

Public Libraries Briefcase

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Small Business Online Resources

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There is a vast body of information on the Internet for and about small businesses and entrepreneurs. These web sites represent the best of what is currently available online. The list has been divided into five sections: General; Small Business Administration; SBA Partners & Other Government Organizations; Associations and Organizations; Online Periodicals.

General

Bplans.com
<http://www.bplans.com>

This free resource from Palo Alto Software has guidelines for writing business marketing, web strategy and advertising plans. Includes sample plans for various types of businesses.

Biz Stats.com
<http://www.bizstats.com>

Leading online source for small business statistics, including useful financial ratios and benchmarks.

CCH Business Owners Toolkit – Revised 6/4/15
<http://csi.toolkit.tst.cch.com/welcome.asp>

Comprehensive checklist of steps to take to start a business. The table of contents expands to display section headings and document titles. Click on document titles for in-depth information.

Dun & Bradstreet Small Business Solutions
<http://mycredit.dnb.com/>

Small businesses can obtain credit reports for companies they want to do business with, manage their own credit, collect debt and obtain customer lists. There are no costs involved to search this website, however, there are fees for purchasing the reports and lists themselves. There are various subscription packages, all at minimal costs, that a small business can take advantage of. Comprehensive charts of D&B's fees and pricing structures accompany each of the services.

Entreworld

<http://www.entreworld.org>

Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation's highly regarded site combines links to the best resources on the web, with content written specifically for Entreworld by noted entrepreneurs and business professionals, for all stages of starting and growing a business.

Findlaw.com

<http://biz.findlaw.com>

Good source of legal information for the business start-up. Guidelines for starting a business, downloadable forms and contracts and a searchable directory of lawyers by state.

Mplans.com

<http://www.mplans.com>

This free resource from Palo Alto Software provides access to an excellent outline for a marketing plan, as well as sample plans and informative articles.

NOLO

<http://www.nolo.com>

Do-it-yourself law center with a section devoted to small business. Includes information on small business legal structures and a good legal encyclopedia.

Peerspectives

<http://peerspectives.org>

Developed by the Edward Lowe Foundation, this site is designed for second stage businesses and entrepreneurs, with information to help them get to that next level. Articles on marketing, finance, human resources, management and organization.

SBTV Small Business Television Network – revised 6/4/15

<https://www.youtube.com/user/SBTVcom>

Television network on the web devoted to small businesses, with content provided by noted business journalists and professionals.

Small Business School

<http://smallbusinessschool.org>

Companion web site to the PBS series. Read television show transcripts and case studies of small businesses that the series profiles.

Someday Soon

<http://somedaysoon.brooklynpubliclibrary.org>

Although this site is geared towards the young adult entrepreneur, the information is relevant to anyone starting a business. Among the features are interactive quizzes and tools, checklists with links, success stories, a start-up cost calculator and a feasibility assessment survey to determine whether a person has what it takes to become an entrepreneur.

Small Business Administration Links**Small Business Administration**

<http://www.sba.gov>

Definitive source of government information for small business. Guidelines and how-to's for starting and financing a small business, FAQs, local office contacts, regulations, headline news, and disaster assistance are some of the many topics covered on this site. Here are key pages on the site.

Business Opportunities

<http://www.sba.gov/businessop/index.html>

Basics of government contracting, including regulations and policies, size standards, preparing bids and proposals, etc.

Business Plan Guide

<https://www.sba.gov/writing-business-plan>

Good comprehensive guide for constructing a business plan.

Forms

<https://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/starting-managing-business/managing-business/forms>

Free downloadable forms, letters and guides

Loans

<https://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/loans-grants/small-business-loans/sba-loan-programs>

SBA offers a variety of loan programs for very specific purposes. Many of these programs are described in this section.

Management for Growth

<http://www.sba.gov/managing/index.html>

Management, leadership, marketing, financing, strategic planning, technology and special interest topics.

