

Cumberland County Small Business Resource Guide



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INTRODUCTION

The Cumberland County Small Business Resource Guide will guide you through the critical steps necessary to turn your dream of business ownership into a reality. You will not find all of the answers within these pages, but you will learn resources that will assist you in finding the answers you need. This guidebook is full of valuable information and insightful advice on how to make your venture a success. So are you ready? Well, let's get started!

ABOUT US

This guidebook was composed by staff at the Women's Business Center (WBC), a program of the Women's Center of Fayetteville. The WBC provides programs and services that are designed to assist entrepreneurs in every phase of enterprise development. A knowledgeable and experience team of staff and volunteers facilitate the many workshops offered and provide one-on-one consultations. The WBC also offers support and guidance while enhancing skill development and encouraging the exchange of information.

Services Include:

- § Business Plan development
- § One-on-one consulting
- § Roundtables
- § Monthly workshops
- § Loan application assistance
- § Loan packaging
- § Credit counseling
- § Computer lab with Internet access
- § Special computer classes

The WBC is funded in part by the U.S. Small Business Administration, Cumberland County Business Council, and private donations. It serves as a focal point for economic empowerment by helping people take advantage of business opportunities. For more information on the Women's Business Center or to make a tax-deductible contribution, please call (866) 323-3377.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Women's Center of Fayetteville is to serve as a regional resource and advocacy center for individuals and families, which enables restoration of personal dignity and economic empowerment.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Hard Work

Owning a business is the dream of many Americans... actually starting that business turns that dream into a reality. However, there is a gap in between that dream and the reality, which can only be filled with careful planning and hard work! Many entrepreneurs believe that business ownership means being able to set their own hours, taking vacations whenever they want, and making lots of money. That sounds good, but the reality is that as a business owner, you will have to work when your customers want you to work, provide the products and services your customers demand, and see a profit only after all of the bills are paid. Most business owners work more hours for themselves than they ever worked for someone else.

Realistic Goals

Do not become blinded by the dream; evaluate its potential. Start out by analyzing the needs of the business in terms of time, money, and your basic understanding of that business. Then ask yourself, what are the start-up costs of this business? Am I prepared to invest time and money to make this business a success? Do I possess the necessary understanding of management, marketing, and accounting? What does my credit report reflect?

You should be able to answer these questions and act upon them before starting your business. It is much easier to look into the future and prepare for difficult situations than to go back and correct mistakes that could have been prevented.

Writing a Business Plan

Regardless of the size of the business, every business owner should write a business plan. A business plan is a written description of your business's future. This document is designed to detail the major characteristics of your business and describe the business, where it intends to go, whom it will serve, what products or services it has to offer, and what is needed to make it a success. Business plans perform a number of tasks for both the writer and the reader. It can be used by entrepreneurs to convey their vision to potential investors. Business plans may be used by firms trying to attract key employees, prospecting for new business, dealing with suppliers, or simply learning how to manage their company better. Remember, that this plan is not written in stone and will change as your business grows and expands.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Marketing

Most people think that marketing is only about the advertising and/or personal selling of goods and services. Advertising and selling, however, are just two of the many marketing activities. In general, marketing is anything associated with identifying the particular wants and needs of a target market of customers, and then satisfying those customers better than the competition. This involves doing market research on customers and the industry, analyzing their needs and wants, and making strategic decisions about product design, pricing, promotion and distribution.

Financing

How are you going to finance this new business venture? Most new businesses are started with personal income or savings, investments from family and friends, venture capital, and/or loans by financial institutions. The truth is that most new entrepreneurs need some sort of financial assistance to get their business started and equipped. Therefore, it is important to be able to provide a detailed business plan of your business expectations, your credit history, your personal financial input, and your repayment abilities.



GETTING STARTED

Do I have to get a business license?

Yes! All for-profit businesses located within the city limits must have a privilege license before beginning operations. Contact the Fayetteville Finance Department for prices of specific licenses. Some businesses may require county or state licenses, while some require a specific industry license and permit. You can find out what is applicable to your business through the Business License Office. Special licenses will affect the sales of alcohol, tobacco, firearms, and certain services, such as cosmetology, childcare, contracting, and real estate. Check with the licensing department for more information.

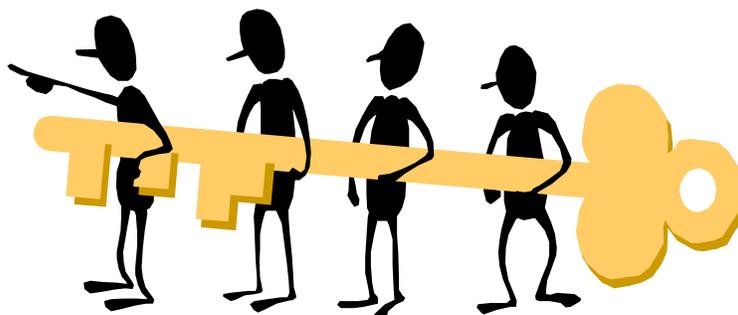
Where do I get a business license?

Visit the Business License Office at City Hall to fill out an application. They will provide you with the guidelines necessary to determine which application you need and the cost. Most fees are determined by expected sales for a given year.

How do I pay, file, and learn about taxes?

Every business is responsible for federal and state income taxes. All pre-tax income for sole proprietorships, partnerships, and corporations should be reported on your individual return. Regular corporations are also subject to corporate income tax. Different reporting forms are required for different types of organizations. For information specific to your organization, call the local IRS Office.

Additionally, the Women's Business Center offers workshops each month to assist small business owners in preparing and paying taxes. Visit our website at www.wcof.org for select dates and times. You can also learn valuable tax information at the IRS website at www.irs.gov.



START-UP CHECKLIST

q Write a Business Plan & Decide upon a Business Structure.

Need Help? Contact the following:

- Women's Business Center
www.wcof.org/wbo
- Small Business Center (SBC) at Fayetteville Tech
www.faytechcc.edu/edprog/coned/cbi.htm
- U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)
www.sba.gov
- Service Corporation of Retired Executives (score)
www.score.org
- Small Business & Technology Development Centers (SBTDC)
www.sbtdc.org

q Get State License Information & Federal Referrals.

- Call North Carolina Business License Information Office (BLIO)
www.nccommerce.com/servicenter/blio
- For information concerning Occupational Safety & Health for your business activity, contact Department of Labor
www.dol.state.nc.us
- Small Business Resource Guide, CD- ROM (IRS Pub.3207)
www.irs.gov
- Federal Information Center
www.info.gov

q Check on Local Licenses & Zoning Information

- License: (910) 433-1675
- Zoning: (910) 433-1612

q File Your Business Structure and/or Register Your Business Name.

- Contact the NC Secretary of State, Corporations Division for Corporations, LLC, LLP, or Limited Partnerships
www.sosnc.com
- Contact the County Register of Deeds to File Business Names for Sole Proprietorships, General Partnerships, or Limited Partnerships.

q Apply for Licenses and Permits with the City, County, State, and Federal Government

Call NC Business License Information Office
www.nccommerce.com/servicenter/blio
1-800-228-8443

The WBC does not give legal advice. This section is intended only to give definitions of the legal forms of business you may wish to use for your business. We suggest that you seek the advice of a legal representative if you have a difficult situation when declaring your form of business.

Sole Proprietorship

The easiest and least costly way of starting a business is a sole proprietorship, which means the business is owned and run by an individual acting alone. It is formed by finding a location and opening the door for business, after obtaining the required licenses and registrations.

Advantages

- *Start-up cost are low*
- *Few regulations*
- *Only taxed once*

Disadvantages

- *Personally liable*
- *Difficult to raise capital*

Partnership

There are several types of partnerships. The two most common types are general and limited partnerships. A general partnership can be formed by a simple oral agreement between two or more persons, but a legal partnership agreement prepared by an attorney is highly recommended. Legal fees for constructing a partnership agreement are higher than those for a sole proprietorship, but are generally lower than incorporating.

Advantages

- *Start-up cost are low*
- *Few regulations*
- *Only taxed once*

Disadvantages

- *Personally liable*
- *Each partner is responsible for the actions or the other partners*



Corporation

A business may incorporate without an attorney, but legal advice is highly recommended. The corporate structure is usually the most complex and is more costly to organize than the other two business formations. Control depends on stock ownership. Persons with the largest stock ownership, not the total number of shareholders, control the corporation. With control of stock shares or 51 percent of stock, a person or group is able to make policy decisions. Control is exercised through regular board of directors' meetings and annual stockholders' meetings. Records must be kept to document decisions made by the board of directors. Small, closely held corporations can operate more informally, but record-keeping cannot be eliminated entirely. Officers of a corporation can be liable to stockholders for improper actions. Liability is generally limited to stock ownership, except where fraud is involved. For more information on starting a corporation, visit the Secretary of States website at www.sosnc.com.

Advantages

- *Ownership is easily transferable*
- *Liability protection*

Disadvantages

- *Double taxation*
- *High start-up cost*
- *Regulatory requirements*

Limited Liability Company (LLC)

A Limited Liability Company shares characteristics with both partnerships and corporations. As with sole proprietorships and partnerships, a limited liability company may be organized to avoid "double taxation," which plagues a corporation. The owners of a LLC are called members and the company is managed by these members or by the managers who may or may not be members. As with a corporation, members enjoy "limited liability." The costs for starting an LLC are fairly high, similar to those of a corporation. Limited Liability Companies have become one of the most popular legal structures in the US. For more information on starting a LLC, visit the Secretary of States website at www.sosnc.com.

