

How to Build A Powerful Online Small Business Resource Center

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2017 Spring Conference

nefma.org

Increasing Small Business Revenue

Content • Sales Support • Research



2017 Spring Conference

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Research Objective

Help marketers better understand how to maximize SMB resource center (RC) ROI

- The role of resource centers across the sales cycle
- The impact of resource centers
- Resource center visit frequency, duration, behaviors and motivators
- Topic and format preferences
- What SMBs value in a resource center
- Individual resource center ratings
- Best practices in resource center development



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Resource Center Definition

The following questions are on the subject of business resource centers such as the AmEx OPEN Forum, the Intuit QuickBooks Small Business Center and the Microsoft SMB Blog. They are places where sponsoring companies provide advice and tips on managing a business, as opposed to information on the company's products and services.

The image displays three screenshots of business resource centers. On the left is the OfficeMax Business Solutions Center, featuring a search bar, navigation tabs, and a featured article titled '7 Social Media Marketing Trends That Will Dominate 2017'. In the middle is the PayPal Business Resource Center, which includes a search bar and a featured article about managing business. On the right is the QuickBooks Resource Center, offering 'Free resources for running your business' with categories like Cash Flow, Expenses, and Inventory. The QuickBooks page also includes a 'Buy Now' button and a 'Sign Up' button.

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Methodology

1 How

- 15-minute online survey via the Bredin.com/SMBPulse

2 Who

- 657 principals of U.S. companies with <500 employees
- Of whom 297 visit resource centers a few times a year or more (5.5%+/- CI)
 - 102 with <20 employees (97.7% weighting)
 - 101 with 20-99 employees (1.9% weighting)
 - 94 with 100-500 employees (.3% weighting)
- Any industry

3 When

- June 15 – 20, 2016



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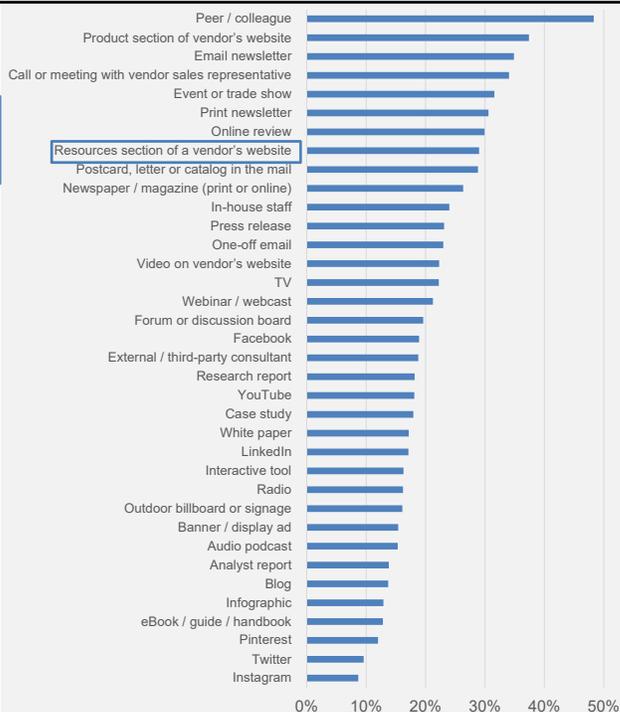
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Awareness

Resource centers play an important role in driving awareness of new products and services for SMBs...

On a scale of 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely), please rate how likely you are to **first learn** about products or services for your business via each of these specific sources / formats.

