



EMDC EASTERN MAINE
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCE GUIDE

2021 EDITION

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A Free Guide for New Business Startups, Already Existing
Businesses, & Entrepreneurs Throughout Maine

A Message from the CEO

Dear Friends,

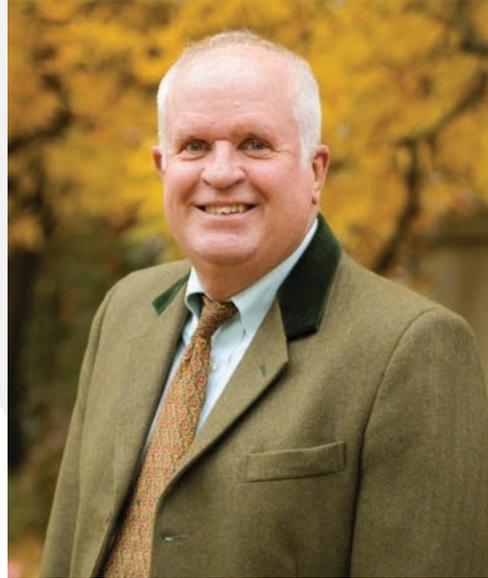
Since 1967 Eastern Maine Development Corporation (www.emdc.org) has been a strong supporter of small business development throughout the region and the state. As a private, non-profit organization we provide small business programs and work with other local, state, and federal agencies to boost entrepreneurial development.

This guide connects entrepreneurs and small business owners with the free integrated resources in our region. These resources support small business startup, growth, and sustainability. This guide makes the process of finding those resources less confusing and less cumbersome.

Regardless of your experience, industry, or the lifecycle stage of your business, there are many programs, resources, and organizations that are engineered to help you succeed. EMDC is here to help you navigate them.

We're here to help businesses, communities, and individuals reach their long-term goals. If at any time you have any questions, concerns, or would like to speak to someone about your business, please reach out to our Community & Business Services team at business@emdc.org or community@emdc.org.

All the best, Lee



Lee Umphrey
 Lee Umphrey, EMDC
President & CEO



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Templates, Tools, & Start-Up Checklists

Business Plans

A formal, written business plan can be seen as the foundation for your business. It can increase the odds that your business startup will succeed and often times is required by lending agencies to secure financing for a business. A business plan typically describes the nature of a business, background information that's relevant to the business, financial projections, and strategies that will enable the business to be successful.

A business plan has no set number of pages, but it should be long enough to adequately describe the business. There are a number of business plan templates that exist on the internet. Here's some free templates that will help you with starting your own:

- https://s3.amazonaws.com/mentoring.redesign/s3fs-public/SCORE-Deluxe-Startup-Business-Plan-Template_1.docx
- <https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/plan-your-business/write-your-business-plan>
- <https://www.mainesbdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Maine-SBDC-Business-Plan-Guide.pdf>

Marketing Plans

A marketing plan is usually part of an overall business plan. It's a comprehensive document that explains a business's advertising and marketing efforts. A marketing plan should include historical data, predictions, and strategies that will ensure a company's overall success in selling products and/or services. Below are some templates that can assist you with putting together your own marketing plan:

- <https://s3.amazonaws.com/mentoring.redesign/s3fs-public/Small%20Business%20Marketing%20Plan.docx>
- <https://www.mainesbdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/sample-marketing-plan-2015.pdf>
- <https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/2017-07/Sample%20Marketing%20Plan%20%28for%20508%20remediation%29.pdf>

Financial Plans

Arguably this is the most important part of a written business plan. If you're applying for a loan, your lender will be looking for this information to make their decision. This section of a business plan shows your business's actual (or anticipated) revenues and expenses. There are some financial templates that should be included with your business plan, including: a cash flow statement, balance sheet, profit/loss statement (P&L), schedule of liabilities, and a break-even analysis. Below is a list of websites where you can obtain already developed financial statement templates:

- <https://www.mainesbdc.org/resources/tools-templates/>
- <https://www.score.org/resource/business-planning-financial-statements-template-gallery>
- <https://templates.office.com/en-us/Search/results?query=financial+statement>

Business Legal Assistance & Business Structures

The business legal structure you choose influences everything from day-to-day operations, to taxes, to how much your personal assets are at risk. You should choose a business structure that gives you the right balance of legal protection and benefits. ****IMPORTANT NOTE: EMDC does not provide legal assistance – Please contact an attorney to help you decide which legal structure is best for you**** Below are some resources that will help you decide and differentiate the various legal structures that exist for businesses:

- <https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/launch-your-business/choose-business-structure>
- <https://www.score.org/search/site/legal%20structure>
- <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/business-structures>

