

Librarian's Shelf by Jill Owens

Finding People and Telephone Numbers @ Your Library

Today we're highlighting often overlooked basic resources available at your library: the City Directory, Business Edition, available in print, and A to Z Databases, available in our E-materials (electronic materials) on the library website.

With so many options available for telephone connections these days, the number you are hoping to find may not always be in a particular telephone company's book of subscribers. Many people who bundle with their cable company for television and internet services suddenly find themselves unlisted in telephone company published books.

In addition to a handy map, the City Directory has four sections. First you will see a business section that may be referred to as 'yellow pages' which lists the Directory's sponsors.

Section two contains residential and business listings combined. Unlike a regular phone book, the Directory lists a spouse's name and information about minor children, so you can be sure you are contacting the correct family. Other information listed includes: "...address, occupation, employer, telephone and cell phone number...email addresses for individuals 14 years or older, gender, male or female, birth month and year, marital status and anniversary date."

Business listings are equally thorough: "Business name, address, names, and titles of officers, owners, partners or managers, number of employees, year established, telephone and cell phone numbers, fax numbers, email and web site addresses and business type."

Section three is colored green and is a reverse look-up for telephone numbers. In the case where you want to find where a certain number calls, this is your starting point.

Section four is a street section, which is only available in the Business Edition. If you want to know what or who is at a particular address, this section is your starting point. For example, looking under 14th Street, I run my finger down to 2504 and find that both the Columbus Arts Council and the Columbus Public Library reside at this address.

Keep in mind that listings in the City Directory are voluntarily given, and everyone may not opt in, but it is certainly a resource to consider if you are frustrated with the limited information in your phone books.

The library keeps for reference use many old editions of the City Directory, one dating back to 1915. These are handy for finding out what streets used to be named, or where someone used to live. We would gratefully accept any donations of City Directories, church directories, and the like for research purposes.

For those of you who prefer to look up things electronically or from home, the library offers A to Z Databases (among other things). It is located at columbusne.us/library under E-services. From there

select E-materials and you'll find an alphabetical listing of all databases available to you with your library card. If you are in the library building, you will not need to enter your card number.

Once you click on the link from the database list, you will see three main search areas, "Find a Business," "Find a Job," and "Find a Person." I have found a person's address and phone number who use a television provider for their telephone service. From there, if I click "Residential Record" I will get a map, directions, neighborhood information, and an interactive photo of the street which I can scroll to the proper address with different views, directions, length of time the person has lived there, income range, and other information. Other information that can be found through this database will have to be a topic for another day.

Some people are uncomfortable with having all their information just a click away, and take great pains to be "off the grid," but many people can be found with either of these two wonderful resources provided by your library.

Recent donations to the Columbus Library Foundation were given in memory of Mathis ("Matt") Asche from: Mr. and Mrs. Robert Stachura, Dana and Gary Brandt, Theresa Wachal, Jean and Larry Anderson, Ron and Donna Starzec, Helen Weber, Jeffery and Susan Overturf, and Bob and Judy Trautwein. James and Gloria Ball donated in memory of Joan Baumert.

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