n=318
Top-two box

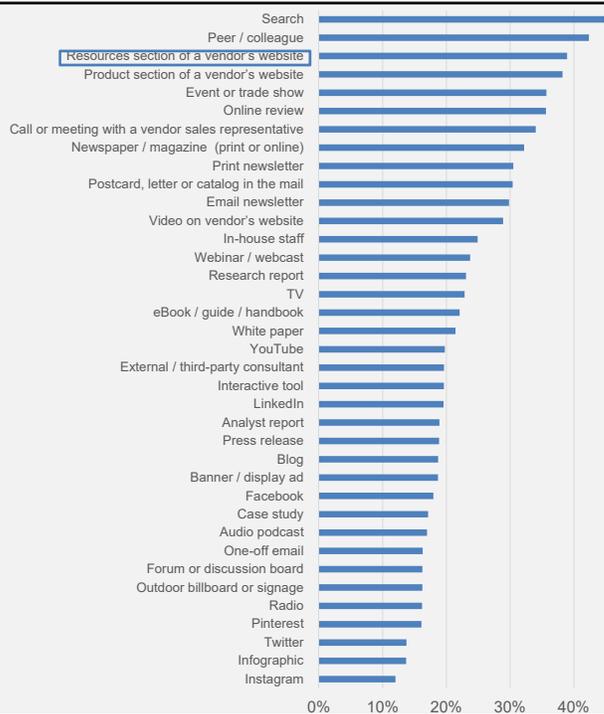


Research

...even more so in research...

On a scale of 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely), please rate how likely you are to use each of these sources / formats when you are **researching** products or services for your business.

n=318
Top-two box

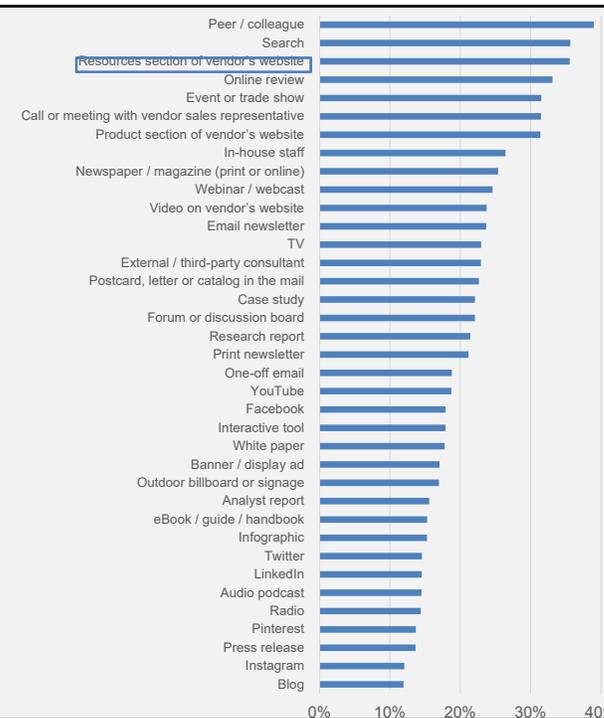


Purchase

...and in enabling SMBs to make a final purchase decision.

On a scale of 1 (very unlikely) to 5 (very likely), please rate how likely you are to use each of these sources / formats to **make a purchase decision** on products or services for your business.

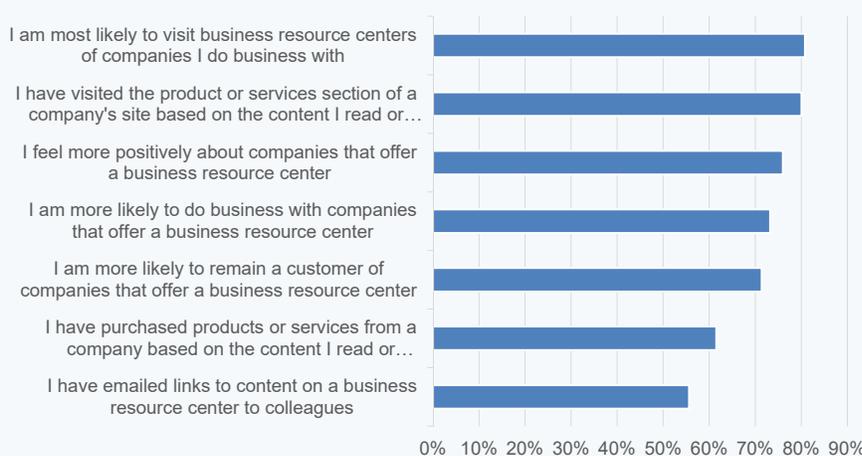
n=318
Top-two box



Resource Center Impact

A resource center can drive traffic, transactions and trust

Please indicate whether you agree or not with each of these statements (% yes):

