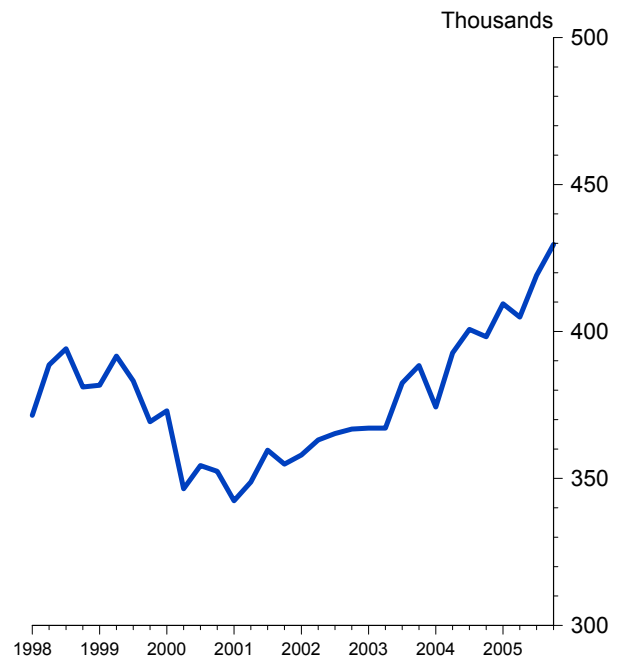


## Small Business Quarterly ♦ 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2005

- The number of small businesses in BC (excluding self-employed persons without paid help) grew 1.2% on average in 2005, including a 2.6% jump in the fourth quarter compared to the same period in 2004. The most significant growth in the fourth quarter was in the number of micro-businesses with fewer than five employees. The count of businesses in this group climbed 4.6%.
- There were 7.9% more self-employed workers in the province in the fourth quarter of 2005 compared to the same period a year earlier. The count of both self-employed with (+12.3%) and without (+6.0%) paid help experienced substantial increases. The number of self-employed in BC has risen in each quarter since the first quarter of 2001. The average number of self-employed in 2005 was up 6.2% compared to 2004.
- Small business employment in the province rose 1.4% in 2005, compared to 2.1% for overall employment. In the fourth quarter, employment in small businesses climbed 1.9%. The fastest growth was in the number of jobs in businesses with 20-49 employees (+3.4%) as employment growth in businesses with fewer than 20 employees was only 1.1%.
- Bankruptcies continued to decline in 2005, with business bankruptcies plunging 14.7%, while consumer bankruptcies fell 2.5%. This includes drops in the fourth quarter for both business (-22.8%) and consumer (-4.3%) bankruptcies.
- New BC business incorporations averaged an increase of 12.4% in 2005, including a 12.2% jump in the fourth quarter.
- The value of both commercial (+53.6%) and industrial (+5.5%) building permits were higher in 2005 compared to a year earlier. In the fourth quarter, the value of commercial permits in the province was up 35.2%, but there was a 9.0% drop in the value of industrial permits.
- The number of chartered bank business loans for less than \$200,000 (the size most likely to be pursued by small business) slumped 2.2% in 2005, including an 8.9% drop in the fourth quarter.

There has been a significant increase in the number of self-employed in British Columbia



## The Business Gateway

### By Paul Gosh

Building a solid business plan or researching a business idea can be both challenging and rewarding. There is, of course, the development of the entrepreneurial idea that may come in a flash of insight or after long consideration. Whether the starting point was an invention, the strong desire to be your own boss, or anything in between, there is little argument that you need to do your homework before committing your time, energy and money to the venture.

Over the years, BC Stats has been approached by many hundreds of clients engaged in researching a business plan. In some cases we have developed standard information products that can be plucked off the shelves. In others, our depth of knowledge of the data sources can shorten your search. Sometimes we will tell you to stop looking for data that does not exist in the public domain. Generally we will be of some help.

