

Making Sense of **Business Reference**



MLA

Academic Libraries 2010: Explore, Discover, Connect

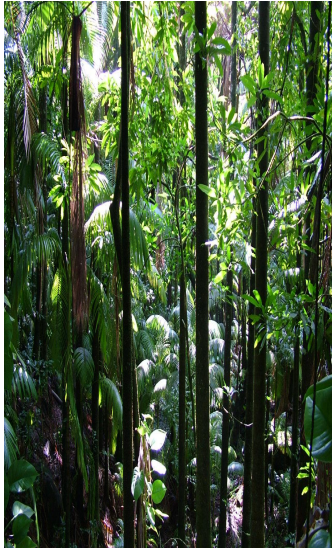
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10:15am - 11:15am





The Business Reference Question

Can you point me towards where to find information on the smoothie industry? How about the scrapbooking industry?

Who are the top executives at EDS?

What is the market share of American Airlines?

What is the target market for iPods?

Where can I find the current national unemployment rate?

What are the quarterly sales and EBITDA for each Starbucks location in MI?

What was AOL's stock price on 4/25/05? What were their 2001 sales?

Where is your RMA guide?

Answering a BusRef Question

Your hunt for clues will take you to databases and other sources containing:

- News/Trade/Research Articles
- Company Profiles
- Industry Profiles
- Market research
- Analyst reports
- Consumer data
- Directory data
- Raw data

As you become more familiar with the resources and with business reference in general, you'll learn which databases to turn to for what.



Business REFERENCE basics

- Don't forget your Reference Interview basics!

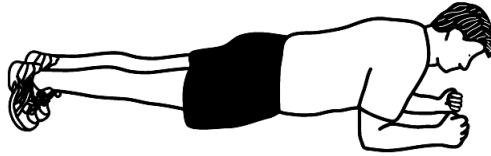
- THINK **C**reatively

- THINK like a DETECTIVE
 - Look for **sources** and other clues, not just data.

- Ask for help!



The "Core Four"



Many business reference questions involve one or more of the following "core four" areas:

Company Information
Stock Market/Financial Information
Industry Information
Statistical/Consumer Information

After the Core Four

Who are the top executives at EDS? **Company**

What is the most current national unemployment rate? **Statistical/Consumer**

What was AOL's stock price on 4/25/05? What were their 2001 sales? **Combo: Company and Stock/Financial**

What is the market share of American Airlines? **Combo: Industry and Company**

What are the quarterly sales and EBITDA for each Starbucks location in Illinois? **Combo: Company and Financial**

Where is your RMA guide? **Industry**

Can you point me towards where to find information on the smoothie industry? **Industry**

What is the target market for ipods? **Combo: Statistical/Consumer and Industry**

Getting started: Company Research

Public

- shares are traded on a stock exchange
- subject to periodic filings and other obligations under Federal securities laws
- much *easier* to find detailed financial and other information on public companies

Private

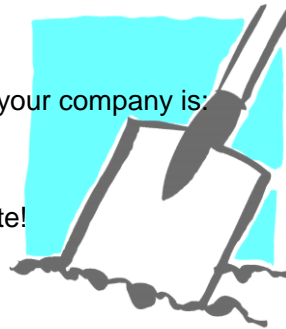
- shares are not traded on the open market
- not subject to same Federal disclosure requirements as Public companies
- much *harder* to find detailed financial and other information on private companies



Company Research (cont.)

First steps:

- Check Hoovers.com to determine whether your company is:
 - **Public or Private** and
 - **Parent or Subsidiary**
- Don't forget to check the company's web site!
- Dig through databases
 - For company profiles
 - For articles
 - An **article search** can turn up lots of info (local, national, international, news, scholarly and trade publications), especially if you're dealing with a **private company**.
 - To screen for similar companies, competitors, etc.
 - For company financials



Where to turn for: Company Profiles

Public companies and some private coverage:

- Hoovers
- OneSource Global Business Browser
- Business & Company Resource Center
 - Contains *International Directory of Company Histories, Notable Corporate Chronologies, Brands & Their Companies* and more
- Factiva
- LexisNexis
 - Contains Hoovers content

Public companies only:

- Mergent Online
- Orbis

Datamonitor profiles:

- Marketline
- Business Source Complete
- OneSource



Screening Companies

You can screen for companies by various criteria (*sales, number of employees, geographic area, etc.*) and generate lists in these databases:

- OneSource
- Orbis
- ReferenceUSA
- Dun & Bradstreet's Million Dollar Directory
- Standard & Poor's NetAdvantage
 - Click on Companies and pick one of the areas under "Advanced Search"



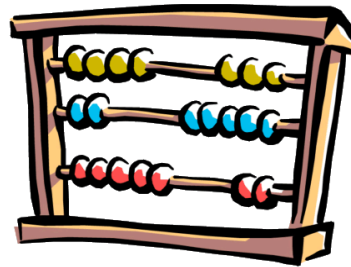
Note: Try **Thomasnet.com** to find out who makes what and where

More Company Info: Analyst Reports

- Thomson Research
 - Look for Investext Reports or click on the “Research” tab on the left hand screen.
- OneSource Global Business Browser
 - Analysts’ Reports section
- Business & Company Resource Center
 - Look for the Investment Report tab
- Standard & Poor’s NetAdvantage
 - Look for the Stock Reports section and “How to Analyze”

Note: In each of these databases, you need to search for the specific company first and then look for related analyst reports—you can’t search through analyst reports by keyword.

Company Financials



Public Companies:

- Securities Exchange laws of 1933-34
- Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002
- Important financial statements include:
 - Annual Report to Shareholders AKA the 10K
 - Proxy Statement (14-A)
 - contains bio info on officers as well as compensation info and shareholder info

Private Companies:

- Consider using financial ratio sources to estimate numbers
- Or identify a similar public company and see what kinds of comparisons you can “guesstimate.”

Financial statements:

- Balance sheet (*what is owed and owned*)
- Income statement (*snapshot of profits and losses*)
- Cash flow (*where the money went and is going*)

Resources for Company Financials

SEC.gov (10K and other filings)
Yahoo! Finance
Hoovers.com
LexisNexis (some private companies)
S&PNetAdvantage
Mergent Online
OneSource
Compustat, Capital IQ, Datastream, Thomson OneBanker



Resources for financial ratios:

- Almanac of Business & Industrial Financial Ratios (print)
- Industry Norms and Key Business Ratios (print)
- RMA Annual Statement Studies (print and also found in OneSource)
- UCLA Anderson School has a handy list of ratios and where you can find them: <http://www.anderson.ucla.edu/x14414.xml>

Campbell R. Harvey's Hypertextual Finance Glossary:

- <http://www.duke.edu/~charvey/Classes/wpg/glossary.htm>

Investing/Stock Market

- Stock performance is one factor that can be used to evaluate a public company or compare it against competitors.
- Learning about a company or industry can help someone decide whether or not to invest in a public company's stock or an investment fund.
- Most analyst and other packaged data comes at a cost
- Remember there are other investment options:
 - Mutual Funds
 - Money Market
 - Commodities
 - And more!



Resources for Investment Information

Fee-based products

- S&P NetAdvantage
- Morningstar.com & ValueLine
- Bloomberg
- Global Financial Data
- CRSP
- Datastream
- TAQ



Free data

- Bigcharts.com
- Yahoo! Finance
- Google Finance

Lots of education sites

- Investopedia.com
- Motley Fool

Historical Stock Data for Merged and/or Defunct Companies

Check Hoovers or other sources for clues

- Turn to print guides
 - Old newspapers (like WSJ)
 - Daily Stock Price Record (from S&P)
 - Mergent/Moody's Manuals
 - Capital Changes Reporter
 - Directory of Obsolete Securities



What to Do with an Old Stock Certificate

<http://www.prattlibrary.org/locations/bst/index.aspx?id=3030&mark=stock>

--From the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore, MD

Cashing in on collectible stock and bond certificates

<http://www.bankrate.com/brm/news/investing/20011030a.asp>

--From Bankrate.com

Industry Research



- DEFINE your industry as best as you can
 - Many are fragmented and can be made up of many small, private companies (AKA "fragmented").
 - Many companies operate across multiple industries
- As you SEARCH for ARTICLES & REPORTS:
 - Look for terms and synonyms, e.g. apparel or clothing or footwear or shoes
 - Don't start too granularly...think broadly and drill down
 - Be on the lookout for terminology, players in the industry, source of data and other clues you can use as your search evolves.
- ASK "Who cares?"
 - Identify specialized trade journals and associations and major companies in the industry.
- Consider SIC and NAICS codes as tools, but don't get hung up on them.

Flexibility, creativity and tenacity are key to successful industry research!

