



Small Business and Technology Development Center

a business development service of the University of North Carolina
operated in partnership with the US Small Business Administration

Internet Resource List

General Business Resources:

Business

1. About.com (<http://about.com>)

This site covers hundreds of subjects relating to business and industry segments. The small business sections (<http://about.com/smallbusiness/>) and (<http://sbinformation.about.com>) provides articles and links to marketing, human resources, financing, and other topics that concern small business owners.

2. AllBusiness.com: Market Research (<http://allbusiness.com>)

This is a vast collection of services, how-tos, real-stories, and forms and agreements on market research, both online and offline. Also has 24 start-up tools listed for businesses. This is listed at the bottom of the site under start-up kit. Click start here, to obtain that information.

3. America's Business Funding Directory (<http://www.businessfinance.com>)

This is a free database of funding sources. It searches over 3,600 sources of capital. It has expert step-by-step manuals that instruct you on how to prepare and present a successful funding request and the art and science of obtaining venture (or investor) capital. This search engine asks the user questions about the type of business and stage of development, then goes to work to find potential sources of funding.

4. Business Plan Pro (<http://www.bplans.com/samples/>)

Although this site is for promotion of a software product, there are free sample business plans for all types of businesses. There are sample business plans, marketing plans and website plans. There is also a question and answer section to answer any questions that you may have.

5. Council for Entrepreneurial Development (<http://www.cednc.org/>)

This is the homepage of the CED and it offers a calendar of events for the organization, a section on education and publications offered by CED and links to other helpful sites.

Economic

1. EconData.net (<http://www.econdata.net>)

This is a guide to regional economic activity. Econdata has over 800 links to socioeconomic data sources, arranged by subject and provider. This is a great source for finding economic and demographic statistics about an industry or area without searching through every government website or publication.

2. Biz Stats (<http://bizstats.com/index.asp>)

Biz Stats is a collection of free business and industry statistics. Topics include: industry market size; average sales per store location; total number of US businesses; financial ratios by industry; inventory turnover ratios by industry; and many more.

3. Dun & Bradstreet's ZapData (<http://www.zapdata.com>)

Zapdata contains information to build a prospect list, free samples from their business directory, and national and state industry statistics.

Finance

1. Global Financial Data (<http://www.globalfindata.com/>)

This site is a collection of historical financial research dating back to the year 1264. Although, most of their services are fee-based, a good deal of data is free.

Demographics/Psychographics

1. American FactFinder by the US Census Bureau (<http://factfinder.census.gov/>)

This is the site for all US Census data. With a few clicks of the mouse, demographics and population statistics can be gathered down to the zip code or block group area.

2. ESRI's Business Information Solutions (<http://www.esribis.com/>)

If the Census data available is a little too old for your needs, ESRI can give you up-to-date estimates for the number of households, size of the population by race and sex, and median income and housing value figures. Data is available by zip code area only.

3. EASI Demographics (<http://www.easidemographics.com/>)

Easi Demographics provides demographic estimates of areas surrounding a user defined address. Want to know how many people live within a 1-mile, 3-mile, and 5-mile radius of your location? This is the site to use. Access is free but you must register first.

4. Prizm (<http://cluster2.claritas.com/YAWYL/Default.html>) Population Clusters

This site uses a technique called clustering to gain a better picture of the psychographic makeup of a zip code area. Area residents are divided into market "types" which give insight into the tastes and preferences of the population.

Marketing

1. Find/Svp (<http://www.findsvp.com/>)

This is the homepage of a marketing research-consulting firm. You can search this site for market research reports that are available for purchase. The site also provides abstracts of the reports.

2. Marketing Resource Center (<http://www.marketingsource.com/>)

The Marketing Resource Center is a resource and reference center designed to assist businesses with their traditional and Internet marketing efforts. A keyword-searchable listing of associations is available at: (<http://marketingsource.com/associations>) (though not as complete as the *Encyclopedia of Associations*).

