

SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE GUIDE

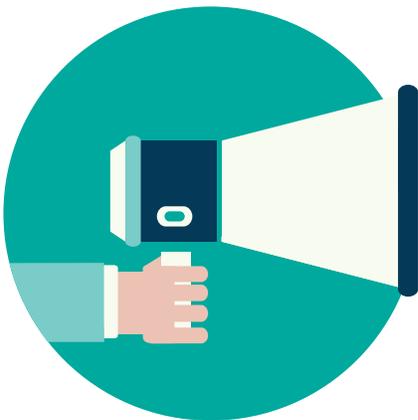


develop a plan



make it official

market your services



grow your business



**A step-by-step guide for starting a small
business and working with local industry**

In collaboration with:



**Simien
Law Firm**



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SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE GUIDE

A step-by-step guide for starting a small business and working with local industry

INTRODUCTION

Southwest Louisiana is an exciting place to be. Industry is making significant investments here, and it's creating a great environment for local businesses to grow and thrive. There are lots of opportunities for small businesses to work with industry and to service the new people moving into the area.

Whether you want to start a small business or already have one and want an opportunity to work with area industry, this resource guide is for you. Sponsored by Sasol, in partnership with the Louisiana Small Business Development Center at McNeese and the SEED Center Business Incubator, the Small Business Resource Guide outlines suggested steps for launching a new business and recommendations for preparing your business to build a working relationship with area industry.

Make no mistake about it – starting, managing and maintaining a small business takes hard work, self-initiative, determination, resilience and staying power. But there is good news. There are numerous organizations and resources across Southwest Louisiana that can help open doors of opportunity and help you reach your business goals.

The Small Business Resource Guide contains three main sections:

- 1 A step-by-step guide to starting your own business (Steps 1-7)
- 2 Guidance for existing businesses who want to work with area industry (Steps 8-9)
- 3 A comprehensive resource section with contact information

**Now, it's time
to get started.**

**Turn the page so you can
begin your journey toward
successful small business
ownership!**





STEP 1: Develop a business plan

The first step toward small business ownership is developing a business plan. At this stage in the game, you need to reflect upon goals and ask yourself a lot of questions. Based on the answers, you can then draft a solid business plan.

A good place to begin is with goals, a mission and a vision. Describe your business, the services you will provide/products you will produce and the market you will serve. Determine why your business will be competitive in the market.

Next, think about financial concerns. A crucial step to establishing a successful business is determining whether you will be profitable. This is part of the business plan. Often, what appears to be an excellent idea will turn out to be unprofitable when the analysis is complete. Sometimes, an entrepreneur needs to recognize a stopping point and go back to the drawing board. In some cases, an entrepreneur can revise the plan and figure out how to be successful. Alternatively, this point is a sign that the business should not be established.

One of the factors in your profitability will be the cost of your products or services and how much you'll charge customers for them. Analysis and competitive information will help you determine a fair price that will let you make a profit.

Think through some of these considerations: What are your goals for revenues/sales, profits, cash flow and return on investment? How much money do you need to start your business? Will you need a loan? How will the money be used? What do you need to buy to get started? If you need a loan, how much can you personally invest in the business? What will you provide as collateral?

Ask questions about your business position. What will your business structure look like when it is formed? Who will be the principal owners? Will it be a sole proprietorship; do you need to incorporate or would a limited liability company better meet and protect your interests? There are several business structures to choose from, and you must decide which best suits your business objectives and needs. For help in making this decision, you should consult a tax practitioner, accountant or attorney. Additional information can be found through the Louisiana Secretary of State and the IRS.

BUSINESS STRUCTURES: PROS & CONS

	Pros	Cons
Sole Proprietor	Easy to establish	Risk of losing personal assets due to business liability
Partnership	Easy to establish	Any partner can establish business debt on behalf of the partnerships, and all partners are liable for any debt
Corporation	Reduces personal liability* for business actions	Requires more paperwork and documentation of business decisions
LLC**	Easy to establish; reduces personal liability* for business actions if rules are followed; tax regulations are simple (flow-through entity)	Must follow rules to separate personal from business finances to maintain protection from liability*
S-Corp	Reduces personal liability* for business actions; tax regulations are simple (flow-through entity)	Requires more paperwork and documentation of business decisions; maximum of 100 shareholders
	*"Liability" does NOT refer to "liability to repay debt." **LLC structure is recognized by the State of Louisiana but is disregarded by the IRS.	

Another important question is, "Will you have employees?" The answer to this question will have a significant effect on your business plan and your business' organizational structure and insurance needs. Employees play a key role in the success of your business and your ability to grow your business. It can sometimes be a challenge to find qualified employees who meet your needs, and you must make an effort to retain your employees over the long-term (*more on this in Step 9*).

And finally, how will you set your business apart from your competitors?

Small businesses are often challenged to compete with national chains that have established brand recognition and lower operating costs. But small businesses excel in other key areas like customer service, local knowledge or unique product/service offerings. Think about where your strengths will be and define them.

Use the Business Plan Worksheet on the following pages as a guide to develop your plan.

Determine whether your business can be successful based on the information in your business plan. Ask yourself: "Is this a good way to invest my money, and can this be profitable?" *If the answer is yes, proceed through the following steps.* If not, consider what you could do to change the outlook and revise your plan accordingly.

● ● ● See page 25 for organizations and programs that can assist you with developing a business plan.

Business Plan Worksheet

What business do you want to start? What services or products will you offer?

What other companies will be your competition? What are their strengths and weaknesses compared to you? What will you do to address your weaknesses and compete against the strengths of your competitors?

What is your background that makes you prepared to start this business, and how are you and your family ready to turn your dream into reality?

Will you be a sole proprietor, partnership, corporation, LLC or S-corp? Why are you choosing that form of organization? Remember, each has tax and legal implications you'll need to consider.

Do you need any other employees? If so, how will you find the right individual(s) and what characteristics do they need to have? How much will you need to pay them?

Will you provide health insurance benefits to your employees (required if you have 50 or more employees)?

How much will you charge for your services and how will you determine your price? What factors will be included in your overhead or operating costs?