There's also some really nice law firms and lawyers in the area that volunteer their time to assist small businesses with basic legal concerns. Below are links to 2 such programs:

- <https://www.vlp.org/>
- <https://www.rudmanwinchell.com/legal-lounge/>

New Business Startup & Incubator Programs

There are many local organizations, programs, and leaders in the area that support small business startup, growth, and acceleration. Whether you're looking to network with other like-minded people, in need of coaching, are looking for small startup funding opportunities, or looking to learn more about entrepreneurship then these programs are right for you:

- <https://www.bigdig.org/>
- <https://www.mced.biz/top-gun/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/SolveForB>
- <https://newventuresmaine.org/programs/start-a-business/>
- <https://www.mainestreamfinance.org/business/business-classes/>
- <https://greenlightmaine.com/>
- <https://umaine.edu/innovation/create-communicate-commercialize/on-campus-services/business-incubator/>
- <https://www.upstartcentermaine.com/incubator>
- <https://www.mced.biz/mmn-mentors/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/unionrivercenterforinnovation/>

Licenses & Permits

Don't know what business licenses or permits you should get for your business? Want to know how to incorporate in Maine? Do you know where to obtain corporate forms? No worries, because the state of Maine has that information available on their website. Click the links below for more details:

- <https://apps.web.maine.gov/cgi/online/businessanswers/index.pl>
- <https://www.maine.gov/portal/business/corporate.html>
- <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/corp/incorporating.html>

Guides & Videos

There are a lot of great information freely available on the internet (a lot of which comes from volunteers!). Whether you're looking for guides/videos on marketing, financing, human resources, business growth strategies, technology, forming an exit strategy, or any other business-related topic then fret not! Below are some links to organizations and businesses that provide free business information/suggestions:

- <https://www.score.org/>
- <https://www.mainesbdc.org/workshops/>
- <https://digitalequitycenter.org/>
- <https://www.sba.gov/learning-center>
- <https://sbdctraining.org/>

Textbook Information

Entrepreneurs wear a lot of hats when it comes to running a business. There's a lot of information out there that's available to help entrepreneurs learn more about marketing, accounting, social media, finance, human resources, etc. Below is a list of websites where you can download textbook documents and read at no cost:

- <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/>
- <https://openstax.org/subjects/business>
- <https://www.saylor.org/books/#acc>
- <https://open.bccampus.ca/browse-our-collection/find-open-textbooks/>

Market Research

Gathering information about target markets and understanding who your customers are going to be can sometimes be difficult. Performing market research can help a business design and sell better products/services, improve customer experience, and help you make better informed decisions about your business. Below are some links to helpful tools/resources that assist with market research:

- <https://login.wv-o-ursus-proxy13.ursus.maine.edu/login?qurl=https://www.referenceusa.com> (You will need a Maine State Library card to access. If you don't have one you can register for one for free at: <https://www.maine.gov/msl/services/libcard.htm>)
- <https://www.sbdcnet.org/>
- <https://maineco.org/about-us/>
- <https://stats.bls.gov/>

Libraries

Many libraries have online databases, books, and other resources that are extremely helpful for small businesses and entrepreneurs! Below is a list of Maine libraries:

- <https://www.maine.gov/ms>
- <https://www.maine.gov/msl/lib/directories/public.shtml>

Workshops, Webinars, & Events

The world of business is perpetually changing and evolving. Keeping up to date with new developments in business can be one of the most difficult aspects of starting and operating a business. Because of this, there's some wonderful nonprofits that offer workshops, webinars, and often times free events that small business owners/entrepreneurs can take advantage of:

- <https://bangor.score.org/>
- <https://newventuresmaine.org/class-schedules/>
- <https://www.mainstreamfinance.org/business/business-classes/>
- <https://mainesbdc.centerdynamics.com/events.aspx?days=90&layout=4>
- <https://www.maineptac.org/events/>
- <https://www.emdc.org/connect/events/>

Government Contracting

Did you know the United States is the #1 purchaser of goods and services throughout the world? It's true! If you're interested in selling your company's products and/or services to local, state, or federal governments than this program is for you! Maine PTAC (short for Procurement Technical Assistance Centers) is a free, statewide program that helps small businesses with government contracting. Learn more about PTAC & government contracting by clicking the links below:

- <https://www.maineptac.org/>
- <https://www.gsa.gov/small-business/small-business-resources/training-resources>

Commercial Lending & Funding Opportunities

Obtaining business financing can be a daunting process, but luckily there's a multitude of lending agencies throughout the state that can assist with commercial financing needs. Whether you're looking for working capital, looking to purchase new machinery/buildings, interested in obtaining a line of credit, or have other financing needs the below links can help you find a financing agency that can assist you:

