Finding Company Information for Employability

There are many excellent resources within the Library that can help you to increase your commercial awareness – a key employability skill that employers often find lacking in prospective employees.

You can use the databases to research companies and industry sectors to give you the advantage over other candidates.

This guide will tell you about the resources you can use for this research. It will cover finding the following types of company and industry information;

- Background
- Financial
- Marketing
- News
- Identifying companies within a sector.

Contact the Business Subject Librarians for further help;

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To access the databases mentioned in this guide, click on the Subject Resources link on Locate.

Next select Business, Management and Economics from the list and click on the link below. This will take you to Libguides. Select the Subject Resources tab and you will see an alphabetical list of the databases.

Click on the tile link to access.

Login using your Coventry University username and password in the format; Username@coventry.ac.uk NOT username@uni.coventry.ac.uk

Background information
Basic background information, such as size, structure, products and services etc can be found in the company’s website, company profiles produced by market research companies and a number of other sources.
Company website
The company’s website should be the first place that you look to research a company. The amount of information given will vary and you will need to explore it in detail. The website will be aimed at selling its products and services, but you can often find out about size, structure, history, social responsibility and view press releases. Click on the ‘about us’ section or go to their corporate site.

Business Source Complete. Contains a list of company profiles and industry profiles produced by Marketline including companies outside the UK. The profiles give some very useful information about the nature of the company, their customers, products, competitors, SWOT analysis etc. To find these, click on the Company Information tab at the top of the page or ‘Company profiles’ on the ‘More’ tab. Alternatively you can search for the company, then under ‘Source types’ limit to Market Research Reports, SWOT Analyses and Industry Profiles.

ABI Inform. This contains similar information to Business Source Complete; company profiles, industry reports and market research reports.

Company Annual Reports not only contain financial information, but also details about the company’s activities, review of performance, strategies and are good for looking at the future direction of the company.

Lexis Library and Financial Times
Newspaper reports can be used to find events and other newsworthy items about companies, e.g. investments, mergers and takeovers, legal actions etc. Newspaper reports are good for finding out about current activities of companies. UK and Irish newspapers can be searched on Lexis Library. The Financial Times is available via Locate.

Financial Information
FAME (Financial Analysis Made Easy) Contains detailed financial information about large public and private companies based in the UK and Ireland. The information has been taken from the company’s annual report and includes profit and loss account, the balance sheet, financial and profitability ratios and financial and profitability trends. This is likely to be more than you need for researching a company, but looking at the turnover is a good indication of the financial health of that company.

FAME contains data for the past 20 years, so you can make comparisons over time and with other companies in the same industry.

You can also use FAME to construct lists of companies that satisfy certain criteria, e.g. geographical area, industry, number of employees etc. Details showing how to do this can be found at the end of this guide.
**Company Annual Reports**
The annual report from a company will contain financial information relating to that company such as turnover, sales, profit and loss account and balance sheets for that financial year as well as containing reviews from key personnel about the company’s performance and operations over the previous year. In addition to financial information Annual Reports are useful for finding out about future directions and corporate social responsibility.

Company reports can usually be found on the company’s own website in the ‘about us’ section under ‘investor relations’ or a simple Google search including the company name, annual report and year will usually find it.

Companies House keeps records of annual reports, [https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/](https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/)

You can also use the website, Northcote [http://www.northcote.co.uk/](http://www.northcote.co.uk/) The service is free and some annual reports are available for a number of years, including some interim reports.

**Shareprice information**
Financial Times newspaper. Available online via Locate, (You will need to register for an account).