As often as not, your inspiration and need for figures will come outside of our regular business hours. With the growing array of tools and pages on our web site, this is not necessarily a problem. While many of the pages have long existed, we recently developed a tool we call the *business gateway* to better help you self-serve. The business gateway is a web page that presents links to dozens of useful pages and sites, all organized under headings intended to speed up your search for business planning information and resources. When looking at this page you will soon realize that we have designed it from your viewpoint - as you step through the headings, subtext and links, it should read a

little like your own thoughts, for example:

#### My Customers Are . . .

– Other Businesses

- Sell to BC manufacturers

In this case the underlined link - [Sell to BC manufacturers](#) - takes you to the British Columbia Manufacturers' Directory site where you can search for companies based on location, industry, size, and many more characteristics.

It may be that not all the information you require is posted to our site or others that we link to. Some resources are available only at libraries or by way of purchase. BC Stats maintains a subscription site that is accessible through many public and academic libraries in the province. We also have a WebStore and service custom requests for a fee. Many basic requests and some advice are freely available from Data Services at BC Stats.

## The Business Gateway

### My Business

The place to start your research is with the classification systems that we use to delineate industries, occupations, goods (products), services, and geographic units. If there isn't a code for it, there is little chance for data in the public domain. First off, find the most appropriate industry code under the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Do this using the search routine on Statistics Canada's site by clicking on our first link: [What industry am I in?](#) Note both the code and the name. Once you have these, the search for data becomes greatly simplified.



BC STATS



A-Z Index ▶  
Contact Us ▶



BC Government Home

BC Stats Publications

- [Business Plan \(PDF\)](#)
- [BC Small Business Profile \(PDF\)](#)
- [Small & Medium-Sized Exporters \(PDF\)](#)
- [Small Business Quarterly](#)
- [Business Indicators](#)

Other Business Resources

- [Industry Canada Small Business Profiles](#)
- [BC Manufacturer's Directory](#)
- [Major Projects Inventory](#)

SUBJECTS

Quick access to BC Stats' subject areas

- ➔ [Aboriginal Peoples](#)
- ➔ [Business & Industry](#)
- ➔ [Census Data](#)
- ➔ [Economic Statistics](#)
- ➔ [Exports & Imports](#)
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## The Business Gateway

For more information contact [Paul Gosh](#) (250) 387-9221

### My Business

- [What industry am I in?](#)
- [How many similar firms are there?](#)
- [Compare to industry norms](#)
- [Classification systems \(Statistics Canada\)](#)

### Writing a Business Plan

- [Our business planning guide](#)
- [Lots of good info on our site](#)
- [Small business BC's FAQ page](#)
- [Our small business page](#)
- [Compare to industry norms](#)
- [Resources for business on the BC site](#)
- [Resources for business on the federal site](#)
- [Consumer Trends Report](#)
- [Learn about various coding schemes](#)

### Business Environment

- [Our weekly synopsis](#)
- [Some of our periodicals will be useful](#)
- [Our small business quarterly](#) is in our store
- [Our free community summary](#)
- [Our regional economic periodical](#) is in our store
- [Major projects provide a significant local boost](#)

### My Customers Are...

- Individuals (locals)
  - [Consumer Trends Report](#)
  - [Spending patterns \(Statistics Canada\)](#)
  - [Demographic details for neighbourhoods, communities and regions](#)
  - [Summary community profiles \(Statistics Canada\)](#)
  - [What areas are growing fastest?](#)
  - [Small area pop projections by age and sex](#) are in our store

### —Individuals (visitors)

- [Our tourism page](#)
- [Annual and seasonal patterns](#)

### —Other Businesses

- [Summary by region and size \(much more detail available\)](#)
- [Sell to BC manufacturers](#)

### —Foreign Buyers

- [Exports - \\$ values only \(free at Industry Canada\)](#)
- [Quantity and value](#) (we query our database for a fee)

### —Government

- [Doing business with the BC government](#)
- [Local governments in BC](#)
- [Selling to the federal government](#)