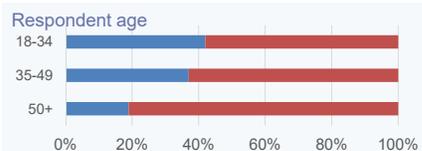
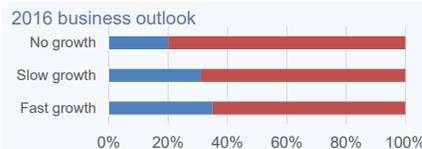
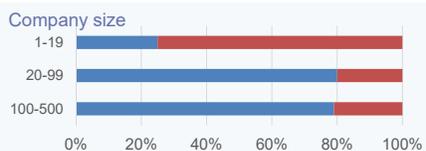
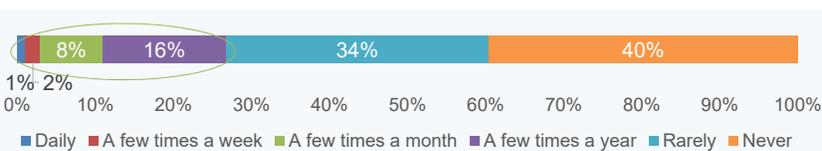


n=varies
% yes

Visit Frequency

1 in 4 SMBs visit a resource center a few times a year or more

Which best describes how often you visit business resource centers?



n=657

Topic Preferences: Company Size

SMBs with >20 employees are more interested in every topic...

On a scale of 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (extremely likely), please rate how likely you are to visit a business resource center to learn more about each of these topics:



Topic Preferences: Respondent Age

...as, generally, are younger entrepreneurs...

On a scale of 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (extremely likely), please rate how likely you are to visit a business resource center to learn more about each of these topics:



Topic Preferences: 2016 Business Outlook

...and, generally, those who expect growth in 2016

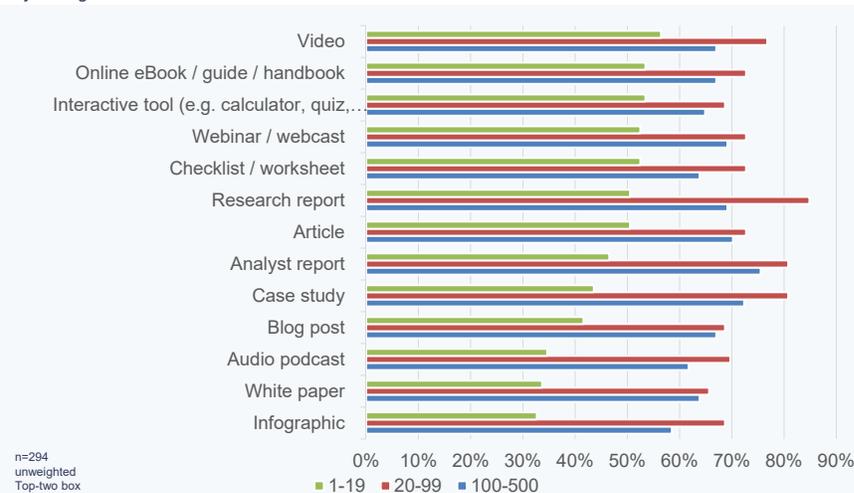
On a scale of 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (extremely likely), please rate how likely you are to visit a business resource center to learn more about each of these topics:



Format Preferences: Company Size

SMBs with >20 employees are more interested in every format

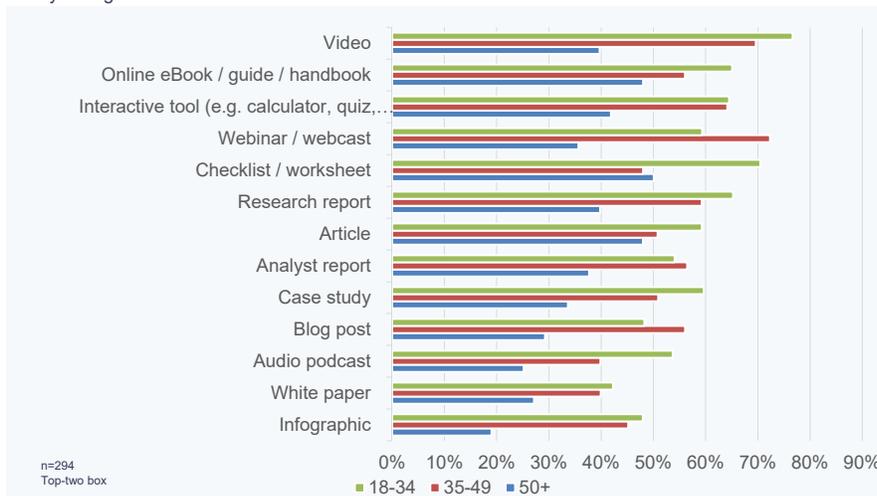
On a scale of 1 (I do not like at all) to 5 (I like very much), please rate each of these types of content that you might find on a business resource center:



Format Preferences: Respondent Age

Format preference generally decreases with age

On a scale of 1 (I do not like at all) to 5 (I like very much), please rate each of these types of content that you might find on a business resource center:



Content Mix: Company Size

The plurality of SMBs want an equal mix of advice and product information

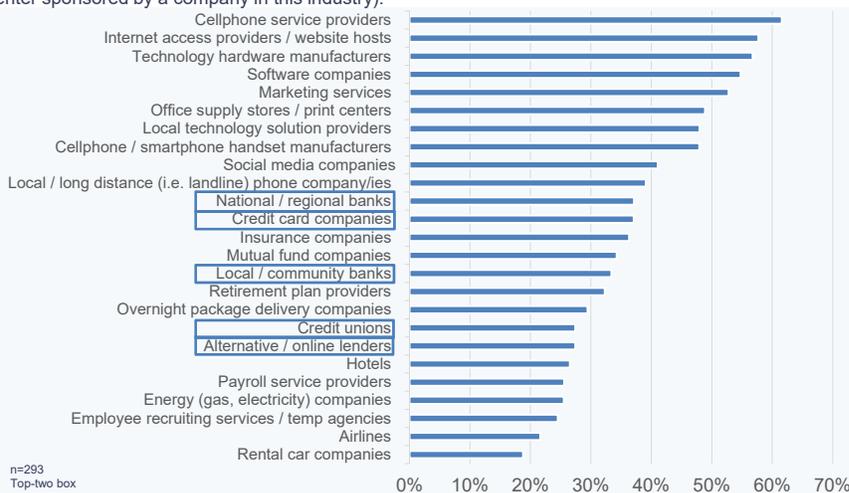
Which combination of business management tips and advice, and information about the sponsoring company's products and services, do you prefer in a business resource center?



Preferred Industry Sponsors

SMBs most want an RC from cellphone service providers

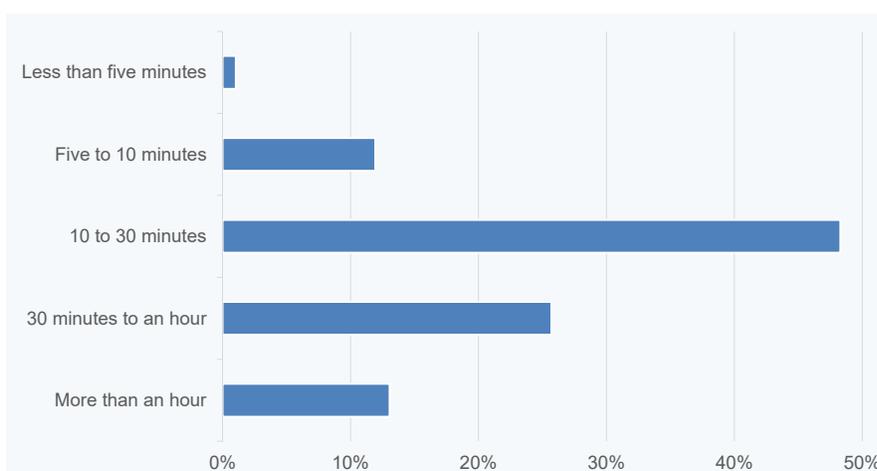
Please rate each of these industries on a scale of 1 (I have no interest in visiting a business resource center sponsored by a company in this industry) to 5 (I am very interested in visiting a business resource center sponsored by a company in this industry).