Who are your potential customers and what makes them good candidates to use your services or buy your products (for example: local industry, new mothers, elderly, teenagers, young couples, etc.)?

Why would they buy from you instead of the competition?

How will you promote your business? What tactics and advertising media will you use?

Be sure to include these costs in your operating plan.

Where do you see your business in 5-10 years?

One year operating plan

Use a Cash Flow Worksheet or similar spreadsheet-based financial model to show how much money you need to get started, and to show your financial situation for the first year. You'll need to estimate your sales and expenses. This is your best guess, based on the details that you've laid out in this business plan. Explain your assumptions about sales (for example, you have a computer services company and you think you can bill for 30 hours per week at \$50 per hour, or your insurance agency can sell 10 policies per week, netting \$75 per policy for your company). Also explain any unusual or very high expenses.

Résumés for yourself and any other principal(s).

Emphasize your management experience and the other aspects of your life that make you likely to succeed in your business. List your previous positions starting with the most recent ones and work back in time, or showcase your experience instead of using chronological order. If you have volunteer or other non-paid experience (for example, you have raised show dogs and trained them for 20 years and now you want to open a pet shop), list it also.

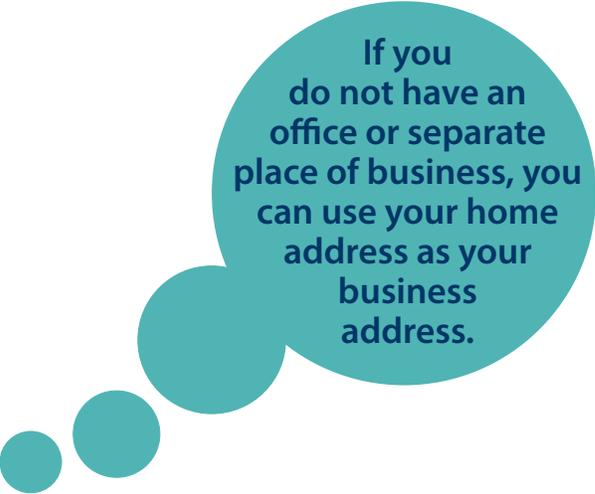


STEP 2: Name your Business

It's been said that, "It's all in the name." Well, not entirely so, but a name – especially for your business – is an important thing to get right in the beginning. A name for your business should reflect the type of services you provide, as well as the personality of your business. Pick the right name and it could mean success; pick the wrong name and the brand might never get off the ground.

After choosing a name, determine your business address. Will you have a place of business with a permanent address, or will you use your home address for business purposes? You must provide a physical address when you register your business, so you will need this before you go to Step 3.

● ● ● ***See page 29 for organizations and programs that can assist you with naming your business.***



If you do not have an office or separate place of business, you can use your home address as your business address.



Make sure your business name lends well to a logo and branding. It should be distinctive and memorable.



STEP 3: Register with the Louisiana Secretary of State

You must register your LLC or corporation with the Louisiana Secretary of State's office. Many businesses elect to use the Secretary of State's online registration, which is simple and fast to use. The file fees can range from \$75-\$150. To file, you must have the name of your business, business structure, an address and a list of the principal owners. Each year in business, you will be required to file an Annual Report in person or electronically with the Secretary of State's office, which costs about \$25-30.

Filing the online registration with the Louisiana Secretary of State is a very simple measure that does not provide a detailed operating agreement or complete articles of incorporation. For a single owner, the online registration is probably sufficient.

However, if you have more than one owner, you need to develop an operating agreement before you establish your company. The operating agreement sets out the responsibilities of each owner, how much cash or other financial contribution each owner will provide, how profits and losses will be split among the owners, what happens if an owner dies or wants to leave the company, and many other details of how the company will be run. Having a solid operating agreement will prevent disagreements and disappointments. The operating agreement can be notarized so that each owner acknowledges that it will govern the operation of the company. A solid operating agreement can be a crucial element in getting a loan because the lender has more confidence that the owners will cooperate with each other.

Multi-owner companies will need articles of incorporation. Articles of incorporation state percentages of ownership of the company, the amount of the start-up capital, voting authorities and similar important facts. They also isolate risk in terms of personal liability and insurance. An attorney can help owners develop this important document for a company.

If you anticipate having investors in your company, or if you believe you'll need to prove that the business is operated by an owner who is female or a minority, it can save time and trouble to prepare the operating agreement and articles of incorporation as part of the start-up process.

● ● ● *See page 31 for organizations and programs that can assist you with registering your business.*

Sole proprietorships aren't required to register with the Secretary of State; however, registering is the only way to protect your trade name or "Doing Business As (DBA)" name.



STEP 4: Obtain tax ID numbers

Every business must have a federal tax ID# or Employer Identification

Number (EIN), which is assigned by the IRS. Ask your accountant to secure your EIN or you can apply for it online by visiting the IRS website. You will need an EIN for IRS tax forms and to open a business checking account. You may also need a state tax ID number.

● ● ● *See page 32 for organizations and programs that can assist you with obtaining tax IDs.*

Sole proprietorships may use their Social Security Numbers as their tax ID numbers; however, for security purposes, it's best to obtain a tax ID to keep your SSN from being used in identity theft.



STEP 5: Establish your finances

Keeping track of your finances is vital to your successful business operation.

It is strongly advised that you use an accountant or CPA to help you manage your finances and tax obligations. Many owners purchase accounting software to setup a list of clients and vendors, create invoices and track and catalog business expenses. Depending on your industry, a point-of-sale system may be important. Report summaries generated by your accounting software are a good and efficient way to manage your inventory, operating expenses and taxes and monitor your business's profitability. Seek advice from your accountant or CPA on which accounting software to purchase – you want to make sure the software you purchase works with your CPA or accountant's software. There are insurance and tax benefits associated with the purchase of equipment, inventory and other business needs. Consult your accountant and insurance agent to develop a plan for managing these expenses and ensuring you take advantage of the benefits available to you.