3. Market Research on the Web (<http://www.wilsonweb.com/webmarket/mkt-research.htm>)

This site contains a large collection of articles and resources on conducting market research online.

4. Wilson Web Marketing (<http://www.wilsonweb.com/>)

This site offers hundreds of good articles on Internet marketing strategies and techniques. Although the topics are focus to web-based businesses, many of the articles discuss concepts that apply to traditional businesses as well.

Human Resources

1. American Compensation Association (<http://www.worldatwork.org>)

This site has news and information about compensation and benefits. It also includes seminars, events, publications, research and searchable membership database.

2. Employee Benefits Research Institute (<http://www.ebri.org/>)

At this site the user can find information about employee benefits. An especially useful section is entitled "Fact Sheets".

3. Equal Employment Opportunity, Office of (<http://www.gsa.gov/eeo/>)

This is part of the General Administrative Services site and has information about the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

4. The Riley Guide to Salary & Compensation Information (<http://www.dbm.com>)

This site has links to private and government salary surveys that can help an employer determine the market pay rate for their workers.

Small Business

1. Business Owner's Toolkit (http://www.toolkit.cch.com/text/p03_0101.asp)

This is a complete guide for the small business owner on successfully marketing goods or services. It introduces small business owners to some of the concepts and strategies that professional marketing experts in large companies use and show how they can be adapted to help a small business thrive.

2. Edge On-line (<http://www.peerspectives.org>)

This site is a service of the Edward Lowe Foundation and has many articles relevant to small business. It has over 1,415 ideas to help you grow your company and find your edge. An especially useful section is the "Business Toolbox" where the user can find interactive modules to help with business activities such as marketing planning, financial management and personal development.

3. National Federation of Independent Business (<http://www.nfib.com/>)

This site has information about current events affecting small business and includes a section entitled, "How to Start a Business".

4. SBDC Research Network (<http://sbdnet.utsa.edu>)

The SBDC Research Network site includes links to sources of interest for small businesses. Main subjects that have links include: associations, demographics, industry specific information, and tax information.

5. The Wall Street Journal's Startup Journal (<http://www.startupjournal.com/>)

The Startup Journal provides a variety of useful articles geared to entrepreneurs and small business owners. Articles cover a wide range of topics including financing, franchising, technology, legal, marketing, and general business "how-to's".

International Resources:

1. Bureau of the Census (<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www/>)

At this government site, the user can search for Schedule B numbers by the keyword and there is a useful section containing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS) on trade information.

2. CIA World Fact book (<http://odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>)

The user will find information on countries including: geography, people, government, economy, transportation, communications and defense.

3. Export-Import Bank of the US (<http://www.exim.gov>)

This is the website of the Ex-Im Bank of US. The website explains the program and gives instructions on how to apply.

4. Europages (<http://www.europages.com/>)

This site allows searching by product or service for company contact information in 37 countries. The user can also search by activity sector and there is economic information about the European market.

5. International Business Resources (<http://globaledge.msu.edu/ibrd/ibrd.asp>)

At this site, you will find links to helpful international sites maintained by Michigan State University.

6. International Trade Administration (Department of Commerce)

(<http://www.ita.doc.gov/>)

This site contains International trade assistance and country specific information under "Regions & Countries", information about the available assistance programs and useful links.

7. Stat-USA (<http://www.stat-usa.gov/stat-usa.html>)

From this site the user can access the National Trade Data Bank. A subscription is required for full access, but there is a sample of information for free.

8. The World Bank (<http://www.worldbank.org>)

The World Bank provides country and project information, publications, research studies, and press releases on-line.

9. US International Trade Commission Trade Database

(<http://dataweb.usite.gov>)

From this site, users can access import/export statistics on individual products. Login is required but free.

10. World Trading Information Center (<http://www.world-trading.com/main.htm>)

This site provides many trade leads for individuals or companies desiring to do business internationally.

11. World Trade Online (<http://www.worldtrademag.com/>)

This site is the homepage of a publication that contains articles on world trading.

12. World Trade Markets (<http://www.wtm.com>)

This site is a daily update of Electronic Trade Opportunities throughout the world.

