

Business Web Research Basics

[Sawyer Library Databases](#)

[Research Scenarios](#)

The purpose of this guide is to provide links, descriptive information and usage tips for various online resources that might be useful to library users doing business research. Listed resources include both databases and materials that the Sawyer Library has leased or purchased, as well links to our other Library Research Guides that address more specific research areas. Because this guide was designed for distance learners and off-campus users who are not in our physical library space, it does NOT include any of our print resources that might be included in our many other research guides.

Sawyer Library Databases

The high quality databases that Sawyer Library subscribes to for the use of our students are usually the best starting point for any business research. They are available both on campus and off-campus (with use of the proxy server). For a full-listing, see our [Database List, Organized by Subject](#). And for a discussion, with "fixes" for known issues related to off-campus access, please see our [Off-Campus Troubleshooting](#) page. The best Sawyer Library databases for Business Research include:

[Business Source Complete](#)

Our best and most wide-ranging business database, BSC claims to be "the world's definitive scholarly business database, providing the leading collection of bibliographic and full text content. Business Source® Complete contains far more active, peer-reviewed, business related journals than any other database currently available....Indexing and abstracts for the most important scholarly business journals back as far as 1886 are included.... Additional full text, non-journal content includes financial data, books, monographs, major reference works, conference proceedings, case studies, investment research reports, industry reports, market research reports, country reports, company profiles, SWOT analyses and more." Note: when you enter BSC, you will have the option of checking a box that simultaneously activates a database called *Regional*

Business News (RBN). If you are interested in topics in United States business operations (that is, local business news from around the USA), it may well be useful to add this set of articles to your results. However, since RBN does not include the local business paper, *Boston Business Journal*, it will not be especially useful for Boston-area business stories.

USE TIP: You will often want to start with a keyword search, combining word concepts by placing the word "and" in between. (Examples: nike and marketing / outsourcing and information technology) Be sure to look at the "Subject Terms" listed on the best records you find. Click on any appropriate subject term to search for articles on that topic. And when you do a search and get your list of results, note the "Source Types" listed to the left side of your results list. These allow you to quickly and easily sort for specific types of materials like "Academic Journals," "Company Profiles," "SWOT Analyses," and "Country Reports." For a Basic (Word document) Search Help Sheet from Ebsco, click [here](#).

[LexisNexis Academic](#)

LexisNexis Academic (LNA) is a massive database, strong in news and legal materials, but also containing a wealth of business information resources. Almost everything in LexisNexis Academic is available in full-text. Materials include newspapers (domestic and international), general business, trade, and professional magazines, wire services, and transcripts. The "SEC Filings" section allows for searching of documents like 10-K, Proxy, and other financial reports. And the "Accounting" section includes several major journals and resources in the field.

USE TIP: Generally, you will want to start by clicking on the "Business" search tab in the upper left tan border on the opening page, and then click on one of the specialized categories listed to the left on this Business section. The default *Company Dossier* search screen will allow you to search by ticker or company name--leave off "Corp," "Co," "Ltd." or any other non-essential suffixes--to get basic descriptions, tabular financials, current news and more. This is a good starting point for company-oriented research. Follow the links in each boxed section for more information. And when searching in the *News* category (tabbed in the top border), note that the default *Sources* option is to search in "U.S. Newspapers and Wires;" a very broad grouping. If you open the Sources window, you will see a category specifically for *Business News Publications*. The *Legal* tab in the top border will lead you to law review articles (the default), and also to case law and federal and state codes. For more tips on using Lexis Nexis, take a look at our [Library Guide on Using LexisNexis Academic](#) LNA's own wiki also has some nice presentations on topics like [Company Dossier: Compare Companies](#), and [Legal Search: Get A Case](#). There are also "How Do I..." links on many search screens for additional help.

[Business & Company Resource Center \(InfoTrac\)](#)

Like the larger Business Source Complete above, Business & Company Resource Center is designed to provide easy access to a wide variety of materials for business research. Gale/Cengage, who produces the database, calls it "a fully integrated resource bringing together

company profiles, brand information, rankings, investment reports, company histories, chronologies and periodicals." Although there will be a good bit of duplication in the periodical and company reports provided by EbscoHost's BSC and InfoTrac's BCRC, there are some materials exclusive to each. So, checking both is usually a good idea.

USE TIP: Although icons provide links to additional search options on the opening screen, you may well want to start with a simple search in the top search box, changing the option from Company to Industry to Article search according to your needs. If you start with a keyword company search, like *Nike*, be aware that you will probably have to select from several options on the first results screen to see the full range of information available from tabs above the results list. If I click the "Nike Inc.(NKE)/Beaverton, Oregon" for the best parent firm option, the available tabs go from two to nine, and I can click different tabs to get resources like a company profile (the default tab), corporate histories, investment reports, rankings and industry overview. Note, also, that while on the profile page you can look to the frame on the left to select articles that address topics like "Operations & Technology" and "Strategy & Planning" for that firm. For more search advice, you might want to consult this [Search Tips PDF](#) from the publisher.