Once you have registered with the Secretary of State and obtained your EIN, you are ready to open a small business checking account. If you will accept credit cards, this is the time to set up that function, too. You should also apply for a business credit and/or debit card to be used for business expenses only. Evaluate the true cost of the account, such as the final price you'll pay for credit card processing. Some credit card processors interact with accounting software, saving time and effort and providing quick information on credit card transactions.

● ● ● *See page 33 for organizations and programs that can assist you with establishing business finances.*

Keep track of all of your expenses and save all of your receipts so you can provide your CPA with comprehensive information.

It is critical to provide recent tax returns and up-to-date financial statements when working with a lender.

Six Cs of Business Credit from SCORE

Lending institutions usually analyze the credit of potential borrowers by the following six C's to determine the overall risk of the loan. There is no specific formula, but these are simply factors that are evaluated and contribute to a lender's decision.

1 • Character – Lenders have to believe that a business owner is a reliable individual who can be depended on to repay the loan. Background characteristics such as personal credit history, education, and work experience are all factors in this business credit analysis. The knowledge, skills, and abilities of the owner and management team are vital components of this credit factor.

2 • Capacity – This is an evaluation of the company's ability to repay the loan. The bank needs to know how you will repay the funds before it will approve your loan. Capacity is evaluated by several components, including:

CASH FLOW: The income a business generates versus the expenses it takes to run the business

PAYMENT HISTORY: The timeliness of the payments that have been made on previous loans.

CONTINGENT SOURCES FOR REPAYMENT: Additional sources of income that can be used to repay a loan (personal assets, savings or checking accounts, and other resources that might be used).

3 • Capital – A company's owner must have his/her own funds invested in the company before a financial institution will be willing to risk their investment. Capital is the owner's personal investment in his/her business which could be lost if the business fails. The single most common reason that new businesses fail is undercapitalization. There is no fixed amount or percentage that the owner must be vested in his/her own company before he is eligible for a business loan. However, most lenders want to see at least 25% of a company's funding coming from the owner. Contrary to what is advertised in the media, a bank will not fund 100% of the business venture. In almost every case, any principal that will own more than 10% of the company is required to sign a personal guarantee for the business debt.

4 • Collateral – Machinery, accounts receivable, inventory, and other business assets that can be sold if a borrower fails to repay the loan are considered collateral. Since small items such as computers and office equipment are not typically considered collateral, in the case of most small business loans, the owner's personal assets (such as his/her home or automobile) are required in order for the loan to be approved.

5 • Conditions – This is an overall evaluation of the general economic climate and the purpose of the loan. Economic conditions specific to the industry of the business applying for the loan as well as the overall state of the country's economy factor heavily into a decision to approve a loan. Typical factors included in this evaluation step include: the strength and number of competitors, size and attractiveness of the market, dependence on changes in consumer tastes and preferences, customer or supplier concentration, length of time in business, and any relevant social, economic, or political forces that could impact the business.

6 • Confidence – A successful borrower instills confidence in the lender by addressing all of the lender's concerns on the other five Cs. Their loan application sends the message that the company is professional, with an honest reputation, a good credit history, reasonable financial statements, good capitalization and adequate collateral.

Source: score.org



STEP 6: Obtain required licenses, permits & certificates

The kind of business you operate will determine the kinds of state, parish and/or city government licenses and permits you need to apply for and secure to operate legally. Many communities require an occupational license. Check with your city, town or parish to see if it's required in yours. Other types of licenses and permits include food permits, parish/retail alcoholic beverage permits, environmental discharge permits and zoning. Become familiar with exactly which kinds of documents are required for your permit application, the cost or fee for each permit filed and the renewal schedule and requirements.

The state of Louisiana and many communities collect sales and use taxes on specific transactions. You need to understand which laws apply to the products and services you sell so that you can obtain a sales tax license, Sales Tax Resale Certificate or other appropriate permits and licenses.

● ● ● *See page 37 for organizations and programs that can assist you with obtaining the right licenses and permits.*

STEP 7: Market your business



Now you're ready to market your business and generate cash flow! Remember the potential customers you identified in your business plan? Your sales efforts should be focused on reaching this group. Will they be on social media, attending local business or community events, searching for businesses like yours on the Internet? Your answers to these questions will help shape your marketing strategy.

At a minimum, you will need to develop a logo and print business cards, letterhead and envelopes. This demonstrates professionalism to potential customers. Your logo, the name of your business, address, phone number, email address and website should all be included on these materials. If possible, engage a graphic designer to design your logo and letterhead.

After you have your logo it's a good idea to create a LinkedIn profile as well as a business Facebook page. Make sure your profile includes contact information and a good description of your services. If your target audience is searching for businesses like yours on social media, these profiles will help them find you. Register your business on Google My Business, Yelp and Local Notice for additional exposure online.

If your budget allows, secure a web address or domain name and develop a website where people can learn about your business and the services you provide. Include a link to your website on all of your online and social media profiles. Include your website on your business cards, invoices, price quotes and other printed materials.

Once you've set up your basic marketing materials, share your business cards with anyone who can help spread the word about your business.

- Research professional groups and community organizations in your area.
- Attend meetings and become involved in groups that share your interests or whose membership includes your target market. You'll develop important relationships that may ultimately lead to business opportunities.
- Reach out to local chambers of commerce and trade associations for information about small businesses that can help you with marketing efforts.
- Join trade associations whose membership includes your target customers.
- Ask major customers to refer you to their subcontractors or other local companies.

Reach out to local chambers of commerce & trade associations for information about small businesses that can help with marketing efforts

Create name recognition by keeping the design & information consistent across all platforms.

Don't forget to track the origin of your leads and referrals. If you keep a good record, you will be able to look back each year and determine which marketing efforts are most valuable and where to focus your time and resources in the future.

Other marketing considerations

If you have room in your budget for additional marketing efforts, consider engaging a graphic designer to develop a brochure that highlights your business and the services you provide.

Next, look into advertising opportunities with local print, radio, television and outdoor advertising outlets. The content of any advertising should include the name of your business, services you provide and how you can be contacted (website, phone and/or email).

