SAMPLE BUSINESS QUESTIONS & Advice

The following FAQ questions and topics were selected by the Business Department Faculty as the ones they most wanted their majors to be able to answer.

1. Company’s basic information - Full name, address, website, ticker symbol, SIC code, NAICS code, president/CEO, etc.
2. Top competitors / Other competitors
3. A financial comparison of top competitors
4. Financial Data (Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow, Earnings Estimates, etc.)
5. Financial Data Comparisons
6. Company Growth Rate / Ratios
7. Industry Growth Rate in Sales
8. Financial Ratios for Company / Industry/ Market
9. Financial Ratios for Main Competitors
10. Company Rank
11. Company Market Share
12. Company News
13. Industry Reports
15. Industry Overview
16. Industry Market Research
17. SWOT Analysis

SEARCH PATHS FOR SAMPLE BUSINESS QUESTIONS

Disney was used in each of the following examples,

1. **Company’s Basic Information** - Full name, address, website, ticker symbol, SIC code, NAICS code, president/CEO – Go to Hoovers, Search under Disney, Click on the full name of the company. This will take you to them Main Page. (NOTE: If you get multiple hits, click on the one that says Headquarters. If more than one says Headquarters, choose the one with a Ticker Symbol. If more than one Ticker Symbol, yours is probably the one with the largest sales revenue.)

   ![Company Name Table](image)

   - **The Walt Disney Company**
     - D-U-N-S #: 932660376
     - Location: Burbank CA United States
     - Location Type: Headquarters
     - Sales: $40,893,000
   - **Disney Publishing Worldwide**
     - D-U-N-S #: 808657589
     - Location: White Plains NY United States
     - Location Type: Headquarters
     - Sales: $21,000

2. **A List of your company’s competitors** - Hoovers > Disney > Competition > Competitors List (NOTE: Each listed competitor will hyperlink to its main page in Hoovers).

3. **A Financial Comparison of Top Competitors** - Hoovers > Disney > Competition > Competitive Landscape (NOTE: Click on Data Definitions at bottom of stats if you are unsure of categories.)
   - Also - Business Insights: Essentials > Disney > Financials Tab > Compare to major competitors Button
   - NOTE: You can compare different companies by selecting the Compare to Specific Companies Button and adding up to four ticker symbols.

4. **Financial Data (Summary, Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow, Historical Financials, and SEC Filings)** - Hoovers > Disney > Financials, then any subtopic mentioned above.
   - Also useful are – Hoovers > Disney > Earning Estimate
     - Hoovers > Disney > Stock Quote & Chart
     - Hoovers > Disney > Financial Market Data

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5. Financial Data Comparisons with Industry and Market - Hoovers > Disney > Competition > Competitors List (Notes your company, the Industry Median, and the Market Median. The Industry Median, presumably, contains all of your company’s competitors. The Market Median contains only those carried by the New York Stock Exchange, American Stock Exchange, and NASDAQ.)

6. Company Growth Rate / Ratios - Hoovers > Disney > Earnings Estimates
also - http://money.msn.com/ > Look up the Company Ticker in the box next to the Get Quote Button > FUNDAMENTALS- Earnings. (This site will compare both past and future growth rates of the Company to its Industry and Stock Exchange.)

7. Industry Growth Rate in Sales - http://money.msn.com/> Look up the Company Ticker in the box next to the Get Quote Button > FUNDAMENTALS- Key Ratios


9. Financial Ratios for Main Competitors - Hoovers > Disney > Competition > Competitive Landscape

10. Company Rank – Hoovers > Disney > Competition > Competitors List.
NOTE: You will need to sort the competitors by Gross Revenue and then number them.

11. Company Market Share - Hoovers > Disney > Competition > Competitors List. (See example above.) Then download names of companies and their revenues into a spreadsheet. Total that industry’s revenues. Then calculate your company’s Market Share percentage by dividing your Company’s Revenues by Total Industry Revenues.

12. Company News - Hoovers > Disney > News and Press (You can filter older news by week.)
However, the following databases are better sources for business news.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Full Text</th>
<th>Lexis Nexis Academic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Insights: Essentials</td>
<td>Regional Business News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Source Premier</td>
<td>Wall Street Journal Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Business File ASAP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. **Industry Reports** – *Business Source Premier > Name of Industry* and the phrase *Industry Profile.* *(See example below)* You will retrieve a number of reports – one global, one United States, and other countries as well. Click on *PDF Full Text* to open the Industry Report of your choice.

![Image of search interface](image)

**NOTE:** If unsure of the name of your industry, search by most likely name and then click on *NAICS/Industry* (Located on left). Then choose the most likely industry.

Or

In the Advanced Search Mode, type the *NAICS Code* in the *IC NAICS Code or Description field.* Then *Search.* Then limit results to *Industry Profiles* (under **Source Types**.)

  - also - *Hoovers > Disney > Industry Information*  **WARNING!** Most Hoover industry information is incomplete. You will frequently be given a hyperlink to additional, *fee based* information.
  - also - *Business Insights: Essentials > Disney > Industry Information* > Then search by Industry Name or NAICS.


