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# Using AERN Research Tools

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Alabama Entrepreneurial Research Network

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# AERN Center

- The AERN Center has numerous resources for:
  - assisting with starting a new business
  - helping existing businesses



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# AERN Sources

- Sources can be used for existing businesses...
    - Identify new customers
    - Possible areas of expansion
  - ...or for new businesses
    - Market potential
    - Business plan
    - Setting up the business
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# How to pick a possible business

- Look through the AERN resource  
*101 Best Businesses to Start*
  - Look at what businesses exist in a similar town (use yellow pages)
  - Think about what business you have experience in
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# Hardware Store

- How do I analyze?
  - Let's use some of the AERN sources to examine the potential for a hardware business in Aliceville.
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# Spending potential

- How big is my potential market?
    - Need to know:
      - How many households in Aliceville.
      - How much each household spends on hardware supplies.
    - Use two AERN sources to calculate.
      - *Community Sourcebook of ZIP Code Demographics*
        - Population & income by zip code
      - *Household Spending*
        - How much households spend on specific goods & services
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# Demographics by ZIP Code

From the *Community Sourcebook of ZIP Code*

*Demographics:*

- Aliceville zip code 35442
  - 2,146 households (2006 estimate)
  - \$26,140 median household income



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# AERN Resource

## *Household Spending:*

### *Who Spends How Much on What*



- Consumer Expenditure Survey by the Bureau of the Census
  - How much households spend on specific goods & services
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# AERN Resource

## *Household Spending*

- See sample pages at the publisher's website:

<http://www.newstrategist.com/store/files/Spend12.SamplePgs.pdf>

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# Spending Potential

\$51.29 avg. spending on plumbing  
per household at avg. income  
level for Aliceville

X

2,146 households =

**\$110,068**

Rough estimate of potential spending on plumbing  
for households in Aliceville, Ala. (ZIP Code 35442)

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# Spending Potential (cont.)

- Hardware store will also sell other items
    - Lawn, farm & garden
    - Paint & cleaning
    - Etc., Etc.
  - Can do a spending potential for all of these.
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# Additional Analysis

- Are there existing hardware stores in Aliceville?
  - Nearby areas?
  - What about Wal-Mart?
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# AERN Resource

## *Best Customers*

See sample pages at:

- <http://www.newstrategist.com/productdetails/BestCustomers3Samples.pdf>

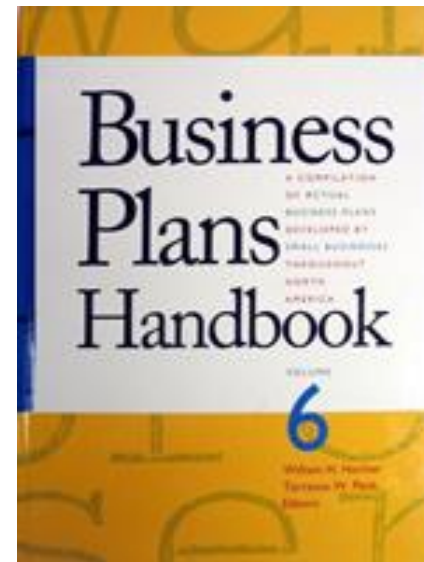


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# AERN Resource

## *Business Plans Handbook*

- Provides examples of actual business plans
  
- Focused on small businesses
  - Example
    - Oshkosh Hardware Store (in Vol. 1)
  
- Important components (partial list)
  - Description of business
  - Market definition
  - Marketing plan
  - Financial information



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# AERN Resource

## *Business Plan Pro*

Software package loaded on AERN computers.

Use to:

- See a b-plan for a Hardware store
  - Build your own b-plan
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# AERN Resource

## *Business Plan Pro*

- Sample business plans available at the Business Plan Pro website:

[http://www.paloalto.com/sample\\_business\\_plans/](http://www.paloalto.com/sample_business_plans/)

(Look in the box called Sample Plan Previews)

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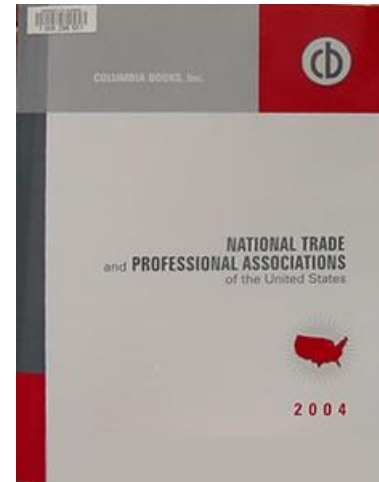


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# AERN Resource

## *National Trade and Professional Associations of the United States*

- Importance of trade associations
  - Networking
  - Access to specialized publications
  - Keep current with your industry
  - Specialized industry information



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# AERN Resource

## *National Trade and Professional Associations of the United States*

For our hardware example....