- <https://www.emdc.org/services/lending/>
- <https://www.sba.gov/offices/district/me/augusta/resources/maine-lenders-list>
- <https://www.mainstreamfinance.org/business/business-lending/>
- <http://www.fourdirectionsmaine.org/lending/>
- <http://tplfinancialservices.me/>
- <https://www.maineangels.org/>
- <https://www.famemaine.com>
- <https://www.maineventurefund.com>
- <https://www.slowmoneymaine.org>
- <https://www.rd.usda.gov/me>
- <https://www.kickstarter.com/>
- <https://www.gofundme.com/>

Women and/or Minority-Owned Business Programs

Maine provides many programs specific to women & minority owned businesses who're small business owners. If you're a woman or minority-owned business and interested in working as a contractor with the Maine Department of Transportation or the Federal Government than there's certification programs engineered to ensure your success. There are also local organizations that promote the racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity that already exists in the region. Below are some links to organizations and programs that support women and minority owned businesses.

- <https://www.maine.gov/mdot/civilrights/dbe/> & <https://www.mainedbe.com/>
- <https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs>
- <http://www.fourdirectionsmaine.org/>
- www.welcomeimmigrant.org
- <https://www.womenstandingtogether.org/>
- <https://mainemulticulturalcenter.org/>
- <https://www.maineomensnetwork.com/>
- <https://www.blackownedmaine.com/>
- <https://www.score.org/hispanic-owned-business>

Veteran Business Resources

There are several excellent programs throughout the state and the nation that provide assistance to veterans looking to enter the world of business ownership. If you're a veteran and looking for funding, training, contracting opportunities, or other information relating to business ownership than check out the links below:

- <https://www.va.gov/osdbu/>
- <https://www.sba.gov/page/veterans-business-outreach-center-vboc-program>
- <https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/service-disabled-veteran-owned-small-businesses-program>
- <https://www.ufvme.us/>

Workforce & Workforce Development

Are you looking to hire more employees? Curious about training programs and have a hard time filling positions for your company? If you answered yes then fear not! There's plenty of resources available to assist you with your workforce & hiring needs:

- <https://www.erieri.com/dlc>
- <https://www.emdc.org/workforce/>
- <https://www.maine.gov/labor/>
- <https://www.maine.gov/unemployment/>
- https://www.maine.gov/labor/jobs_training/index.shtml
- <http://www.mainecareercenter.gov/>
- <https://www.projectlogin.com/techhire-maine/about>
- <https://www.onetonline.org/>
- <https://www.maine.gov/labor/cwri/>
- <https://joblink.maine.gov/>
- <https://www.emcc.edu/workforce-development/>

Business News Sources & Upcoming Events

It's always a good idea to be on-top of the latest business information. Whether you're interested in local, state, or federal business developments that affect Maine small businesses than there's a ton of information that's available out there. Here are some links to business news sites and organizations that can keep you up to date:

- <https://www.mainebiz.biz/>
- <https://bangordailynews.com/newsletters-on-hold/>
- <https://www.ellsworthamerican.com/>
- <https://www.foxbangor.com>
- <https://www.wabi.tv/>
- <https://www.newscentermaine.com/>
- <https://www.tedxdirigo.com/>
- <https://www.eventbrite.com/>

Free Business Software Tools

There's a ton of creative, useful, and free software tools available for small businesses to utilize. Technology can be a great tool and asset when implemented correctly. Below are some recommended software programs that small businesses can utilize to remain productive, stay organized, and maintain contact with their client base:

- <https://www.hubspot.com/>
- <https://doodle.com/en/>
- <https://mailchimp.com>
- <https://constantcontact.com>
- <https://trello.com>
- <https://slack.com>
- <https://alternativeto.net>
- <https://wordpress.com/>

Business Taxes & Government Resources

There's a lot of helpful information made available by the state and the federal government to ensure small business success. Learning and understanding business taxes, safety/hiring laws, trademark/patent protection, energy efficient upgrades, or other business concerns can be difficult as well as confusing. The below websites can assist you with these kinds of business concerns:

- <https://www.maine.gov/revenue>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/site/menu/en/>
- <https://www.census.gov/>
- <https://www.uspto.gov/>
- <https://www.osha.gov/>
- <https://www.usda.gov/>
- <https://www.energymaine.com/>
- <https://www.maine.gov/portal/business/>
- <https://www.sba.gov/>
- <https://www.maine.gov/mhrc/home>
- <https://www.maine.gov/portal/employment/rights.html>
- <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/workcomp>
- <https://www.dhs.gov/>

Municipal & Chamber of Commerce's Contact Information

Local chamber of commerce's and municipalities can be extremely helpful when it comes to starting and supporting small business development. Below are links that can connect you with local resources:

- <https://memun.org/Training-Resources/Local-Government/Municipal-Websites>
- <https://www.bangorregion.com/news/>
- <https://www.piscataquischamber.com/>
- <https://www.ellsworthmaine.gov/business/ellsworth-area-chamber-commerce/>
- <https://www.belfastmaine.org/>

Small Business Support Organizations

There are so many small business support organizations in the state it's not funny! There's even some who provide very unique services dedicated to those looking to accomplish a specific goal or task. Other organizations cater to very specific business industries and others cater to all industry types. Below is a list of the state's most important organizations for entrepreneurial and small business development, growth, sustainability, and acceleration.