Advantages

- *Taxed only once*
- *Liability protection*

Disadvantages

- *High start-up cost*

CREDIT ISSUES

Obtaining financing for your small business is dependent upon your personal credit. Credit is one of the most important factors in opening your business. Potential creditors and investors see credit as indication of your financial trustworthiness. A potential creditor is going to look at your payment history (paying bills on time), debt-to-income ratios (how much debt you have verses how much debt you can afford), and public records.

Credit Reports

Do you know what's on your credit report? Is the information correct? If not, then how do you correct the mistakes? These are a few of the questions that potential small business owners should ask. The key is to be able to read and understand your credit reports. There are three major credit reporting agencies: Equifax, Experian (formerly TRW) and Trans-Union. A credit report consists of 4 sections:

- 1) Personal Information: Permanent information on your credit report
 - § Name
 - § Social Security Number
 - § Date of Birth
 - § Addresses (current and up to two former)
 - § Spouses name (current and possibly former)
 - § AKA's (any way your name is registered with creditors for example: John Doe, John M. Doe, etc.)
 - § Employment information
 - § Date the credit file was established

- 2) Public Records: Life span of this information on your credit report varies
 - § Bankruptcies—Remains on report for 7 years
 - § Divorces filed or final—Remains on report indefinitely
 - § Judgments or liens—Remains on report for 7 years
 - § Other public information—May be permanent information

- 3) Trade Lines: Remains on your credit report for 7 years from the date of last activity. Student loans remain until the loan has been satisfied.
 - § Summary of accounts, with high credit limit
 - § Mortgage
 - § Auto Loans
 - § Personal Loans
 - § Student Loans
 - § Credit Card accounts

- 4) Inquires: Life span is up to 2 years.
 - § Requests for credit initiated by consumer
 - § Requests not initiated by consumer

Credit Scoring

Late payments and excessive credit applications will affect your credit score. Payments that are 30 days late will have a significant impact on your score. Applying for credit too many times during a short period will also affect your credit score. Credit scores can range from 300-950 depending on the credit-reporting agency; the lower the score the higher risk of default.

Negative credit information can remain on your report for 7 years or longer depending on the type. Bankruptcies can remain for up to 10 years, and government loans or liens can remain for an indefinite amount of time.

Prepare your credit for small business, as your business idea develops. Check your credit report at least once a year, write a dispute letter if the information is incorrect, and make arrangements to pay-off any old debt. It is your credit, do all you can to protect it!!

Tips to Maintaining Good Credit

Establishing good credit is not an easy task once personal credit is damaged. On the road towards good credit, you may face many challenges, such as accepting higher interest rates on loans. The good news is that there are steps you can take to establish or re-establish your reputation as a responsible credit user. Here are a few habits for establishing good credit:

- § Pay your bills on time.
- § Watch your debt-to-income ratios
- § Limit the number of inquiries into your credit
- § Don't open several accounts in a short period of time
- § Limit credit card accounts; close any account that is not in use. Most banks recommend using only 3 to 4 cards.
- § Check your credit report at least once a year.

Identity Theft

Identity theft is the latest scam effecting consumers. What is identity theft? Well, someone assumes your identity through personal information and uses it to obtain goods or services. This can happened to a small business as well.

To avoid having your identity stolen: watch your credit card receipts and shred all important documentation with Social Security numbers, credit card information, and bank statements. If Identity theft is suspected contact the Fraud Department at all three major credit-reporting agencies.

Equifax
PO Box 740241
Atlanta, GA 30374
www.equifax.com
1-800-685-1111

Experian
PO Box 9532
Allen, TX 75013
www.experian.com
1-888-397-3742

Trans Union
PO Box 6790
Fullerton, CA 92834
www.tuc.com
1-800-916-8800



BUDGETING

Developing a budget for a small business is very similar to developing a budget for your own household. You should be most concerned with the cash flow. How much cash is going out to pay the bills, and how much cash must come in order to adequately cover those bills? A budget to a family means living within their income level, without financial distress. A budget should mean the same thing to a small business. If your business exists within the limits of its income, there should be no financial worry. However, planning a budget for a small business requires more thought and effort than the household budget, especially when you aren't open for business yet. The following three phases of small business budgeting should help you gain an accurate assessment of your business's expenses.

Start-up Budget

How much will it cost you to start-up your business? Take into consideration these and any other costs that may be unique to your business idea:

- Licenses/permits
- Equipment/supplies
- Legal fees
- Insurance
- Advertising/marketing
- Salaries/wages
- Utilities

Short-Range Operating Budget

How much will it cost you to operate your business each month for the first year? Again, these are suggestions to keep in mind; your business may not need all of these or may have some additional expenses:

- Salaries/wages
- Insurance
- Supplies
- Advertising/marketing
- Rent/utilities
- Taxes
- Repairs/maintenance
- Depreciation
- Legal/accounting
- Loan payments

Long-Range Operating Budget

You should take into consideration how you expect your business to grow over the next three to five years. Use the same expenses for the short-range budget and expand them out over five years. This will give you a good idea of where you expect to go in the future with your business.

Grants

First, let's clear up a very popular myth: the government does not give grants to start a business! While you are recovering from that very difficult blow, please read on. In spite of what people see on television or hear from friends, the truth is there is not a government agency or private foundation handing out "free money" to fund a start-up business, regardless of the entrepreneur's gender, ethnicity, or economic status.

Most grants are awarded to non-profit organizations, research development companies, and intermediary lending institutions, but even those grants are extremely specific in nature and often quite technical. The grant money that is obtainable is not available to individuals who are interested in opening restaurants, clothing stores, and other small businesses.

If the government provided free money to everyone who wanted to start a small business, it wouldn't last very long. If tax dollars were funding these risky ventures, the outcry from taxpayers would be incredible. The fact is that most new businesses are started with personal savings, friends or relatives support, or small commercial or personal loans.

Small Business Loans

With loans being one of the primary sources of funding for small businesses, entrepreneurs must receive an adequate amount of information from various lending institutions in order to make an executive decision on which financial institution and loan type may be better suited for them. For instance, credit unions can offer generous terms to their members, but make mostly consumer loans. The following pages list a few organizations that will be able to assist you with your financial needs. But there are many other financial organizations to choose from.



FINANCING

Community Organizations

Cumberland County has many organizations available to assist entrepreneurs, but there are three specific organizations that offer financial assistance for business owners.

1) City of Fayetteville:

- q Small Business Loan Program: The small business loan program is designed to foster business expansion and community revitalization. These loans are intended for small business owners in need of financing to improve their business operations and/or appearance. Loans range from \$5,000 to \$25,000.
- q The Fayetteville Downtown Loan Program: This program is designed to offer economic incentives for new and existing businesses in Downtown Fayetteville, while creating jobs for low/moderate-income individuals. At least one full-time job must be created for each \$50,000 loaned by the Downtown Loan Program.

2) Cumberland County Community Development Loan Program: The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) provides funds to start or expand a small business. The goal of this loan is to fund projects that provide goods and services for residents with low/moderate income and/or to create jobs for low/moderate income persons, while supporting small businesses and promoting community self-sufficiency. Applicants must be a for-profit business, with five or fewer employees (including the owners) that is located within the Cumberland County municipality.

Count Me In Loans

Count Me In champions the cause for women's economic independence by providing access to business loans, consultation and education. Count Me In uses a unique credit scoring system to make loans of \$500 to \$10,000 available to women across the United States who have nowhere to turn for their first business loan. The organization provides access to networks that expand contacts, markets, skills and confidence. For more information, visit their website at www.count-me-in.org.



Innovative Bank

Innovative Bank is an FDIC insured financial institution specializing in providing solutions to small and mid-size businesses and is a preferred SBA lending institution. Innovative Bank's business strategy is to provide the best suite of quality financial products and services in the banking industry. They cater to the small to mid-size business customers that are often overlooked by larger institutions. For more information on SOHO, call the WBC at 323-3377.

SOHO Banking

Small Office Home Office Banking is a product developed by Innovative Bank to promote the SBA's Community Express Loan, which provides financial assistance, capital access, technical and management assistance to underserved segments of the small business community. The program is a collaborative effort between the SBA and the National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC).

SOHO Banking offers qualified, small business owners fast approval on loans of \$5,000 - \$25,000 with a 7-year term, no pre-payment penalty, minimal paperwork, and free technical assistance. This loan is designed to increase lending in geographic areas generally comprising Low to Moderate Income areas and to women, minorities and/or veterans. Loan proceeds must be used exclusively for business related purposes.



Business Loan Express

BLX is a non-bank financial services company formed and managed by a group of dedicated entrepreneurial business people committed to serving the long term capital needs of small businesses, professionals and investors. Today, BLX is the fastest growing small business and commercial finance company in America with the capital and resources necessary to help America's small businesses and professionals thrive and enrich their communities.

Community Express Loan

The SBA Community Express program is BLX's newest commercial loan product and is specifically designed to increase working capital, help business owners meet daily operating expenses and accelerate growth. Community Express loans are an inexpensive alternative to expensive credit card debt, and provide a regular payment schedule. Borrowers can receive loans up to \$50,000 with no collateral and with no prepayment penalty. The application process is easy and loan decisions are typically issued within two business days. As with SOHO Loans, free technical assistance is provided. The lending program is designed for women, minorities and/or veterans; Low to Moderate Income areas, Hub Zones and other SBA designated areas. For more information on BLX, please contact the WBC at 323-3377.