[Wall Street Journal](#)

This is the financial newspaper of record for the United States, and an excellent source of articles detailing company news, industry happenings, and the general business climate. This ProQuest database provides full-text of articles back to 1984. (However, stock quotes and other numerical tables are not in the database.)

USE TIP: Like the news sections of LexisNexis, WSJ looks for keyword occurrences anywhere within the article full-text. So, if you are interested in searching for articles that are substantively *about* your company, look for the company within the Company subject field. For an example of how that is done, if you were interested in articles on Nike, you would put CO(Nike) in the search box. Or click the green tab for "Advanced" search that will allow you to use the database more precisely. For more tips on using the Wall Street Journal, take a look at our [Library Guide on using Wall Street Journal](#).

And if the business topic you are interested in is specific to Massachusetts, take a look at [Massachusetts Newsstand](#), a database from the same company that provides fulltext articles from Massachusetts newspapers, including the *Globe* and *Herald*.

[Wall Street Journal Archive 1889-1991](#)

As you can tell from the name, this version of the *Wall Street Journal*, also from ProQuest, is a digital archive that does NOT cover current stories, but does provide deep backfile. Use this version to look for specific events or aspects of a company's history for dates earlier than the current *Wall Street Journal* file. Also, because this is a page image database of the paper, it does include ads and stock tables.

USE TIP: The opening "Basic Search" screen allows you to look for specific terms and narrow by date. The CO (company) searching is unfortunately not an option in this version of the WSJ. However, note the additional grey tab below the basic search that offers "More Search Options." This allows you to change the way articles are sorted, look for a specific author, or--most importantly--look for a specific *Document Type*. Document types include Front page, Display ad and Stock quote. For more tips on using the Historical Wall Street Journal, you can consult a [Search Guide: Historical Newspapers](#) from ProQuest.

[MergentOnline](#)

This valuable database is related to the well-respected manuals and handbooks that used to be called "Moody's." The quality of the financial information you can get from Mergent has been consistently high, even if the interface is not the most user-friendly and the response time is often quite slow. Search by company name or ticker and you will first see a "Business Summary" with a basic description and financial figures. Click on the green "Company Details" in the upper tabbed border, or click additional module tabs (e.g., Company Financials, Annual Reports, Competitors) near the top of the screen to delve further into the details of your company. Company Financials can be opened in Excel, as well as in the default html format.

USE TIP: According to your browser and monitor, MergentOnline can sometimes be confusing to use. You click on a tab, see a few words on a screen and think that's it. But look more closely. Certain words should display in green on these pages. These are actually links to the more important information. So, be sure to click further and explore the inner screens! For a quick and handy one-page summaries of a company and its financials, look for that last tab, which has the unfortunate name of "TearSheets," then click on the green word "FactSheets" or "Equity Report" for those useful one-sheet PDF overviews. And do you need old financials (even back to the early 1900s)? Mergent also has a digital archive of the old *Moody's Manuals*, [Mergent WebReports](#). It is a page-by-page image archive of the actual books and is awkward to use, but can be useful for much older balance sheet and other information.

[Standard & Poor's NetAdvantage](#)

S&P is a major vendor of company financial, directory, and evaluative material. NetAdvantage opens with a busy opening screen, that offers everything from economic analysis to investment ideas. In the upper right is a simple Keyword Search box which uses Google to search across S&P content for your company or topic. The most valuable product unique to S&P is their extensive and excellent "Industry Surveys." These reports, which puts a major public company within the context of its industry really is a good place to start for many research projects. And they are the top option in the "Quick Links" area to the right. But don't forget to look at the "Stock Reports," which is one of several options in the "Publication Search" box in the upper right. The *Stock Reports* provide a very useful informational snapshot of an individual company.

USE TIP: Want to consult S&P's famous investment newsletter, *The Outlook*? Unfortunately, it is hard to spot! To browse the PDF of an issue, in full, look for the "Quick Links" area on the

right middle of the opening screen. *Outlook* is listed below *Industry Surveys*. To look for the company you are interested in within *Outlook* content, across ALL issues, try another tack. Use the "Publication Search" box in the upper right of the opening screen. Here you can also search in the *Industry Surveys* and the *Stock Reports* for your company. And a note about the *Industry Surveys*: The "Quick Links" option only works for the U.S. Industry Reports. However we also buy the *Global Industry Surveys*. To find these, click the "Industries" button in the top blue banner, and then look at the middle of the screen. Open the boxes to find the *Global Industry Surveys*, organized by Region (Asia, Europe, and a few for Latin America).

