

Where  
do I Start?



# Business Plans

**Writing a business plan** is an important part of forming and running your business. It's often critical to acquiring funding and for charting your successful course.

Find business plan guidance, research sources and strategies, Internet sites, and helpful organizations to help create your business plan using this guide and your City of Mesa Library.

**Location Key:** MN = Main Branch  
DR = Dobson Ranch Branch  
RM = Red Mountain Branch  
REF = in-house use

## Developing Your Plan

**Dewey Number for Business Plans: 658.4012**

Use the following items and others for step-by-step instructions on writing and reviewing sample business plans. (Favorites marked by ▶)

**ABC's of Writing Winning Business Plans.** Garrett Sutton. MN 658.4012 SU87A 2005

▶ **Anatomy of a Business Plan: A Step-By-Step Guide to Building a Business and Securing Your Company's Future.** Linda Pinson. MN, DR, RM 658.4012 P657A 2005

**Bankable Business Plans.** Edward G. Rogoff. MN, DR, RM 658.4012 R635B 2004 Explains how to use Risk Management Association (RMA) numbers in your plan. See Financials section of this list for information on RMA source.

**Business Plans Kit for Dummies.** Steven D. Peterson. MN, DR, RM 658.4012 P442B 2005

**Business Planning Guide: Creating a Winning Plan for Success.** David H. Bangs. MN, RM 658.4012 B225B 2002

▶ **Business Plans Handbook: A Compilation of Actual Business Plans Developed by Small Businesses Throughout North America.** Gale Research, Inc. 13+ Volumes MN, MN REF 658.4012 B964B Index in MN REF Sample plans ideal for models.

**Business Plans Made Easy.** David Bangs. MN, DR, RM 658.4012 B225BD 2005

**Business Plans That Work: A Guide for Small Business.** Jeffrey A. Timmons. MN, DR, RM 658.4012 T484B 2004

**The Complete Book of Business Plans.** Joseph Covello & Brian J. Hazelgren. MN 658.4012 C838C 2006

**Complete Idiot's Guide to Business Plans.** Gwen Moran, Sue Johnson. MN, RM 658.4012 M793C 2005

**How to Write A Business Plan.** Mike McKeever. (Nolo Press) MN, RM 658.1522 H83H 2005.

**Real Business Plans and Marketing Tools...Including Samples to Use in Starting, Growing, Marketing, and Selling Your Business.** Anne McKinney. MN 658.4012 M215R 2003

▶ **Rule's Book of Business Plans for Startups: Create A Winning Plan That You Can Take to the Bank.** Roger C. Rule. MN, DR, RM 658.11R861R 2004

**Seven Step Business Plan.** Sheila Holm. MN 658.401 H73S 2007

**Seven Steps to A Successful Business Plan.** Al Coke. MN, RM 658.4012 C669S 2002

**So You Need to Write a Business Plan!** Jerome S. Osteryoung. MN, DR 658.4012 OS76S 2003

**Streetwise Business Plans with CD: Create a Business Plan to Supercharge Your Profits.** Michele Cagan. DR 658.401C117S 2006

**The Successful Business Plan: Secrets and Strategies.** Rhonda Abrams. MN, DR, RM 658.4012 AB83S 2003

**Your First Business Plan: A Simple Question and Answer Format Designed to Help You Write Your Own Plan.** Joseph A. Covello, Brian J. Hazelgren. MN, DR, RM 658.4012 C838Y 2005

## Researching Your Plan

### Industry Classification Numbers

Find your **NAICS** (North American Industrial Classification System)/**SIC** (Standard Industrial Classification) numbers prior to any research. These classification numbers identify your primary area(s) of business and are useful in further research. Find numbers by locating your business area in the index of the following manuals or online at the Census website:

**NAICS Manual** - REF at all branches

**SIC Manual** - REF at all branches

**United States Census website** (see NAICS link) [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

### Financials

View financial information from statements aggregated from companies in your business area. You may not always be able to locate statements as specific as your business type might be.

**RMA Annual Statement Studies: Financial Ratio Benchmarks. Risk Management Association.** MN, DR, RM REF 657.3 AN78A **Almanac of Business and Industrial Financial Ratios** (Also Called Troy) MN REF 338.52 T759

**Standard & Poor's Industry Surveys** MN REF 338.5 ST24 **Sourcebook of Statistics of Income** GovDoc T 22.35/5-2: (At Business Index Table, MN)

## Market Research/Demographics

Learn about the market for your product/service and demographics related to your target: customer.

**United States Census** [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) including population census (person demographics) and economic census (business demographics)

**Research Alert Yearbook** MN REF 658.835 R311R (selected years)

**Library Business Databases/E-Resources** with journal/newspaper articles (Business & Company Resource Center, Reference USA, newspaper databases, others) at [mesalibrary.org](http://mesalibrary.org) – requires library card and PIN number.

## Industry Research/Forecasting

Gather information about your industry including current and future trends and helpful resources:

**Encyclopedia of American Industries** MN REF 338.02 EN 19E v.1 & v. 2

**Encyclopedia of Emerging Industries** MN REF 338.003EN19G

**S&P Industry Surveys** MN REF 338.5 ST24

**BizStats.com** [bizstats.com/](http://bizstats.com/) with ratios, benchmarks, business statistics of all kinds; must pay for more in-depth information.