Visit Duration

85% of SMBs spend at least 10 minutes per RC visit

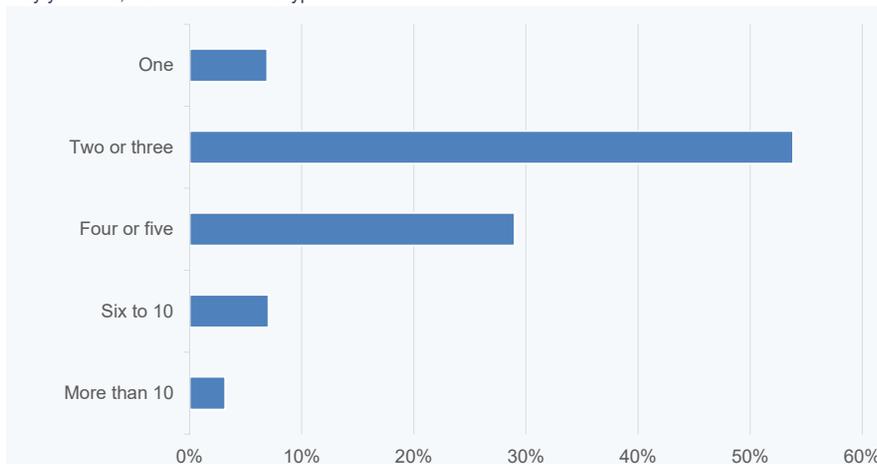
How long would you say you spend on a typical visit to a business resource center?



Content Consumption

9 in 10 SMBs consume multiple content elements per visit

How many different content elements (such as articles, videos, blog posts, quizzes etc.) would you say you read, watch or take on a typical visit to a business resource center?

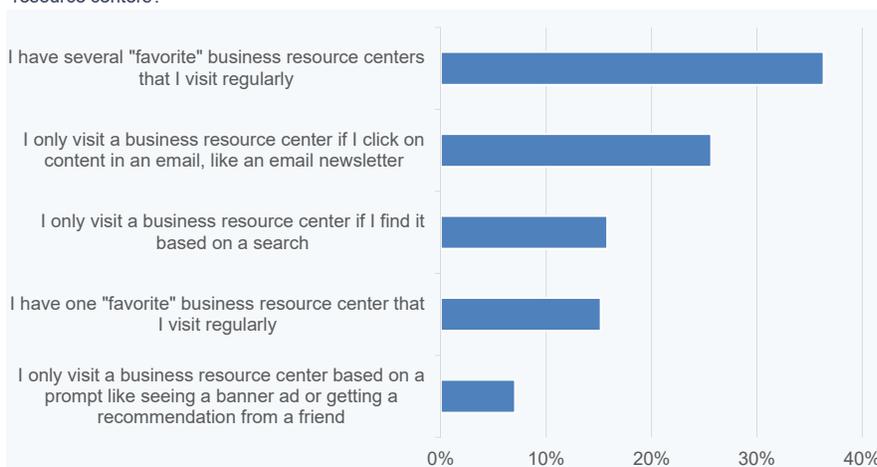


n=292

Visit Behaviors

More than one third of SMBs have several "favorite" resource centers

Which one statement best describes the way you engage with, or are motivated to visit, business resource centers?

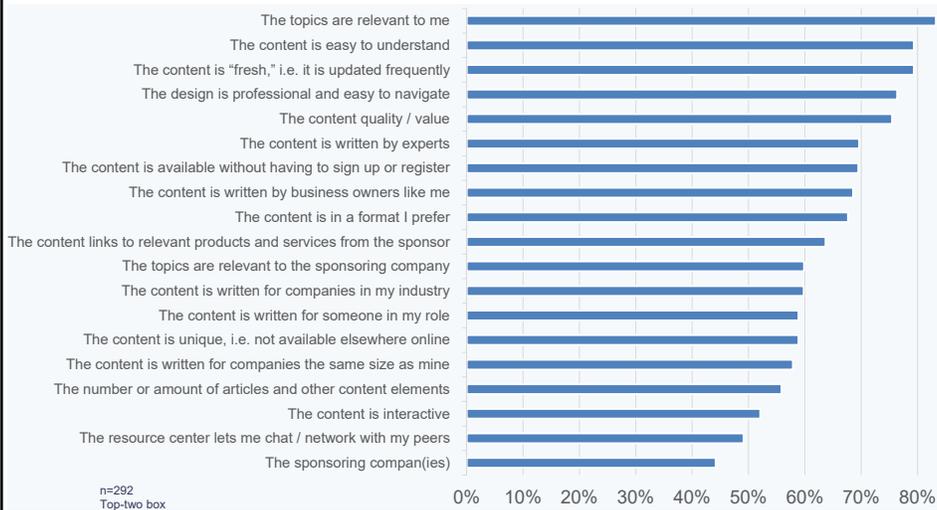


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What SMBs Value in Resource Centers

