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Using Google Bucket Activity in Business Students' Library Orientation

This Google bucket activity is adapted from the [University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Library's Google bucket activity](#) (University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Library, 2016) and designed specifically for business students' orientation. Instructors can use this activity to introduce a wide range of business collections and encourage students to think critically about the content available through Google and how it compares to content available through a range of library databases. Instructors can also incorporate multiple information literacy framework concepts such as "searching as strategic exploration" and "authority is constructed and contextual" in this one-shot instruction session (Association for College and Research Libraries, 2016). An in-class assessment indicated that 11 out of 13 students strongly agreed that using buckets visually helped them understand the content in library databases better than online demonstrations and most of them felt more confident using library databases. Below is a lesson plan that you can adapt at your institution.

Google Bucket Activity Lesson Plan

Learning Objectives:

- Students will be able to describe the types of business resources available through Google, noting that the quality of the resources varies and some resources are behind a paywall.
- Students will be able to articulate the variety of business-related information sources available through library databases.
- Students will be able to describe how research takes several steps and they will need to use different tools to satisfy different information needs.
- Students will be able to develop basic information evaluation skills.

Time Required:

20 - 40 minutes

(The activity is about 20 minutes; the online demonstration adds approximately 20 minutes.)

Research Tools Introduced:

- Google
- Business Source Complete (BSC)
- LexisNexis
- IBISWorld
- Statista

Example Topic:

Students are asked by a management class professor to do research on a company and its related industries. The student decides to research Apple, Inc. and the mobile phone/consumer electronics industry.

Materials Needed:

- One five-gallon bucket labeled "Google" containing a variety of screenshots from publicly accessible websites including:
 - A Wikipedia article on Apple, Inc.
 - A *New York Times* news article relating to Apple, Inc.
 - A government document/statistical report on the consumer electronics industry
 - An IBISWorld report (behind paywall)
 - A MarketLine industry profile (typical cost \$350)
 - A report from a trade association (does not need to relate to Apple or the industry)
 - A SWOT analysis of Apple, Inc.
 - A scholarly article on Apple's product lines (full-text not available)
 - A Statista Dossier (typical cost \$325)
- One two-gallon bucket labeled "Business Source Complete" containing the full text of selected articles or screenshots of the first page of selected reports (with table of contents if available) including:
 - A full-text scholarly article on Apple's product line (preferably the same one as paywalled in the Google bucket)
 - A magazine article
 - A MarketLine U.S. mobile phone industry profile
 - A MarketLine industry report for another country
 - A MarketLine SWOT analysis for Apple, Inc.
 - A country review report
- One two-gallon bucket labeled "LexisNexis" containing:
 - A company profile of Apple, Inc.
 - An industry report on the U.S. consumer electronics industry
 - An industry report on another country
 - A legal case involving Apple, Inc.
 - A news article about Apple, Inc.

- A SWOT analysis of Apple, Inc.
- One five-quart bucket labeled "Statista" containing:
 - Apple, Inc. Statista Dossier
 - An Infographic on Apple, Inc.
 - iPhone Dossier
 - Smartphone in the U.S. Dossier
- One two point five-quart bucket labeled "IBISWorld" containing:
 - Industry report on consumer electronics (global)
 - Industry report on consumer electronics stores (U.S.)
 - Industry report on mobile phone manufacturing in China
 - A list of industry reports (search results page)

Instructions

- Divide students into five groups.
- Explain that the buckets represent five business research tools. Give the groups a few minutes to examine the buckets and select one.
- The library instructor assumes the role of a student researcher and asks for class members' help in doing research on Apple, Inc. and the mobile phone/consumer electronics industry.

Prompt 1 - Research Apple, Inc. and its product lines.

- Begin by asking the Google bucket group for an article on Apple's product lines. Expect students to find a Wikipedia article and a more in-depth scholarly article without full-text.
- Discuss the authority of a Wikipedia article and how to use it.
- Explain that a full-text scholarly article is often not available through Google. Then ask the entire class for help finding a full-text scholarly article on Apple's product line. The BSC group should have it.
- Ask what other content about Apple can be found in BSC. A SWOT analysis should be found; then ask which other groups have a SWOT analysis. Google and LexisNexis groups should have one.
- Explain the difference between the three analyses and help students understand that authority is constructed and contextual.
- Ask what other content about Apple is available in LexisNexis.
- Ask what other content about Apple is available from Google. A paywalled Statista Report should be found.
- Ask what Statista has for Apple product research.

Prompt 2 – Research the mobile phone/consumer electronics industry.

- Ask the Google group for industry reports. They will find most industry reports from Google are behind a paywall.

- Introduce the same reports from library databases individually. BSC, IBISWorld, and Statista should have them.
- Compare the reports from different sources and explain how to evaluate the content.

Prompt 3 - Find visually appealing graphs for the presentation.

- Ask which groups have more visual content. IBISWorld and Statista should have it.

Prompt 4 - Summarize and reflect.

- Ask students to share their advice on how to use different resources to conduct research on this topic. Explain that searching is a strategic exploration.
- Summarize the resources in Google and library databases, and examine the materials that have not been discussed.
- Briefly demonstrate how to access these resources through the library and describe their content structure.

References

Association for College and Research Libraries. (2016). *Framework for information literacy for higher education*. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Library. (2016). *The Google bucket*. Retrieved from <http://www.utc.edu/library/services/instruction/teaching-materials/google-bucket.php>