

Guide to Market Research for Small Business

Getting ready to start a new business or researching for future business decisions? Do you want to know your customers better and understand your business environment?

This Ottawa Public Library research guide gathers up-to-date sources of demographic and related statistical data to help you develop business strategies, do market research, prepare business plans, and select and evaluate possible business locations. The Ottawa Public Library website is www.BiblioOttawaLibrary.ca. For more help, e-mail business@BiblioOttawaLibrary or call 613-580-2424 x32140 (Main Library) or x41467 (Nepean Centrepointe branch).

Getting Started

For background material, search these subjects or Call numbers in the library catalogue. You can also browse the shelves for titles with the Call numbers. The largest collections of Business reference books are at Nepean Centrepointe branch and at the Main Library.

Subjects to search in the catalogue:

Business Enterprises – Ontario – Ottawa
Management
Entrepreneurship
Industries – Canada
Marketing – Canada
Canada – Census
Small business – Ontario – Finance
New business enterprises – Canada

Call number areas to browse:

304.609713
312.0971
312.0
330.971
338.0971
658
658.11
658.8

Market Research Made Easy. Don Doman. Self-Counsel Press, 2006.

Call number: 658.83 D666

A great book if you're just starting out, this title is available in several branches. Use the library catalogue to reserve a copy.

To connect to our recommended websites:

[> Taking Care of Business > Essential Business Websites](#)

To connect to our online research databases

[>Taking Care of Business > e-resources](#)

You'll need your library card and pin number to access the e-resources from home.

Population and Demographics

You need to know your market. Census information will provide you with the data on the national, provincial and local levels about population, income, education, language, ethnic origin, and many other categories, as well as trends.

Census Information

The Census contains a wealth of demographic information to help you develop a demographic profile of your target market. The 2006 Census, with the latest data and projections from Statistics Canada is available at <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census/index.cfm>.

2006 Census is searchable by postal code or using a census tract number. Census tracts are small geographic areas so you can find out about the specific characteristics of particular neighbourhoods. Census tract numbers are available through GeoSearch,

<http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/profiles/ct/index.cfm?Lang=E>

The census tract numbers can also be found on a map in a print Statistics Canada publication in the library

Profile of Census Tracts in Ottawa-Hull 95-234-XPB

<http://www.statcan.ca/bsolc/english/bsolc?catno=95-234-X>

Although this summary publication is based on 2001 census data, the census tract map is a useful tool.

Census statistics can also be accessed through E-STAT, an online interactive tool for creating profiles based on specific demographic characteristics. (In Library use only.)

<http://www.statcan.ca/english/Estat/licence.htm>

E-STAT provides access to statistical tables that cost money on the Statistics Canada website (through CANSIM). The Library subscribes to E-STAT, allowing you to use these tables free of charge. The tables cover a wide range of Canadian socio-economic topics and are derived from Census figures and from annual Statistics Canada surveys. The tables can be printed, formatted in charts, presented in map format, or exported for use in an Excel spreadsheet.

Other useful routes to access statistics from the main page of Statistics Canada www.statcan.ca

- By Subject > Statistics by Subject (e.g., Incomes, pensions, spending & wealth; Population & demography)
- Summary Tables for statistics searchable by subject, province or territory or metropolitan area
- Community Profiles for a detailed profile of a particular metropolitan area or census division (e.g. Ottawa-Gatineau, Ottawa)
- Publications > Search the online catalogue, and type in the document title or keywords. Many publications are available electronically in full-text.
- Search the site in the general search box

The following print publication, available in the Library, provides a useful analysis of census data:

FP Markets, Canadian Demographics: explore Canada from coast to coast. Toronto: Financial Post. 2008.

For use in Library (Call number: Ref 330.971S963c)

Extensive demographic data and projections are broken down by province, city, and census division. The analysis includes buying power indices, retail sales estimates by type of business, projections for household and personal income, and clustering of market data for households based on consumption behaviour.

Other Statistics Canada Publications

These are key Statistics Canada publications for market research.

Market Research Handbook. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. 2008.
<http://www.statcan.ca/bsolc/english/bsolc?catno=63-224-XWE>

This in-depth analysis of statistics is an important tool for market research. It shows details and trends in population, income, expenditure, housing and household information, and businesses by size and type.

Spending Patterns in Canada. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Published 2006; Released 2008.
<http://www.statcan.ca/bsolc/english/bsolc?catno=62-202-X>

Details how much households spend on a variety of goods and services (i.e., child care, health care, pets, recreation, gifts, recreation, vehicles, etc.).

Canadian Social Trends. Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Published quarterly.
<http://www.statcan.ca/english/ads/11-008-XIE/index.htm>

Discusses social, economic, and demographic changes in Canada. Contains statistics and latest figures for major social indicators. Articles are organized by theme or topic (e.g., Aging, Health, Marriage and families).