● ● ● *See page 39 for organizations and programs that can assist you with marketing your business.*

**Be specific
about your market
& realistic about
whom you can reach.
This will affect your
budget, profitability
and ultimately
your success.**

STEP 8: Find out how to work with industry



With billions in investments announced in the Southwest Louisiana region, there are numerous opportunities for small businesses to work with local industry during the construction phases of the projects and throughout operations. These companies are committed to hiring local businesses to support their projects.

Working with large companies has many advantages, but it is also important to recognize the complexities involved. These companies will likely have strict requirements, policies and payment schedules. Contractors are often required to undergo stringent verification and training processes at the start of a project. Make sure you have enough resources, both financially and time-wise, to meet these challenges.

Working with industry often requires specific insurance policies, certifications or training. Review the following checklist and company-specific fact sheets to find out what you need and who you should contact for additional information.

Working with Industry Checklist page 17

Sasol..... page 18

● ● ● **See page 41 for organizations and programs that can assist you with connecting with industry.**

EPC Contractor & Subcontractor

Typically, a company will hire an Engineering, Procurement and Construction contractor to manage its industrial development project. The EPC contractor hires numerous subcontractors – smaller businesses and vendors – to assist with executing the project. This provides an opportunity for local small businesses to work with industry through the EPC contractors managing these projects.

Working With Industry Checklist

The following checklist will help you prepare to do business with local industry. Establishing these items in advance will help ensure a smooth process when you are selected for a particular project.

Not every company will require every item below. This shall serve as a comprehensive list to guide you in your preparations.

- Register on ISNet World
www.isnetworld.com
- Complete a Pre-Qualification Form (PQF) with the Safety Council of SWLA (for operational work)
www.safetycouncilswla.org
- Register with Vendor Vet (for administrative consulting or other work)
www.vendorvet.scswwa.org
- Certificate of insurance covering the following:
 - Worker's Compensation
 - Employer's Liability
 - General Liability
 - Automobile Liability
 - Excess Liability
- Financial information (financial statements, tax forms, etc.)
- Check bonding requirements

Once selected, you will establish a contract and receive a contractor license number. You will also be required to complete site-specific training through the company.

Sasol Ethane Cracker & Derivatives Project

Westlake, Louisiana

www.sasolnorthamerica.com

Brief project summary:

The ethane cracker and derivatives complex is located in Westlake, Louisiana. At the heart of the new facility is an ethane cracker that will produce 1.5 million tons of ethylene annually, benefiting from significant economies of scale. The complex also includes six chemical manufacturing plants. Approximately 90 percent of the cracker's ethylene output will be converted into a diverse slate of commodity and high-margin specialty chemicals for markets in which Sasol has a strong position, underpinned by collaborative customer relationships.

Who/where is the point of contact for businesses interested in working with your project?

To be considered for future business opportunities with Sasol, please email services-procurement@us.sasol.com for services and materials-procurement@us.sasol.com for materials.

Project status:

Sasol's ethane cracker and derivative units began commissioning in 2019 and are expected to be fully operational by the end of 2020. Visit www.sasolnorthamerica.com/vendors for more information.

**How will your company invite local businesses to bid on available work?
What is your Invitation to Bid (ITB) process?**

If companies are interested in serving as a supplier and subcontractor in the construction phase, we encourage companies to contact and register with the contractors directly. Fluor Technip Integrated (FTI) and the major construction contractors each have different subcontract and supply needs depending on their scope. Individuals interested in registering with FTI can visit www.fluorprocurement.com. A complete listing of these contractors and respective contact information can be found at www.sasolnorthamerica.com/vendors.

- If you are interested in serving as a supplier or subcontractor to Sasol's current plant, or after the project enters into the operations phase, you should register with Sasol directly. Information on Sasol's vendor management specialist and system can be found at www.sasolnorthamerica.com/vendors.

If a business has already expressed interest in supporting your project directly through your company, what other steps should they take?

We encourage area businesses to register directly with each company to which they are interested in subcontracting or supplying. Companies who register in one company's system are not necessarily visible to the other contractors. In addition, the contractors all have numerous efforts ongoing in Louisiana and there may be opportunities on those other projects as well.

How can a business get placed on the bidders' list for your project?

If your company is a good fit for the project and there is a suitable near-term opportunity, then the project team may contact the company to prequalify them. Please express your interest in supporting the projects via Sasol's vendor management specialist at 337-478-1933 or www.sasolnorthamerica.com/vendors. Once companies are prequalified and placed on the approved bidders' list, then they are eligible to receive invitations to bid (ITBs) for contracting/supply opportunities.

What are the minimum insurance requirements for your project?

FTI and Contractors share insurance and technical requirements as part of the ITB process with individual bidders.

How can I identify and track supply/subcontracting opportunities on your project?

Upon registering your interest to support the contractors at site, the individual contractors are responsible for contacting businesses as opportunities that match the businesses' capabilities become available.

The responsibility to track individual opportunities remains with each business endeavoring to submit a proposal for goods and services, so it is important to proactively follow up with each contractor.

Will other major contractors be named?

Additional construction and specialty service contractors will be announced as the project progresses. Contact information for each of the contractors will also be provided on Sasol's website at www.sasolnorthamerica.com as it becomes available.

Subcontracting and supply opportunities available on the project include:*

Construction Indirects

Small tools
Gases-welding, purge, etc.
Safety supplies
Janitorial services
Medical and first aid
Transportation services

Civil

Backfill (materials)
Environmental (materials)
Landscaping
Fencing
Road and bridge construction
Railroads
Concrete services
Reinforcing (materials)
Anchor bolts
Site preparation work
Paving
Civil work

Structural

Towers, antennas
Shop fabricated structural steel

Logistics

Trucking

Architectural

Pre-engineered buildings
Permanent building design and construction
Building materials
Facility equipment
HVAC equipment
Building systems – mechanical
Building systems – electrical
Building systems – plumbing
Building systems – fire detection and protection

Piping/Valves/Fittings

Carbon steel valves and accessories
Tubing and fittings
Piping components – gaskets, bolts, fasteners, etc.
Heat tracing
Shop fabrication
Pipeline engineering and construction

Instrumentation

Tagged instrumentation
Programmable logic controllers
Cable

Electrical Equipment & Bulks

Conduit & accessories
Electrical wiring & accessories
Power cable
Pole lines
Grounding and cathodic protection
Electrical and instrumentation services

Industrial Paint & Insulation

Paint & coatings
Insulation
Fireproofing
Scaffolding

Corporate Indirects

Catering
Office equipment
Furniture and supplies
Promotional goods
Reprographics
Signs
Business services
Consulting

*Needs as of 2014



STEP 9: Maintain your business

Congratulations! You've started a small business. We wish you the best in going forward and continuing to grow your business. Don't forget, you must maintain your business by efficiently managing your financing, legal requirements, licenses, certifications and permits. Review your financial statements each month and adjust spending as needed.