SMBs want relevant, easy to understand, and fresh content

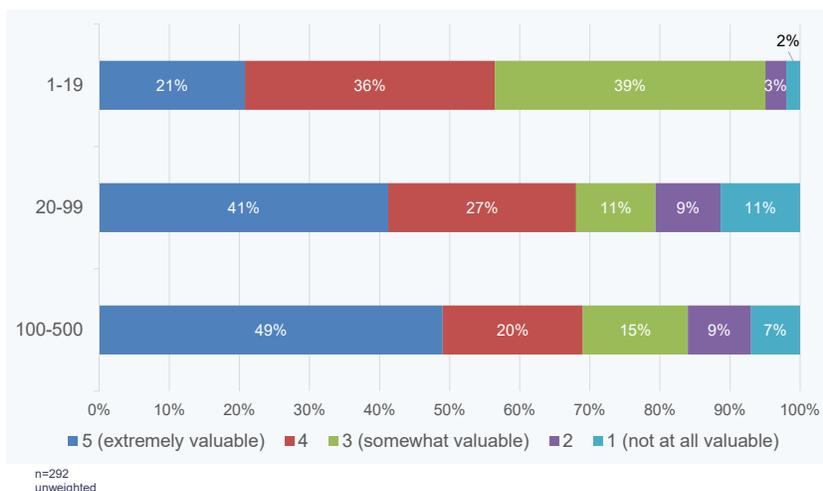
On a scale of 1 (not at all important) to 5 (extremely important), please rate each of these aspects of business resource centers:



Content Value: Company Size

Satisfaction with RC content increases with company size...

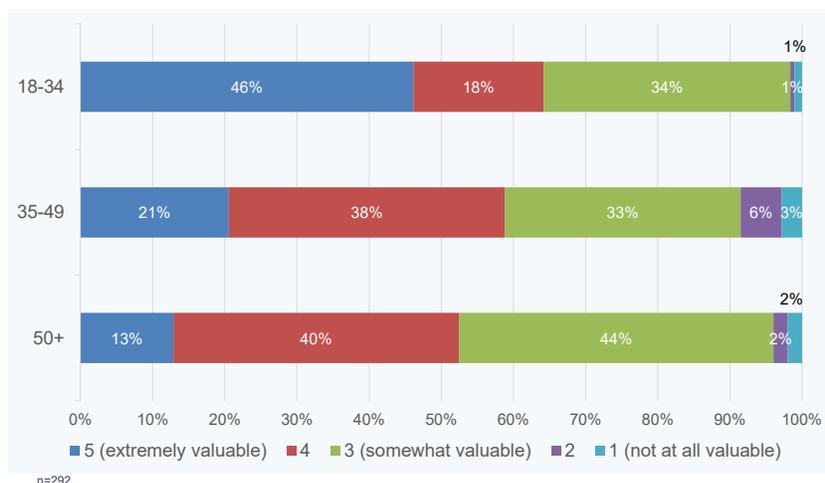
On a scale of 1 (not at all valuable) to 5 (extremely valuable), how valuable in general would you say are the tips and advice on business resource centers?



Content Value: Respondent Age

...but decreases with age

On a scale of 1 (not at all valuable) to 5 (extremely valuable), how valuable in general would you say are the tips and advice on business resource centers?



Resource Center Positives

Not surprisingly, SMBs most like the quality of RC content

What do you find particularly good or useful about business resource center(s)?

