

Why You Should Use It:

1. Create an account to build your entrepreneur profile, business model canvas/ ideation chart, break even analysis, business plan, pitch deck, financial analysis, and financial projections.
2. There are helpful prompts along the way

Database: Reference USA

What It Does:

1. Search for US Businesses, US New Businesses, US Consumers / Lifestyles, US New Movers / Homeowners
2. Search by "Geography," "Business Type," "Income," and other categories
3. Provide basic data about businesses and consumers
4. Download lists and view heat maps
5. Useful for competitive analysis, market research, target audience, B2B & B2C sales lists

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 Insights: Global

What It Does:

1. Industry Reports
2. Case Studies

Why You Should Use It:

1. This is a source for industry research. You can access: industry essays, market share reports, rankings, and news for your industry

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 market research tool that makes it simple 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: Simply Analytics (available at Parkway Central Library only)

What It Does:

1. SimplyAnalytics is a web-based mapping, analytics and data visualization program providing over 70,000 data variables.
2. Demographic and market research data by Geographic Area
3. Maps business locations by industry, sales volume, and name
5. Provides insights into consumer behavior for 210 media markets on a local level with 60,000+ data variables, including over 450 categories and 8,000 specific brands - from the products we buy to the brands we prefer to our attitudes and lifestyles.
6. Analyze data by State, County, City/Place, ZIP code, Census Tracts, Block Groups, or even custom area. Includes data from the year 2000, 2010, Current Estimates, Five Year Projections, D&B's Complete US Company Database

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. Mapping tool is 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.
4. Search for relevant categories and datasets by keyword. Multiple views available - map, comparison, list, ranking

Database: Gale Virtual Reference Library

What It Does:

1. Fully searchable database of over 260 reference titles developed by Gale and other publishers
2. Search within publications, listen, email, or download materials

Why You Should Use It

1. Access information and data in full text reference books on demographics, income, and spending including: *American Incomes, American Marketplace, Household Spending, American Buyers, Best Customers,*
2. Access information and data in full text reference books on industries including: *Encyclopedia of American Industries, Encyclopedia of Emerging Industries, Market Share Reporter*

Other Useful Resources

1. NAICS and SIC industry classification codes available via census.gov/naics
2. NOLO Legal Guides for Starting & Running a Small Business
3. Small Business Collection (in the BRIC, sign in at the reference desk)
4. Business magazines (many are also available on RBdigital, accessible via databases - Digital Media on the Free Library's home page)
5. Online learning resources - take free classes (accessible via databases - Online Learning on the Free Library's home page): Take classes on business and technology subjects such as entrepreneurship, bookkeeping, marketing, web design, and more

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