13. US State Department Country Commercial Guides

(<http://www.state.gov/e/eb/rls/rpts/ccg/>)

This site has the Country Commercial Guides available in an easy format for printing.

14. US Census International Database

(<http://www.census.gov/ftp/pub/ipc/www/idbprint.html>)

(http://www.census.gov/main/www/stat_int.html)

These pages from the US Census provide statistical demographic summaries and links to international statistical agencies from around the world.

North Carolina Government Sources:

Business & Industry

1. NC Department of Commerce (<http://www.commerce.state.nc.us/>)

There is an extensive business section on this site including information on tax credits for qualifying businesses. Also, the County and Regional Scans produce good statistics about the economic trends and conditions of each county and region in the state.

2. WebSARAS (<http://eslmi40.esc.state.nc.us/websaras/>)

Produced by the NC ESC, WebSARAS is intended to make state, county, and regional data easier to find and collect. Demographic, economic, and industry data are taken from a variety of state and federal government sources. The searchable database includes information on population, income, occupations, industry, businesses, labor supply, local information and more.

3. NC Industry Profiles

(<http://cmedis.commerce.state.nc.us/industryprofiles>)

Provided by the NC Commerce Dept., this page links to short reports on the state of 18 major industries in North Carolina.

Human Resources

1. NC Employment Security Commission (<http://www.ncesc.com>)

The NC Employment Security Commission homepage includes: general information about the commissions, news releases, employment service listings, and labor market information.

2. NC Industrial Commission

(<http://www.comp.state.nc.us/ncic/pages/bulletin.htm>)

This site explains Workers Compensation laws in North Carolina.

General Research:

1. NC General Assembly (<http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/>)

The user can search bills by number, key word or sponsor. There are also calendars, geography and representation information.

2. NC Secretary of State (<http://www.state.nc.us/secstate/>)

This site has an online corporate name database, business license information, corporations division (the user can download corporate forms from here) and information on the qualified business tax credit program.

3. North Carolina @ your service (<http://www.ncgov.com>)

This is a portal for citizens, businesses and employees. Citizens can register cars and purchase State Fair tickets online (among other things).

4. NC Community College System (<http://www.ncccs.cc.nc.us/>)

This site contains news releases and links to community colleges across the state.

US Government Resources:

1. Bureau of Labor Statistics (<http://stats.bls.gov/>)

This site has the "economy at a glance", data about labor, and regional information.

2. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) (<http://www.cfda.gov/>)

CFDA is a government-wide compendium of Federal programs, projects, services, and activities that provide assistance or benefits to the American public. It contains financial and non-financial assistance programs administered by departments and establishments of the Federal government. You can search the catalog at this site.

3. Firstgov (<http://firstgov.gov>)

This is a search engine that searches numerous government databases. Useful for finding government reports from a variety of sources.

4. National Transportation Library (<http://www.bts.gov/NTL/>)

This site is part of the Bureau of Transportation site and has numerous reports on transportation from bicycles to aviation.

5. National Center for Education Statistics (<http://nces.ed.gov>)

This government site contains a great amount of data regarding education at all levels. The current *Digest of Education Statistics* contains over 500 pages of interesting statistics for those interested in education.

6. OSHA (<http://www.osha.gov/>)

This is the US Dept. of Labor's site for Occupational Safety and Health Administration. It has a "frequently asked question" section and a link to a list of standards and publications by OSHA.

7. Small Business Administration (<http://www.sba.gov>)

This gives users information on the SBA including: SBA program offices and resource partners; starting, financing and expanding your business; and information on disaster assistance. Also included is "Great Business Hotlinks" which allows users to link to the Internal Revenue Service, Social Security Administration, etc.

8. Small Business Innovation Research (<http://www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu/sbir/>)

This site explains SBIR and STTR programs as well as "Fast Track". It also has a "commonly asked question" section.

9. Statistical Abstract of the US (<http://www.census.gov/statab/www/>)

The most compact source of statistics on social and economic conditions in the U.S.; updated every year.