Useful Data for the Ottawa Area

The City of Ottawa website provides detailed information on the demographic, social and economic conditions of the population of Ottawa.

www.ottawa.ca > Residents > Statistics

- Data Handbook
- Annual Development Report provides yearly updates and analysis on demographic data
- Ottawa Counts provides analysis of people of Ottawa, who they are and how they live, work and commute
- Census 2001 >Wards

These are easy-to-access quick local facts, but are based on the 2001 census. They remain relevant for showing very specific information on local trends, neighbourhood statistics, population estimates based on the wards, projections for population and employment up to 2021.

Ottawa Neighbourhoods <http://www.neighbourhoodstudy.ca/maps/index.shtml>

Neighbourhood maps on this site include details of the demographics, housing, civic engagement, food and recreation environment, and health and financial services.

Ottawa Region OCRI Global Marketing

www.ottawaregion.com > About Ottawa

Provides information on population, economic development, employment by business activity, cost of living in the Ottawa Gatineau region.

Also useful for planning your business is information about zoning by-laws:

City of Ottawa Zoning By-Law http://ottawa.ca/residents/bylaw/a_z/zoning/index_en.html

Zoning details; searchable by property for zone information for residential, mixed / commercial, industrial, and greenbelt zones.

Organizations and Businesses

You need to know who your competitors are. Also, if you are selling B2B (business to business), you need to know what companies will be your market.

These business directories are available for use in the Library.

Book of Lists. Ottawa Business Journal. 2008

Call number: 338.702571384 B724

A guide to the top local businesses by category (includes number of employees, revenues, product description, etc.). The Ottawa Business Journal publishes this list annually, and publishes weekly supplements in the newspaper, available free in news boxes or at the Library.

Ontario Business Directory. InfoCanada. 2008

Call number: 338.7025713 O59

An excellent B2B (Business-to-Business) marketing directory to Ontario businesses and manufacturing.

Ottawa Business & Procurement Directory. Ottawa Business Contacts. 2007

Call number: 338.002571384 089b

Lists local businesses by category and also alphabetically by name. Includes address, phone, owner/manager, company size, and web site.

Directory of Ottawa Community Services (The Blue Book). Community Information Centre of Ottawa. 2008.

Call number: 361.002571384 D598d

Also available online: <http://ottawa.cioc.ca/start.asp?UseCICVw=13>

This directory lists information about social services and charities in Ottawa region, which can be useful if you are targeting a specific community (e.g., religion, ethnic, health) or neighbourhood. Both print and online versions are searchable by subject or organization.

CARD (Canadian advertising rates & data) Toronto: Rogers Media. Monthly magazine.

Print issues of magazine available in Reference – Magazines.

Lists Canadian business publications, newspapers (including community), online services, radio and TV stations. Quotes Canadian market statistics, media links, customs regulations and Canadian magazine advertising specifications.

Online, **CARD** is available through subscription at www.cardmedia.com; the website offers free market statistics.

Associations

It can be useful to get in touch with associations or agencies related to your line of business or with area business associations to see what information they have available. These sources provide information about these types of groups.

Associations Canada: An encyclopedic directory

Call number: 061.1 A849a (in Library use)

Ottawa Chamber of Commerce <http://www.ottawachamber.ca/en/>

The Chamber of Commerce has over 750 voluntary members from the City of Ottawa, with all sizes of businesses.

National Capital Business Alliance <http://www.ncba.ca/>

This is an umbrella organization with representatives from the suburban and rural City of Ottawa's Chambers of Commerce and major business alliances.

Charity Village <http://www.charityvillage.com/>

Website with information for Canadian charities. Links to small businesses supplying resources.

Industry and Manufacturing

You need to know about competing products and companies who are manufacturers, wholesalers, or distributors of those products. You may also need to find suppliers of the products you want to sell.

Scott's Directories: Ontario Manufacturers. Toronto. 2007

Call number: Ref 338.4025713 S431

There are also Scott's business directories available for Quebec and the Western and Atlantic provinces. Detailed information on companies is organized geographically and by product type. These directories categorize products using NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) codes.

SEDAR <http://www.sedar.com/>

A directory of Canadian public companies.

Canadian Trade Index. www.ctidirectory.com Canadian Manufacturers' Association

This directory of companies is searchable by company name or by product.

Frasers.com www.frasers.com

A detailed catalogue of Canadian industrial wholesalers, manufacturers, distributors and their products and services. In addition, details of international companies that supply goods and services to the Canadian marketplace.

Human Resources and Social Development Canada

<http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/hip/hrp/sp/research.shtml>

This site provides National Industry Profiles of industrial sectors based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). All sectors are analysed on the basis of some 30 carefully selected economic performance indicators.