[Global Market Information Database \(GMID\)](#)

From the London-based company, Euromonitor, comes an excellent database for international market and selected demographic research. The publisher indicates that GMID "offers integrated access to internationally comparable statistics, full-text market reports, insightful comment from expert industry and country analysts as well as thousands of sources of further information." GMID covers 205 countries, with extended coverage of 52, so there is a good chance that this multinational resource will have some useful information even on nations considered developing markets. Euromonitor has a more-elaborate-than-average authentication process. When you first click on the shortcut, you will need to accept a usage agreement, then, after another relay, you will be transferred into the database. There, you can either do a quick search jump from the green bar in the top border, or explore search options in the left frame.

USE TIP: You may build a search by industries, by country, or by consumer. Below these sorts, there is even a search box that allows you to Search Companies (where you can search by global brand owner [the default] or by national brand owner). And, finally, there are searches of Analysis, which include Company and Country Profiles. Often, you will want to step through a "Menu Search" selecting the data you wish to put together. At a certain point, GMID will offer you options in viewing prepared country reports and the like. Explore these. (Different icons will let you know whether something is "Statistics," a "Report," or a "Source.") Select, filter, and sort your results, and then click *Go* to move to the next step. When you build your own data set, you can even capture that as an Excel (look for the icons to the upper right of your data chart) to more readily manipulate the data later. Since GMID is not the easiest database to use, consider clicking on HELP in the teal border of the front page. Here you will find FAQs as well as a "Getting Started" animated tour of the database.

[Value Line Research Center](#)

The Value Line Investment Survey is one of the oldest and most respected print stock evaluation resources. This online version contains everything in the basic print Survey plus a lot more. Search by ticker symbol--and if you don't know your symbol, look for the link for "symbol lookup."

USE TIP: You will need to "click here" to enter the main Value Line site. Although Value Line is best known for its snapshots of individual stocks, note that the "Quick Index" in the left frame

includes a "Mutual Fund Survey." When you do a ticker or name search, besides the default snapshots, look for the tab for "Survey Issues" to see the PDF content that looks like the paper product.

[Morningstar Investment Research Center](#)

Morningstar is best known for their 5-star (or below) ratings of mutual funds. Some of Morningstar information can be found on their "free" (if advertising-laden) website. However, the Library Edition that we lease for users has much, much more information. And not just on mutual funds. Morningstar has information on stocks, ETFs, and even some industry information. You can even do a "Portfolio X-Ray" to see how truly diversified your investments are. Screeners allow you to identify stocks or funds that meet your own criteria as well.

USE TIP:A simple search of a ticker symbol for a mutual fund will get you to the familiar "Snapshot," but the default display for ETFs is a less-useful "quote," so be sure to click the Snapshot link to the left to get more information. And speaking of more information, don't forget to check for Morningstar "Analyst Reports" (again, left frame). These expert opinions can be very useful and are not available on the general web version.

[RDS Business Suite \(TableBase\)](#)

RDS Business Suite includes three databases that can be searched together (the default) or not (as we would suggest). *Business & Management Practices (BaMP)* content focuses on practical approaches to management processes and methods. *Business & Industry (B&I)* is a broad-based business information database that focuses on facts, figures, events and market information about companies, industries, products and markets. However, since most of the articles in these files can be duplicated and expanded upon in BSC and BRC above, they aren't that useful. The real jewel of this suite is *TableBase*, which presents business information in tabular format, such as: market share, market size, capacity, production, imports, exports, sales, and product rankings. If you are looking for basic data on markets and trends, this is the best database to consult. Tables are drawn from trade magazines, statistical annuals, brokerage reports, trade association materials, and governmental reports.

USE TIP:If what you are looking for is quick statistics, first unclick the boxes for BaMP and B&I. However, it isn't a big deal if you don't do this. Just look for the tab on the results list to browse specifically the *TableBase* results. If you are looking specifically for something like "market share," add that term to your keyword query. And if you are interested in how two brands compete, try putting in multiple brand names at once (e.g. nike and reebok and new balance). Note that the search screen has many boxes that allow you to specify specific industries, document types, or regions. Use these limits cautiously, as you may end up eliminating records you actually want to look at.

And for additional sources of industry-related or economic statistical data, take a look at [LexisNexis Statistical](#) and [SourceOECD](#).

[Emerald Fulltext](#)

Need scholarly journals in areas like human resources, general management, marketing, accounting and finance? Try this database (along with *Business Source Complete*, listed above). Emerald includes full-text articles from over 150 "peer-reviewed" journals in management and related fields. And since many of these journals are edited as well as published outside of the United States, articles often reflect more of a global perspective.

USE TIP: Note that on the search screen, the default is to search for your keywords, by "relevance." This works well, but because the indexing goes further back than the full-text coverage, many article titles in your results list will be marked with a light green scissors icon indicating that only an abstract is available. Near the top of your results list is a box that allows you to change the sort/display to "newest" first. This retrieves the latest citations first, and these are the ones most likely to be full-text.