10. Thomas, Legislative information on the Internet (<http://thomas.loc.gov/>)

This site allows searching of US bills by keyword, bill number or title. Bill text is available or the user can download the bills in a PDF format.

11. US Business Advisor (<http://www.business.gov/>)

With this address users can be linked to federal government information, services and transactions.

12. US Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov/>)

This site offers information from the US Census, including charts and statistics. To find information about North Carolina, go to

http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en and select "North Carolina." Information about the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is available at: <http://www.census.gov/epcd/www/naics.html>

13. US Dept. of Commerce (<http://www.doc.gov/>)

This is the US Dept. of Commerce's site and it has a business/trade section that has links to other government sites with business information.

14. US Dept. of Labor (<http://www.dol.gov/>)

This is the US Dept. of Labor's site. The Small Business Compliance Assistance Information Inventory is a matrix of Department of Labor Compliance Assistance materials available on the Internet. The Matrix is designed to serve as a clearinghouse for all regulatory compliance assistance documents, publications, and printed information

http://www.dol.gov/dol/osbp/regs/compliance/matrix_main.htm.

Libraries and General Reference Resources:

1. North Carolina Academic Library Catalog (<http://www.libdex.com>)

This is a quick link to most of the university libraries in the state. Counselors may find it hardly to refer clients to resources in the library nearest to them by searching that library's catalog (by subject, etc.) since academic libraries will have far more resources than we are able to maintain.

2. Industry Research Desk (<http://www.virtualpet.com/industry/mfg/mfg.htm>)

Provides information on how to research an industry and gives numerous links to a wide range of resources.

3. John McDonnell's Really Useful Sites

(<http://www.reallyusefulsites.org>)

Mr. McDonnell publishes a newsletter about doing research on the Internet; here are some of his recommended links.

4. Rita Moss's Business Information Pages

(<http://www.lib.unc.edu/reference/busecon/>)

Ms. Moss is the Business & Economics librarian at our own host institution, UNC-Chapel Hill. Her well-organized pages list many valuable sources, both print and online.

5. Gary Price's Direct Search (<http://www.freeprint.com/gary/direct.htm>)

Mr. Price is the Business librarian for Georgetown University, and has compiled this amazing resource. Spend more time exploring links on this site; it will almost always lead you to useful pages. Also see his *List of Lists* (<http://www.specialissues.com/lol/>), with a plethora of "Top 10", "Top 50", and "Top 100" lists, mostly in the business field, including international statistics.

Newspapers and Magazines:

1. NCLive (<http://www.nclive.org>)

This is an online database of abstracts and full-length articles for thousands of national and local newspapers, magazines, and journals nationwide. This database is supported by the NC General Assembly and is accessible using an NC college/university staff/student id number. Contact your school librarian for password assistance.

2. Ecola Online Newsstand (<http://www.ecola.com>)

A well organized listing of links to hundreds of online newspapers and magazines; some are fully accessible, although others require subscription. Follow the links to the Small Business page (<http://www.ecola.com/magazine.php?cat=3&sub=26>).

3. Advertising Age (<http://www.adage.com>)

4. American Business Journals (<http://www.amcity.com>)

This is a fully searchable site of the 39 *Business Journal* publications. This includes the three for North Carolina the (Triangle, Triad and Charlotte).

5. Entrepreneur (<http://www.entrepreneurmag.com>)
6. Financial Times (<http://news.ft.com/home/us>)
7. GoTriad (<http://www.gotraid.com>)
8. Inc (<http://www.inc.com>)
9. Investors Business Daily (<http://www.investors.com>)
10. Newspapers (<http://www.newspaperlinks.com/>)

This site provides links to newspapers all over the country.