Resources for Industry Information

Industry profile sources:

- Standard & Poor's Industry Surveys in NetAdvantage
 - IBISWorld
 - Plunkett's Research
 - Business & Company Resource Center (contains: Ency. of American Industries, Ency. of Emerging Industries, Ency. of Global Industries and Datamonitor Industry profiles)
 - Marketresearch.com
 - Mintel
 - MarketLine
 - Global Market Information Database (GMID from Euromonitor)
 - Tablebase
 - Forrester, Gartner, Frost & Sullivan
- Be prepared to dig for articles in databases like ABI Inform, Business Source Complete, Factiva, LexisNexis, etc.
 - Don't forget the open internet
 - look for associations and trade sites and also government sites (more in the Statistics section on government sites)



Consumer Data

Much of this data is proprietary, but a lot can be found using a combination of print resources, databases and article searching.

"Who buys
how much of
what, where
do they buy
it and why?"

- Try adding different terms like "target market" or "consumers" or "customers" or "consumer behavior" or "consumer attitudes" to your search.
- Some big names in Consumer/Retail Sales data are Nielsen, NPD, MRI, Claritas PRIZM and IRI
 - Sometimes you can glean bits of their expensive data from an article search.
 - *Note: Information Resources, Inc. (IRI) is now known as SymphonyIRI and Claritas is owned by Nielsen.*
- The more granular your search, the more difficult your search will likely be.
 - As with industry research, try to start broadly and then drill down if necessary.

Resources for Consumer Data



Some robust data can be found through print sources:

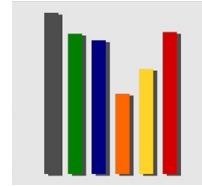
- Lifestyle Market Analyst
- New Strategist Publications
 - *Millennials: Americans Born 1977 to 1994*
 - *Who's Buying for Pets*
 - *Household Spending*
 - And more!
- Demographics USA



Databases for Consumer Data:

- RefUSA (New Movers, US Lifestyles, US Consumer Research add-ons)
- Mintel (contains Simmons data as well as NPD)
- MRI (MediaMark Research) (has an academic subscription option)
- Simmons Choices III
- SimplyMap (contains some Simmons, MRI, Claritas and lots more)
- Global Market Information Database (GMID)
- World Development Indicators

Business & Economic Statistics



Statistics are everywhere!

Trick is to find them broken out the way you want

- Quarterly? Annually? Daily? Five years' worth of data? Twenty-five years? Zip code? County?
- Just because you've found a number doesn't mean it's the right number--be extra vigilant when dealing with data.
- Looking for **SOURCES** is especially important with statistics.
- The US Government tracks *a lot* of data...more than you might realize.
- Many databases (or open web sites) that focus on international coverage include economic and other statistics.
 - Global Market Information Database (GMID from Euromonitor)
 - Economist Intelligence Unit
 - CIA World Factbook
 - Nationmaster.com

(A few) Resources for Business & Economic Statistics

Explore Statistics (from Umich GovDocs)

www.lib.umich.edu/government-documents-center/explore/browse/statistics/260

Statistical Abstract of the United States

www.census.gov/compendia/statab

MHAL - Sources for Michigan Statistics

<http://bit.ly/MIstats>

Statemaster.com

Census.gov

(includes American Factfinder, County Business Patterns and Statistics of US Business)

Business Data & Statistics

www.usa.gov/Business/Business_Data.shtml or www.business.gov/expand/business-data





Sanity check: Some business reference questions can't be answered!

Ask yourself:

- Would a company want their competitors to know this?
- Is this kind of data even tracked? If so, would a company release it? For free?
- Is there an alternative way to approach this question?

Strengthen your core!



BUSLIB - *Business Librarians' Email Discussion Group*

BRASS – *Business Reference & Services Section of ALA/RUSA*

SLA – *Business & Finance division*

Resourceshef: www.resourceshef.com
Biz Ref Desk: bizrefdesk.blogspot.com

Journal of Business & Finance Librarianship and **Business Information Alert** :

For reviews, articles, publishing opportunities and more!

NYPL

www.nypl.org/research/sibl

Harvard's Baker Library:

www.library.hbs.edu/guides

Does that make sense?

Remember:

- You already know what you're doing! Really!
- Not every question has an answer.
- The Core Four can get you started.
- Think like a detective
 - look for clues, not exact answers
- It's a jungle out there—
 - Don't be afraid to ask for help!

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