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Helping Minority Businesses Find Major Opportunities

Successful minority entrepreneurs have long known that taking advantage of available networking opportunities and training is a key ingredient for growing their business.

Established by a presidential proclamation signed by President Ronald Reagan in 1983 and continued through [this year](#), the National Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week was created to honor some of the country's most innovative and emergent minority businesses nationwide. Since then, the U.S. Commerce Department's [U.S. Minority Business Development Agency](#) (@USMBDA) has built a conference around this national event to share learnings as well as celebrate successes, while other regional MDBA Business Centers hold

local MED Weeks around the country.

[National MED Week](#) is very special this year. If you are in the San Diego area this week, consider attending the [National Minority Supplier Development Council \(NMSDC\) Conference](#) which attracts more than 6,000 attendees interested in minority supplier diversity. For 2015, they are hosting National MED Week with a [specialty track "Powered by MBDA"](#) at the NMSDC Conference. Follow the conversation on [Twitter at #MEDWEEK](#).

Tools for Minority Businesses

According to the Census Bureau's 2007 [Survey of Business Owners](#), minority-owned businesses grew to 21.3 percent of the nation's businesses, employing 5.8 million persons (5.0 percent of all U.S. employees) and generating \$1.0 trillion in revenues or 3.4 percent of the nation's receipts.

Chock full of valuable resources such as a [Local Business Assistance Locator](#) to guided "wizards" to help you [Start a Business](#), [Access Financing](#), [Hire Employees](#), find [Taxes and Credits](#), protect your [Intellectual Property](#), learn about the new [Health Care Changes](#), and [Find Opportunities](#) for government contracting and other ideas for [Growing Your Business](#), BusinessUSA has assembled the very best in federal, state and local government resources that minority and other American businesses can use to fuel their growth.

You will want to bookmark this page to find all our [Business Resources and Tools](#).

Disability Employment Awareness for Businesses

In honor of the 70th anniversary of [National Disability Employment Awareness Month \(NDEAM\)](#) this month, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) provides a number of [Ideas for Employers](#) to "*celebrate the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities.*"

2015 is also the [25th anniversary](#) of the Americans with Disabilities Act or ADA. Since complying with ADA for their employees and customers can be rife with misconceptions for business owners, DOL has prepared this helpful Fact Sheet: "[Employers and the ADA: Myths and Facts](#)" to demystify ADA compliance for businesses.

Financing Minority Businesses

Finding the appropriate financing to fund your business growth is tricky at the best of times and can present a significant challenge for minority business owners.

Fortunately, there is a variety of public and private sector alternatives available. Check out the [Top 10 Grants Available to Black and Minority Business Owners](#) for sources of minority business grants.

In "6 Places to Find Small Business Loans for Minorities (Plus 3 Places to Get Help)," the author explains what is considered a minority business for lending purposes and provides some of the best places to seek out small business loans for minorities, including loans from the SBA, NMSDC and Accion U.S. Network.

A Certified Advantage in Government Contracts

Minority-owned small businesses have some advantages when it comes to participating in federal contracts. The U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has an [8\(a\) Business Development program](#) which can help qualifying minority-owned firms develop and grow their businesses through one-to-one counseling, training workshops, and management and technical guidance. The 8(a) program also provides access to government contracting opportunities, allowing these minority businesses to become solid competitors in the federal marketplace. Learn more about [minority businesses and the 8\(a\) program](#).

Participation in federal and state minority set-aside contracts often requires certification. Small businesses seeking minority business certification should review [MBDA's page on how certifications can help grow your business](#). In addition to providing a link to other federal and state certifying agencies, they recommend contacting the [National Minority Supplier Development Council \(NMSDC\)](#), for info on [Minority Business Enterprise \(MBE\) Certification](#).

Stay Connected!

Are you following us on Twitter? If not, you've missed a lot of great information! Check out the **Best 5 Tweets** from the past week below. Follow us at [@BizUSA](#).

1. Check out [@SBAgov's new #cybersecurity resources for #smallbusiness](#) page → [#CyberAware](#) cc [@STOPTHINKCONNECT](#): [\[Tweet\]](#)
2. Hey, [#smallbiz](#) owners! Here are 6 supportive communities you should join: [\[Tweet\]](#)
3. [#ICYMI](#): Trans-Pacific Partnership [#Trade Deal](#) Is Reached [@nytimes](#) [@TradeGov](#) [#TPP](#)

@CommerceGov: [\[Tweet\]](#)

4. #SocialMedia plays a huge role in #onlinemarketing. Here are 7 trends to watch for 2016: [\[Tweet\]](#)

5. Explore nearly 40 years of patent #data w/ @USPTO's new PatentsView tool: [\[Tweet\]](#)

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