11. News and Observer (<http://www.newsobserver.com/>)
12. The Small Business Journal (<http://www.tsbj.com/>)
13. Wall Street Journal (<http://wsj.com>)
14. Winston-Salem Journal (<http://www.journalnow.com>)
15. USA Today (<http://www.usatoday.com>)

Patents and Trademark Sources:

1. IBM Patent Server (<http://www.delphion.com>)

This is IBM's Patent Server where the user can access over 26 years of US Patent & Trademark Office (USPTO) patent descriptions as well as the last 23 years of images. The user can search, retrieve and study over two million patents. Fee required.

2. US Patent and Trademark Office (<http://www.uspto.gov/>)

This links you straight to the US Patent and Trademark Office.

Other Market Research Resources:

1. American Demographics/Marketing Tools
(<http://www.adage.com/section.cms?sectionid=195>)

This site allows for full text searches of American Demographics articles, a searchable directory of marketing services and access to a catalog of data sources, marketing books and research materials. American Demographics is now part of Advertising Age.

2. Association Central.com (<http://www.associationcentral.com/>)

This site is a wealth of information on associations. There is a news section, a searchable directory, a publications section, and an education section that gives information on online courses.

3. Barron's Annual Reports (http://barrons.ar.wilink.com/asp/BAR1_search_Eng.asp)

This is a free service. It provides quick access to annual reports and other information on select companies. Annual reports for hundreds of companies can be ordered here.

4. Dun & Bradstreet Internet Access (<http://www.dnb.com/>)

This site allows Internet access to information on millions of companies. This service is for a fee.

5. OSHA Standard Industrial Classification Search
(<http://www.osha.gov/oshstats/sicser.html>)

A quick reference to look up SIC codes by either number or category.

6. The Standard (<http://www.thestandard.com>)

This website is a great resource for current news on Internet business.

7. ThomasNet (<http://www.thomasnet.com>)

This site allows users to search the full Thomas Register database by product/service or company name and provides the option of narrowing the search to a specific state or location.

Multi-Search Engines

1. Dogpile (<http://www.dogpile.com>)
2. MetaCrawler (<http://www.metacrawler.com>)
3. Search.com (<http://www.search.com>)

*These sites allow users to enter in key words or phrases and search several of Search Engines simultaneously to give more source information per your inquiry.

Search Engines

1. Alta Vista (<http://www.altavista.com>)

One of the largest search engines on the web, it has a wide range of power searching commands that make it a favorite among researchers. This site is recommended for business/information sites.

2. Excite (<http://www.excite.com>)

This offers a fairly large index and integrates non-web material, such as company information into its results.

3. Google (<http://google.com>)

This site is useful because it makes heavy use of link popularity. It offers links to all facets of the web based upon key words entered for a search. It searches over 1.5 million sites per search.

4. Go (<http://www.go.com>)

It offers personalization and free e-mail. It provides quality results in response to many general and broad searches. This is an excellent site to receive news and headline information.

5. Lycos (<http://www.lycos.com>)

This site is a broad information resource similar to yahoo. It is good for finding shopping/retail information.

6. Northernlight (<http://northernlight.com>)

This site offers documents from thousands of sources such as newswires, magazines, and databases. Searching for these items are free, but there is a charge to view the items.

7. WebCrawler (<http://webcrawler.com>)

This site has the smallest index of all the major search engines. This is good when you are searching for general information that isn't unusual. It provides less overwhelming results in response to general searches.

8. Yahoo (<http://www.yahoo.com>)

This site is the web's most popular search engine and has a well-deserved reputation for helping people find information easily. Yahoo helps you find information on shopping/retail. It also has several links into specialized areas to assist you in your search.

9. Zeal.com (<http://zeal.com>)

Zeal is a community-driven directory that allows enthusiasts from around the world to contribute sites, manage categories, and collaborate with a team of professional Editors to build a superior directory. Zeal is a part of LookSmart, the global leader in Web directories.

10. LookSmart (<http://www.looksmart.com>)

The global leader in web directories, helping more than 40,000 businesses harness the power of Internet searches to generate qualified leads.

11. Netscape Search (<http://search.netscape.com>)

This search engine does an extremely good job at listing "official" websites. Second search results come from Google, which also is a site known for its links.