### My Products Are...

### —Classified as

- [Canadian export codes \(Statistics Canada\)](#)
- [Canadian import codes \(CBSA\)](#)
- [U.S. export codes](#)
- [U.S. import codes](#)
- [Standard classification of goods \(Statistics Canada\)](#)

### My Suppliers Are...

- [Find local suppliers](#)
- [Located outside Canada \(\\$ Value data only\)](#)
- [Located outside Canada](#) (I am willing to pay for quantity and value data)

### My Business Thrives on...

- [Births, deaths or marriages](#)
- [Construction \(homes or buildings\)](#)
- [Construction \(major projects\)](#)
- [Crime](#)
- [Exports or imports](#)
- [Fishing, hunting or trapping](#)
- [High technology](#)
- [Population growth \(or decline\)](#)
- [Tourism](#)
- [Vehicles \(licenced\)](#)
- [Vehicle traffic](#)
- [Weather \(norms\)](#)

### Open a New Location!

- [What areas are growing fastest?](#)
- [Demographic details for neighbourhoods, communities and regions](#)
- [We can map data for you](#)
- [We can profile a location for you](#)
- [Tetrad can profile a location for you](#)
- [Vehicle traffic](#)

### My Workers

- [Our labour and income page](#)
- [An overview of the labour market](#)
- [Our earnings periodical](#) is for subscribers or single issue purchasers
- [Our employment periodical](#) is for subscribers or single issue purchasers

### Didn't find it here?

- [We service requests for a fee](#)
- [Talk to us, or email us](#)

↑ Top

Numbers of business establishments by industry and region provide some indication of saturation. Summary figures are posted at our link: [How many similar firms are there?](#)

The most current review of profitability, balance sheet and financial ratios comes from the small business profiles that can be found, by detailed industry for several years and provinces, through our link: [Compare to industry norms.](#)

### Writing a Business Plan

The single most important element for success is a proper, current plan that is the basis for operations. The random pursuit of opportunity relies on luck, which sooner or later fails.

[Our business planning guide](#) has a numbers focus - coding schemes, data and information resources. There are links to other informative sites including ones that simplify start-up and filing requirements - the technical and legal side of getting into and staying in business.

### Business Environment

While mindful execution of the plan is central to success, it is essential to be constantly on watch for external shocks. These may be positive or negative and the difference may depend upon your reaction. Some are temporary, while others more permanently alter business conditions. Some arise dramatically and others form so incrementally that they are sometimes missed from the plan.

We have a number of reports and publications to help keep you abreast of conditions in British Columbia and its regions. [Our weekly synopsis](#), *Infoline*, is the most widely read document we produce and can form part of any basic news kit for business leaders.

### My Customers Are . . .

Successful businesses understand and anticipate their customers. They pitch for maximum penetration in each market segment and analyze the demographics of current and potential customer groups. If sales are not keeping pace with growth in the market place, then you are losing ground - whether to changing market demand or more nimble competition - and need to address the problem.

The [Consumer Trends Report](#) and [Spending patterns](#) look at consumer behaviour. [Demographic details for neighbourhoods, communities and regions](#) takes you to our census pages. Our small area population projections will tell you [what areas are growing the fastest](#) so that you can get out in front of the growth curve or anticipate a flat or falling market.

If your receipts are augmented by visitors then there is some useful information on [our tourism page](#). Knowing [annual and seasonal expenditure patterns](#) can help you manage the tourism-related part of your business.

We can help you [sell to BC manufacturers](#) or look for foreign buyers. There is also a section on [doing business with the BC government, local governments in BC](#) or the [federal government](#).

### My Products Are . . . —Classified as

Knowing the correct product classification for your goods will greatly ease the search for production, export and import figures.

### My Suppliers Are . . .

We can help you [find local suppliers](#) which should help pare transportation and inventory costs. Our on-line direc-

tory makes it easy to narrow your search right down to your own community.