- **Make sure you're managing all tax, insurance and legal obligations.**
- **Determine how often you need to renew your licenses, certifications and permits and make sure you keep up with them.**
- **Frequently review your business plan to make sure you are reaching your desired goals. As things change or progress, revise your plan.**
- **If you've been in business for several years, evaluate service costs (phone, internet, insurance, etc.) and see if any can be reduced by your current provider or by switching providers.**

Remember, the resources in this guide are still available to you if you need assistance with maintaining your business or if you run into unexpected challenges.

● ● ● **See page 42 for organizations and programs that can assist you with maintaining your business.**



STEP-BY-STEP RESOURCES

**For assistance with business and financial plans,
workshops, individual counseling**

RESOURCES AT THE SEED CENTER

Sustainability Education & Economic Development

Organization	Services	Contact Info
SEED Center Business Incubator	Incubator offices, training, networking	Adrian Wallace 337.433.0977 awallace@allianceswla.org www.seedcenterswla.com
SWLA Economic Development Alliance	Information about branding or marketing firms that can assist you with developing a company name or implementing a marketing program	Paula Ramsey, Membership Council Contact 337.433.3632 www.allianceswla.org
Louisiana Small Business Development Center	Assistance with business & financial plans, workshops, individual counseling Assistance with development of marketing plans Guidance on bookkeeping/ record keeping Classes on Quickbooks	Susan Thibodeaux 337.475.5584 sthibodeaux@louisianasbdc.org www.lsbdc.org/msu
Louisiana Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (LAPTAC) - Southwest	Assistance with getting contracts with federal, state and industrial buyers	Jane Kulick 337.482.6265 jane.kulick@louisiana.edu www.ptac.louisiana.edu
Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)	Assistance with growing and maintaining your business operations	Paul Arnold 337.433.3632 ext.1217 parnold@allianceswla.org www.southwestlouisiana.score.org

4310 Ryan Street • Lake Charles, LA • 70605



RESOURCES FOR STEP 1: Develop a Business Plan

Louisiana Small Business Development Center at McNeese State University

For assistance with business and financial plans, workshops, individual counseling

SEED Center
4310 Ryan Street, Suite 162
Lake Charles, LA 70605
337.475.5529
lsbdc.msu@louisianasbdc.org

GeauxBiz

Provides a starting point for customers to obtain information regarding which state agencies will need to be contacted for a variety of registration documents. Provides a customized checklist with local and state licensing agencies you should contact to start your business.

www.geauxbiz.sos.la.gov

Internal Revenue Service

Defines types of business structures and provides information on the types of forms you may be required to file

1. Go to www.irs.gov
2. Click "File" at the top of the page
3. Click "Businesses and Self Employed"

Louisiana Department of Revenue

For tax forms, registration information and information about business taxes

Baton Rouge Headquarters

Baton Rouge, LA 70821

617 North Third Street

Baton Rouge, LA 70802

855.307.3893

www.revenue.louisiana.gov/Businesses

Louisiana Economic Development

Resources to assist with starting, sustaining & growing your business

www.opportunitylouisiana.com/page/start-a-business

Louisiana Job Connection

Connects employers with qualified job seekers

www.louisianajobconnection.com

Louisiana Secretary of State

For information about business structure, tax and insurance requirements and license and permit requirements

1. Go to www.sos.la.gov
2. At the top of the page, click "Business Services"
3. Click "Start a Business" on the left side of the page

www.sos.la.gov/BusinessServices/StartABusiness/Pages/default.aspx



**Consult
a tax professional
for assistance with
tax considerations.
Consult an insurance
professional for
assistance with
insurance
considerations.**

Louisiana Workforce Commission

Provides information about finances, insurance, workforce development, labor laws and other business maintenance items

www.laworks.net/Businesses.asp

McNeese Entrepreneur classes in the business department

Entrepreneurship and innovation

Contact: Dr. Jeffery Stevens

337.475.5540

jstevens@mcneese.edu

4205 Ryan Street, Burton Business Center #222

Lake Charles, LA 70605

www.mcneese.edu

Office of Veterans Affairs

Provides opportunities for veteran-owned small business

1000 Ryan Street

Lake Charles, LA 70601

337.491.2309

www.vetaffairs.la.gov

SEED Center Business Incubator

For incubator offices, training, networking

SEED Center

4310 Ryan Street

Lake Charles, LA 70605

Adrian Wallace

337.433.0977 ext. 2221

awallace@allianceswla.org

www.seedcenterswla.com

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)

For assistance with business and financial plans, workshops, individual counseling

SEED Center
4310 Ryan Street
Lake Charles, LA 70605
Paul Arnold
337.433.3632 ext.1217
parnold@allianceswla.org

www.southwestlouisiana.score.org

U.S. Small Business Administration

Provides helpful tools for starting a business

Louisiana District Office
365 Canal Street, Suite 2820
New Orleans, LA 70130
504.589.6685

www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/starting-managing-business



RESOURCES FOR STEP 2: Name your business

Check with your local chamber of commerce for branding or marketing firms that can assist you with developing a name.