Industry Canada

Be sure to take a close look at Industry Canada's website. The site contains both domestic and foreign market information. There is a general section with resources for Business and also analysis, statistics, contacts, news, events, financing and regulatory information by specific industry sector.

http://www.ic.gc.ca/ic_wp-pa.htm

> Programs and Sectors > By Subject to obtain information on business tools and resources, industry and trade statistics, market research, finding financing, not-for-profit organizations, etc.

> Resources > Businesses to obtain information on start-up businesses, federal information, planning and management, etc. On this page >Company Directories leads to useful directories:

>Canadian Company Capabilities, a valuable tool for searching information about 60,000 Canadian companies and their products

> Canadian Importers Database

>Company Directories by Sector to connect a database of information about companies, organized by product using NAICS codes

Performance Plus <http://www.ic.gc.ca/epic/site/pp-pp.nsf/en/Home>

This Industry Canada on-line benchmarking tool provides detailed financial and employment data on more than 600 business sectors across Canada. Whether you are a new or an established small business, you can determine how you measure up against your competitors, and find out where you stand compared to a relevant industry average. It is possible to build your own comparative analysis profile.

Newspapers, Magazines, Trade Publications

Search our research databases for facts and articles about trends, markets, business types, and other information that can help you fill in the gaps for your market research: www.BiblioOttawaLibrary > Taking Care of Business > E-resources (If you are using these from home or work, you'll need your library card and PIN – usually the last 4 digits of your phone number.)

To access these databases, go to www.BiblioOttawaLibrary > Find Articles and Research Guides

Business Source Complete – Enhanced

Full text of business magazines, company profiles, country reports, market research reports and industry profiles.

CBCA: Canadian Business and Current Affairs

Citations and full text to Canadian journals and magazines. Also searchable through same interface, Canadian Newsstand, which indexes articles from hundreds of publications.

Small Business e-collection. InfoTrac Gale Group

Articles from 250 trade publications. The subject of the publication and the article can be searched (e.g., baked goods).

Depository Services Program. Statistics Canada

An index to finding Statistics Canada publications on many subjects including specific manufacturing sectors, aspects of trade and economy. A useful source of specific studies.

You can also search for articles in the current issues or archives of specific newspapers or magazines on their websites. For example:

Ottawa Business Journal <http://www.ottawabusinessjournal.com/>

Ottawa Citizen <http://www.canada.com/ottawacitizen/index.html>

Financial Post <http://www.financialpost.com/>

The Library carries many business magazines for you to borrow. (E.g., Canadian Business, Entrepreneur, Report on Business). You can also read the last 60 days of newspapers on the database [Library Press Display](#).

Federal and Ontario Government Services for Entrepreneurs

Connect to these and most of the other websites listed in this guide from the Library's website:
> Taking Care of Business > Essential Websites

Canada Business Services for Entrepreneurs

This key portal covers all aspects of starting a business.

<http://www.canadabusiness.ca/gol/cbec/site.nsf/en/index.html>

> Importing and > Exporting go into detail about the process of bringing supplies into Canada or selling abroad.

Canada-Ontario Business Service Centre

An essential resource for every aspect of setting up and running a small business.

<http://www.canadabusiness.ca/ontario/>

> Market Research links to introductory and overview information about the basics of market research and market analysis.

Service Ontario Gateway for Business

Covers all aspects of setting up a business, including registering a business name.

<http://www.serviceontario.ca/> > Gateway for Business

Ontario Ministry of Small Business and Consumer Services

This site links to advice, publications, and related websites on small business by other federal and provincial agencies.

http://www.sbe.gov.on.ca/ontcan/sbe/en/home_en.jsp

>Start and >Grow navigate to guiding information for starting and growing businesses.

Other Sources

GD Sourcing.com is a useful commercial website that offers assistance in performing market research. This site helps you find Canadian statistics useful for your market research and assessment of market potential and competition. This website charges for its customized services, but provides much information free.

www.gdsourcing.com

The same company also created the Stats Link Canada website. GD Sourcing charges for their market research service, but they do provide basic assistance at no charge. This website is designed to provide guidance on defining your target market and insight into the major free and low-cost resources available for profiling in your market.

www.stats-link-canada.com/index.html > Market.

Putting the Market Research into a Business Plan

Business Plans Handbook: a compilation of actual business plans developed by small businesses throughout North America. Gale Group.

Call number: 658.4012 B979

A multi-volume publication that contains thousands of complete text business plans for many different types of businesses, providing excellent guidance for the information needed in gathering market research data.

Online access to the Business Plans Handbook is available through one of the Library's research databases.

www.BiblioOttawaLibrary.ca > Find Articles and Research Guides > Gale Virtual Reference Library > Business .

Need help getting started with your market research?
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