Commercial Banks

There are a number of institutions that offer small business loans. Traditional savings banks, savings and loans, and commercial banks are generally the first place small business owners think of when looking for institutional financing. Credit unions can offer generous terms to their members, but make mostly consumer loans. Consumer finance companies may be willing to make higher-interest loans to higher-risk borrowers. Commercial finance companies may be worth considering if you need a loan for inventory or equipment purchases.

There are two major characteristics that vary among bank loans: the term of the loan and the security or collateral required to get the loan.

Long-Term versus Short-Term Loans

The term of the loan refers to the length of time you have to repay the debt. Debt financing can be either long-term or short-term. Long-term debt financing is commonly used to purchase, improve, or expand fixed assets such as your plant, facilities, major equipment, and real estate. If you are acquiring an asset with the loan proceeds, you will ordinarily want to match the length of the loan with the useful life of the asset. Short-term debt is often used to raise cash for cyclical inventory needs, accounts payable, and working capital.

Secured or Unsecured Debt

Debt financing can also be secured or unsecured. A secured loan is a promise to pay a debt, where the promise is "secured" by granting the creditor an interest in specific property (collateral) of the debtor. If the debtor defaults on the loan, the creditor can recoup the money by seizing and liquidating the specific property used for collateral on the debt. For startup businesses, commercial lenders will usually require that all loans be secured with adequate collateral.

An unsecured loan is also a promise to pay a debt. Unlike a secured loan, the promise is not supported by granting the creditor an interest in any specific property. The lender is relying upon the creditworthiness and reputation of the borrower to repay the obligation. An example of an unsecured loan is a revolving consumer credit card such as VISA or MasterCard. Sometimes, working capital lines of credit are also unsecured. Until a small business has an established credit history, it typically cannot obtain unsecured loans.

Specific Types of Bank Loans

In addition to consumer loans and mortgages, the most common types of loans given by banks to startup and emerging small businesses are:

- § Working capital lines of credit for the ongoing cash needs of the business
- § Credit cards which have a higher interest rate
- § Unsecured revolving credit which are short-term commercial loans for one to three years
- § Longer-term commercial loans: generally secured by real estate or other major assets
- § Equipment leasing for assets you don't want to buy outright
- § Letters of credit for businesses engaged in international trade.

Each quarter, the U.S. Small Business Administration releases a list of the most active lenders to small business. Listed below are the results for Fiscal Year 2004, as of May 2004.

Most Active Lender: Fiscal-Year 2004

1. Bank of America
2. Capital One
3. Innovative Bank
4. Wachovia Bank
5. First Citizens Bank & Trust Co.

Small Business Lending Companies

1. CIT Small Business Lending Corporation
2. Self-Help Credit Union



U.S. Small Business Administration

Since 1953, the SBA has guided small businesses to success, from inception to expansion. Many big businesses whose names are now household words – FedEx, Intel, Nike, Apple, Ben & Jerry's, Compaq and AOL, just to name a few – received help from the SBA along the way. Today's small businesses are more demographically diverse, more technologically driven, and more global in scope than ever before.

The SBA's programs and services can assist you in almost every aspect of starting your business - from developing a business plan to obtaining financing; from marketing your products and services to managing your company. By using SBA services (either through their Website or local offices), you can avoid the common mistakes of business. You can gain assistance in setting up proper record-keeping systems, planning for the movement of cash through a business, and properly setting goals for your company to ensure its success.

The SBA's programs and services can also guide you through each stage of building a successful business. They offer management and technical assistance, business planning, financing, access to federal contracts, and much more. Most services are free. You can contact the SBA by phone at 1-800-UASK SBA or by visiting www.sba.gov.



Disclaimer Statement:

The Women's Business Center of Fayetteville is partially funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) through a cooperative Agreement. The SBA's funding is not an endorsement of products, opinions or services. All SBA funded programs are extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis. Arrangements for persons with disabilities will be made at all times in accordance with the American With Disabilities Act of 1990 and associated amendments. Arrangements for persons with special needs will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance.

BUSINESS PLAN

Now that you are working on any credit issues or saving money to start your business, it is a great time to start preparing your business plan. The business plan has multiple purposes. Most people see it as the agonizing process of acquiring a business loan. While this is true, the business plan should also serve as a plan for your business. A business plan is a written document detailing the operational and financial aspects of your company. Like a map, it helps you determine where you are, where you are going, where you want to be and how you are going to get there. If it is well written, your business plan will keep you in touch with your goals, potential risks and probable rewards. Moreover, it may be the crucial factor in convincing investors or company management to give you the financing you will need to realize your dream.

Outline

No two businesses are exactly alike no matter how similar they may seem. Each business has its own unique customers, location, product or service, and individual goals. This outline is meant to a guide, not a rule. You may need to exclude parts for your own needs or to add parts to highlight important points for **your** business. Use this outline as a starting point and make it your own business plan to suit your own needs.

Elements of a Business Plan

- I. Cover Page
- II. Table of Contents
- III. Executive Summary
- IV. General Company Description
- V. Products and Services
- VI. Marketing Plan
- VII. Operational Plan
- VIII. Management and Organization
- IX. Personal Financial Statement
- X. Startup Expenses and Capitalization
- XI. Financial Plan
- XI. Appendices (Supporting Documents)

Sample

The following sections of this resource guide are dedicated to helping you prepare and write portions of the business plan. Also, page 26 of this guide provides a sample plan to help in the design of your plan. Keep in mind that this is just a sample. Your business plan should not look exactly like this sample, with your name and business name simply filled in the blanks. Your business plan should reflect **your** plan for **your** business.

MARKETING

Marketing is the process of pricing, promoting, and distributing your products and services. It includes advertising, public relations, sales, customer service, and communication. Marketing should always focus on what customers' need or want.

Target Market

Your target market is the group of individuals who need or want your services most. The reason you should be concerned with identifying a target market is because it how you will effectively design strategies for pricing, distributing, promoting, positioning and improving your product. Basically you have to know your target in order to create a strategy that directly reaches that group.

For example, if you know your target market is 24- to 49-year-old men who like rhythm & blues, are frequent CD buyers, and live in urban neighborhoods, you can create an advertising message to appeal to those types of buyers. Additionally, you could buy spots on a specific radio station or TV show that appeals to this type of buyer, rather than buying general media time.

When selecting a target market, ask yourself the following questions:

- § What is the product or service used for?
- § Who benefits most from the use of the product or service?
- § What is the unmet need your product or service fulfills?
- § Who can benefit most from that need fulfillment?
- § Who would use the product or service? Who would purchase the product or service? Are they the same person?

Those questions should help you identify who exactly your target market is, but now you will have to do some research on that group. You will need the following data about your target:

- § *Demographic Factors*: income level, age range, gender, education level, ethnicity, occupation, etc.
- § *Geographic Information*: where they live, where they work, where they shop
- § *Behavioral Characteristics*: shopping behavior, frequency of purchase
- § *Psychographics*: attitudes, interests, and opinions
- § *Technographics*: level of computer knowledge and willingness to use technology (especially important if you are planning to sell from the Internet)

The following are great places to start your target market research.

- § U.S. Census Bureau: www.census.gov
- § The Rite Site: www.easidemographics.com
- § Earth Resource Systems: www.ersys.com
- § Regional and County Economic Development: www.nccommerce.com/econscan
- § Metrovisions: www.fayettevillencchamber.org/metro_metrovisions.htm

Product Features and Benefits

Now that you know your customers, it's time to focus on your product or service. Products and services can be described in two ways, as a feature or as a benefit. Features are product or service characteristics like size, color, functionality, etc. Benefits answer the customer's question: What's in it for me?

Good marketers sell products on their benefits not features. For that reason, it is important to identify all the features of your product or service and decide on the benefit each provides to your consumer. Creating a chart is a great place to start; on one side list all of your product or service's features and on the other side list the benefit of that feature to your target market. But remember it is only a benefit, if your target market will benefit from it. Always think in terms of the customer! Below are some examples of possible features and benefits.

Feature	Benefit
Superior Customer Service	No Hassles / Saves Effort
Experience, Reliable Staff	Peace of mind
Long-Distance Calling Plan	Saves Money
Order by phone or by internet	Saves Time and Effort
99% Fat Free	Lose Weight / Be Healthy
Patented box spring mattress	Provides comfort...a restful night's sleep
Microwaveable	Saves Time and Effort
Great Tasting Food	Increase Happiness
Small physical size	Convenient...take it anywhere
Fully-Loaded, Luxury Vehicle	Be admired



Setting Your Prices

How you price your products will effect how well you compete. You can use pricing as a competitive tool by pricing products/services extremely low (low-cost leader) or extremely high (luxury good). However, for small businesses somewhere in the middle is generally the best bet. Before you price your products, you will need to understand three things.

- 1) Cost of producing the product/service
- 2) Price your customers are willing to pay
- 3) Price your competition charges

Costs of Production

In order to operate a successful business, the pricing structure must take into account all of the expenses of running the business. Expenses must be identified and divided into two categories: variable costs and fixed costs.

§ Variable Costs: the direct expenses of creating your product/service. These costs vary depending on the number of products/services you create. Included in variable costs may be materials, cost of goods sold, and supplies.

§ Fixed Costs: costs that remain the same regardless of your level of sales. Some examples of fixed costs are rent, loan payment, and insurance.

Pricing goods/services so that it just covers your costs is called the *price floor* or the lowest possible amount that you can charge for your product. Any price below this point will cause you to lose money.

