

# How to Research a Company

This handout gives you some of the basics on doing library research on a company. It tells you the best places to look to get the most information quickly and easily. How to Research an Industry is covered on the back page of this handout.

Start by typing in your company name in anyone of the databases listed below. Each database has its own strengths and unique content so try several. These databases can be accessed from anywhere on campus from the University Libraries' Electronic Resources web page which is found at <http://delphi.tcl.sc.edu/indexdb/er.php> and from off-campus by using University Libraries' EZproxy service from this same web page.

- **Mergent Online**

What it Does: Covers all public companies (companies that have stock for sale to the public) Both US and foreign companies are included. Gives detailed facts about the company and extensive financial data. Also includes complete annual reports for the most recent 10 years. Complete text of SEC filings (EDGAR) are also available.

- **Hoover's Online**

What it Does: Tremendous source of worldwide company information. It is especially good for company background information and listings of competitors. It also does cover some private companies and non-profit organizations. Be aware that Hoovers gives you the option of buying expensive, specialized research reports that are not included in our subscriber content. Try what is free from library sources before you invest in one.

Access Limitations: The library's subscriber version of Hoover's which is more detailed than the universally available free version can only be accessed from within BA Building.

- **Business Source Premier**

What it Does: Great source for full text articles about companies found in trade publications (journals that focus on a particular industry), in business magazines and also in scholarly journals. If the company you are researching is private or owned by another company then articles may be one of your best sources of information. Also includes very detailed company profiles for both US and overseas public companies. Includes company SWOT Analysis which cover strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats.

- **Business and Company Resource Center**

What It Does: Provides company profiles, financials, news, rankings, and investment reports. A unique feature is the full text information about companies from business reference books. In this category are in-depth company histories.

- **LexisNexis Academic**

What It Does: Provides company information with detailed financials and is another great source for articles about companies from magazines and newspapers worldwide. Also gives basic directory type, brief information on thousands of small private companies.

## How to Research an Industry

Type in the industry name or the industry code numbers from either the NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) or SIC (Standard Industrial Classification). Code lookups are available in most databases or search for NAICS codes by keyword at <http://www.census.gov/epcd/www/naics.html> These databases can be accessed from on-campus or off-campus from the University Libraries' Electronic Resources web page.

- **IBISWorld**

What It Does: The first place to look for in-depth and very current US industry information. It gives extremely detailed industry reports on hundreds of industries at the very specific 5 digit NAICS code level. Reports cover industry conditions, key statistics, market characteristics, leading companies, competition, trends, and outlook. A typical report runs 25 pages or more and is updated every four months.

- **Business and Company Resource Center**

What It Does: Contains reference books (Encyclopedias of American Industries, Global Industries and Emerging Industries) containing full text industry reports. It also has full text industry market research reports, market share data, and articles.

- **Business Insights**

What It Does: Provides comprehensive global market analysis focusing on industries in consumer goods, energy, finance, health care, and eCommerce and technology.

- **Business Source Premier**

What It Does: Contains detailed Industry Profile reports for both US and overseas markets along with numerous full text industry articles and market research reports.

- **Mergent Online**

What It Does: Full text reports on industry groups in the US, Europe and Asia Pacific. Covers both service and manufacturing industries. Reports contain industry profiles, current environment, market trends, leading companies and industry outlook.

- **Hoovers Online**

What It Does: Has Industry Overviews and detailed listings of companies within industries. Also provides full text industry news. Hoovers accessible only within BA.

- **Mintel**

What It Does: Contains in-depth reports on consumer goods industries for both US and overseas markets. Covers competition, consumer demographics and market share.

- **Standard & Poor's Industry Surveys** (Business Reference HC 1 .S74)

What It Does: This print source provides comprehensive reports analyzing US industries. Covers trends, current environment, how the industry operates, statistics, how to analyze a company within that industry and a comparative company analysis.