**ICAF Industry Reports** – Industrial College of the Armed Forces annual reports analyzing industries – click “Reports”: [www.ndu.edu/icafe/industry/reports.htm](http://www.ndu.edu/icafe/industry/reports.htm)

**Library Business Databases** with journal/newspaper articles (Business & Company Resource Center, Reference USA, newspaper databases, others) at [mesalibrary.org](http://mesalibrary.org) – requires library card and PIN number.

## Trade Associations

Discover associations in your field. They may be able to provide statistics and information, some free, others for a fee. Often, they offer information on the Web and can provide excellent contacts/data for your plan and business:

**Encyclopedia of Associations** MN REF, RM REF 061.3 G131E

**National Trade and Professional Associations of the United States.** MN REF 330.025 N213N

Also search **Google** to locate associations in your industry area.

## The Competition & Your Market

Identify competitors in your business' geographic/industry area:

Arizona Business Directory

Dun's Regional Business Directory Phoenix/Tucson

Arizona Industrial Directory

Arizona Manufacturers Directory

Rocky Mountain High Technology Directory

Reference USA (*library e-resource – req. library card/PIN*)

The library also carries a selection of national and industry-specific business directories.

## A Word About Research

You may not always be able to find the information you desire from “free” or public library-subscription sources. Depending upon the depth of information required, it may be necessary to consider:

- using an academic library with specialized business-curriculum resources,
- checking fee-based sources including **MarketResearch.com** (this and other companies sell industry and business intelligence research reports on demand; these reports can cost from several hundred to several thousand dollars), or
- conducting your own primary research (creating and administering questionnaires, running focus groups, interviewing competitors/potential customers, etc.).

The library has a wide range of books to help you understand and carry out marketing research (Dewey 658.83), including:

**Marketing Research That Won't Break the Bank: A Practical Guide to Getting the Information You Need.** Alan R. Andreasen. MN 658.83 AN25M 2002

**Marketing Research.** David A. Aaker, V. Kumar, George S. Day. MN 658.83 AA41M 2001

**Market Research Made Easy.** Don Doman, Dell Dennison, Margaret Doman. MN, DR, RM 658.83 D71M 2006

**Market Research Matters: Tools and Techniques for Aligning Your Business.** Robert Duboff, Jim Spaeth. MN 658.83 D852M 2000

**The Focus Group: A Strategic Guide to Organizing, Conducting and Analyzing the Focus Group Interview.** Jane Farley Templeton. MN 658.83 T249F 1994

## Internet Sites

All URLs current as of 8/08. URLs/ site availability subject to change. City of Mesa Library does not endorse individual products or businesses and takes no responsibility for claims made. Sites are included for useful information found.

**BizStats.com** [www.bizstats.com/](http://www.bizstats.com/)

Instant access to useful financial ratios, business statistics & benchmarks, effective and understandable online analysis of businesses & industries. Some advanced information for a fee.

**Business Planning for Non-Profits or For-Profits:**

[www.mapnp.org/library/plan\\_dec/bus\\_plan/bus\\_plan.htm](http://www.mapnp.org/library/plan_dec/bus_plan/bus_plan.htm)

Links to information about business plans.

**CCH Business Owner's Toolkit: Planning Your Business:**

[www.toolkit.cch.com/text/P02\\_0001.asp](http://www.toolkit.cch.com/text/P02_0001.asp)

Links explaining all parts of the business plan.

**Creating an Effective Business Plan:**

[home3.americanexpress.com/smallbusiness/tool/biz\\_plan/index.asp](http://home3.americanexpress.com/smallbusiness/tool/biz_plan/index.asp)

At American Express' Small Business Network. Explains plan elements.

**Small Business Administration Business Plan Basics:**

[www.sba.gov/starting\\_business/planning/basic.html](http://www.sba.gov/starting_business/planning/basic.html)

Outline and explanation of business plan. Excellent section on marketing research (marketing link).

## Helpful Organizations

These local agencies offer counseling, training, and other assistance:

**AZ Department of Commerce – Small Business Services:** See

helpful online startup manual, *Entrepreneur's Edge*, including business plan template. Many other services.

[www.azcommerce.com/SmallBiz/](http://www.azcommerce.com/SmallBiz/)

**SBA - Small Business Administration:** Phoenix office. Can assist with lending/support. [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

**SBDC - Small Business Development Centers:** Free counseling

and technical assistance, low-cost training.

[www.maricopa.edu/mccdsbdc/](http://www.maricopa.edu/mccdsbdc/)

**SCORE – Counselors to America's Small Business:** Free

counseling, technical assistance, low-cost training.

[evaz.scorechapter.org/](http://evaz.scorechapter.org/)

**Maricopa Community College - Business Administration**

**Department:** Coursework in entrepreneurship/business topics.

[www.mc.maricopa.edu/dept/d07/](http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/dept/d07/)

**See our Business Resources page at [mesalibrary.org](http://mesalibrary.org) for more great resources!**

Revised 8/08

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City of Mesa Library