Customer Pricing

Your marketing research should have given you a good understanding of the amount that your customers are willing and able to pay. This price is generally referred to as the *price ceiling* or the maximum amount that you can charge for your goods/services. Any price greater than this point will cause you to lose customers. *Most business owners believe that the best price for your goods/services falls somewhere in the middle of the price floor and price ceiling.*

Competition's Pricing

Shop around to your competition and get a feel for their pricing strategy. You can then determine if you are aligned with competitors in your market and in your industry. The two most important questions to ask when evaluating your competitor's prices are:

- 1) What are similar businesses charging for the same product/service?
- 2) Do you have a reason to price above or below your competition?

Promoting Your Product

So now you know what you are selling and the price you are charging, but you don't have customers until people know about your product. That's where the promotions come into play. This is where you figure out the tactics you plan to use to market your product. As with everything in marketing, your promotions must focus on the target market.

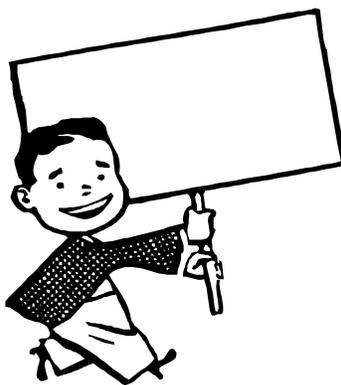
Things to consider when designing promotions:

- 1) What promotional techniques will best reach my target market?
- 2) What promotional techniques fit into my marketing budget?
- 3) How can I make sure these promotional techniques are working?

Promotional Tactics

When deciding on promotional strategies, quality is generally better than quantity. For example, let's say running one radio spot during rush hour traffic costs the same as 15 spots at 2:00 in the morning. If your target market is 3rd shift workers, then you may have found a great deal—buy those 15 radio spots. But if your target market is 9-5 workers, then the 15 spots aren't such a bargain.

With that being said, you should understand that quantity is also important. You may want to think of quality (ability to reach your target market) as your primary goal and quantity (number of times you reach them) as your secondary goal. For example, that one radio spot in rush hour traffic may reach your target market, but how great will the impact be? They probably won't even notice the ad. But suppose an advertisement in the Sunday edition of the newspaper for 5 consecutive Sundays costs the same as that one radio spot. If your target market regularly reads the Sunday paper, that advertisement will most likely have a greater impact than the one radio spot. The trick is to find strategies that maximize the impact of your marketing dollars.



MARKETING

Below is a partial list of promotional tools.

- 1) Marketing Collateral: Materials that you produce and distribute such as brochures, fliers, posters, and newsletters
- 2) Promotional Activities: Activities that you or the customer engage in
 - a. Sponsoring a special event or local team (walk-a-thon or Little League)
 - b. Attending or Exhibiting at Trade Shows
 - c. Public Speaking Engagements
 - d. Give-aways (hats or t-shirts with your logo) and contests
 - e. Coupons and free samples
- 3) Media Relations Campaigns: press releases, public service announcements, articles in the newspaper
- 4) Advertising
 - a. Print Advertising: newspapers and magazines
 - b. Direct Mail: postcards, sales letters
 - c. Outdoor Advertising: billboards, sides of buses
 - d. Broadcast Advertising: radio, TV, and Internet

Projecting Costs

Do some research to estimate costs as accurately as possible. Call providers of the promotional tactic that you want to use and get a price quote. Make sure this amount fits into your overall marketing budget. Spending more money on marketing than you budgeted for will hurt your bottom line almost as much as not marketing at all.

Implementation and Tracking

It is important that you have a regular schedule for your promotions and decide when and where your promotional strategies will take place. For example, if your promotional strategy is to distribute flyers, then you need to decide when you will hand out flyers (1st of the month, every other Wednesday, etc.) and where you will place them (car windows at the grocery store, standing outside the Cafeteria of Fayetteville State University, etc).

Tracking your promotional activities is also crucial to your success, so that you can assess whether or not your promotions are working. Tracking promotions can be as easy as putting a coupon on a flyer saying, "mention this ad for a special deal" or asking customers how they found out about your company. The goal is to ensure that your promotional activities are effective and to discontinue or change promotional tactics that aren't working.

Sales and Distribution

The selection of sales and distribution channels is the final step in successful marketing. You can think of sales and distribution as how your products and customers meet. The key to successful sales and distribution is customer convenience and that depends on your particular target market. For example, making your products and services available online is only convenient to your target if they own and know how to operate a computer.

There are a wide variety of distribution channels, including the ones defined below. You may use one method or a combination of sales and distribution methods. Again your choice should depend on your target market.

- § Direct Sales: selling directly to the customer or end user of the product. There is no agent between your company and the customer. Providing financial planning services to individuals is an example of direct sales.
- § Telephone and Internet Sales: a form of direct sales but using catalogs or on the Internet.
- § Indirect Sales, Retail: selling to a retailer whose salespeople then sell to the customer. Selling camping equipment to Wal-Mart is an example of this.
- § Indirect Sales, Wholesale: selling to a wholesaler or agent who then sells your products to retailers. An example is farmers who sell their crops to food service distributors, who then sell the products to restaurants.
- § Multi-level Marketing: (AKA Telemarketing) selling both directly to customers and to other sales people that you have recruited to sell products. Amway® is one of the more recognized examples of this method.



COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

The objective of this section is to enable you to pick up the good competitive practices and avoid the errors of your competitors. A common error is opening a business in a market that is already more than adequately serviced. Carefully viewing the competition can lead you to alter your basic strategy or to change existing operations to compete more effectively. This has to be an ongoing practice because markets are continually changing and successful ideas attract competition.

To analyze your competition, consider the following questions:

- § Who are your five nearest direct competitors?
- § Who are your five nearest indirect competitors?
- § How is their business—steady, increasing, or decreasing?
- § How are their operations similar and dissimilar to yours?
- § What have you learned from watching their operations? What works for them? What doesn't?
- § How will your operation be better than theirs?

Visit your competitor's stores and websites. Gather as much information as possible about them and their processes. Every incidence that you find to distinguish your company from theirs is considered a competitive advantage. Use the following chart to conduct a thorough competitive analysis.

Customer Seeks	Competition Offers	You Offer
Quality		
Lower Prices		
Product Service		
Reliability		
Location		
Information		
Accept Credit Cards		
Warranty		
Customer Advice		
Knowledgeable Staff		
Hours of Operation		

MANAGEMENT

Managing a business requires more than just the desire to be your own boss. It demands dedication, persistence, the ability to make decisions and the ability to manage both employees and finances.

Your management plan along with your marketing and financial plan sets the foundation for and facilitates the success of your business.

One of the most critical elements of entrepreneurial success is learning how to manage yourself and others effectively. To be an effective leader, you must develop skills in strategic thinking. Strategic thinking is a process whereby you learn how to make your business vision a reality by developing your abilities in teamwork, problem solving, and critical thinking. It is also a tool to help you confront change, plan for and make transitions, and envision new possibilities and opportunities.

Like equipment and supplies, employees are resources too. They are the most valuable assets a business has. As an entrepreneur/business owner, you will discover that employees and staff will play an important role in the total operation of your business. That is why it is crucial that you know what skills you possess and those you lack since you will have to hire personnel to supply the skills that you lack. Additionally, it is essential that you know how to manage and treat your employees. Make them a part of the team. Keep them informed of, and get their feedback regarding changes. Employees oftentimes have excellent ideas that can lead to new market product lines or services that can improve your overall competitiveness.

Your management plan should answer questions such as:

- How does your background experience help you in the business?
- What are your weaknesses and how can you compensate for them?
- Who will be on the management team?
- What are their duties?
- What are your current personnel needs?
- What are your plans for hiring and training personnel?
- What are salaries, benefits, vacations, and holiday's will you offer?

Lastly, the operating procedures, manuals and materials should be included in this section of your business plan. Develop a management plan that will ensure the success of your business and satisfy the needs and expectations of employees.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Your financial section will come in handy when preparing your business plan, as well as during the life of your business. It is very important to understand the financial aspects of your business, not just to convince a lender to finance your project, but also, to give you a clear picture of how your business is doing on a daily, monthly, and yearly basis. There are a variety of financial statements and financial analysis that business owners will need to understand.

Balance Sheet

The balance sheet is like a snapshot; it shows what your business owns, what it owes and what it is worth at a specific point in time. By reviewing a company's balance sheet, a lender can quickly gauge the business's level of liquidity and whether or not it is solvent. Entries on the balance sheet can be used by the lender to analyze certain financial ratios that provide even more insight into the financial condition of the company and its management practices. A balance sheet template is on page 47 of this guide.

The balance sheet consists of assets, liabilities and capital, or equity.

- 1) Assets – everything the business owns that has a value, both current and fixed. Examples of assets are cash, accounts receivables, and furniture fixtures.
 - a) Current assets – assets that are in the form of cash or will generally be converted to cash or used up within one year. Examples are accounts receivable and inventory.
 - b) Fixed assets – assets that are generally not converted to cash within one year. Examples include property, plant and equipment (PPE).
- 2) Liabilities – what the business owes creditors or persons other than its owners. Examples are accounts payable, payroll taxes payable and loans payable.
 - a) Current liabilities – liabilities payable within one year. This includes accounts payable and payroll taxes payable.
 - b) Long-term liabilities – liabilities that are not due within one year. Examples are notes payable and loans payable.
- 3) Equity or Net Worth – the amount owned by the owner: the amount by which assets exceed liabilities. The total value of assets such as cash, checking account balance minus all debts such as loans and revolving credit accounts.