And for additional sources of peer-reviewed journal literature, the more general publisher aggregates of [Sage Journals Online](#), [Oxford Journals Online](#) and [Wiley Interscience](#) can all add additional refereed journals to your research mix. And if you click the limiting box for "Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals," you'll find plenty in [Business Source Complete](#), too. For deep backfile of several key scholarly business and economic journals, you might also want to consult [JSTOR](#).

[Public Administration Abstracts](#)

For those in the Public Management area of the B school, this database will be useful as it targets the professional and scholarly literature of the Public Administration field. Because "Abstracts" is in the title, you know that this is not, per se, a full-text oriented database. You can only count on summaries or abstracts. However, since we get this through EBSCOhost, our primary database vendor, there are a great many articles that directly link from affiliated electronic resources.

USE TIP: This is definitely NOT a database where you want to click the box for "Full Text" because there is little here. Instead explore the custom links or 360 Link under the item records in your result page to check for linkable complete articles. And explore the "Subject Terms" assigned to the best articles you find. That's a great way to find more articles.

And for additional sources related to the public sector, check your topic search also in [Business Source Complete](#) and [Political Science Complete](#).

[Corporate Affiliations](#)

An enhanced directory database that includes public, private, and international firms. *Corporate Affiliations* also indicates relationships between companies (and brands) and provides basic information on firms. Each entry includes a statement of whether the company is public or

private, and a corporate hierarchy chart which displays the relationship between the parent company and its subsidiaries all the way down to the seventh level of reporting relationship. Search under company name, then view the "hierarchy" to see if the company is a subsidiary. The Directory also includes the SIC codes, a brief overview of products, names of key employees, and a list of outside service firms. This database will NOT provide detailed financial data on a company, but can be very useful nonetheless. And this is another limited access database, so **please "Sign-Off" in the upper right when you have completed your research.**

USE TIP: Although most people use Corporate Affiliations (CA) to look up an individual company and get a sense of its corporate hierarchy, this database can also be used to find all companies (within CA's directories) in a particular industry within a particular city, state, zip or area code, or country. So use all the search fields to build a more complex query. Note: CA does not include the breadth of companies in ReferenceUSA (listed below), but the nearly 210,000 parents and subsidiaries that CA covers are more likely to be major corporations. (For example, only "Parent Companies with >\$10M annual revenue" are included.) Take a look at the "Learn More" sections for more inclusion criteria.

[Hoover's Online](#)

Hoover's Online definitely has name recognition, but it is actually not as valuable as the above-listed databases for company research. However, it does cover private companies (and in some cases, international companies) that are not always listed in stock-oriented databases like those from S&P and Mergent. You can search by company name, ticker, or industry from the opening page, and then click on links within the text or sections of record in the left frame. Although we have purchased the full "Academic Researcher" package, Hoover's--which is owned by D&B--will still try a bit of bait and switch to get you to buy D&B credit reports or other add-ons not included in the main Hoover's database. Beware these secondary paths, as well as the annoying ads they post.

USE TIP: For best results, and a handsome end-product, look for the "Build a Report" gold button that is usually near the top of any entry. There, you can select the information sections that interest you and produce a report in either HTML or PDF format.

[FirstResearch](#)

First Research, an affiliate of Hoover's, is a leading industry intelligence company designed to help sales teams perform more effectively. The database synthesizes hundreds of sources into an easy to digest format of industry profile. These profiles are basic, but useful, and cover many small business categories that other databases (oriented towards public stock companies) do not. Each report should be updated quarterly. The industry database may be searched by keyword, SIC or NAICS code. Handy State Profiles are also available here to provide a quick snapshot of the business climate in individual states and Canadian provinces.

USE TIP: If you know your NAICS or SIC, then you can certainly use that as a search option.

But a keyword search is useful if you actually want to look at related industries. For example, if I search medical devices, I am offered a variety of reports, ranked by relevancy, that would include "Medical Supplies and Devices," "Medical Equipment Distributors" and "Medical & Imaging Laboratories."

[Small Business Resource Center](#)

Here is another database especially useful for information on small business and entrepreneurial enterprises. It will have many of the same types of articles from business magazines and trade journals that you would find in BSC or BCRC, but it also includes a good deal of useful BOOK content helpful in small business research. This content includes sample business plans from the long-running series *Business Plans Handbook*, as well as other reference resources like the *Encyclopedia of Major Marketing Campaigns*, the *Small Business Sourcebook*, and some easy-to-read titles from the *Running a _____ for Dummies* series.

USE TIP: The opening basic search screen does have large buttons to the right that offer you quick browsing options for Business Topics, Business Types, and Sample Business Plans. However, it is easy enough to simply do a quick search for the type of business (i.e., restaurants) that you are interested in. When you get results, the default will be for the sample business plans, while other tabs above the results will provide links to Articles, Overviews, and Directories content.

[ReferenceUSA](#)

The best thing about *ReferenceUSA* is its size: 14 million U.S. Businesses providing "verified, accurate data" that is updated monthly. You can think of the database as an enhanced Yellow Pages. It doesn't provide a lot of information about a company, but it does list just about every firm, large or small. This database works best as a means of creating a list of all the companies that meet your criteria. For example, those that do a particular thing in a particular area.