- <https://www.startupmaine.org>
- <https://www.sba.gov/offices/district/me/augusta>
- <https://www.usa.gov/business?source=busa>
- <https://www.umaine.edu/amc>
- <https://www.ceimaine.org>
- <https://www.umaine.edu/innovation>
- <https://www.thomas.edu/haibi/>
- <http://maineacceleratesgrowth.com/>
- <https://www.maineaquaculture.org/>
- <https://www.mced.biz/>
- <https://www.mdf.org/>
- <https://www.mitc.com/>
- <https://www.mainemep.org/>
- <https://www.mccs.me.edu/workforce-training/train-my-workforce/maine-quality-centers/>
- <https://www.mainesbdc.org/>
- <https://mainemfg.com/>
- <https://newventuresmaine.org/>
- <https://www.scoremaine.org/>
- <https://www.scratchpadaccelerator.com/>
- <https://startupSPACE.app/maine-resource-compass/recovery>
- <https://www.mainestreamfinance.org/>
- <http://www.fourdirectionsmaine.org/>
- <https://www.mainemade.com/>
- <https://cdi.coop/>
- <https://www.islandinstitute.org/>
- <https://www.mainetourism.com/>
- <https://www.bbb.org/>
- <https://www.bni.com/>
- <https://www.eeoc.gov/employers/smallbusiness/>

Nonprofit Support Organizations

Looking to start a nonprofit? Wondering what funding is available for nonprofits? Want to know more about the resources that can assist you with starting/operating your nonprofit? Check out the links below:

- <https://www.nonprofitmaine.org/>
- <https://www.maine.gov/msl/libs/admin/nonprofits.htm>
- <https://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/corp/nonprofitresources.html>
- <https://librafoundation.org/>
- <https://www.maine philanthropy.org/>
- <http://www.maine cf.org/>
- <https://www.grants.gov/>

State & Regional Economic Development

The State of Maine has several Economic Development Districts (EDDs) throughout the State. There's also some organizations that assist with regional/economic development. Check out the links below for more details about each:

- <https://www.emdc.org>
- <https://www.avcog.org>
- <https://www.bsaedc.org>
- <https://www.portlandmaine.gov/485/economic-development>
- <https://www.gpcog.org>
- <https://www.kvcog.org/>
- <https://www.lcrpc.org>
- <https://www.mainerda.org>
- <https://www.mceddme.org/>
- <http://mrra.us/>
- <https://www.nmdc.org>
- <https://www.pcedc.org>
- <https://sedcomaine.com/>
- <https://www.smpdc.org>
- <https://www.sunrisecounty.org>
- <https://www.maine.gov/decd>
- <https://www.facebook.com/BRPforGreaterBangor>

Farming & Food Based Businesses

Agritourism, farmers' markets, farms, breweries/distilleries, creameries, wineries, sugar shacks, and other food/beverage-based businesses are vital to Maine's economy and identity. Below are some resources for farming & food-based businesses:

- <https://extension.umaine.edu/>
- <https://www.getrealmaine.com/>
- <https://www.maine farmland trust.org/>
- <http://www.maine farmers markets.org/>
- https://www.maine.gov/dacf/ard/business_and_market_development/farmer_education/index.shtml

A Message from the Editor

Greetings,

First, let me thank you for downloading this guide. Having worked with numerous business clients throughout the years I've familiarized myself with the wonderful resources, programs, and organizations that assist small business entrepreneurs. This guide is a compilation of all those resources in one, easy to find, document.

Some of the resources listed in this guide are local, some are statewide, and others are federal resources. Regardless of your experience or education level, this guide will help you with starting a business, growing a business, forming an exit strategy, and everything in-between.

Eastern Maine Development Corporation supports small business entrepreneurship on all levels. We're happy to assist you with your business needs and continue to bring economic vibrancy to Eastern Maine.

If at any time you have any concerns, questions, or need assistance with your business, please reach out to our Community & Business Services team. We provide free business counseling at no cost to your business. Give us a call at (207) 942-6389 or email us at business@emdc.org.

Sincerely, Cody



Cody Gilks, EMDC
DBE Supportive Services Specialist