There is a very simple equation to remember for your balance sheet:

$$\text{Assets} = \text{Liability} + \text{Equity}$$

If you rearrange this equation, you can determine what your business is worth.

$$\text{Equity} = \text{Assets} - \text{Liability}$$

Income Statement

The income statement, also known as the profit and loss statement provides essential information about the financial performance of a company for a given period of time. The income statement provides an historical perspective about the company's revenue generation, its costs, and various measures of profitability. This is in contrast to the balance sheet, which provides a snapshot of the businesses position at a given moment in time. When taken together the balance sheet and income statement are powerful tools in evaluating a company's ability to repay a loan. A template for an income statement is included on page 48 of this guide.

The income statement consists of two parts:

- 1) Revenue – inflows or other enhancements of assets of an entity or settlements of its liabilities during a period from delivering or producing goods, rendering services or other activities that constitute the entity's ongoing major or central operations.
- 2) Expenses – outflows or other using-up of assets or incurrences of liabilities during a period from delivering or producing goods, rendering services or carrying out other activities that constitute the entity's ongoing major or central operations.

The equation to determine your net profit or loss is very simple to calculate:

$$\text{Revenue} - \text{Expense} = \text{Net Profit or Loss}$$

Cash Flow Statement

A cash flow statement is a projection of your business's cash inflows and outflows over a certain period of time. A typical cash flow statement predicts the anticipated cash receipts and disbursements of a business on a month-to-month basis. It takes information from the income statement and balance sheet and displays it in a manner, which highlights the movement of cash.

The primary purpose of using a cash flow statement is to predict your business's ability to take in more cash than it pays out. This will give you some indication of your business's ability to create the resources necessary to support you, the business owner. The cash flow statement can also predict your business's cash flow gaps — periods when cash outflows exceed cash inflows when combined with your cash reserves. You can take cash flow management steps to ensure that the gaps are closed, or at least narrowed, when they are predicted early. These steps might include lowering your investment in accounts receivable or inventory, or looking to outside sources of cash, such as a short-term loan, to fill the cash flow gaps.

Financial Ratios

The information that was provided in the balance sheet and the income statement can be used to create certain ratios that provide useful insight into the business. Using ratio analysis, quick comparisons can be made between a particular business and other businesses in the same industry. In addition, financial ratios also provide you with the tools necessary to assess your business and determine whether certain operations of your business are thriving or need fine-tuning. The following list explains how each of the financial ratios is calculated and what it tells you about your business's financial health. The list does not include *all* of the ratios that you or your accountant might calculate. However, it does include those financial ratios that should be included in your business plan. They provide a clear picture of your business's ability to generate a profit, pay its bills on a timely basis, and utilize its assets efficiently.

- **Quick Ratio (Acid Test):** The Quick Ratio provides a simple reading of the company's liquidity. A higher value corresponds to a higher level of liquidity, which in general is a positive indicator of a businesses financial condition and ability to pay off short-term liabilities.

$$\frac{\text{Cash \& Cash Equivalents} + \text{Accounts Receivable}}{\text{Current Liabilities}}$$

- **Gross Profit Margin Ratio:** The Gross Profit Margin Ratio indicates the percentage of revenue remaining after the expenses are subtracted. A high Gross Profit Margin is a sign that the business can operate profitably as long as its overhead is not excessive.

$$\frac{\text{Gross Profit}}{\text{Revenues}}$$

- **Debt-to-Worth Ratio:** The Debt-to-Worth Ratio is used to measure the extent to which the company is leveraged. A high Debt-to-Worth Ratio indicates that the company relies heavily on borrowed funds, which might affect its ability to repay a loan.

$$\frac{\text{Total Liabilities}}{\text{Net Worth}}$$

Break-Even Analysis

For any new business, you should predict what gross sales volume level you will have to achieve before you reach the break-even point and then, of course, build to make a profit. For early-stage businesses, you should be able to assess your early prediction and determine how accurate they were, and monitor whether you are actually on track to make the profits you need or if it is going to take a little longer or more work. Even the mature business would be wise to look at their current break-even point and perhaps find ways to lower that benchmark to increase profits.

You may do a break-even analysis before you even begin your business and determine that your gross margin will come in at a certain percentage and your fixed expense budget will be set at a certain level. You will then be able to establish that your business will break even (and then go on to a profit) at a certain level of sales volume. But your pre-start projections and your operating realities may be very different. After three to six months in business, you should compare projections to the real-world results and reassess, if necessary, what volume is required to reach break-even levels.

Along the way, expenses tend to creep up in both the direct and indirect categories, and you may fall below the break-even volume because you think it is lower than it has become. Take your profit and loss statement every six months or so and refigure your break-even target number.

Personal Financial Statement

Because lenders want to know not only about your business's financial position, but also about your personal financial profile as the business's owners, it is very important to understand how to prepare a personal financial statement. This statement outlines all the information that conventional lenders will want to know about your personal finances, from a description of your assets and liabilities to identification of your sources of income. You can get a good idea of what lenders are looking for, how your financial profile will appear to them, and the importance of carefully completing such a form before submitting it to a lender by reviewing this statement. A template for a personal financial statement is included on page 46 of this guide.

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Today is the day! You are open for business. Hold onto this book and refer back to it from time to time. Keep coming back to remind yourself along the way of your goals and expectations for your new business. Give us a call if you hit a snare, want to expand, or even if you just need a word of encouragement. Congratulations and best of luck in your new business venture.

Did this book help you? If you have suggestions on how we can improve this guide, we welcome your comments. You can contact us at (910)-323-3377.



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Business Plan

Cathy's Cleaning Service, Inc.

Cathy Smith, President
P.O. Box 2927
Indianapolis, IN 46206
(317) 000-0000

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Cathy's Cleaning Service, Inc. Business Plan

Introduction

Description of Business

Cathy's Cleaning Service, Inc. (CCSI), is a full-service residential and commercial cleaning company. The business has been owned and operated by Cathy Smith since June 1992, and is a Sub-S Corporation, incorporated in June 1993. The business office is located at 01 N. America's Avenue, Suite 350, Indianapolis, IN 46201. The business phone number is (317) 000-0000.

In June 1992, Cathy Smith was a mother of two school-age children and a full-time homemaker when she began cleaning homes for neighbors. Within six months, Cathy was regularly cleaning two residences and had one commercial property contract. She hired her mother and two sisters as part-time employees and has since added to her staff.

Currently, CCSI has three full-time and four part-time employees who work in teams to provide services to clients. Two of the full-time employees and three part-time employees make up the commercial cleaning department, and the remaining employees operate in the residential cleaning department. Commercial contracts are awarded annually, and residential cleaning is done on an ongoing basis unless a homeowner wishes to make a change.

The business goal of CCSI is to provide high-quality residential and commercial cleaning services to customers at a reasonable price, which will allow the corporation and its owners to recognize a profit. It is also the mission of the company to foster a healthy working environment, to pay competitive and fair wages to its employees, and to encourage employees to develop a healthy balance between work and family commitments.

The company owner recently completed taking a business planning course to improve her ability to analyze and monitor pricing and produce long- and short-term cash-flow projections. Additionally, it is the intention to send the owner and one manager to a personnel management course. A short-term capital equipment loan is required to add industrial vacuums and other cleaning equipment, thereby allowing the firm to grow by taking on more commercial contracts.

Marketing

Service Description

CCSI offers residential and light commercial cleaning. For residential customers, each job is bid according to the size of the home, the number of individuals residing in the home, and the scope of services required. There are three service packages from which the homeowner will be able to choose. These are outlined below:

- ◆ Residential Cleaning # 1 — Frequency of visits: 1–4 times per month
Includes: dusting of all surfaces, vacuuming all carpeted areas, sweeping and mopping all vinyl or tile floor areas, complete bathroom cleaning, loading dirty dishes into a dishwasher (no hand washing dishes), up to three full loads of laundry washed, dried, folded, and stacked, general light housecleaning.
- ◆ Residential Cleaning # 2 — Frequency of visits: 1–4 times per month
Includes: dusting of all surfaces, vacuuming all carpeted areas, sweeping and mopping all vinyl or tile floor areas, complete bathroom cleaning, general light housecleaning.
- ◆ Residential Cleaning # 3 — Frequency of visits: One-time cleaning
Includes all of the services offered in package #1, plus window washing (inside only), and oven cleaning. This cost of this package is an actual per-hour cost of \$10.00 per hour per cleaning person.

The most commonly purchased residential package is #1. Package #2 is usually ordered by the single customer or the customer who may not work full-time outside of the home. Package #3 is most often ordered for special occasions, such as weddings or family reunions.

Custom packages are available for customers who have special needs.

Commercial cleaning is bid on a custom basis. The owners or property managers of a commercial building will meet with the owner of CCSI and decide on the frequency of visits and services to be offered. Commonly, the services performed in commercial buildings include emptying trash and ash receptacles, vacuuming carpeted areas, damp mopping vinyl and tile floor areas, and cleaning rest rooms. The professional cleaners of CCSI will not remove or disturb anything atop desks or other personal work areas. Work surfaces, computers, and other electronic equipment will be lightly dusted but not disturbed. All bids for services will be prepared by Cathy Smith.

Market Description

CCSI is located on the near East side of Indianapolis. The target markets for cleaning services are the residential and commercial customers located on the East and near East sides of Indianapolis.

The primary residential target customers are families in which both parents are employed outside the home and have two or more children. According to *American Demographic* magazine, 43 percent of families of four or larger, in which both parents are employed outside the home utilize a professional housecleaning service at least once a month. Of that 43 percent, 51 percent prefer to use a local, privately-owned service as opposed to a franchise operation. They state the reasons for this preference are more dependable service, greater ability to customize services, and more flexible working agreements.

