

INTERNET RESOURCES



"The South Carolina SBDC is partially funded under Cooperative Agreement No. (2006) 6-603001-Z-0043-26 by the U.S. Small Business Administration."

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Updated 9-20-2006

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GRANTS: Every SBDC Business Consultant gets questions several times a day about grants.

www.sba.gov In the top right corner, enter the word “Grants” in the search box. You will see: **The U.S. Small Business Administration does not offer grants to start or expand small businesses.** But grants are offered by *other* government agencies. However, most grants are usually available only to non-profits, universities, municipalities or states.

www.grants.gov A good site to look for grants

<http://12.46.245.173/cfda/cfda.html> The “Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance” (CFDA) is a government-wide compendium of all 1,424 Federal programs, projects, services, and activities that provide assistance or benefits to the American public. These programs provide grants, loans, loan guarantees, services, information, scholarships, training, insurance, etc., to millions of Americans.

BUSINESS PLAN SITES *These sites offer resources writing business plan and also have sample business plans on-line that may be downloaded free of charge. Take note, these are only sample plans, your business plan may need extra sections or may not need some of the sections in these plans. Use extreme care when using these examples. Ask your SBDC Business Consultant about sample business plans contained on a CD for “Business Plan Pro” from Palo Alto Software.*

www.bizplans.com Information on business plans, entrepreneurship, financing, and marketing plans. This site is intended as supporting materials for someone who already knows about business plans and where they want their business to go.

www.bplans.com This site has different plans that can be downloaded and viewed. The plans are all in different industries so choose the one that is the closest match to your own business. Also has a section for help with marketing plans.

www.businessplans.org MBA’s from the best schools present business plans to a panel of investors; available for review are the best selections of various business plans.

www.paloalto.com The site for *Business Plan Pro* software and support.

COMMERCIAL SITES: *These are sites that are created as advertising for products for small businesses. These sites do contain a great deal of useful information. Just remember they are trying to sell you their products. They are worth a visit as some of their products might be just what your small business needs.*

www.americanexpress.com/smallbusiness American Express's site offers their products but also has practical advice on how to handle specific aspects of running a small business (ex. Marketing – How to make cold calls, etc.). Click on “Articles and Discussions” for a variety of helpful management articles. Also has section to assist with writing business plan.

www.bcentral.com Microsoft’s homepage for small business solutions. Select the “Learning Center,” then select the “Search For” button. This site has lots of articles about starting and running a small business.

www.leasesmart.com Site designed to give expanding companies information, tips and trends on how to save money and reduce risk when leasing or purchasing property.

www.jaxworks.com Provides online access to business financial tools. Dozens of spreadsheet templates.

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www.bizfilings.com As the name implies, they will help (for a fee) with business filings: (example: forming a company or LLC). The site provides numerous explanatory articles.

FRANCHISE SITES

www.franchisesolutions.com good information about a number of the most popular franchises.

www.franchise.org International Franchise Association. Offers a comprehensive “guide to buying a franchise.”

<http://www.franchiseadvantage.com> A franchise re-seller (like a real estate agent)

<http://www.franchiseforsale.com> Is just what it sounds like.

<http://www.bestfranchiseopportunities.com> a franchise re-seller.

<http://www.franchise-chat.com> Lots of information, plus a chat-room.

<http://www.entrepreneur.com> Great Site for all-in-one info regarding starting your own business

<http://www.betheboss.com> Hints into various world-wide business ideas.

HOME BUSINESS: *These sites offer help on setting up business at home. They are a good source for information concerning the decision of where to locate the business and how to make a home business successful*

www.gohome.com Sections on marketing, technology, current news, and how you rate as a home based worker.

EMPLOYEE BACKGROUND CHECKS:

www.sled.state.sc.us The website of “State Law Enforcement Division” for South Carolina.

www.codeamber.org/sor.html “Code Amber” sexual offender registry for all 50 states. Multiple search options.

www.nsopr.gov “National Sex Offender Public Registry,” a site by the US Dept. of Justice.

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GENERAL SITES: *These sites are a good source of general small business information. They contain a great deal of start-up information and links to a more specialized info. This is a good place to start your research.*

www.business.gov The US governments website for business topics. Advise on how to run a business, business forms, financial statements, etc. Also has information about grants, most of which are for universities, research, city, county and/or state governments.

