

Librarian's Shelf by Karen Connell

Business Owners & Nonprofit Directors Have Resources at Their Library

The Columbus Public Library offers a wide variety of online resources. AtoZdatabases and the Small Business Reference Center in particular are great resources available online for business owners and nonprofit directors. AtoZdatabases is provided by the Columbus Public Library so users would access it away from the library by logging in with their library card number. Small Business Reference Center is one of many online resources offered by the state, as part of the NebraskaAccess resources. This means users can access this resource away from the library by logging in with their Nebraska Driver's License number or obtaining a password from the library.

AtoZdatabases is helpful to small business owners because it offers lists of potential customers based on income, home value, geography, lifestyles, and more. These resident searches can be filtered by location, area code, age, home value, income level, as well as interests and hobbies. Lists of sales leads are then generated with addresses and phone numbers. Up to 1000 records per search can then be emailed, downloaded, or printed for later use. The results can be viewed as a list, on a map, and as a graph. Directors of nonprofit organizations can use the same search feature to create potential donor lists.

The Small Business Reference Center can be used a variety of ways. Users can search for specific topics, articles, and videos, or browse by subject. Business Basics, including interviewing candidates, coaching an employee, and starting and running a nonprofit, is one category to browse. Start-Up Kit & Business Plans is another category. This includes examples of business plans and information to draft your own, as well as necessary start up forms.

Articles can also be browsed by industry in the section labeled Industry Information by Small Business Type. This is a quick way to stay up to date regarding your industry.

You can also browse for and read full text NOLO legal guide books on subjects like "Incorporate Your Business," "Working for Yourself," and "Effective Fundraising for Nonprofits."

Instructional videos are also available in the Small Business Reference Center. Simply search for a topic and limit the results using the facets on the left side of the result page. Videos require flash player, so make sure you are using a web browser, like Chrome, that has flash installed. If you encounter trouble with flash player and your browser, call or stop by the library and we can help.

AtoZdatabases and the Small Business Reference Center contain quite a bit of information and offer multiple ways to access the information so users can navigate the resource in whatever way works best for them.

If you need help navigating these resources, contact the library at 402-564-7116 or stop by to "Book a Librarian." Columbus Public Library offers half hour "Book a Librarian" appointments for users to have their questions answered individually. Librarians can help you navigate our online resources, use your electronic device, or help you find your next favorite book, so "Book a Librarian" today!