USE TIP:For best results, do a custom search and check boxes that match the types of search fields or company characteristics you wish to explore. The top three sections--Name, Business Type, and Geography--are the most important ones for most people. But the "Phone" designation of Area Code can also be a handy way of identifying competitors in a local market.

[Country Commerce \(Economist Intelligence Unit\)](#)

This database presents lengthy reports on the operating environment in nearly 60 countries. Includes investing, taxation, licensing, human resources, and foreign trade. Unfortunately, few smaller, "developing" national markets are included here. (For example, Senegal is not included, but Kenya and Nigeria are.)

USE TIP: The busy and confusing opening screen teases with "promotional content" to the left. EIU claims that this is useful content, but in reality it is mostly puffery for the advertising

companies. For best results, look specifically for the "Country Commerce" link right below the map. Click on that link and you'll see a list of all the countries in the Country Commerce service.

And for additional sources of country information, take a look at the less business-oriented [Europa World](#), [SourceOECD](#) and [CountryWatch](#).

[Conference Board](#)

When the media reports on the health of the U.S. (or global) economy, especially in areas like "Consumer Confidence," they often site the research of the Conference Board. Use this database to access this material. All content is in PDF form, and the latest indicators and news are listed on the opening screen.

USE TIP: Besides general economic data and analysis, Conference Board also does lengthy reports on various management issues facing American business. To browse through or search this content, click on the green "Business Management Research" link in the left frame of the opening screen.

[eStatement Studies \(RMA\)](#)

RMA used to stand for Robert Morris Associates (and some teachers still refer students to "Robert Morris"). RMA now stands for Risk Management Association, but the information provided by the products is still much the same: business ratios. Today, RMA products feature data for over 750 industries derived directly from more than 244,000 statements of financial institutions' borrowers and prospects. The two main components of the database are "Financial Ratio Benchmarks Data" and "Industry Default Probability Data." If you are trying to get an idea of the health and risk of specific enterprises, or you are trying to compare a company to industry averages, then this resource will likely be useful.

USE TIP: On the basic search screen you can pick an industry from the opening window (listed alphabetically next to their NAICS code). Or you can use the search box next to the window to find an industry. Unfortunately, the search box is not intuitive at all. If I search fast food restaurant, I get no results. However, if I search simply restaurant, I get two options including "722211 Limited-Service Restaurants." Click on the NAICS to get to the data, which can be printed or exported. You can even produce data lines as graphs. Be warned, eStatement studies is not particularly user-friendly, so you may have to look through the "About eStatement Studies" and "Help" areas (see tabs at top) to understand the data that is being presented.

[Dun & Bradstreet's Key Business Ratios \(KBR\)](#)

Here is another useful resource that will allow you to compare your company to the entire industry. Key Business Ratios (which quantify "Industry Norms") from D&B is a slightly less complex option for industry averages. Although not all industries (organized by SIC codes) are included in this database, most are. A simple industry average, these ratios are meant to measure

solvency, efficiency and profitability.

USE TIP:KBR still uses the four-digit SIC code to specify industry. And for best results, it would help if you found the primary SIC you want from another resource, before you visit this resource. If you know your SIC, pick it from the top window on the default page. Otherwise, you can try picking the best match from the "Line of Business" window, but these abbreviated designations are confusing to sort through. Since most annual reports, company profiles, or even many industry-related articles in journal databases indicate SIC codes, you will be less frustrated by KBR if you come to the product prepared with the most appropriate four-digit code.

[STAT-USA](#)

STAT-USA "contains the international trade information of the National Trade Data Bank (NTDB) as well as an extensive collection of domestic economic data. Features include trade opportunity leads, market reports, and economic releases from the State Department, the Bureau of Export Administration, the Federal Reserve Board, and the U.S. Census Bureau." Start with "State of the Nation" for U.S. economic indicators and the like. Choose the "Globus & NTDB" section for access to exchange rates, export/import statistics, and the Country Commercial Guides.

USE TIP: Like most government databases, STAT-USA has a very un-friendly interface. The opening pages of both "State of the Nation" and "Globus & NTDB" list some current documents that have been recently added. For further research, look at the link towards the bottom of the page that reads *The State of the Nation Library* or *The International Trade Library*, this will provide a more detailed list for browsing. Or simply use the "Site Search" or "Quick Search" on either page, but be aware that you will likely need to change the default "Database" being searched in Globus, which is the commodity-oriented "AgWorld."

[DemographicsNow](#)

DemographicsNow is an interactive database designed to provide U.S. demographic information including income, housing, race, age, education, consumer expenditures and more. You would first pick a geographic area--these include state, county, zip codes, and the like. Then you select specifics in your geographic category, then pick the types of statistics you want, or look for the grey tab that says "Report Packages" to choose a "Express Pack" report that covers topics like "Business Location" or Census or Population. You can even do comparisons or ranking reports, and produce maps.