Greater Beauregard Chamber of Commerce

111 N. Washington Street
DeRidder, LA 70634
337.463.5533
Lisa Adams
Executive Director
membersvcbcc@bellsouth.net
www.beauchamber.org

Jefferson Davis Chamber of Commerce

100 Rue de l'Acadie
Jennings, LA 70546
337.824.0933
Marion Fox
President/CEO
marionfox@jeffdavis.org
jeffdavis.org/chamber-of-commerce/

Kinder Chamber of Commerce

333 8th Street
Kinder, LA 70648
Barbara Savant
Executive Director
337.998.1168
kindercc1@gmail.com
kinderchamber.org

Oakdale Chamber of Commerce

107 S. 10th Street
Oakdale, LA 71463
Ariel Allison
Secretary
318.335.1729
oakdaleareachamb@bellsouth.net
cityofoakdale.net/chamber-of-commerce.html

SWLA Economic Development Alliance

4310 Ryan Street
Lake Charles, LA 70605
R.B. Smith
337.433.3632 ext. 1228
rsmith@allianceswla.org
www.allianceswla.org

West Calcasieu Chamber of Commerce

500 A North Huntington Street
Sulphur, LA 70663
Lena McArthur
337.313.1121
associationw@bellsouth.net
www.westcal.org

U.S. Patent & Trademark Office

Learn about the process for obtaining a patent or trademark, search existing patents and trademarks
www.uspto.gov



RESOURCES FOR STEP 3: Register with the Louisiana Secretary of State

Once you have finalized the type of business you will have, the name of your business and your business structure, you will be ready to file with the Louisiana Secretary of State. Depending on your business structure, you will be required to file certain forms. These forms can be found on the Louisiana Secretary of State's website (sos.la.gov) and filed online.

The screenshot shows the Louisiana Secretary of State website. At the top, there is a header with a photo of R. Kyle Ardoin, the Secretary of State, and the Louisiana State Seal. Below the header is a navigation menu with categories: ELECTIONS & VOTING, BUSINESS SERVICES, NOTARY & CERTIFICATIONS, HISTORICAL RESOURCES, and OUR OFFICE. A search bar is located on the right side of the header. The main content area features several sections: a central banner with links for 'Check Your Absentee Request and Ballot', 'VIEW: Video for Completing Absentee by Mail Ballot', 'View Sample Ballot and Polling Location', 'Download Your "I Voted" Sticker', and 'Schedule a Commercial or Commissions Appointment'; a 'GEAUX VOTE' section with a map of Louisiana and questions about registration; a 'NEWS & EVENTS' section with a list of recent legislative actions; a 'geauxBIZ.com' section for business services; and a 'CONNECT WITH US' section with social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. The footer contains contact information: phone number 225.922.2880, address 8585 Archives Ave. Baton Rouge, LA 70809, and P.O. Box 94125 Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9125, along with a 'CONTACT US' button.

Louisiana Small Business Development Center at McNeese State University *For assistance with business and financial plans, workshops, individual counseling*

SEED Center
4310 Ryan Street, Suite 162
Lake Charles, LA 70605
337.475.5529
lsbdc.msu@louisianasbdc.org



RESOURCES FOR STEP 4: Obtain a Federal Tax ID# (EIN)

For information about applying for an Employer Identification Number (EIN), visit the IRS website's Small Business Section:

www.irs.gov/Businesses/Small-Businesses-Self-Employed/How-to-Apply-for-an-EIN

The screenshot shows the IRS website's "How to Apply for an EIN" page. The page is in English and features a navigation menu on the left with categories like "Individuals", "Businesses and Self-Employed", "Corporations", "Partnerships", "Charities and Nonprofits", "International Taxpayers", and "Government Entities". The main content area is titled "How to Apply for an EIN" and includes a sub-header "Apply Online". The text explains that the Internet EIN application is the preferred method and provides details about the application process, including the requirement to disclose the name and Taxpayer Identification Number (SSN, ITIN, or EIN) of the true principal officer, general partner, grantor, owner, or trustee. It also mentions that the responsible party must be an individual (i.e., a natural person), not an entity. Other sections include "Apply by Fax", "Apply by Mail", "Apply by Telephone – International Applicants", and "Other Important Information". The "Other Important Information" section includes "Daily Limitation of an Employer Identification Number" and "Responsible Party".



RESOURCES FOR STEP 5: Establish your finances

LED Small and Emerging Business Development Program

For training on bookkeeping/recordkeeping

LED's Small and Emerging Business Development (SEBD) Program provides the managerial and technical assistance training needed to grow and sustain a small business.

- Provides for developmental assistance, including entrepreneurial training, marketing, computer skills, accounting, business planning, and legal and industry-specific assistance
- Provides assistance in setting up accounting software (Quickbooks, Microsoft Office, etc.)
- Consideration for bidding on select products or services purchased by state agencies
- SEBD Intermediaries provide a free needs assessment and assistance with accessing other program benefits

Program Contact:

Adrian Wallace
Executive Director, Small Business Services
337.433.0977
awallace@allianceswla.org

Apply online:

www.ledsmallbiz.com

For more information about eligibility and getting started, visit opportunitylouisiana.com:
www.opportunitylouisiana.com/page/small-and-emerging-business-development-program

Send employees to classes or training on accounting management so they can manage it and provide reports to you.

Louisiana Economic Development

Small Business and Loan Guaranty Program

The Small Business Loan and Guaranty Program facilitates capital accessibility for small businesses by providing loan guarantees to banks and other small business lenders in association with the federal State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI). The program's purpose is to provide financial assistance, which will help with the development, expansion and retention of Louisiana's small businesses. The program is administered by Louisiana Economic Development through Louisiana Economic Development Corporation (LEDC).

- Guarantees may cover up to 75% of the loan amount, not to exceed \$1.5 million.
- Guarantee fee may be waived (determined by risk).