[http://uk.finance.yahoo.com](http://uk.finance.yahoo.com) Contains free stock exchange data  
[http://bigcharts.marketwatch.com](http://bigcharts.marketwatch.com) contains freely available stock exchange data. You can alter the time runs of available data.  
[www.londonstockexchange.com](http://www.londonstockexchange.com)

**Market Research**
Market research reports are useful to find out about an industry sector and provide information about products and services, market sectors, market size, competitors, customers and lifestyle trends. You can find market research reports on the following databases;

**Mintel.** A database of market research reports produced by Mintel. These are useful for finding out about the main producers/retailers of products and services and who their competitors are. They contain overviews of market sectors, consumer information and brand/product information. The reports are mostly UK, but there are some relating to China and Europe.

**IBISWorld** produces Industry and market research reports on a wide range of industries, e.g. energy, oil and gas, construction, food and drink, entertainment etc for UK and China. It also contains Brexit impact statements.

**Euromonitor Passport.** Contains similar information to Mintel, but has global coverage. Information includes consumer lifestyles, country information and
company and brand data. It also contains some statistical information and economic indicators such as GDP, inflation etc.

**Business Source Complete and ABI Inform**
There are industry profiles, company profiles and market reports available on both of these databases. These cover global industries including non-consumer areas such as oil and gas.

**News**
Newspaper can be used to find events, trends and other newsworthy items about companies and industries, e.g. investments, mergers and takeovers, legal actions, people, new innovations etc.

It is also good to keep up to date with current affairs, so you can be aware of anything that might affect your company or industry sector.

**Lexis Library.** Contains a collection of UK and Irish newspapers, both national and local which can be used to search for news about companies. Local newspapers are good for finding how companies impact on local population and environment.

**Financial Times.** This is not contained within the database Lexis Library, but can be found on Locate.

**Business Source Complete, ABI Inform and Emerald.** These are the main business databases and can be searched to find journal articles about specific companies. They are also useful for finding case studies. BSC and ABI Inform contain trade and professional journals which are good to find news about specific professions.

**Finding companies within a sector**
If you wish to find companies that are engaged in a specific type of business in a given location, so you can send speculative job applications, you can use these sources to help you.

**www.yell.com** The Yellow pages online. This can be used to find company addresses and contact details, especially for small or local companies. You can obtain details of companies in a sector in a particular area, e.g. automotive component manufacturers in Coventry.

**www.Kompass.com**
This is the global database of industrial and business services in over 70 countries. Coventry University does not have a subscription to Kompass so the number of companies available to non-subscribers is limited. You can search for companies by industry or by location.
**FAME** This is a good database for finding lists of companies in a given location within a sector, (instructions given at the end of this guide will show how to do this). As well as the financial data mentioned above, there are also details of the directors, both past and present, contacts within the company and a listing of subsidiary companies.

**Mintel** and **IBISWorld** can be used to identify who are the main companies producing or selling a product.

**Using FAME to find companies to send speculative applications**

Use the database, **FAME** to construct a list of companies you would like to approach regarding jobseeking or placements.

You can access FAME via the **Subject Resources** tab in **Libguides**. Click on the title link and login using your **Coventry University username and password**.

**Creating a list of companies**

To search for more than one company or to create a list of companies that satisfy certain criteria, e.g. location and industry you will need to select them using the criteria in the selection panel, rather than the search box at the top.
For example, if you want to find companies in a specific area, click on Location, then select Region, Postcode or County.

You can then select a more specific location. For example, West Midlands. Click on the arrow next to region and select your location. It will then appear in the column on the right. Click OK.
You can continue to combine this with other categories such as **activities** to find the industry. Repeat the same process as above, but choose from **trade description**, **industry classification** or **major sectors**.
You will then see the two searches combined. Click ‘**View results**’.

The list will then be displayed with the default information. If you want to change this to show other information, such as contact details click on **Add/remove columns**.

It would be best to click ‘**Remove all**’

You will then be able to select the information you need from the categories on the left hand side.
Further details or subcategories will appear in the middle panel and you can select them by clicking the arrow. Your selections will be displayed in the panel on the right. Click **Apply** to view. The results can be exported into Excel. To view the individual companies, click on the title link.