USE TIP: Once you build or open the report you want, it can be put into a Printable Version, a PDF Version, or an Excel Version which would allow you to manipulate the data further. (Just look for the buttons at the top of the screen.)

[MRI+ \(Mediamark Reporter\)](#)

"The leading database of key magazine planning resources," Mediamark, makes its basic information about media available without charge, as long as you register for a free account. Create reports and working lists. Especially useful is the reader demographics you can find in the "Pocket Pieces--Top-Line Reports" section.

However, Suffolk students and faculty need not settle for the limited free materials. You can also access the much more useful "Mediamark Reporter," which covers product and brand demographics, as well as media data. To access this area you **MUST** sign up using a Suffolk email address (with a domain extension of "suffolk.edu"). You cannot use your Hotmail, Yahoo, AOL, or any other email account for this resource, as only validated Suffolk users are provided access to this library of market research statistics.

USE TIP:The opening screen, after logging into Mediamark's MRI+ is a very busy one. To get to the best materials, ignore all the use icons like "New Search" and "Create Reports," and look down the screen a bit for a button marked "Mediamark Reporter." Click here--that's where the most valuable information is lurking! Click on the latest Product or Media Report, then choose more specific reports or use the search box to find the information you want. Also, take a look at the "Local Market" report on Boston.

Sawyer Library has many other useful databases, many of which touch--at least indirectly--on business topics. Keep in mind, that if you are studying health administration, medical journal databases (on the *Sciences* database list) might be useful. Or if you are studying the social impacts of globalization, our *Social Sciences* collection of databases might add valuable options for your research. Stay flexible and explore our high-quality databases! To view the list of all of our online research services, go to our [List of Databases by Subject](#). Or for brief descriptions of all of our online files, take a look at the [annotated alphabetical list of databases](#) page.

And if you wish to learn more about the general principles of research, take a look at the [Library Director's wide-ranging Web-Based Research Tutorials](#). .

Research Scenarios

If you need a Basic Company Profile, TRY. . . .

[Business Source Complete](#) (After entering the database, look for the "More" link in the top blue border. Click this, then select "Company Profiles" and either browse or search for your company.)

[LexisNexis Academic](#) (Business Section/Tab, Search for your company on the opening "Company Dossier" page, then look for the "Company Profiles" link in the left frame.)

[Hoover's Online](#) (Search for company and select their record. The "Fact Sheet" automatically displays. Look, too, for "Overview" in the left-hand frame. And the "Build Custom Report" option under

"Company Record Tools" allows you to pick and choose the elements you want in the company profile.) [Business & Company Resource Center \(InfoTrac\)](#) (The default is "Company Search," so put in the company name. You may get multiple options in results. Click the correct--usually the largest in sales--one. Besides the "Company Profile," look for other tabs that will provide news, investment reports, rankings, etc.)

And for Public Companies, take a look at search for your company in [MergentOnline](#) and click on the "Tearsheets" green tab. And also check out the "Stock Reports" in [Standard & Poor's NetAdvantage](#)Also consult our [Company Information Resource Guide](#) for lots of useful database and general web leads.

If you need Company Financials (Balance Sheets, Income Data, 10-K Reports), TRY. . . .

[Mergent Online](#) (Start with the "Company Financials" tab, but almost every section of Mergent will have valuable financial data)

[LexisNexis Academic](#) (Business Section, then "SEC Filings" in the left frame. There is also a "How Do I...?" entry in this same frame that gives advice on downloading financials into a spreadsheet.)

[Business & Company Resource Center \(InfoTrac\)](#) (After displaying the Company Profile, you will see that one of the tabs above is "Financials." Reuters data is tabbed for Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow and Ratios. And you can easily run comparisons to other companies.)

....You might want to take a look at the many useful database and web suggestions found in our [Finance Resource Guide](#).

If you need Stock Evaluation, TRY. . . .

[S & P NetAdvantage](#) (Especially "Stock Reports.")

[Value Line Research Center](#)

[Mergent Online](#) (Especially TearSheets--"FactSheets.")

[Business & Company Resource Center](#) (Search for company, then look for the "Investment Reports" tab above the Company Profile.)

... .Our [Company Information Resource Guide](#) might also be worth exploring.

If you want Company History, TRY. . . .

[Mergent Online](#) (Search for your company, then look for the "History" tab in the dark green border--this will give you bare-bones corporate changes)

[Business Source Complete](#) or [General BusinessFile ASAP \(InfoTrac\)](#) (Do a simple search combining the word "history" with the name of the company--e.g., *hewlett-packard and history*--although results will not be precise. In BSC, also look at the "Source Types" and take a look at the Company Profiles.)

[Hoover's Online](#) (Search for company and select their record. Then look for History in the blue left-hand frame.)