### **My Business Thrives on . . .**

When you know just what invigorates your business it may be possible to sleuth out hot spots that should figure into your expansion plans. We have set out a dozen links by way of example. If you want more, or something else, there is the internet or you could contact Data Services at BC Stats.

### **Open a New Location!**

The risk of opening a new location can be reduced by making informed choices.

You might look first at [what areas are growing fastest](#). Each year BC Stats projects population and households for areas in British Columbia. Shouldn't you be using the same quality data that the health and education ministries rely on?

Perhaps you are looking for concentrations of particular demographic characteristics in your new location. [We can](#)

[map data for you](#) to pinpoint areas that deserve a more rigorous examination of [demographic details](#) and Data Services can provide detailed profiles of any area in the province.

### **My Workers**

[Our labour and income page](#) highlights earnings and labour market information available through BC Stats.

### **Didn't find it here?**

If your requirements go beyond our web site or complimentary service, [we service requests for a fee](#). You can also [search](#) our wider web site. When you want to [talk to us, or email us](#) you have direct access to our individual phone numbers and email addresses for every person in the organization. However, initial contact should be made with Data Services:

(250) 387-0327

bc.stats@gov.bc.ca

**Recent Feature Articles Listed by Issue Number**

- 05-4:** *'The Business Gateway'*  
(released Mar 2006)
- 05-3:** *'BC Restaurants: An Industry Overview'*  
(released Dec 2005)
- 05-2:** *'Effects of Canadian Dollar Mixed for Small Business'*  
(released Oct 2005)
- 05-1:** *'Small Businesses that Export'*  
(released Jun 2005)
- 04-4:** *'Small Business Outlook'*  
(released Mar 2004)
- 04-3:** *'Lumber Dispute Big Issue for Small Business'*  
(released Dec 2004)
- 04-2:** *'Small Business and Older Workers'*  
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- 04-1:** *'Small Business Suffers Gas Pains'*  
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- 03-4:** *'Small Business is Embracing the Internet'*  
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- 03-3:** *'Cost of Insurance is the Top Concern for Small Business in BC'*  
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- 03-2:** *'Chartered Bank Business Loans Continue to Decline'*  
(released Sep 2003)
- 03-1:** *'Moonlighting in British Columbia'*  
(released Jun 2003)
- 02-4:** *'Stay-at-Home Workers'*  
(released Mar 2003)
- 02-3:** *'Profile of Women Entrepreneurs'*  
(released Jan 2003)
- 02-2:** *'A Comparison of Small Business Size, 1993 and 2001'* (released Sep 2002)
- 02-1:** *'Will Retiring Boomers Lead to Labour Bust?'* (released Jun 2002)
- 01-4:** *'Expectations of Manufacturers Showing Signs of Improvement'*  
(released Mar 2002)
- 01-3:** *'Business and Consumer Bankruptcies are on the Rise in BC'*  
(released Jan 2002)
- 01-2:** *'The Benefits and Costs of a Higher Minimum Wage'* (released Nov 2001)
- 01-1:** *'Small Business On-Line: Internet Use Among SMEs'* (released Sep 2001)
- 00-4:** *'Co-operatives Grew Steadily Throughout the 1990s'* (released May 2001)
- 00-3:** *'Profile of Self-Employed in British Columbia'* (released Mar 2001)
- 00-2:** *'Latest Small Business Employment Numbers Show Three Year Changes'* (released Jan 2001)
- 00-1:** *'Some Distinctive Features of The Small Business Workplace'*  
(released Oct 2000)
- 99-4:** *'Transfers of Corporate Charters to Other Provinces Suggest Business Migration From British Columbia'*  
(released Jul 2000)
- 99-3:** *'755 Thousand British Columbians Rely On Small Businesses For Jobs'* (released Mar 2000)
- 99-2:** *'A Quarter of All Employees In British Columbia Work For Small Employers'* (released Nov 1999)
- 99-1:** *'Self-Employment In British Columbia Takes On New Profile'*  
(released Sep 1999)