  - also - *Business Source Premier* (Search under *name of Industry,* Then limit results under *NAICS/Industry* code.)
  - also - *Business Insights: Essentials* > *(Do an Industry search using either the name of the industry or NAICS code.)*
  - also - *General Business File ASAP* (Use the *Subject Guide* to identify your industry. Then click on *Industry Overview.*)
  - also - *Regional Business News – (Subject search)*

15. **Industry Overview** - *Business Insights: Essentials > Industry* (Search under industry name or NAICS codes or your company.)

  - also - *Hoovers > Industry Tab > Click on Browse Hoover’s Industries > Select Profile*  **WARNING!** Most Hoover industry information is incomplete. You will frequently be given a hyperlink to additional, *fee based* information.


  - also – *Business Source Premier > Enter your topic and click on Search > Name of Industry > Market Research Reports*  **Warning** – Since name of industry may vary from database to database, you may wish to enter one or two key words instead!

    - also - Much of the information available in Market Research Reports can be found using the same techniques mentioned in questions 13, 14 and 15.

17. **SWOT Analysis** - *Business Source Premier > At the Search Screen* type *Disney and SWOT Analysis*  **NOTE:** Not all companies will have a SWOT Analysis.

**SEARCH TIPS**

Sample Business Questions 3 updated 1/23/13
When conducting company research it is useful to write down the following information which can then be used in advanced searching:

1) Full Company Name: *The Walt Disney Company*, not *Disney*.
2) Ticker and Stock Exchange: DIS and NYSE
3) NAICS Codes and SIC Codes: (Useful in searching for industry information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAICS Codes</th>
<th>US SIC Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3993</td>
<td>27210000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39931</td>
<td>27310000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>511120</td>
<td>36520000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>511130</td>
<td>39420000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>512110</td>
<td>39440000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>512120</td>
<td>48330000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>512220</td>
<td>48410000</td>
</tr>
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<td>515120</td>
<td>70110000</td>
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<td>515210</td>
<td>73720000</td>
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<td>519130</td>
<td>78120000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>713110</td>
<td>70220000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>721110</td>
<td>79960000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4) It is also useful to have the same information for your company’s chief competitors.

**ADVANCED TECHNIQUES**

**Using Truncation in Business Source Premier**

If any of you are using *Business Source Premier* to find industry information, I recommend this technique I used for the motorcycle industry.

Using advanced search type

- **motorcycle*** in the first field
- **statistic*** or **trend*** or **forecast*** or **project*** in the second field

Unclick the *Suggest Subject Terms Box*.

Do your search.

Then click on the *Industry Profiles* hyperlink located just above your results. You will find a series of periodicals published by country. Scroll through them alphabetically until you find the one for global. It's an 18-page Datamation Report. The report on the United States is also useful.

**NOTE:** The use of the * at the end of a search term is called truncation. When you search for **motorcycle*** you find not only **motorcycle** (singular), but also **motorcycles** (plural).

**NOTE:** The use of the "or" connector expands your search to all four search terms and is useful when your information could be described in a variety of ways. This saves you from doing four different searches.

**NOTE: *Business Source Premier* is really nice because it allows you to limit your results to the following areas:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Results</th>
<th>Academic Journals</th>
<th>Trade Publications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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NOTE: When doing complicated searches like this, it is common to get zero hits. A lot can go wrong. Sometimes it is useful to build your search, one term at a time, so that if you suddenly get zero hits, you know the problem was caused by the last term you added.

NOTE: Since this is a complicated search, you might want to save it so that you can use it again without typing it. You can then make quick edits to it – substituting bicycle* for motorcycle* or adding or motorbike* to your first search field. Etc. You can save your searches by clicking on Add search to folder. You may have to register a user name and password of your choice to do this, but if you are a frequent user, it is worth your time.

NOTE: Once registered as an EBSCOHost user, you can also store the results - the bibliographies and articles – by clicking on Add to folder. Then you don't have to email them. You simply log on and retrieve them as needed from your folder.

**MSN Money**

This site is similar to Hoovers in arrangement, but with most links found on the left side of the screen. Be aware that there may be Tabs at the top of the page which will provide access to additional information, such as:

**Walt Disney Co** (NYSE DIS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>% Change</th>
<th>Realtime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39.40</td>
<td>+0.16</td>
<td>+0.38%</td>
<td>Find Quote</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Yahoo Finance** is similar to MSN Money but gives better industry information. Go to http://finance.yahoo.com/ then click on Investing > Industries > Complete Industry List > Your Industry > Industry Browser. It’s not a lot of information, but it does include the following stats:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>1 Day Price</th>
<th>Market Cap</th>
<th>P/E</th>
<th>ROE %</th>
<th>Div. Yield %</th>
<th>Long-Term Debt to Equity</th>
<th>Price to Book Value</th>
<th>Net Profit Margin % (mrq)</th>
<th>Price to Free Cash Flow (mrq)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Investopedia** - http://www.investopedia.com/

Includes a wide variety of financial information and advice. Of special interest is its Industry Handbook at http://www.investopedia.com/features/industryhandbook/ which provides discussions of about a dozen select industries aimed at investors.