[Business & Company Resource Center \(InfoTrac\)](#) (After displaying the Company Profile, you will see that one of the tabs above is "Histories." Content comes from *Notable Corporate Chronologies* and *International Directory of Company Histories*.)

Through the [Gale Virtual Reference Library](#) we also have the latest volumes of [The International Directory of Company Histories](#) available online.

And don't forget to **look at the corporate website of your company!**

... Also consider the **Company Profile** sources listed above, as well as our [Company Information Resource Guide](#).

If you want an Industry Overview, TRY. . . .

[S & P NetAdvantage](#) (Look at both the detailed "Industry Surveys" and the much briefer "SubIndustry Review." Also, for international industries, click on "Industries" in the top blue border and look mid-screen for *Global Industry Surveys*.)

[First Research](#) (This database is nothing but Industry Profiles, but is oriented towards small business. Search by SIC/NAICS or keyword.)

[Business & Company Resource Center \(InfoTrac\)](#) (The default is "Company Search," so click the icon for Industry. Enter SIC/NAICS for keyword description of Industry. Results will vary and will often include Industry Overviews and News/Magazines material. Click other tabs for more options.)

[Business Source Complete](#) (Do a simple search for the industry--e.g., telecommunications industry--then look at the "Source Types" listed to the left of the results. There should be a link specifically to "Industry Profiles.")

[Morningstar Investment Research Center](#) (Click Industries icon on the opening screen. Not useful for prose analysis, but it does provide a handy clickable list of major companies/stocks in industry sectors--linking you to company information.)

... Also explore the many web and database suggestions in our [Industry Information Resource Guide](#).

If you need to Find Industry Ratios, TRY. . . .

[Dun & Bradstreet Key Business Ratios](#)

[eStatement Studies \(RMA\)](#)

... Also take a look at. . . .

[S & P NetAdvantage](#) (At the end of the "Industry Surveys" there is "Company Comparative Analysis" which does not give an "industry average" but does provide real ratios--profit, balance sheet and equity--for your company's real-life major competitors. And the "Stock Report" now provide a quick table of "Peer-Group" comparison that can also be worth consulting.)

[MergentOnline](#) (Within the "Portraits" look for the link on the bottom of the page for "Industry Comparison." Again, this is not a ratio set, but does--in graph form--compare your company's financial measures to peer group and industry.)

If you need to find Market Share Information, TRY. . . .

[TableBase \(in RDS Business Suite\)](#) (Search industry category or company name with the term market share--e.g., *staples and market share*, or *office supplies and market share*--or look for multiple companies mentioned in same record--e.g., *nike and reebok and saucony*.)

[Global Market Information Database \(GMID\)](#) (Through various industry and company searches, you can find your "Company Factfile." Once found, look for the "Market Share" link in the left frame.)

. . . .Also, for articles, try [Business Source Complete](#) and [Business & Company Resource Center](#) (click "Articles" icon and do a keyword search) and [LexisNexis Academic](#) (For article databases, use exactly the same search strategy as for TableBase above.)

. . . .It might also be productive to browse through some of the many web and database suggestions in our [Marketing and Advertising Resource Guide](#).

If you need to Find Out Who Acquired/Sold Out to Whom, TRY. . . .

[Corporate Affiliations](#) (Look for the "MergerTrak™" and "Merger News" links in the left frame.)

[LexisNexis Academic](#) (Click News in the top tan border, then in "Sources" select "Business News Publications," then search for a particular company name or industry, along with the word merger specifically in the "headline & lead paragraphs.") [Wall Street Journal](#) (Do a simple search combining an industry or company name with the word "mergers"--e.g., *oracle and mergers*--or do a subject heading search: *SUB(Acquisitions & mergers)* and combine that with other terms.) Similar techniques will also work in [Business Source Complete](#) and [Business & Company Resource Center](#).

If you need to Find Information on a Private Company or Subsidiary, TRY. . . .

[Corporate Affiliations](#) (Make sure that the radio buttons under the search bars indicate "all" and "both" to include all companies.)

[MergentOnline](#) (Make sure that the box below the search area is checked to "Include private companies.")

[Hoover's Online](#) (Search by simple company name. Leave off any name extensions like "inc." or "corp.")

[Business & Company Resource Center](#) (Do a default "Company Search." Basic profiles are available for many private companies. Then explore tabs on top, or article links in left frame for more information.)

[LexisNexis Academic](#) (Search the default "Company Dossier" after clicking Business in the top tan frame.)

And don't forget to search for relevant articles in:

[Wall Street Journal](#), [Business Source Complete](#) and [Massachusetts Newsstand](#) if it's a local company.

....And if your "company"--e.g., Harvard Pilgrim--is organized as a not-for-profit, you might want to check for them at the websites listed in our [Nonprofit and Philanthropic Organization Resource Guide](#)

BUT be advised: Private companies and subsidiaries are not required to file detailed financial documents with the SEC, and therefore the amount of information available on them is VERY limited. If

you are picking a company to do a report on you are strongly urged to ***pick a Public Company on a Major Exchange!***

If you need to Find Information on an International Firm, TRY. . . .