We can use this source to identify the North American Retail Hardware Association.

Visit their website at <http://www.nhra.org> to see tips and strategies, as well as training and business tools.

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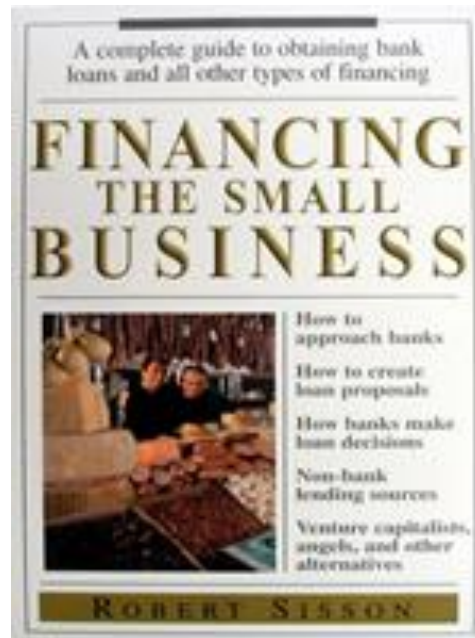
# Funding your business

- How do I get the \$\$ to get started?
  - Will the banks loan me the money to buy a business?
  - Do I have to put up collateral?
  - Etc., Etc., Etc.
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# AERN Resource

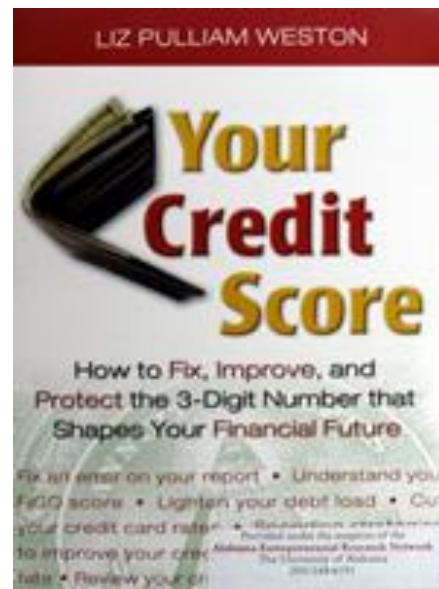
## *Financing the Small Business*



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# AERN Resource

## *Your Credit Score*



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# Financing Sources on the Web

- AERN website
    - <http://aern.cba.ua.edu>
      - Ask a Business Librarian
      - Email answered by us – i.e. the business librarians in the Angelo Bruno Business Library at The University of Alabama
  - SBA Alabama – Financing Page
    - <http://www.sba.gov/al/financing.html>
  - Southern Development Council
    - <http://www.sdcinc.org>
  - Alacom Finance
    - <http://www.alacom.com>
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# Another Web Resource - Alabama Virtual Library