The second target market for residential customers is the single executive. *American Demographic* magazine finds that 37 percent of singles earning an annual income of \$40,000 or greater utilize a cleaning service at least one time per month.

According to the 1990 census report for Indianapolis, 22 percent of all metropolitan Indianapolis families of four or larger in which both parents are working outside the home live in the near East side and the East side neighborhoods of Indianapolis. Only 7 percent of the single executives earning annual incomes of \$40,000 or greater reside in this same geographic area.

The commercial market CCSI targets are the small office buildings that employ 50 or fewer employees. Larger offices tend to utilize large, franchise cleaning services, and very large, multibusiness office buildings often have on-staff cleaning services. Industrial buildings are often quite difficult and time-consuming to clean and are not included in the target market for CCSI.

According to the *Commercial Real Estate Update* (local) magazine, the near East side of Indianapolis contains over 30 percent of all small commercial office buildings in the downtown or near downtown areas.

Competition

As of December 31, 1993, there were only two privately-owned cleaning services and no franchise services that specifically serviced this geographic area of Indianapolis. Comparatively, there are 27 privately-owned services and four large franchise services that target the North, Northwest, and Northeast areas of metropolitan Indianapolis. The South, Southeast, and Southwest areas are serviced by another 15 companies, and the West side of town is targeted by another 12 companies. Even though the East and near East side neighborhoods do not make up the larger portion of the target residential

customer, the lack of existing competition and the existing contacts CCSI has established make this a very good market in which to sell its services. The facts that CCSI has an office located in the near East side and that all of its employees live in the East side allow CCSI to be more responsive to customer needs.

Most commercial cleaning services prefer to bid on the multioffice, larger office buildings, and a survey conducted by CCSI mailed to local office buildings found that the smaller buildings have had difficulty finding services willing to clean their offices.

CCSI offers service to an area that is poorly serviced at this time. CCSI also offers custom cleaning services, tailored to the specific size of each location and the services requested by the individual customer—something the larger franchise firms do not offer. For residential and commercial customers alike, the fact that CCSI has established a reputation for honest, dependable cleaning people is quite attractive. All employees are bonded, and a police background check is performed prior to hire to ensure high-quality employees. Supervisors are assigned to monitor work crews, thereby providing added security for the customer.

Marketing Strategy

CCSI markets its cleaning services through advertisements in the local *Near Eastside Neighbor* and *INDY East* newspapers. Additionally, five local church bulletins are used to advertise services. Fliers are posted at four local beauty shops, one local grocery store, and two service stations. A referral program is being offered to existing customers whereby an existing customer who refers a new customer gets a \$25 discount on future cleaning services.

Through a local property management company, which manages seventy single-family rental units, one free housecleaning will be awarded (program to begin next month) to a resident who wins this service in a semiannual drawing (all residents who pay their rent early or on time for six months in a row are eligible for the drawing). In the commercial buildings CCSI cleans, one free residential cleaning will be awarded per year to each customer, to be given away as the commercial building owner/manager wishes (such as to employees as an “employee of the year” award). Also, cleaning gift certificates for \$25, \$50, and \$75 will be offered to commercial accounts as gifts for employees or preferred customers. Of course, these gift certificates will also be available to residential customers. Once every quarter, all residential and commercial customers will receive a newsletter outlining all current marketing programs.

Word-of-mouth advertising still remains the most effective method of growth for CCSI. All customer suggestions are responded to in writing, and all phone calls are returned within 24 hours. By paying special attention to all

customers, and frequently (at least once a quarter) contacting all customers by telephone or in person to see if they remain satisfied with the level of services offered, CCSI continues to build a loyal clientele.

Organization

Quality Control

CCSI recognizes the importance of delivering high-quality service in order to maintain a loyal customer base. In order to ensure that cleaning is done to the high standards of CCSI, supervisors regularly inspect the work performed. For residential customers who contract CCSI to clean regularly, at least one cleaning per month is supervised by a manager. For residential customers who contract a single or special-event cleaning, every work crew is headed by a manager who supervises the cleaning. Every commercial work crew is accompanied by a manager who supervises the cleaning of office buildings.

Work crews are scheduled weekly. Two full-time and three part-time employees are regularly scheduled to perform on the commercial contracts. One full-time and one part-time employee regularly clean residential properties. Cathy Smith regularly accompanies work crews as a supervisor. Each work crew has a checklist that must be reviewed before leaving the work site. The checklist ensures that all services contracted are actually performed. The crew leader signs the checklist and becomes responsible for any discrepancies reported by the customer. All cleaning products are provided by CCSI unless a customer specifically requests that a certain product be used. This ensures consistent use of high-quality cleaning products.

Since CCSI contacts every customer at least once each quarter, it allows customers to voice any concerns or complaints they may have regarding the quality of work performed. Customer suggestions are always considered and implemented whenever possible.

Legal Structure

CCSI is a Sub-S Corporation, incorporated in June, 1993. The business is operated by the sole owner, Cathy Smith. CCSI originally started doing business in 1992 as a sole proprietorship and converted to a Sub-S for limited liability protection.

Insurance

CCSI carries business liability insurance through Mr. Allen Green of the ABC Insurance Agency. The insurance Underwriter is AmerInsurance.

Additionally, all employees of CCSI are bonded. Workmens' Compensation and a life insurance policy on Cathy Smith are also sold to CCSI by the same agency.

Management

Cathy Smith is the President and General Manager of CCSI. Her background includes supervisory positions for over 10 years, managing as many as 15 employees in a manufacturing environment. Cathy left the job market for 10 years when she married and had two children, and began CCSI when her youngest child started first grade.

Cathy hires and trains employees, schedules residential and commercial cleaning, purchases supplies, negotiates contracts, markets the company, and manages all accounts receivable and payable. Each cleaning crew has a crew leader who immediately supervises all work, and each division has a manager who takes responsibility for supervising the crew leaders. Additionally, Cathy acts as a manager in both divisions.

The manager in the commercial cleaning division, Sarah Jones, has five years of experience working as a manager for a national franchise cleaning service. Sarah has worked for CCSI since October, 1992.

The residential cleaning division manager, Mary Murphy, has two years of experience as the head of housekeeping services for a large, local hotel. Mary has been employed with CCSI since January, 1993.

Cathy maintains accounts receivable and payable for CCSI. She collects all business-related receipts and maintains the company checkbook and other records. On a quarterly schedule, Cathy turns these records over to a bookkeeper, who prepares quarterly profit and loss statements. Once a year, a Certified Public Accountant prepares the company taxes and generates a full set of financial statements.

Actual payroll generation and payroll tax records are maintained by PAYCHECKS, Inc., a payroll service. Payroll is generated on the fifteenth and last day of each month.

Advisors

Martha White, CPA, prepares taxes and annual financial statements for CCSI. Ms. White is in private practice with an office located at 123 Main Street, Indianapolis. John Kennedy, a local attorney with Mayor, Jones and Smith, is CCSI's attorney. Mr. Kennedy advised CCSI to convert to a Sub-S Corporation

and filed all the appropriate paperwork with the Secretary of State. Annually, Cathy meets with both Ms. White and Mr. Kennedy to review the status of the company and to discuss any updates or changes that need to be made.

Cathy has also compiled a group of four volunteers who serve as an advisory committee. Once a year, Cathy meets with these advisors to discuss her business strategies and update her business plan. Three of the four advisors are retired executives who offer their expertise based on many years of small business experience. The fourth advisor is a local businesswoman who manages a financial services business. Two of her four advisors are also CCSI customers.

Financial Information

Use of Funds

Use of loan proceeds will be as follows:

Loan Request: \$1,000.00

Use of funds is for permanent working capital. A cash-flow projection follows, which demonstrates that this influx of cash will allow CCSI to service more residential and commercial customers. The cash flow outlines that the increase in sales will allow CCSI to purchase additional capital equipment beginning in the fourth month. The cash-flow projections also demonstrate an adequate ability to service the debt incurred by this loan.

The proposed loan will be secured with a first security interest in the assets of the business, as well as a personal guaranty from Cathy Smith. CCSI has no business debt at this time, and equipment with a net value (net of accumulated depreciation) of \$3,500.00.

Cash-Flow Assumptions

The first assumption of the cash-flow projection is that all existing business will be retained in the next 12 months. New residential business will be in the form of one house in month 2, an additional house in month 4, a third new house in month 6, and a minor increase in rates in month 10 for a total of new residential business income of \$1,680.

New commercial business consists of one new building in month 3, a second new building in month 5, and a slight increase in all commercial rates reflected in months 9-12. Total new commercial income for the year is \$4,000.

The operating expenses related to new business income is reflected as 68 percent of new residential income and 69 percent of new commercial income.

Cathy's Cleaning Service _____ *Business Plan Pg. 7*

This assumption is based on historical operating percentages. All fixed expenses remain the same. Loan payments begin in month 3 and are calculated at 10 percent interest for a 12-month term.

Capital equipment purchases will be made beginning in month 4 with the purchase of three new vacuum cleaners and the addition of a floor waxing unit in month 8.

Scenario 2 assumptions are basically the same as above, except that new residential and commercial sales are half the amounts stated above. Operating expenses are reduced accordingly.

