

## Public Libraries Briefcase

Disclaimer\*

No. 3, 1st Quarter 2003

A publication of the BRASS Business Reference in Public Libraries Committee

*Public Libraries Briefcase* is a quarterly column written by members of the BRASS Business Reference in Public Libraries Committee. Our latest column, written by Jennifer Mahnken, is a selected bibliography of industry information. We hope that this column will be of use to public librarians working with business materials.

---

## Finding Industry Information

In public libraries, a request for industry information is common. Someone is working on a business plan or needs background information for their investment club research. Following is a list of resources as well as ideas on how to help someone looking for industry information, historical data, current trends or the outlook.

- *Standard & Poor's Industry Surveys* – Covers 36 major industries. Sub-industries included within major ones. Very thorough coverage that includes top market share holders, trends, history and projections.
- *Gale's Encyclopedia of American Industry* – This two-volume source covers most industries and provides a brief description as well as some history and trends.
- *Gale's Encyclopedia of Emerging Industries* – As the name implies, get information about new and emerging industries.
- *Dun and Bradstreet's Industry Norms and Key Business Ratios* – This source and the following two are organized by SIC code. They offer ratios and averages for a given number of companies in an industry in various areas such as inventory costs, debt, earnings, and employee costs. Get an idea about costs and expenses for any given industry.
- *RMA Annual Statement Studies*
- *Troy's Almanac of Business and Industrial Financial Ratios*

### Free Web Sites

- Standard Industrial Classification -- <http://www.osha.gov/oshstats/sicser.html> -- Find the SIC code associated with the appropriate industry in order to find data in other publications.
- North American Industrial Classification System -- <http://www.osha.gov/oshstats/naics-manual.html> - The "new" SIC. Find the NAICS code as another means to locate data about a given industry.
- County Business Patterns -- <http://www.census.gov/epcd/cbp/view/cbpview.html> -- Government reports organized by industry code that provide statistical data.
- Current Industrial Reports -- <http://www.census.gov/cir/www/> -- Government reports about specific industries and sub-industries. Provides statistics and detailed tables regarding sales and production.
- ZapData -- <http://www.zapdata.com/> -- a commercial site that provides free industrial reports for a select group of industries. Free registration is required.

### Other Ideas

**Associations** – Don't forget about recommending that your patron check out some of the associations affiliated with the industry! This can be a great source of information as well as a current one.

- Gale's Encyclopedia of Associations – A list of associations grouped by subject, accessed by key word.
- Small Business Source Book – Not only associations but also books and trade journals about the business or industry.

**Magazines and Newspapers** – This is one of the first places I send a patron for current industry trends or outlook. It is the most up-to-date information and easily accessible through several online databases or free news Web sites.

- Infotrac's Business and Company Resource Center
- EbscoHost's Business Source Premier
- Proquest's ABI/Inform and ABI Inform Dateline
- Bizjournals.com – Regional business news

---

Written by Jennifer Mahnken, Johnson County Library, Overland Park, Kansas

*\*Disclaimer* : This publication has been placed on the web for the convenience of BRASS members. Information and links will not be updated. Posted 14 January 2003.