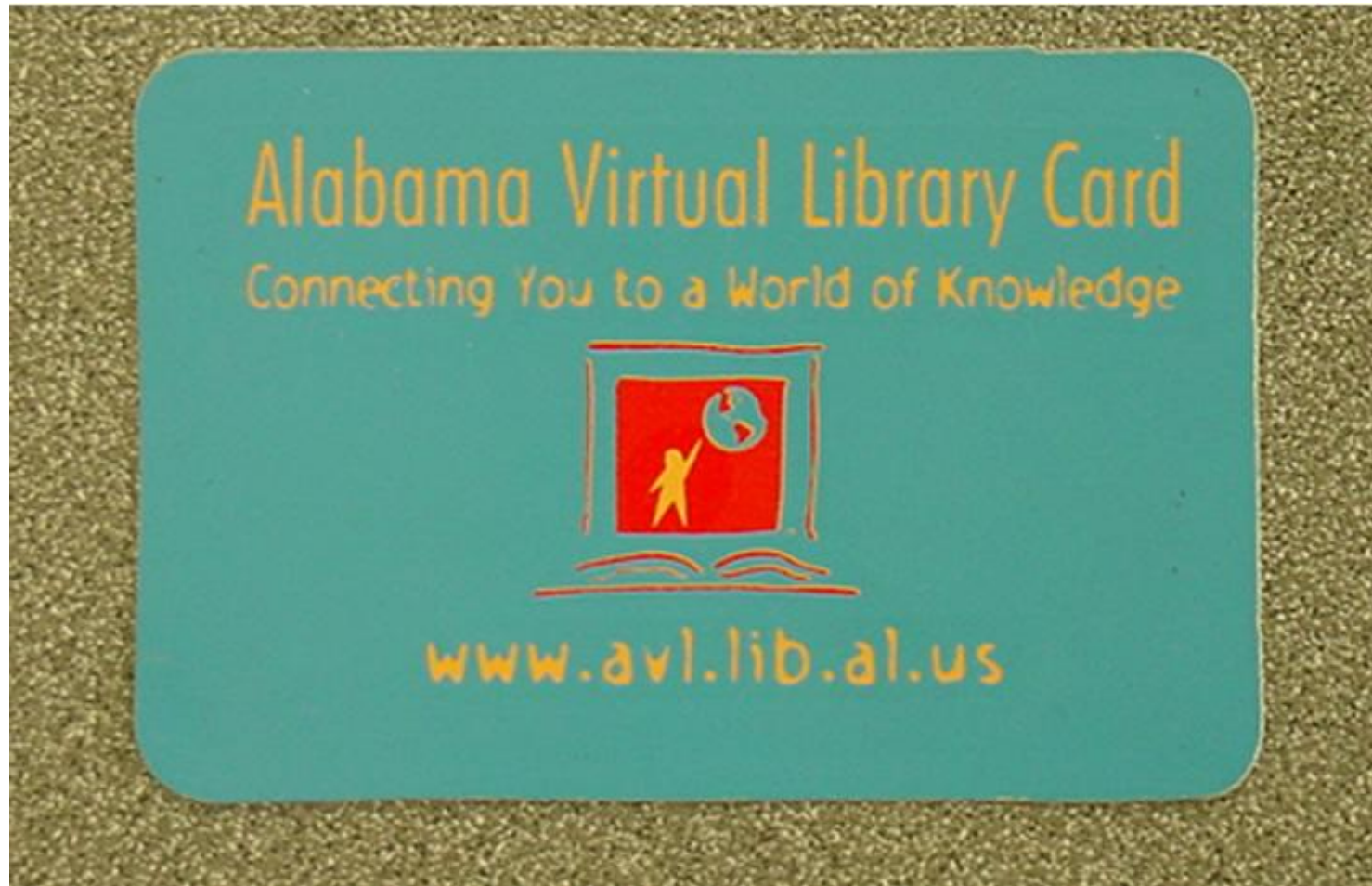
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# Alabama Virtual Library (AVL)

- Collection of databases for all ages and subjects.
  - Available for free to Alabama residents. Obtain your AVL card for password privileges from your local public library.
  - Useful business research databases in AVL
    - [Business Source Premier](#)
    - [Business & Company Resource Center](#)
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# AVL Card (free from your public library)



# Alabama Virtual Library

## Business & Company Resource Center



# Alabama Virtual Library

## Business & Company Resource Center

- Find Associations using “Advanced Search”



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Business & Company Resource Center website. The page title is "Business & Company Resource Center -- Associations Display Page". The browser address bar shows the URL: <http://galenet.galegroup.com/servlet/BCRC?as1=nursery&vrsn=unknown&ai:>. The website header includes the University of Alabama logo and the "Business & Company RESOURCE CENTER" title. Navigation tabs include Home, Company, Industry, Articles, and Advanced Search. A search bar contains the text "Company Search" and a "SEARCH" button. Below the search bar, there are links for "Print", "Email", "Mark this document", "Revise Search", and "< Results List". A horizontal menu of categories includes Company Profile, News/Magazines, Histories, Investment Reports, Financials, Rankings, Suits and Claims, Products, Industry Overview, and Associations. The search results show "Association 1 of 70". The main content area displays the following information for the Alabama Nursery and Landscape Association (ALNLA):

**Alabama Nursery and Landscape Association (ALNLA)**  
PO Box 9  
Auburn, AL 36831-0009 USA  
Phone: (334) 821-5148  
Fax: (334) 821-9111  
Email: [info@alna.org](mailto:info@alna.org)  
IIRI · <http://www.alna.org>

# Alabama Virtual Library

## Business Source Premier

The screenshot shows the Business Source Premier website in a Windows Internet Explorer browser window. The address bar displays the URL: <http://web.ebscohost.com/bsi/search?vid=1&hid=115&sid=fc9b1ada-6f69-4e>. The page title is "Business Source: Basic Search - Windows Internet Explorer".

The main content area features the "Business Source Premier" logo, powered by EBSCOhost. Navigation links include "Sign In", "Folder", "Preferences", and "Help". A "UNIV OF ALABAMA" link is also present. The search interface includes tabs for "Basic Search", "Advanced Search", and "Visual Search". The "Basic Search" tab is active, showing a "Find:" search box with "Search", "Clear", and "Search Tips" buttons. Below the search box are radio buttons for search criteria: "Keyword" (selected), "Industry", "Publication", "Company", "Author", and "Subject".

