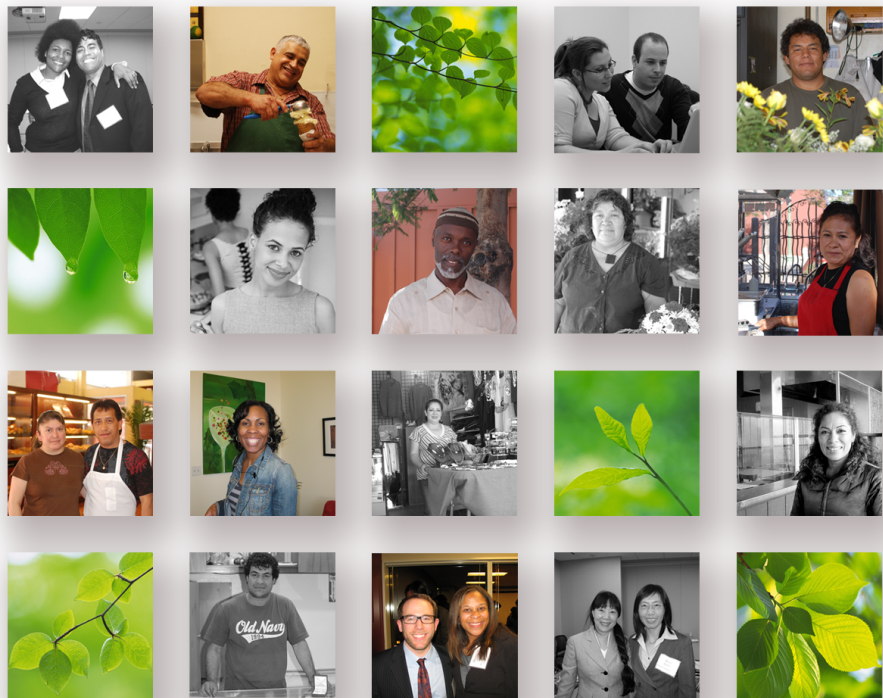


Mobile Entrepreneurship Toolkit Overview



Centro Community Partners
825 Washington Street, Suite 228
Oakland, CA 94607
www.centrocommunity.org

October 2013

Centro Community Partners' (Centro) new Mobile Business Toolkit (Toolkit) provides underserved youth and adult entrepreneurs with affordable, high-impact enterprise-building tools. The Toolkit helps entrepreneurs develop a basic business plan, assess their creditworthiness, and determine which alternative lenders best suit their needs. These innovative products are designed to achieve the following objectives:

- **Provide Adaptable and Scalable Solution to Access Entrepreneurship Education:** Although training and development is available, it is not very accessible to underserved individuals. The Toolkit is able to reach millions of potential and existing entrepreneurs in rural and urban areas through mobile technologies.
- **Reduce Costs of Entrepreneurship Training:** The cost for Microenterprise Development Organizations (MDOs) to provide entrepreneurship training is high, with a nationwide average of \$4,330 per entrepreneur and an average of \$7,050 for clients who receives significant services. (The Aspen Institute/Field U.S. Microenterprise Census Highlights: FY2011 Data) The Toolkit dramatically lowers the cost of entrepreneur training to as low as \$10 per user for both basic and advance entrepreneurship education.
- **Reduce Transaction Costs for Microfinance Institutions (MFIs):** Access to capital and financial services inclusion are significant challenges for MFIs, due in large part to the transaction costs for the administration of microcredit. The Toolkit increases the capacity of MFIs and lowers their transaction costs by helping potential borrowers determine which MFI is most appropriate for their needs and, if necessary, identify ways to improve the likelihood of being approved for a loan. As a result, the Toolkit increases the pool of qualified loan applicants for MFIs while decreasing the length of the pre-loan credit approval process from days or hours to less than 30 minutes.
- **Reduction of Borrower Credit Risk:** The Toolkit allows MFIs to provide financial literacy and business training to new and existing borrowers. Significantly reducing their borrowers' risk of default.

The first two mobile applications (apps) that Centro created are the Business Planning Tool (BPT) and the Loan Assessment Tool (LAT). Centro plans to expand the Toolkit by creating a range of apps that will help entrepreneurs track their finances, plan new projects and develop their business competency. The Toolkit will also be made available in multiple languages, mobile platforms (i.e., Android) and will be able to provide MDOs and MFIs with impact metrics and analysis on their clients.

The BPT guides users through a step-by-step process to create a basic business plan and budget. It prompts users with a series of questions to determine their vision, mission, shared values, personal budget, competitive advantage, customer profile, and business financials. Other business planning apps that include interactive components are available, but the standard practice is to provide instructions and given examples. The BPT takes technology-enabled experiential learning to a new level by prompting users to analyze their answers and enhance their overall business model. These activities introduce complex business concepts in a way that is intuitive and easy to understand. As a result, users are not told how to write a business plan, they develop a robust business model.

The LAT increases access to capital by helping entrepreneurs identify and link to appropriate lenders. The tool asks users for information required by most alternative lenders and then compares the information with the lending criteria of different community lenders. The user is then provided feedback on their borrowing potential, on their creditworthiness and on which alternative lenders in their area can best meet their capital needs. Then the user is automatically referred to those lender(s).

Product Features

a) The Business Plan Tool:

- 27 activities that focus on strategy, market analysis, value proposition, operations and finance.
- Activities are gamified to keep users engaged throughout the process.
- Activities include information gathering and analytical components.
- Collect user information and track educational process.
- Easily integrates into an established entrepreneur training programs (Centro has a facilitators guide available.)
- Small business advisors can view client progress through a web-based interface.
- Prototype is available for iOS 6 devices (through Test Flight)
- In Q4 2013 it will be available for iOS devices as a free download with a ceiling cost of \$5 per user for basic content (through in-app purchases.)

b) The Loan Assessment Tool:

- Prompts users to answer questions that assess their candidacy for a microloan.
- Answers are automatically compared with lender criteria (e.g., Kiva Zip or a CDFI).
- Provides automatic referrals to potential borrowers that are a good fit.
- Users that do not fit lender criteria are shown the reason(s) why so that they can improve their business model and perhaps qualify for a future loan.
- Free to use and available on any browser (optimized for mobile web browsers).
- Will be customized for each geographical region.

CENTRO

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Empowering Entrepreneurs • Growing Communities

Contact information

Arturo A. Noriega
Executive Director

arturo@centrocommunity.org

Phone: (510) 830-3204

Mobile: (650) 270-6916

Centro Community Partners
825 Washington Street, Suite 228
Oakland, CA 94607

Centro Community Partners is a 501(c)(3)
non-profit economic development
organization based in Oakland, California.

