

💡 Let Your Imagination Wander 💡

Consider putting some of the following ideas to work in your library, or use them as a starting point to create a program uniquely tailored to the needs of your community.

- ❑ Develop a community information database for access by businesses considering locating in your community.
- ❑ Cooperate with your chamber of commerce or area development agency to produce a community information package. Include statistics comparing doing business in your community with other communities. Your staff can help with the research, design, and distribution of the package.
- ❑ Sponsor a seminar on doing business in your community. Invite businesses from your state and those nearby.
- ❑ Identify and survey community agencies that generate primary resource information and related materials for your community (census materials, for example).
- ❑ Form a task force of local business people and government officials which will meet periodically to review and assess your business collection and services.
- ❑ Host workshops on starting a small business.
- ❑ Create a database of area small businesses to provide information to the community on their goods and services and to provide information for job seekers.
- ❑ Begin a selective dissemination of information (SDI) service for businesses and local government.
- ❑ Work with SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives) to provide educational opportunities such as workshops or counseling for small business owners.
- ❑ Build a special collection for your area's major industry. Invite business people to donate materials that they find useful. The advantage: They avoid the expense of housing and organizing the collection.
- ❑ Cultivate community leaders who may be willing to volunteer their time to assist the library in planning its services.
- ❑ Form a business advisory group of local business people to help market library services to their colleagues.
- ❑ Place displays highlighting library services to business in commercial districts.
- ❑ Create an electronic bulletin board service for area businesses to share information and communicate with one another. Good programming, content, marketing are essential.
- ❑ Issue library cards to businesses in your community.
- ❑ Create a special collection devoted to reports published within the last five years which are relevant to the business economy of your area.
- ❑ Index and abstract newspaper articles and other information relevant to businesses or industries in your area.
- ❑ Help establish "country desks" to brief foreign trade missions so that their overseas contacts will be more effective.
- ❑ Develop an online directory to link economic needs to identified sources, whether online, print, agency program, or personal contact.
- ❑ Market interlibrary loan services to businesses and agencies in rural areas as a way for them to save time, money, and travel in gathering information.
- ❑ Encourage businesses near the library to link their promotional efforts to the library's. Both the library and the businesses will benefit!
- ❑ If you are located near a military installation, a federal government procurement center should be a serious consideration for your library.
- ❑ Invite a librarian who has successfully promoted his or her community to speak to a group of local community and business leaders. Get them excited about what you can do!
- ❑ Look for ways to use the resources of local academic libraries to foster your community's growth.
- ❑ Host a party or reception to acquaint local leaders with the services your library can provide them.
- ❑ Develop contacts with agencies in your state dedicated to helping small business. You will be able to refer current or prospective business owners to them and they may also find it convenient to use your library as a site for their programs.
- ❑ Whatever you do, make sure everybody in your community knows about it. Get credit for your work!

This page of ideas is taken from Libraries and Economic Development, prepared by Marian Veld for the M-Link Project, Harlan Hatcher Graduate Library, The University of Michigan, June 1991.