Loan Amount: \$5,000 to \$1.5 million

Maximum Guarantee: 75%

Minimum Equity Requirement: 15% to 20%

Application Fee: \$0

Quick Turnaround for Loans: \$350,000 or less

Program Contacts:

Steven Baham

Associate Director, Business Expansion and Retention

steve.baham@la.gov

225.342.1940

Marissa Doin

Program Administrator, Loan and Investment Programs

marissa.doin@la.gov

225.342.5883

For more information about eligibility and getting started, visit: www.opportunitylouisiana.com

Louisiana Small Business Development Center at McNeese State University

For guidance on bookkeeping/recordkeeping

Also offers occasional classes on Quickbooks

SEED Center
4310 Ryan Street, Suite 162
Lake Charles, LA 70605
337.475.5529
lsbdc.msu@louisianasbdc.org

www.lsbdc.org

Angel Investors of Southwest Louisiana

Assists early-stage companies with fundraising, mentoring and advisory services

Ron McGinley
337.263.2701
macfhion@gmail.com
SEED Center
4310 Ryan Street, Suite 151
Lake Charles, LA 70605

www.angelsoswla.org

Economic Gardening

Helps Louisiana based small businesses with one-on-one business counseling

R.B. Smith
337.433.3632 ext. 1228
rsmith@allianceswla.org
4310 Ryan Street
Lake Charles, LA 70605

www.allianceswla.org

Society of Louisiana CPAs – Lake Charles Chapter

For resources/contact information for tax professionals

Reagan Robert
Membership Coordinator
2400 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Suite 500
Kenner, LA 70062
504.904.1129
rrobert@lcpa.org

www.lcpa.org/group/LC

United States Small Business Administration

For information about loan programs

Louisiana District Office
365 Canal St., Suite 2820
New Orleans, LA 70130
504.589.6685
Hours: 8a.m. - 4:30p.m.
www.sba.gov/loanprograms

United States Department of Agriculture - Rural Development Agency

For business loan programs

Evan Pruss
Louisiana State Office
3727 Government Street
Alexandria, LA 71302
318.473.7960
evan.pruss@usda.gov
www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/all-programs/business-programs



RESOURCES FOR STEP 6: Obtain required licenses and permits

United States Small Business Administration

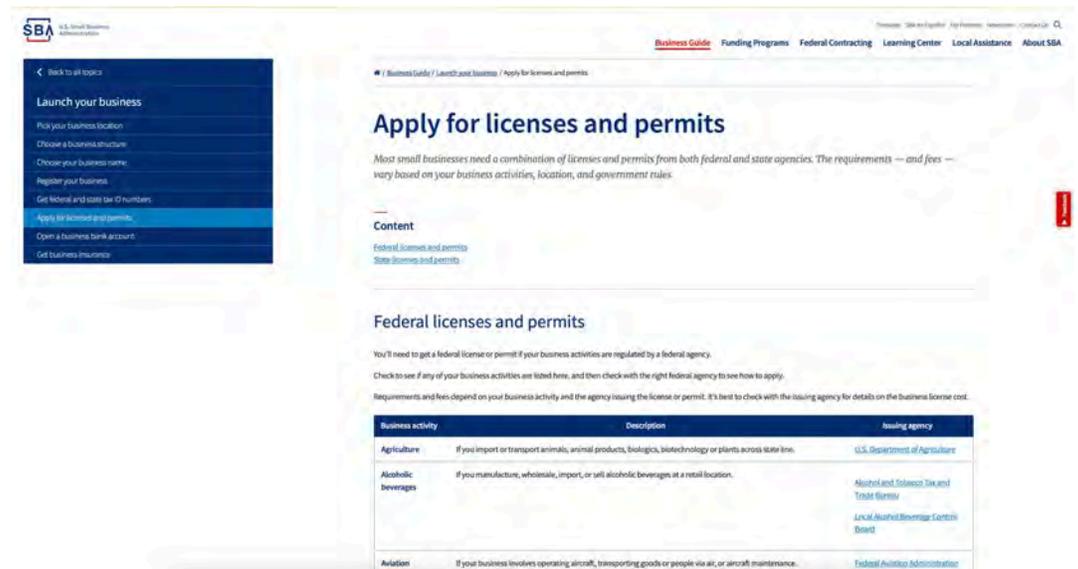
For help with starting, building and growing your business

Louisiana District Office
365 Canal St., Suite 2820
New Orleans, LA 70130
504.589.6685

Hours: 8a.m. - 4:30p.m.

Visit www.sba.gov

Under "Launch your Business," click "Apply for Licenses and Permits."



City of Lake Charles

For information on zoning requirements

Doug Burguières
Assistant Director
337.491.1542
dburguières@cityoflc.us
City Hall, 7th Floor
326 Pujó St
Lake Charles, LA 70601
www.cityoflakecharles.com

GeauxBiz

Provides a starting point for customers to obtain information regarding which state agencies will need to be contacted for a variety of registration documents. Provides a customized checklist with local and state licensing agencies you should contact to start your business.

225.925.4704

www.geauxbiz.sos.la.gov

Louisiana Economic Development

For information about business structure, tax and insurance requirements and license and permit requirements

www.opportunitylouisiana.com/page/start-a-business

Louisiana State Licensing Board for Contractors

For information about licenses

225.765.2301

www.lslbc.louisiana.gov

Louisiana.gov

Provides information regarding incentives, tax credits and rebates, infrastructure assistance and workforce training through the Louisiana Economic Development, the Workforce Commission, and other economic development organizations.

www.louisiana.gov/business

USA.gov

Learn the steps to start a small business, get information on financing help from the government, and more

www.usa.gov/business



RESOURCES FOR STEP 7: Market your business

Lake Area Industry Alliance

Trade association with industry membership

The Lake Area Industry Alliance is comprised of over 20 local industries. Formed in 2000, LAIA is a channel of communication between industries and the community, as well as leaders, politicians, educators and non-profit organizations.

Jim Rock
Executive Director
337.436.6800
jrock@laia.com
www.laia.com

LED Small and Emerging Business Development Program

Provides marketing assistance and training

LED's Small and Emerging Business Development (SEBD) Program provides the managerial and technical assistance training needed to grow and sustain a small business.