[Corporate Affiliations](#) (Make sure that the radio button under the search bars indicate "all" to include international companies.)

[MergentOnline](#) (This database includes "International Company Data" and often covers foreign parents--especially if their stock is sold in the US.)

[S & P NetAdvantage](#) (Look for the "Industries" tab in the upper border area on the opening screen and then for the Global Industry Reports option in the middle of the following page.)

[Hoover's Online](#) (Search by simple company name on the opening screen.)

[LexisNexis Academic](#) (Business Section, Company Profiles, and search in "International Company Reports" and "Hoover's Company Reports." And do a separate search in "Business News.")

[Global Market Information Database \(GMID\)](#) Put your company name into the "Search Companies" box in the left gray frame.

And don't forget to search for relevant articles in:

[Wall Street Journal](#)

[Business Source Premier](#)

and [Business & Company Resource Center](#).

....Although not specific to actual corporations, you might want to take a look at the many useful database and web suggestions found in our [International Trade and Business Resource Guide](#).

AND be advised: International firms who do not trade their stock on major U.S. exchanges are not required to file detailed financial documents with the SEC, and therefore the amount of information available on them is VERY limited. If you are picking a company to do a report on you are strongly urged to ***pick a Public Company on a Major U.S. Exchange!***

If you want to find information on the Business Climate of a particular Country, TRY. . . .

[Country Commerce \(Economist Intelligence Unit\)](#) This database specifically addresses licensing and trading conditions in other countries, although not all countries are profiled.

[Business Source Premier](#) (One approach is to simply search for the name of the country on the opening screen. At the top of the next search results screen, you will see icons that allow you to sort results into groupings. One of these should be "Country Reports." For another approach, click on the "Publications" button in the green border. Type in the name of the country in the "Browse for" box and and submit search. A list of country reports available from companies like Global Insight and Economist Intelligence Unit will display. Click on individual title links to browse in available reports.)

[STAT-USA](#) ("The Globus & NTDB" section does have useful information, but the STAT-USA search engine is poor and you have to sort through lots of results to find useful data. And remember to open the "in the database" box and look in multiple files.)

[SourceOECD](#) (Start with "Country Reports and Tables" from the top "Go To" Search box.)

[Global Market Information Database \(GMID\)](#) Pick "Countries" in the top green border, or pick the "Search Countries" option in the left gray frame and select the sub-category (like Economic Indicators) that suits your needs. Or simply search your country name in the upper right search box and see a variety of data options.

[CountryWatch](#) can be worth a look. (Simply select a country from the "Shortcut to Country Review" window on the opening screen to start.)

[Europa World](#) (In this general country information resource, take a look at the "Country Statistics" and "Country Profiles" section on your country. And if you want to locate specific "Business and Commerce" organizations--like the country's stock exchange or central bank, look in the "Directory" section, as well.)

[IMF Statistical Databases](#) (Country data related to finances, direction of trade, balance of payments and government can be found here.)

[MergentOnline](#) (To the right of the opening search screen, look for the "Country Profile" section and select your country from the list in opening box. However, be warned, except for stock exchange information near the end, this is a woefully general report.)

Less useful, but possibly worth checking is [Lexis-Nexis Academic](#) Click on "Business" section near top, then "Country Profiles" in the left frame. Information from about a dozen resources can be found here. Open up the "Sources" box to explore your options.)

....Web resources can help. Check out the many useful suggestions found in our [Country Information Resource Guide](#) as well as our [International Trade and Business Resource Guide](#).

You need to look up some Definitions and Descriptions of Basic Business Concepts, TRY. . . .

[Credo Reference Business Resources](#) (The search box on this screen will search across several business dictionaries. You can also pick "Business" from the left frame to browse specific titles like the *Capstone Encyclopedia of Business* or the *Handbook of United States Economic and Financial Indicators*.)

[Gale Virtual Reference Library](#) Although you can click specifically on "Business" in subject links below the search box, you are better off simply searching for the word concept you are interested in. (GVRL includes the *Encyclopedia of American Industries*, *Gale Encyclopedia of E-Commerce*, *Encyclopedia of Business and Finance*, *Worldmark Encyclopedia of National Economies*, *Encyclopedia of Small Business*, and most volumes of the *Business Plans Handbook* in e-book form.)

[Sage eReference](#) Better know for coverage of the social sciences, Sage has actually published a good assortment of reference works related to business. These include *Encyclopedia of Business Ethics and Society*, *Encyclopedia of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, *Encyclopedia of Leadership* and *21st Century Management: A Reference Handbook*.

[S & P NetAdvantage Glossary](#) (A good basic dictionary of investment and business terminology)

....Other databases also have glossaries and explanations of terms, but these are often tucked away in Help Screens.