Online Classroom

<http://www.sba.gov/training>

Pick from an extensive list of free training courses and workshops in a virtual classroom setting.

Other Languages Version

<http://www.sba.gov>

On the home page of the English language version, click on the link "translate" at the upper right corner.

Starting Your Business

http://www.sba.gov/starting_business/index.html

Startup basics, including access to a free comprehensive small business startup guide.

SBA Partners and Other Government Organizations

IRS Small Business & Self Employed One-Stop Resource

<http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small/index.html>

One-stop shopping resource for everything small business owners need to know about starting and running a business from a tax perspective.

SCORE – updated 6/4/15

<http://www.SCORE.org> or <https://www.sba.gov/offices/headquarters/oed/resources/148091>

Service Corps of Retired Executives provides mentoring, training seminars and online counseling to small business startups.

Small Business Development Centers

<http://www.sba.gov/sbdc>

SBDC's provide businesses with management and technical assistance. Find links to offices in each state. Access the SBDC's National Information Clearinghouse, sbdcnet, along with links to statistics, organizations and publications.

Women's Business Centers – revised 6//4/15

<https://www.sba.gov/tools/local-assistance/wbc>

Educational centers designed to help women start and grow their businesses. A PDF document lists each of the over 80 centers across the US.

Associations & Organizations

International Franchise Association

<http://www.franchise.org>

Information on seeking a franchise, with a resource center and a comprehensive database with links to over 800 companies.

National Association for the Self-Employed

<http://www.nase.org>

Provides benefits, support and advocacy for micro-business with up to 10 employees and the self-employed.

National Association of Small Business Investment Companies

<http://www.nasbic.org>

SBIC's are private financial institutions licensed by the SBA to make equity capital and long-term credit available to small businesses. Search the NASBIC member database by company, city, state or firm type, as well as industry and member links.

National Business Incubator Association

<http://www.nbia.org>

Although most of the content is for members only, the Resource Center provides access to links for member incubators in the US and international and state and international incubator associations. View profiles of incubator award winners.

National Dialogue on Entrepreneurship

<http://www.publicforumsinstitute.org/nde>

This independent, nonpartisan, not for profit organization seeks to improve awareness on the value of entrepreneurship. Links to daily news about entrepreneurship in the US and around the world, articles, reports and statistics.

National Federation of Independent Businesses

<http://www.nfib.com>

Advocacy organization representing small and independent businesses in Washington. Search the toolbox of articles of interest to small business and read about key issues the NFIB is lobbying for.

Small Business Survival Committee

<http://www.sbsc.org>

This advocacy group, representing the interests of small business owners, produces the annual Small Business Survival Index, which shows how 21 major government imposed or related costs impact small business owners in various Industries and business categories.

Online Periodicals

Business Week Small Business Online

<http://www.businessweek.com/smallbiz>

Resources for financing, day-to-day operations and staffing a small business. A small business guide and small business tools are special features.

Entrepreneur

<http://www.entrepreneur.com>

Articles and information on start-ups, franchising, e-commerce, marketing and more.

Forbes

<http://www.forbes.com/entrepreneurs>

Use this URL or click on the "Work" tab on the home page to access a list of resources and tools for the entrepreneur, including links to the "200 Best Small Companies" and "500 Largest Private Companies."

Fortune Small Business

<http://www.fortune.com/fortune/smallbusiness>

Articles about and for small business, including links to special issues such as the "FSB 100 list of America's Fastest Growing Small Companies."

Inc.com

<http://www.inc.com>

Search for articles and view the "Inc. 500" list. Register, at no cost, to gain free access to over 100 useful tools, including policies, procedures, worksheets and checklists.

WSJ.com Startup Journal

<http://www.StartupJournal.com>

Wall Street Journal's site for new business start-ups and entrepreneurs includes a database of thousands of businesses and franchises for sale that is searchable by location and category. In addition, there are feature articles on a variety of topics of interest to small businesses.