- Provides for developmental assistance, including entrepreneurial training, marketing, computer skills, accounting, business planning, and legal and industry-specific assistance
- Consideration for bidding on select products or services purchased by state agencies
- SEBD Intermediaries provide a free needs assessment and assistance with accessing other program benefits

Program Contact:

Adrian Wallace
Executive Director, Small Business Services
337.433.0977 ext. 2221
awallace@allianceswla.org

Apply online:

www.ledsmallbiz.com

For more information about eligibility and getting started, visit:
www.opportunitylouisiana.com/page/small-and-emerging-business-development-program

Louisiana Associated General Contractors

For information on how to make connections and market your business

Lafayette/Lake Charles District Office

David Landreneau

Area Manager

337.884.4735

davidl@lagc.org

666 North Street

Baton Rouge, LA 70802

www.lagc.org

Louisiana Small Business Development Center at McNeese State University

Provides assistance with development of marketing plans

SEED Center

4310 Ryan Street, Suite 162

Lake Charles, LA 70605

337.475.5529

lsbdc.msu@louisianasbdc.org

SEED Center Business Incubator

For incubator offices, training, networking

SEED Center

4310 Ryan Street

Lake Charles, LA 70605

Adrian Wallace

337.433.0977

awallace@allianceswla.org

www.seedcenterswla.com

Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance

For information about member companies that can assist you

Paula Ramsey

Membership Council Contact

4310 Ryan Street

Lake Charles, LA 70605

337.433.3632 ext. 1209

pramsey@allianceswla.org

www.allianceswla.org



RESOURCES FOR STEP 8: Find out how to work with industry

Louisiana Economic Development

Hudson Initiative

Certification program designed to help eligible Louisiana small businesses gain greater access to purchasing and contracting opportunities that are available at the State government level.

- Your business and contact information will be accessible to State purchasing officials and prime contractors looking for subcontractors
- State agencies are encouraged to get quotes from and use qualified, certified companies whenever possible
- For small purchases of less than \$15,000, State agencies can waive the requirement of getting additional quotes if a certified company submits a quote that is reasonable
- 10% of the total evaluation points can be added to your bid on a Request for Proposal (RFP)
- Prime contractors who use your business as a subcontractor on a bid for an RFP are also eligible to receive additional percentage points on their bid

Stephanie Hartman
Director, Small Business Services
225.342.5677
stephanie.hartman@la.gov

www.opportunitylouisiana.com/page/hudson-initiative

Louisiana Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (LAPTAC) - Southwest

Provides assistance with getting contracts with federal, state and industrial buyers

Jane Kulick
537 Cajundome Boulevard, Suite 232
Lafayette, LA 70506
337.482.6265
jane.kulick@louisiana.edu

ptac.louisiana.edu



RESOURCES FOR STEP 9: Grow and maintain your business operations

American Job Center

Provides career and employment services, job training and up-to-date information

2424 3rd Street
Lake Charles, LA 70605
Nypheteria Clophus
337.721.4010, Ext. 5026
nclophus@cppj.net

Associated Builders & Contractors

For information on craft training and certifications from a diverse, non-profit trade association of contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, and industry professionals who have joined together to advance the construction industry

Southwest Campus
337.882.0204
222 Walcott Road
Westlake, LA 70669
Hours of Operation:
Monday-Thursday, 7:30 am - 6:00 pm

www.abcpelican.org

National Association of Insurance Commissioners

Provides helpful information, tips and considerations about insurance for owners of small companies and home-based businesses

<https://content.naic.org/consumer/small-business.htm>

Louisiana Economic Development International Commerce

Manages initiatives focused on attracting foreign direct investment, increasing trade volume and expanding trade-related manufacturing activity

Kathe Falls
Executive Director, International Commerce
225.342.4323
kathe.falls@la.gov

Louisiana Export Council
Export University - Export Training Program

Series of courses on exporting help U.S. companies begin an export initiative and gain new skills and innovation in expanding their international sales

R.B. Smith
337.433.3632 ext. 1228
rsmith@allianceswla.org

Louisiana Small Business Development Center at McNeese State University

SEED Center
4310 Ryan Street, Suite 162
Lake Charles, LA 70605
337.475.5529
lsbdc.msu@louisianasbdc.org

Louisiana Workforce Commission

Provides information about finances, insurance, workforce development, labor laws and other business maintenance items

www.laworks.net/Businesses.asp

Louisiana Workforce Commission Small Business Employee Training (SBET)

Benefits business and industry by assisting in the skill development of existing employees through individual, standardized training.

Employers are reimbursed for tuition and required textbooks and manuals once the training has been completed and proper documentation has been submitted to the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC). Training costs cannot exceed \$3,000 per trainee per state fiscal year (July 1 - June 30).

Shannon Chevalier
Director, Incumbent Worker Training Program
schevalier@lwc.la.gov
318.487.5560
Learn more at: www.laworks.net/workforceDev/IWTP/IWTP_SmallBusiness.asp

Manufacturers Extension Partnership of Louisiana (MEPOL)

Provides product development and business growth services

LCTCS
265 South Foster Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70806
Connee Byrd
337.394.2763
connee.byrd@mepol.org
www.mepol.org

McNeese Entrepreneur classes in the business department

Entrepreneurship and innovation

Dr. Jeffery Stevens

337.475.5540

jstevens@mcneese.edu

4205 Ryan Street, Burton Business Center #222

Lake Charles, LA 70605

www.mcneese.edu

SEED Center Business Incubator

4310 Ryan Street

Lake Charles, LA 70605

Adrian Wallace

337.433.0977

awallace@allianceswla.org

Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)

SEED Center

4310 Ryan Street

Lake Charles, LA 70605

Paul Arnold

337.433.3632 ext. 1217

parnold@allianceswla.org

www.southwestlouisiana.score.org

Society of Louisiana CPAs – Lake Charles Chapter

For resources/contact information for tax professionals

Reagan Robert
Membership Coordinator
2400 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Suite 500
Kenner, LA 70062
504.904.1129
rrobert@lcpa.org
www.lcpa.org/group/LC

**Southwest Economic Development Alliance
International Trade**

Helps facilitate trade-related activity for businesses to expand existing export markets or develop new export markets

R.B. Smith
337.433.3632 ext. 1228
rsmith@allianceswla.org

United States Small Business Administration

For information about loan programs

Louisiana District Office
365 Canal St., Suite 2820
New Orleans, LA 70130
504.589.6685

Hours: 8a.m. - 4:30p.m.

www.sba.gov/loanprograms

USSBA Resource Guide:
www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/files/resourceguide_3119.pdf

USA.gov

Provides access to U.S. government information and services

www.usa.gov/business

In collaboration with:



sasol



**Simien
Law Firm**

