



Favorite (Mostly Free) Business Research Websites

Christine Hamilton-Pennell

Company, Industry and Market Information

- **Bizjournals**, www.bizjournals.com, offers free full-text access to news articles from business newspapers in more than 40 regions in the U.S. You can search for articles by company, industry, or name.
- **Free Research**, www.free-research.com, requires free registration to gain access to industry reports in 27 vertical markets, from Automotive to Travel, in most countries around the world. Most reports are brief—from one paragraph to several pages. Other useful content includes trade associations in each of the global industry sectors; annual reports, 10K's, and investor presentations for the world's largest companies; and country guides and market insight reports.
- **Hoovers**, www.hoovers.com, is a robust database of company and industry information. Companies profiled by Hoover's are both public and private with revenues of \$5 million and higher. On the free side, you can get a profile of a company or industry, including financial information; view free industry video interviews with expert analysts and business leaders; and build an Excel list of the top 10 companies in a specific area.
- **Industry Information Resources**, www.valuationresources.com/IndustryReport.htm, is a free resource guide to industry resources and data for over 400 industries in the U.S. Individual pages for each industry list resources and data available from trade associations, industry publications, and research firms. Information provided includes an industry overview; industry issues, trends, and outlook; industry financial information and financial ratios; compensation and salary surveys; and business valuation resources.
- **Metrics 2.0**, www.metrics2.com, is a site that uses publicly available data—research, surveys, stats, facts, figures, and forecasts—from thousands of authoritative sources to provide insights about business trends and markets. For example, you can find global broadband penetration numbers, trends in green business practices, consumer spending on gift cards, and trends in mobile social networking.
- **ThomasNet**, www.thomasnet.com/, is a comprehensive resource for finding North American suppliers of industrial products and services by company name, brand name, and location. For example, you can find suppliers for plastic bottles for hair care products or pressure-sensitive tapes. **Thomasglobal**, www.thomasglobal.com, provides similar information for markets throughout the world.
- **Tradekey**, www.tradekey.com, is essentially a marketplace linking buyers and sellers of specific products in more than 200 countries. It's a handy way of finding out who else is in your product space. A similar database is **Alibaba**, www.alibaba.com, which boasts more than one million buyers from around the world and allows you to post products and leads and get trade news and insights.
- **U.S. Census Bureau—Economic Census**, www.census.gov/econ/census02/, is updated every five years. 2007 reports will be available in 2009 and 2010. The 2002 industry reports are available by sector (NAICS code) and geographic region (states, metropolitan areas, counties, and cities). You can

also access ready-made Industry Snapshots for specified industries. These reports illustrate annual data from Nonemployer Statistics and County Business Patterns as well as 5-year Economic Census data.

Competitor and Prospect Lists

- **Superpages**, <http://www.superpages.com/?SRC=insp>, allows you to search by city/state or ZIP code and then by category or business name to find U.S. businesses within a 1 to 100 mile radius. Just enter an address, use the drop down box to select a distance and click the SEARCH button.
- **Manta**, www.manta.com, offers data from Dun & Bradstreet. You can search for U.S. companies in a city or state, identify competitors or potential B2B customers, drill down a series of SIC categories for a specific type of business within an industry, or receive a profile that includes contact name and title, annual sales, employees and more.
- **Zapdata**, www.zapdata.com, provides detailed company information for creating competitor and B2B prospect lists. For each search, Zapdata will allow you to view a list of up to 50 customers or competitors by name, city and state at no charge. You are not limited on the number of searches.

People Information

- **Jigsaw**, <http://jigsaw.com>, is an online directory of more than 8 million business contacts. Every contact in Jigsaw includes full name, title, postal address, email address and telephone number. You can often find people who are buried deep in an organization. It has safeguards built in to protect qualified names and email addresses, but you can get a name around 70% of the time.
- **ZoomInfo**, www.zoominfo.com, is a search engine that finds, understands, and extracts the latest online information about people and companies and delivers it in concise and useful summaries. You can search for people by name and find their work history, education, and cached links to internet references on them. You can also find links to employees from the same company and link to the company's profile, as well as search job openings on the company profile page.
- **LinkedIn**, www.linkedin.com, is a business-oriented social networking site with more than 25 million members. You can search the database for people, companies and keywords. The majority of members hail from the U.S. and Canada.
- **Xing**, www.xing.com, is the European equivalent of LinkedIn. You can search this business network of close to six million members by name, company, or search term.
- **PRNewswire**, <https://profnet.prnewswire.com/>, has a searchable database of more than 25,000 experts.