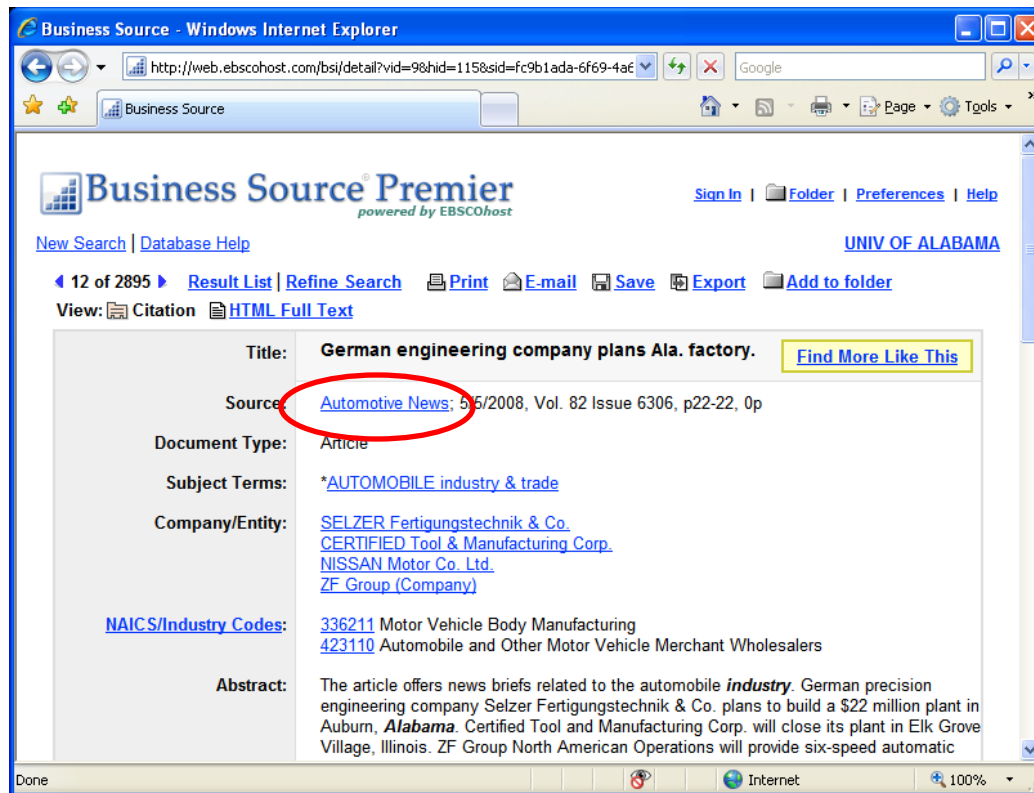
The "Browse:" section offers links to "Company Profiles" (Datamonitor companies...), "Industry Profiles" (Overview, market value...), "Country Reports" (Economics, political background...), and "Market Research Reports" (Market insight, emerging trends...). A "Top of Page" link is located at the bottom left.

The EBSCO HOST logo is centered at the bottom of the page. The browser's status bar at the bottom shows "Done", "Internet", and "100%" zoom level.

# Alabama Virtual Library

## Business Source Premier

- Find articles from thousands of sources



Business Source Premier  
powered by EBSCOhost

Sign In | Folder | Preferences | Help

New Search | Database Help

UNIV OF ALABAMA

12 of 2895 | Result List | Refine Search | Print | E-mail | Save | Export | Add to folder

View: Citation | HTML Full Text

**Title:** German engineering company plans Ala. factory. [Find More Like This](#)

**Source:** [Automotive News](#); 5/5/2008, Vol. 82 Issue 6306, p22-22, 0p

**Document Type:** Article

**Subject Terms:** \*AUTOMOBILE industry & trade

**Company/Entity:** [SELZER Fertigungstechnik & Co.](#)  
[CERTIFIED Tool & Manufacturing Corp.](#)  
[NISSAN Motor Co., Ltd.](#)  
[ZF Group \(Company\)](#)

**NAICS/Industry Codes:** [336211](#) Motor Vehicle Body Manufacturing  
[423110](#) Automobile and Other Motor Vehicle Merchant Wholesalers

**Abstract:** The article offers news briefs related to the automobile *industry*. German precision engineering company Selzer Fertigungstechnik & Co. plans to build a \$22 million plant in Auburn, **Alabama**. Certified Tool and Manufacturing Corp. will close its plant in Elk Grove Village, Illinois. ZF Group North American Operations will provide six-speed automatic



*Connecting Entrepreneurs to Resources*

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