

How to do archival and written record research

1. Determine what documents are available to you.
2. Determine what areas you are still lacking research. What demographic or geographic questions do you need answers to?
3. Take notes while you scan the information. Use a journal or field book to record thoughts, facts, figures, statistics, trends, quotes, interesting nuggets of information, needs, technology advances that could affect your business, etc.
4. Scan through journal and highlight areas that identify need states, drivers in the market, areas of opportunity, improvement.
5. If the highlighted area provokes any thoughts of new product, service or business ideas or improvements to existing products, services or businesses, record on an idea sheet (see next page).
6. Conduct a brainstorming session to target those identified need states or formulate information into an interview discussion guide to be used in further research.

Places to Look:

- Libraries
- Courthouse
- Government organizations
- Local organizations (Chamber of Commerce)

Possible Areas to Explore

Old maps of the area	Censuses
Demographic breakdown of area	Marriage certificates
Birth records	Death records
Building licenses issued	Zoning maps
Industry analysis	Newspaper files
Courthouse records	Growth rates of the population
Growth rates of businesses	Types of industries in an area