Cathy's Cleaning Service, Inc.						
12-Month Cash-Flow Forecast						
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Beginning Cash Balance	\$0	\$1,110	\$1,239	\$1,342	\$1,114	\$948
Cash Inflow						
Existing Business	\$2,470	\$2,470	\$2,470	\$2,470	\$2,470	\$2,470
Loan Proceeds	\$1,000					
Owner Contributions						
New Residential Business		\$60	\$60	\$120	\$120	\$180
New Commercial Business			\$200	\$200	\$400	\$400
Total Cash Inflow	\$3,470	\$2,530	\$2,730	\$2,790	\$2,990	\$3,050
Cash Outflow						
Existing Operating Expenses	\$1,643	\$1,643	\$1,643	\$1,643	\$1,643	\$1,643
New Residential Operating Exp	\$0	\$41	\$41	\$82	\$82	\$122
New Commercial Operating Exp	\$0	\$0	\$138	\$138	\$276	\$276
Office Space	\$68	\$68	\$68	\$68	\$68	\$68
Utilities	\$15	\$15	\$15	\$15	\$15	\$15
Office Supplies	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10
Business Insurance	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$25
Auto Expense	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50
Auto Insurance	\$35	\$35	\$35	\$35	\$35	\$35
Pager	\$14	\$14	\$14	\$14	\$14	\$14
Loan Payments			\$88	\$88	\$88	\$88
Owner's Compensation	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500
Capital Purchase-Vacuum Clnrs				\$350	\$350	\$350
Capital Purchase-Floor Waxer						
Total Cash Outflow	\$2,360	\$2,401	\$2,627	\$3,018	\$3,156	\$3,196
Monthly change in cash	\$1,110	\$129	\$103	(\$228)	(\$166)	(\$146)
Ending Cash Balance	\$1,110	\$1,239	\$1,342	\$1,114	\$948	\$802

Cathy's Cleaning Service, Inc.**12-Month Cash-Flow Forecast**

	7	8	9	10	11	12	Totals
Beginning Cash Balance	\$802	\$1,006	\$710	\$945	\$1,186	\$1,427	
Cash Inflow							
Existing Business	\$2,470	\$2,470	\$2,470	\$2,470	\$2,470	\$2,470	\$29,640
Loan Proceeds							\$1,000
Owner Contributions							
New Residential Business	\$180	\$180	\$180	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$1,680
New Commercial Business	\$400	\$400	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$4,000
Total Cash Inflow	\$3,050	\$3,050	\$3,150	\$3,170	\$3,170	\$3,170	\$36,320
Cash Outflow							
Existing Operating Expenses	\$1,643	\$1,643	\$1,643	\$1,643	\$1,643	\$1,643	\$19,716
New Residential Operating Exp	\$122	\$122	\$122	\$136	\$136	\$136	\$1,142
New Commercial Operating Exp	\$276	\$276	\$345	\$345	\$345	\$345	\$2,760
Office Space	\$68	\$68	\$68	\$68	\$68	\$68	\$816
Utilities	\$15	\$15	\$15	\$15	\$15	\$15	\$180
Office Supplies	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$10	\$120
Business Insurance	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$300
Auto Expense	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$600
Auto Insurance	\$35	\$35	\$35	\$35	\$35	\$35	\$420
Pager	\$14	\$14	\$14	\$14	\$14	\$14	\$168
Loan Payments	\$88	\$88	\$88	\$88	\$88	\$88	\$880
Owner's Compensation	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$6,000
Capital Purchase-Vacuum Clnrs							\$1,050
Capital Purchase-Floor Waxer		\$500					\$500
Total Cash Outflow	\$2,846	\$3,346	\$2,915	\$2,929	\$2,929	\$2,929	\$34,652
Monthly change in cash	\$204	(\$296)	\$235	\$241	\$241	\$241	\$1,668
Ending Cash Balance	\$1,006	\$710	\$945	\$1,186	\$1,427	\$1,668	\$1,668

Sample Financial Statements

<i>Name of Your Business</i> <i>Personal Financial Statements</i> <i>As of MM/DD/YYYY</i>	
Assets	Dollar Amount
Cash - Checking Accounts	\$0
Cash - Savings Accounts	0
Certificates of Deposit	0
Securities - Stocks / Bonds / Mutual Funds	0
Notes & Contracts Receivable	0
Life Insurance (Cash Surrender Value)	0
Personal Property (Autos, Jewelry, etc.)	0
Retirement Funds (eg. IRA's, 401k)	0
Real Estate (market value)	0
Other Assets (specify)	0
Other Assets (specify)	0
Total Assets	\$0
Liabilities	
Current Debt (Credit Cards, Accounts)	0
Notes Payable (Describe Below)	0
Taxes Payable	0
Real Estate Mortgages (Describe Below)	0
Other Liabilities (Specify)	0
Other Liabilities (Specify)	0
Total Liabilities	\$0
Net Worth	\$0

SAMPLE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Balance Sheet

Name of Your Business Balance Sheet As of MMIDD/YYYY			
Assets		Liabilities and Capital	
<i>Current Assets:</i>		<i>Current Liabilities:</i>	
Cash	\$0	Accounts Payable	\$0
Accounts Receivable	0	Sales Taxes Payable	0
Merchandise Inventory	0	Payroll Taxes Payable	0
Supplies	0	Accrued Wages Payable	0
Prepaid Expenses	0	Unearned Revenues	0
Notes Receivable	0	Short-Term Notes Payable	0
Total Current Assets	\$0	Total Current Liabilities	\$0
<i>Fixed Assets:</i>		<i>Long-Term Liabilities:</i>	
Vehicles	0	Long-Term Notes Payable	0
Furniture and Fixtures	0	Mortgage Payable	0
Equipment	0	Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$0
Buildings	0	Total Liabilities	\$0
Land	0	<i>Capital:</i>	
Total Fixed Assets	\$0	Owner's Equity	0
<i>Other Assets:</i>		Net Profit	0
Goodwill	0	Total Capital	\$0
Total Other Assets	\$0		
Total Assets	\$0	Total Liabilities and Capital	\$0

SAMPLE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Income Statement

Name of Your Business Income Statement For the Year Ended MMIDDIYYYY			
Revenue:			
	Gross Sales		\$0
	Less: Sales Returns and Allowances		0
Net Sales			0
Cost of Goods Sold:			
	Beginning Inventory		\$0
	Add: Purchases		0
	Freight-in		0
	Direct Labor		0
	Indirect Expenses		0
			0
	Less: Ending Inventory		0
Cost of Goods Sold			0
Gross Profit (Loss)			\$0
Expenses:			
	Rent		\$0
	Wages		0
	Insurance		0
	Bank Charges		0
	Operating Supplies		0
	Depreciation		0
	Office Expenses		0
	Bad Debt		0
	Amortization		0
	Marketing Expense		0
	Miscellaneous		0
	Dues and Subscriptions		0
	Interest		0
	Payroll Taxes		0
	Permits and Licenses		0
	Postage		0
	Professional Fees		0
	Maintenance		0
	Repairs		0
	Travel		0
	Utilities & Telephone		0
	Vehicle Expenses		0
	Charitable Contributions		0
Total Expenses			0
Net Operating Income			\$0
Other Income:			
	Gain (Loss) on Sale of Assets		0
	Interest Income		0
Total Other Income			\$0
Net Income (Loss)			\$0

SAMPLE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Bank Reconciliation

<i>Name of Your Business</i> <i>Bank Reconciliation</i> MMIDD/YYYY			
Bank Statement Date:			
Ending Balance from Bank Statement	\$0.00		
Add Deposits in Transit:			
<u>Deposit Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Deposit Date</u>	<u>Amount</u>
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
Total Deposits in Transit			<u>\$0.00</u>
Subtotal			\$0.00
Subtract Outstanding Checks:			
<u>Check Number</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Check Number</u>	<u>Amount</u>
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
	\$0.00		\$0.00
Total Outstanding Checks			<u>\$0.00</u>
Computed Book Balance			\$0.00
Balance per Your Books			<u>\$0.00</u>
Difference			<u>\$0.00</u>

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BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S CLUB, INC

(910) 424-6227

PO Box, 58048, Fayetteville 28305

BPW is an organization of members from all professions, both working and retired, dedicated to elevating the standards of working women through leadership development, education, networking and social action. BPW's purpose is to promote full participation in the workforce, and equality and economic self-sufficiency for America's working women.

CAPTIAL ONE SMALL BUSINESS LOANS

(877) 561-9847

www.capitalone/smallbusiness/loans

Offering a range of SBA-backed loan options that can help you meet the financial challenges of running a business.

CENTER FOR BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

(910) 678-8496

Fayetteville Technical Community College

2801 Fort Bragg Road, Fayetteville 28303

www.faytech.cc.nc.us/edprog/coned/welcome.htm

The **Small Business Center** is located in this facility and offers a variety of services designed to assist small business owners to include specialized seminars, a resource center, business counselor, and a statewide network. The latest in literature and audiovisual materials on operating a small business are available in the Small Business Center's resource room.