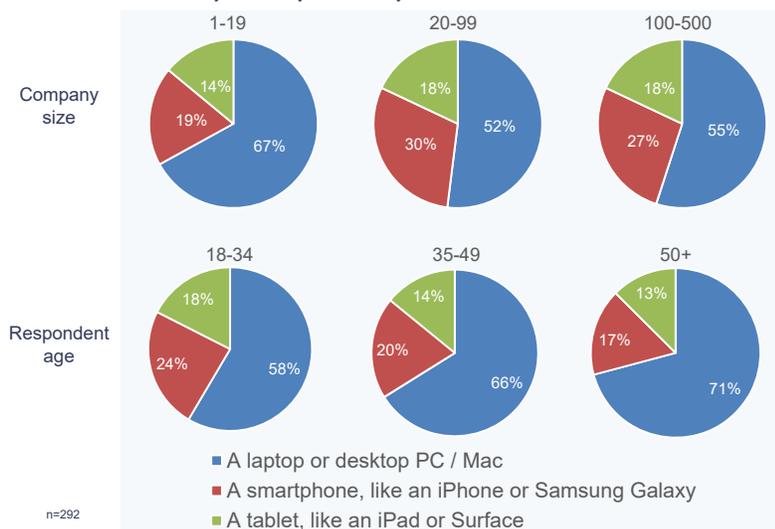


n=135

Device Preference

SMBs are most likely to use their laptop / desktop to visit an RC

What kind of device do you usually use when you visit a business resource center?

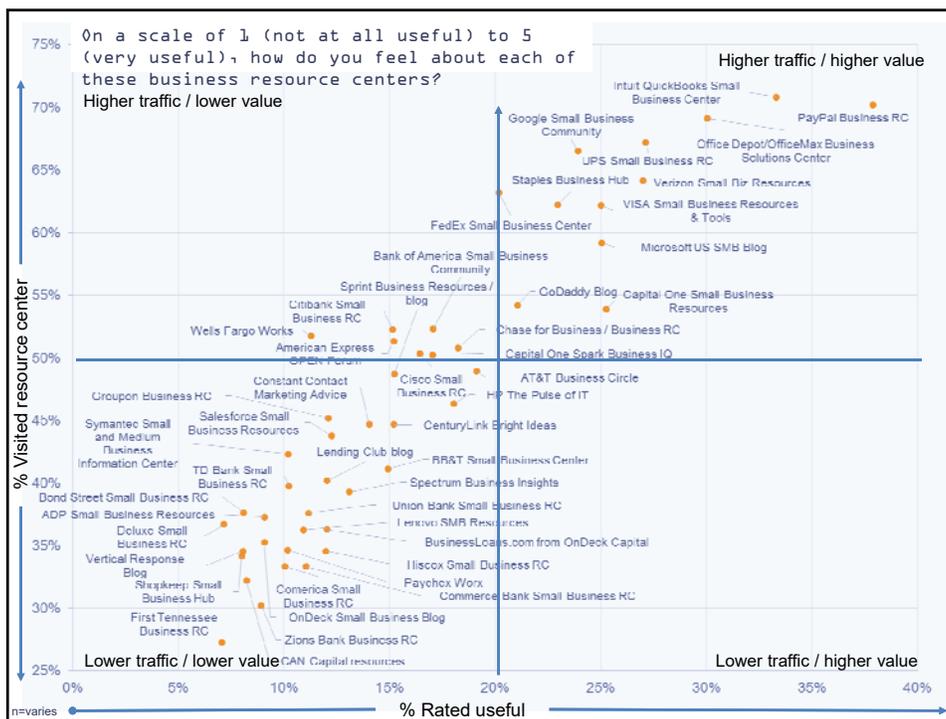


Recently Visited Resource Centers

The Verizon, AmEx OPEN and Microsoft RCs are top of mind

Which, if any, business resource center(s) have you been to recently?





Resource Center Development Best Practices: 7 Tips

- 1 Know your audience(s): title, company size, industry, pain points
 - Focus your topics on your brand domain
- 2
 - Keep topics tightly focused
 - Include an industry focus where possible
- 3 Test different topics and formats
 - Make it easy to link from piece to piece
 - Longer form content works better with larger companies
- 4 Focus on content quality
 - Relevant, actionable, easy to understand, current
 - Make your brand the hero (internal SME bylines only)
- 5 Ensure a good mix of advice and product / service information
- 6 Develop content to support the entire sales cycle
- 7 Promote your site actively
 - Email newsletter, search, social media
 - Capture and follow up on leads

Thank You



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