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## General Resources

[Business.USA.Gov](#) - Official business tools and resources of the U.S. Government.

[SBDCNet](#) - Business information, help, and examples.

[SBA Office of Advocacy](#) - An independent voice for small business within the federal government, the watchdog for the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) and the source of small business statistics.

[SBA's Women's Business Center](#) - Find the Women's Business Center, designed to assist women in starting and growing small businesses, nearest you.

[Disaster Preparedness Plan](#) - SBA.gov resources to help you understand and create disaster preparedness plan

[California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development Business Portal](#) – “Whether you are interested in starting and growing your business, finding applicable incentives or looking for financial assistance to operate your business, the California Business Portal is here to help!”

## News/Media Resources

[The 100 Most Underrated Small Business Blogs](#) - A list of 100 underrated small business blogs that compile original, unique, and invaluable content on a regular basis, despite being lesser known.

[The Wall Street Journal](#) - Start-up information and databases of businesses for sale and venture capital. Wealth in the form of money or assets, taken as a sign of the financial strength of an individual, organization, or nation, and assumed to be available for development or investment.

[Inc.com](#) - The online magazine for entrepreneurs and small business owners.

[Entrepreneur.com](#) - Magazine with start-up ideas, resources, and articles.

[Entrepreneurship.org](#) - Innovative educational tools and informative resources covering the latest issues and insights affecting entrepreneurs.

[The Balance](#) - A comprehensive site with articles written by experts in their field including business practices, general business, industry specific information, and small business.

[North Bay Biz](#) - Monthly magazine dedicated to exclusive coverage of business in the North Bay area of California (Marin, Napa, and Sonoma counties).

[North Bay Business Journal](#) - A weekly publication and online business news for the north San Francisco bay area counties of Napa, Sonoma, and Marin.

[Press Democrat](#) - This Sonoma County daily newspaper includes current news and archive files by subject.



## **Inventions and Intellectual Property, Trademarks/Copyrights Resources**

[Inventing 101](#) - Free Online Course By Stephen Paul Gnass

[How to protect your invention while pitching it.](#) - From protecting your inventions, ideas, and product names to the public domain and fair use rules, you can find everything about intellectual property in articles and information here.

[U.S. Patent and Trademark Office](#) - Information, research and registration of U.S. patents.

[California Secretary of State](#) - The Secretary of State's office maintains registration and all updates of California state trademarks and service marks.

[U.S. Copyright Office](#) - Research and register a copyright.

## Import/Export Resources

[SBA Exporting](#) - SBA provides counseling, training and financing to small businesses looking to increase sales and profit by taking their businesses global.

[Office of International Trade](#) - Many exported and imported products are regulated by federal agencies. If you export or import the following types of products, you may be required to obtain specific licenses and permits or complete additional paperwork.

[Export.gov](#) - The primary federal government exporting site to better serve beginning exporters.

[Centers for International Trade Development \(CITDs\)](#) - CITDs are the state's top source of trade assistance. CITDs offer a variety of free or low-cost programs & services to assist local companies in doing business abroad. These include one-on-one technical assistance and consulting, market research, training and educational programs, trade leads and special events.

[Standard Industrial Classification \(SIC\) Codes](#) - If you know the SIC code for your business or industry, you can research employment, productivity, import/export, etc., for that industry. SIC codes were established in the 1930s primarily to help measure and compare statistical information.

[North American Industry Classification System \(NAICS\)](#) - A more detailed classification system that covers the U.S., Mexico, and Canada, NAICS codes allow for closer comparisons than SIC codes. Almost all business research is easier if you know your SIC and NAICS codes (some agencies and publications, including the SEC, still use SIC).

[Tradeport](#) - Comprehensive international trade information, trade leads, and company databases. Guides you through the export process.

## Financing Resources

[Business Loan Application Checklist](#) - Use this checklist to make sure you have the typical items required for any small business loan application.

[Grants.gov](#) - A good site to use when searching for Federal grants funding.

[SBA Loan Programs](#) - SBA offers a variety of loan programs for very specific purposes. Take some time to study the programs described on this site to see if you qualify to participate.

[8\(a\) Business Development Program Suitability Tool](#) - Respond to a series of questions to determine if the 8(a) program is for you.

[BusinessFinance.com](#) - Economic development organizations or corporations have various financing programs. This is a list of economic development organizations in CA.

[National Venture Capital Association Member Directory](#) - The NVCA serves as the definitive resource for venture capital data and unites its member firms through a full range of professional services.