CHILD CARE SOLUTIONS

(910) 860-2277

351 Wagoner Dr., Suite 200 Fayetteville 28303

Mon – Fri 7:30am – 6:00pm

Provides information on choosing childcare and referrals to state and local agencies and services. Lending library offers resources for providers and parents of small children. Conducts workshops.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY RESOURCES

CONSUMER CREDIT COUNSELING SERVICE OF FAYETTEVILLE

(910) 323-3192

316 Green St., Fayetteville 28302

Helps clients to budget money and reduce debt.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY FIRE MARSHAL

(910) 678-7640

130 Gillespie St., Fayetteville 28302

www.co.cumberland.nc.us/fire

Inspects various occupancies in Cumberland County for fire code violations and compliance. All businesses must have fire inspections.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

(910) 433-3600

227 Fountainhead Lane, Fayetteville 28301

www.publichealth.sr-ahcc.org/cumberland

Provides public health education, inspections, and active enforcement of county and state rules and regulations. Issue health cards that are required for individuals employed in food and drink establishments, daycare, and long-term care facilities within Cumberland County. Call 433-3610 for valid health cards.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENT

(910) 321-6636

130 Gillespie St., Room 106, Fayetteville 28302

Issues permits for zoning and installations of building, electrical, plumbing, heating and air conditioning. Enforces county zoning regulations. Inspects rental housing to determine if the structure meets code requirements. Issues permits for businesses that are operated in private homes, including permits for signs.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY MINORITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

(910) 867-4322

6862 Buttermer Drive, Fayetteville 28314

Creates wealth by bringing people together regardless of race, religion, sex, physical disability or national origin. Open to anyone.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY RESOURCES

CUMBERLAND COUNTY REGISTER OF DEEDS

(910) 678-7775

Cumberland County Courthouse
117 Dick St., Fayetteville 28302

www.ccrood.org

Issues birth and death certificates and marriage licenses; keeps listing of property that must be recorded by law; keeps birth and death certificates for Cumberland County on file; swears in notaries public and keeps notary public renewal forms; records military discharges; registers business names.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY TAX ADMINISTRATION

(910) 678-7507

Cumberland County Courthouse
117 Dick St., Room 530, Fayetteville 28302

www.co.cumberland.nc.us.taxadmin.html

Responsible for real and personal property assessment, the countywide reappraisal of real estate (revaluation), tax collection, property mapping and geographic information systems.

EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION OF NORTH CAROLINA

(910) 486-1010

414 Ray Avenue, Fayetteville 28301

Provides assistance to employers in the areas of recruitment, selection, development and utilization of work force.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

(910) 483-4405

121 E. Mountain Dr., Fayetteville 28306

Provides financial and managerial assistance for farms, rural homes and small businesses.

FAYETTEVILLE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

(910) 483-8133

201 Hay Street, 4th Floor, Fayetteville 28301

www.fayettevillenc.com/chamber

An association for the business community with approximately 1,500 members. Enhances the profitability of its members and encourages them to contribute to the continued development of the quality of life in our area.

FAYETTEVILLE AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

(910) 483-3408

592 Executive Place, Suite 201, Fayetteville 28302

www.faednc.com

A non-profit organization assisting both companies evaluating Cumberland County for a new location or existing businesses looking to expand. Provides inventory of available sites, information on business and industrial statistics, and provides in-depth profiles on the area for prospective companies.

FAYETTEVILLE CITY FINANCE DEPARTMENT

(910) 433-1676

City Hall, 433 Hay St., Fayetteville 28301

www.cityoffayetteville.org

Sells city privilege licenses to operate businesses within the city.

FAYETTEVILLE CITY ZONING COMMISSION

(910) 433-1612

City Hall, 433 Hay St., Fayetteville, 28301

www.cityoffayetteville.org

Appointed by the Fayetteville City Council, the commission makes recommendations to the council on matters of initial zoning, rezoning and special use permits.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY RESOURCES

FAYETTEVILLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

(910) 433-1935

433 Hay St., 3rd Floor, Fayetteville 28301

www.cityoffayetteville.org

Oversees the Downtown Loan Program, the Small Business Development Loan Program, and the Façade Improvement Grant Program.

FAYETTEVILLE HUMAN RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

(910) 433-1696

433 Hay St., Fayetteville 28301

www.cityoffayetteville.org

Assists with discrimination complaints against businesses, industries or organizations in Fayetteville. Helps businesses understand and comply with Equal Employment Opportunity Laws and employer/employee relationships.

FAYETTEVILLE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

(910) 433-1635

City Hall, 433 Hay St., Fayetteville 28301

www.cityoffayetteville.org

Provides the City of Fayetteville with qualified applicants for employment. Publishes a weekly job opportunities listing.

FAYETTEVILLE INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENT

(910) 433-1707

City Hall, 433 Hay St., Fayetteville 28301

www.cityoffayetteville.org

Enforces and administers the North Carolina State Building Codes and City Ordinances. Handles inspections for substandard housing and for installations or repair of electrical, insulation, heating, air-conditioning and plumbing facilities within the city limits. All construction in the city for which a permit has been issued must be inspected and approved by the department.

**HOPE MILLS AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
(910) 423-4314**

5546 Trade St., Hope Mills 28348
Mon – Fri 10:00am – 2:00pm

Provides information about Hope Mills area businesses.

**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
1-800-LABOR NC**

907 Hay St., Suite 104, Fayetteville 28305
www.dol.state.nc.us

Wage and Hour Office

Accepts and investigates complaints about wages in cases covered by North Carolina labor laws. Helps collect back wages and promised wages or benefits and checks complaints concerning vacations and illegal deductions. Employers needing assistance with wage regulations should call 486-1442.

**NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
(910) 486-1211**

225 Green St., Suite 800, Fayetteville 28301
www.dor.state.nc.us/business

Distributes information and forms pertaining to North Carolina state taxes. Individual assistance with state income tax forms at this office during the tax-filing period. Registers retailers and takes applications for privilege licenses.

**NORTH CAROLINA INDIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE
(910) 486-6555**

155 Gillespie Street, Suite 205, Fayetteville 28302
www.ncindian.com

NCIEDI works to promote economic development in North Carolina's urban and tribal Indian communities through the creation and preservation of good jobs, the creation of social and capital assets, and increased capacity for individual tribal member's self-development.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY RESOURCES

NORTH CAROLINA RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER

(919) 250-4314

4021 Cary Drive, Raleigh 27610

www.ncruralcenter.org

Operates the Rural Center, which provides loans to local governments, self-employed individuals and small businesses in the state's rural counties.

NORTH CAROLINA SECRETARY OF STATE

(919) 733-4098

PO Box 29622, Raleigh 27626

www.state.nc.us/secstate

Handles incorporation, profit and non-profit and trademark registration. Provide forms for incorporation.

RALEIGH/DURHAM MINORITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

(919) 833-6122

205 Fayetteville Street Mall, Suite 200, Raleigh 27601

Provides basic business information and referral and assistance with managerial/technical issues to small minority-owned businesses and individuals interested in starting such a business. Assists with business plan development, financial packaging, **Small Business Administration** applications, market analysis, etc.

SELF-HELP CREDIT UNION

(910) 354-1010

100 Hay St., Suite 300, Fayetteville 28301

www.self-help.org

A community development lender that has provided over \$3.5 billion in financing to 40,000 homebuyers, small businesses and nonprofits. Self-Help reaches people who are underserved by conventional lenders—particularly minorities, women, rural residents, and low-wealth families—through the support of socially-responsible citizens and institutions across the U.S.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY RESOURCES

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (SBA)

6302 Fairview Rd., Suite 300, Charlotte 28210

www.sba.gov

Small Business Answer Desk (800) 827-5722
Business Service Center (704) 344-6563

Supplies information about loans, government contracts, small business training and counseling programs. Provides assistance in getting started and helps solve problems by directing persons to appropriate government agencies, trade association or other resources.

SMALL BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CENTER (SBTDC) (910) 672-1727

FSU School of Business and Economics, Suite 130

PO Box 1334, Fayetteville 28302-1334

www.sbtdc.org

Assists with the start-up, expansion and successful operation of small and mid-sized businesses; provides management counseling, education and technical services; counsels on financing, marketing, human resources, operations, business planning and feasibility assessment. Offers specialized assistance in government procurement and international business development and marketing. Assistance with patents and trademarks is available.

SPRING LAKE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (910)-497-8821

PO Box 333, Spring Lake, 28390-0333

110 North 4th Street

Mon – Thu 9:00am – 5:00pm; Fri 8:00am – 5:00pm

Provides information about Spring Lake area businesses.

THE MARKET & GIFTS (910) 483-3222

302 West Russell St., Fayetteville 28301

Wed – Sat 10:00am – 4:00pm

Nonprofit organization that supports crafters and the works of professional artisans. Some craft classes are available.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY RESOURCES

US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR- WAGE & HOUR DIVISION

(910) 483-7491

225 Green St., Room 303, Fayetteville 28302

Thu 8:30 – 12:00pm

www.dol.gov

Gives information on federal minimum wage and overtime, child labor, record keeping, government contracts, the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Protection Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act and the Employee Polygraph Protection Act. Administers compliance, accepts complaints and conducts investigations.

US PATENT AND TRADEMARK SEARCH FILE

(919) 515-2935

NCSU Libraries, Box 7111, Raleigh, 27695

Mon-Fri 8am – 9pm; Sat & Sun 9am – 10pm

www.lib.ncsu.edu/risd/patent/index.html

Serves as a patent depository library. Patron is able to search for trademark and patent information. Fees for photocopying. Call before visiting.

WOMEN'S BUSINESS CENTER

(910) 323-3377

230 Hay Street, Fayetteville 28301

Mon – Thu 8:00am – 5:00pm; Fri 8:00am – 12:00pm

www.wcof.org

Provides programs to help women entrepreneurs develop and enhance their business skills. This is a service of **THE WOMEN'S CENTER OF FAYETTEVILLE**, offering one-on-one consultations, loan packaging, and workshops.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Women's Business Center would like to thank the US Small Business Administration (SBA), Cumberland County Business Council, the City of Fayetteville, Cumberland County Community Development, our various resource partners, and the generous donors for their continued support of our programs.

