

SMALL BUSINESSES & STARTUPS: TOP USES FOR PLUNKETT RESEARCH ONLINE



Access to PlunkettResearchOnline.com is like having your own, in-house research department!

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GET THE DATA YOU NEED FOR BUSINESS PLANS, LOAN APPLICATIONS AND INVESTOR PRESENTATIONS



EXAMPLE: You are developing a business plan for a new food product that is high in nutritional value and low in calories. You hope to raise funds, build a small factory, and develop a distribution/marketing plan.



ACTION PLAN: Use Plunkett's Food Industry Research Center to determine trends in the "functional foods" market. Pick up statistics and facts regarding concerns about obesity in the U.S. See an opportunity to target your product at the parents of overweight children.



TIP: Use facts from Plunkett Research to bolster your business plans and your presentations. Use the "Citation" links to correctly cite Plunkett as an expert source, adding credibility to your document.

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LEARN ABOUT THE BIG GUYS



EXAMPLE: You have potential investors in your business who are asking tough questions about the typical profit margins and return on investment in your industry.



ACTION PLAN: Use Plunkett data to create a spreadsheet of industry-wide averages for key statistics: sales per employee, return on investment and gross profit margin. Build your personal knowledge about the top corporations in your industry so that you can be more authoritative and confident during meetings.



TIP: The selection tools within Plunkett Research let you target corporations within specific industry niches by NAIC industry code. Note that you can build spreadsheets containing comparisons of companies for their financials. You can choose firms by country, and by operating year.

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TARGET NEW CUSTOMERS



EXAMPLE: You are a Kansas City area seller of advertising specialty products such as pens and key chains. You are looking for some big corporate sales, and you need a regional prospect list to call on.



ACTION PLAN: Use the "Research a Company" Center in Plunkett Research to build a target list of major companies within your market area. You can export your list, with full company information, into Excel or into a text file. Use the list for mail merge, phone calls and personal calls. Upload it to your customer relations software.



TIP: The geography selection for company search includes a special selection by Metro Area. This means that you can search companies within the entire metropolitan area of your target market, not just by city name.

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STUDY TRENDS TO LOOK FOR NEW PRODUCT AND SERVICE IDEAS



EXAMPLE: You're looking for new product ideas for your automotive after market accessories business.



ACTION PLAN: Study the automotive, transportation and retail trends within Plunkett Research. Dig deep for ideas. Be creative. Notice, for example, that motor scooter sales are soaring, creating a terrific opportunity to create new accessories for that booming market.



TIP: Look outside your own industry for new ideas. The broader your perspective, the better you will be able to make sound, creative decisions.

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CREATE INDUSTRY GUIDES TO USE IN TRAINING YOUR STAFF



EXAMPLE: You sell environmental services to the energy industry. You want your sales associates to be more knowledgeable about the energy industry overall. As a result, they will better understand the needs and practices of your customers, and they will make a better impression during sales presentations.



ACTION PLAN: Use the Plunkett's Build-A-Report tool to create a custom industry summary in PDF format. Distribute it electronically and/or in print to your staff. Ten days later, schedule a company lunch to discuss the industry, what your staff has learned, and what you want them to focus on.



TIP: Use the Build-A-Report selection screen to choose exactly the industry trends and statistics you want your staff to study. Include the industry glossary for them to refer to.