[SBIR/STTR Funding](#) - Can be used to pay for research and development for innovative companies.

[Trends in Venture Capital Funding in the 1990s](#) - A report about who supplies venture capital, who receives it, and how is it changing the U.S. economy, written by Nicole R. Onorato, former intern in the SBA's Office of Advocacy.

[Business Loans from California Capital](#)

[More financing resources from the Solano Small Business Development Center.](#)



## Business Planning Resources

[Start and Manage Your Business](#) - SBA's website has resources for helping you, including templates for planning a business and advice blogs.

[Small Business Resources in Northern California](#) - SBA Handout

[Small Business Start-Up Guide for Northern California](#) - SBA Handout

[Bplans.com](#) and [Center for Business Planning](#) - Sites that have sample plans and writing tips.

[CalGOLD](#) - Offers direct internet links and contact information to state, local, regional, and federal permitting authorities for more information. Assists you in finding appropriate permit information for your business.

[Business Dictionary.com](#) - It can be hard to understand the associated terms and concepts. With over 20,000 definitions, search this site for a specific term, or choose a general category and read a definition for any word.

[SCORE](#) - The Service Corp of Retired Executives offers informational sites along with online expertise in starting and owning a business.

[More business planning resources from the Solano Small Business Development Center.](#)

## Government Resources

[Business Matchmaking](#) - The nation's premier public-private initiative supporting procurement opportunities for small business in every industry.

[Procurement Opportunities for your Small Business](#) - If you have been considering contracting your services to the procurement marketplace, this webinar, hosted by the Northern California SBDC, tells you all you need to know about resources and leads for business matchmaking with federal, state, and local government agencies, how to prepare for a business matchmaking conference, how to get paid, etc.

[Practical Guide to Doing Business with the Federal Government](#) - Includes a directory of federal procurement offices in California.

[Useful Government Contracting Websites](#) - SBA's list of small business issues and information via the Internet.

[California Department of General Services](#) - Central location for businesses wanting to do business with the State of California. Information about minority certification, etc.

[How to Do Business With California State Government](#) - Brochure from the California Department of General Services explaining the four-step process.

[Finding Government Customers](#) - Contracting opportunities listed by the SBA.

[Minority Business Development Agency](#) - Web portal dedicated to helping small businesses benefit from minority certifications.

[Federal Business Opportunities](#) - The single government point-of-entry (GPE) for Federal government procurement opportunities over \$25,000. Government buyers are able to publicize their business opportunities by posting information directly to FedBizOpps via the Internet and commercial vendors



seeking Federal markets for their products and services can search, monitor, and retrieve opportunities solicited by the entire Federal contracting community.



## Legal and Taxes Resources

[Forming a corporation in California](#) - An outline of the steps you need to follow in order to form a corporation (specifically, a "C corporation") in California.

[FindLaw's Small Business Law](#) - legal information, guides, sample forms, and other legal resources.

[What New Business Owners Need to Know About Federal Taxes](#) - IRS links to basic federal tax information for people who are starting a business, as well as information to assist in making basic business decisions.

[California Tax Service Center](#) - Forms and services you need as a California taxpayer.

[Nolo](#) - Nolo is the nation's leading provider of do-it-yourself legal solutions for consumers and small businesses.

[Legal Zoom](#) - LegalZoom is the nation's leading provider of personalized, online legal solutions and legal documents for small businesses and families. Form an LLC, incorporate a business, make a will, register a trademark, get legal advice, and more online.



## Human Resources and Payroll

[Hire an Employee in California Checklist](#) - North Coast SBDC's comprehensive list is applicable to businesses located throughout Northern California.

[Solano Workforce Investment Board](#) - The Workforce Investment Board of Solano County offers programs and services to provide employers access to qualified workers, and equip job seekers to compete in today's job market.



## California Business Resources

[Bay Area Council](#) - The Bay Area Council is a business-sponsored, public-policy advocacy organization for the nine-county Bay Area. It proactively advocates for a strong economy, a vital business environment, and a better quality of life for everyone.

[California Chamber of Commerce](#) - The California Chamber of Commerce is the largest, broad-based business advocate working at the state and federal levels to influence government actions affecting all California business. This site links to local chambers of commerce.

[California Community Colleges Economic and Workforce Development Program](#) - Ten initiatives provide a variety of solutions for business development and workforce training needs to strengthen on-the-job performance and business competitiveness.