<http://www.bizcoach.org> Good site for info regarding current business owner issues

<http://startup.wsj.com> Wall Street Journal – many good articles about starting and running a business.

www.bizexperts.org An excellent site sponsored by the SBDC office in Charleston SC. This site has a bulletin board where you can post any business related questions. Several “experts” check the site regularly and will usually provide answers within a day or two.

www.ceoexpress.com B portal that provides links to various websites related to operation of a business. A great search portal.

www.entrepreneurmag.com Information regarding a variety of small business and related topics

www.entreworld.org Sponsored by Kauffman Foundation. Has info on starting & running a business. Has search and glossary functions that speed a search.

www.findlaw.com Find a lawyer. Also has articles on legal issues.

www.ideashappen.com Think you have a unique never-thought-of-before idea for a business? Check out the more than 19,000 new business ideas. Some are really wild! This site pays \$25,000 each year to some of the best ideas.

www.irs.gov US Internal Revenue Service

www.melissadata.com A pay-site with a few free handy tools for research on demographics, zips, phone #s, etc.

www.missouribusiness.net A fully loaded site that provides hundreds of links to internet resources.

www.morebusiness.com. Info on starting and running a business, as well as daily news for small businesses. Also has downloadable templates and worksheets as well as interactive features. A great site.

www.sba.gov Covers just about everything you can think of that the SBA deals with. Has tons of information about starting a business. This site also links to different SBA resources, such as SBDC sites across the United States.

www.scsos.com SC Secretary of State. This is where business names can be registered, or searched.

www.SearchEngineWatch.com A great site! It has a lot of information for both beginner and advanced marketing businesses. In the "Search Engine Submission Tips" link, there is a good overview of how to use meta tags and such to move your website to the top of the page.

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www.sctax.org SC Department of Revenue

www.success.org American Success Institute. Click on “Master Small Business” for 30 free “Empowerment Courses” about how to start a business.

www.toolkit.cch.com Provides information in various areas pertaining to starting a business and writing the business plan. A “Class A” site.

www.uspto.com US Patents Office

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MISCELLANEOUS SITES:

www.entrepreneurmag.com Information regarding a variety of small business related topics for the entrepreneur.

www.jaxworks.com Provides online access to business financial tools.

www.leasesmart.com Site designed to give expanding companies information, tips and trends on how to save money and reduce risk when leasing or purchasing property.

www.mo-bis.org A great source of information for small business owners. Major topic areas include: Business Development, Finance, Legal/Regulatory, Marketing, Resource/Tools.

www.startup.wsj.com Wall Street Journal page for startups; provides a variety of issues directed to the small business startup.

www.success.org American Success Institute site. Free “empowerment” courses to assist people starting new businesses.

www.toolkit.cch.com Provides information in various areas pertaining to starting business and writing business plan.

www.bankrate.com Everything you need to know about loan rates. Some small business articles.

MARKET RESEARCH: *These sites can help answer “who & where are my customers?”*

www.bls.gov Bureau of Labor Statistics, US Dept of Labor. A multitude of statistics.

www.census.gov Census Bureau. Good for demographics

www.myscgov.com Everything about SC government agencies, counties, etc. Good for demographics.

<http://peerspectives.org> Click on “Defining and Serving a Market” “Market Research”

www.sba.gov Lots of good articles & ideas. Covers about everything that SBA deals with.

www.sccommunityprofiles.org Good for demographics.

www.smallbusinessnotes.com Good for research. But only allows access to 5 free items per day.

www.fedstats.gov Federal & State demographics & maps.

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SITES FOR INEXPENSIVE WEB-TOOLS

Site	Go there for	Pricing
Emachineshop.com	light manufacturing	starts at \$65
Cafepress.com	ecommerce, promos	starts at \$5/month
Associate-o-matic.com	online retail stores	basic version is free
Mturk.com	market research	pennies per question
Gmail. Hotmail, etc	web based email	free
Openoffice.org	Erstaz Microsoft Office	free
SalesForce.com	customer relationship Management software	\$995/year for 5 users.
Pas2Pad.com	custom circuit boards	from \$83/board