[California Department of Consumer Affairs — Licensing and Permit Information](#) - Information on types of state licenses required and how to obtain them. DCA licenses in more than 100 business and 200 professional categories, including doctors, dentists, contractors, cosmetologists and automotive repair facilities. It includes 40 regulatory entities that establish minimum qualifications and levels of competency for licensure. They also license, register, or certify practitioners, investigate complaints and discipline violators.

[California Department of Finance](#) - This web site provides economic forecasts, county profiles and economic indicators for the state's fiscal matters.

[California Electronic Job Listing Service](#) - This California state service is an Internet system for linking employer job lists and job seeker resumes.

[California Employer Advisory Council](#) - The CEAC and local Employer Advisory Councils (EAC) are recognized and accepted by employers and government as the premier information resources for the employer perspective on employment and other workforce development issues.



[California Employment Development Department](#) - A direct link to job placement and referrals, unemployment insurance, disability insurance, employment and training, labor market information, employment taxes and more.

[California Employment Training Panel](#) - ETP is a California State agency that funds training that meets the needs of employers for skilled workers and the need of workers for good, long-term jobs.

[California Healthcare Foundation](#) - Everything small business owners and their advisors need to know about offering health insurance. An unbiased resource on cost estimates, tax savings, coverage options, legal rights, and more.

[California Labor Market Information](#) - Information by geographical area, subject or industry including occupational and career information, employment by industry, wages, and industrial classifications.

[Sonoma County Economic Development Board Resources](#) - The Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB) provides information and referral services to help local businesses to start up, succeed, and grow. Site includes a Business Assistance Guide, Resource Guide, International Resource Guide, Doing Business with the County, Expanding/Relocating in Sonoma County.

## Documents/Forms

[Financial Templates](#) - This Excel workbook has a 12 month P&L statement, creates a breakeven analysis, a cash flow projection, and a balance sheet from the data you enter into the P&L. It is based on the handouts from our Financial Pre-Venture Workshop.

[Living Wage Estimate](#) - This is an excel spreadsheet where you can enter your personal expenses and the spreadsheet will estimate how much you need to make each month to cover your financial obligations. It can also calculate how much cash flow per hour you need to cover your draw and taxes.

[State Small Business Guide](#) - This publication identifies the key sites for small businesses interested in doing business with the state and finding financial resources offered by the state government.

[Contracting with the California State University System](#) - Information needed to contract with California State University system.

[More documents and forms from the Solano Small Business Development Center.](#)

## Other Business Resources

[Knowthis.com](#) - A meta-site with links to marketing-related topics.

[FaxZero](#) - Send faxes for free to anywhere in the U.S. and Canada.

[FreeConference](#) – Free conference calls and free online meetings with HD audio, video, and screen share.

[iReuse](#) – Recycling service for businesses to be notified about local, used furniture and supplies for their offices. Great for new or expanding small business, and sometimes free for non-profits.

[Moving Your Business Online](#) – The Internet can seem like a daunting place when considering moving your business online. This checklist will help you enter the online business world and give you access to customers you may have never been able to target.

[EMV Chip Informational Webinar](#) - Learn all about EMV chip technology: what chip technology is, how it works, what the impacts are to merchants who accept payment cards at their businesses, and what these businesses need to do to be prepared.

[Strategies for an Economic Downturn](#) - Be proactive in any cash crisis with our no-nonsense checklist to maximize profit and market share anytime, especially when times are tough.

[Shopify's Free Business Resources](#) - Shopify offers free business tools to help you run your business. Currently there are 21 tools to assist small business with creating templates for bills of lading, shipping labels, purchase orders to calculators for business loans, profit margins and advertising campaigns.

[U.S. Census Information](#) - Very useful census data available for market research.



[U.S. Department of Labor](#) - The Department of Labor provides compliance assistance to small business through “elaws”, an interactive exchange that allows small business owners to ask questions about labor laws.

[U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) - The EPA offers small business advice on how to keep the environment clean and how to comply with environmental regulations.

[U.S. Federal Trade Commission](#) - The U.S. Federal Trade Commission enforces federal consumer protection laws that prevent fraud, deception and unfair business practices. The FTC offers creative, practical, plain-language business education publications that are a cost-effective and business-friendly way to obtain compliance with the law.

[U.S. Small Business Administration](#) - Valuable information on federal programs for small businesses as well as loan program details. Complete listing of SBDC’s throughout the country.