
Outstanding Business Reference Resources 2015

BRASS Business Reference Sources Committee

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Each year, the Business Reference Sources Committee of BRASS selects the outstanding business reference sources published since May of the previous year. This year, the committee reviewed twenty entries; of these, two were designated as “Outstanding,” seven were selected as “Notable,” one was designated as a “Significant New Edition.” To qualify for these designations, each title must meet the conventional definition of reference: a work compiled specifically to supply information on a certain subject or group of subjects in a form that will facilitate its ease of use. With print reference materials being used less heavily in most cases, these works stood out based on their content, quality, and utility. The works are examined for the following: authority and reputation of the publisher, author, or editor; accuracy; appropriate bibliography; organization; comprehensiveness; value of the content; currency; unique addition; ease of use for the intended purpose; quality and accuracy of index; and quality and usefulness of graphics and illustrations. Each year, more electronic reference titles are published. Additional criteria for electronic reference titles are accuracy of links, search features, stability of content, and graphic design. Works selected must be suitable for medium to large-size academic and public libraries.

OUTSTANDING

Handbook of Digital Currency: Bitcoin, Innovation, Financial Instruments, and Big Data. Edited by David Lee Kuo Cheun. London: Academic Press, 2015. 612 pages. \$150 hardcover (ISBN: 9780128021170), \$150 e-book (ISBN: 9780128023518).

The *Handbook of Digital Currency: Bitcoin, Innovation, Financial Instruments, and Big Data*, edited by David Lee Kuo Cheun, is a comprehensive reference book that provides an overview of digital currency using a multifaceted, global approach. The one-volume handbook features twenty-eight chapters written by contributing authors from nine countries.

In the preface, Cheun states that the intention of the handbook is to focus not only on Bitcoin, but its associated innovations as well. Cheun discusses the Global Financial Crash of 2008 and subsequent decline of confidence in a centralized monetary system, and determines that these events set the stage for the introduction of Bitcoin. He goes on to present several reasons that digital currency remains a topic of interest and provides a context for the rest of the handbook.

The book is arranged in two parts: “Digital Currency and Bitcoin” and “Finance Markets and Bitcoin.” Each part

is divided into sections comprised of chapters, with each chapter further divided into subsections. The chapter subsections are listed in the table of contents, making it easy to home in on a specific theme or topic. In part one, the chapters provide an introduction to digital and alternative currencies, starting with an overview of Bitcoin. The following chapters feature a history of cryptocurrency around the world, explorations of the technology behind Bitcoin, and in-depth discussions of the benefits and risks of cryptocurrency, impact on interest rates, and possible future applications of digital currencies. Part two focuses on the practical aspects related to digital currency, including regulation and taxation, the development of centralized monetary systems, and e-payment and security, with many featuring tables and graphs. All chapters include references, with many providing recommended or additional reading lists. Bonus: the e-book includes hyperlinks to references and additional readings. An index is also available.

The greatest strength of this book is the range of insights provided from the contributing authors and editor. David Lee Kuo Cheun is a Professor of Quantitative Finance (Practice) at Lee Kong Chian School of Business, Singapore Management University and Director of the Sim Kee Boon Institute for Financial Economics. Examples of contributor backgrounds include: David Yermack, Albert Fingerhut Professor of Finance and Business Transformation at the NYU Stern School of Business and teacher of courses on digital currency; legal experts in securities, regulatory enforcement, and international transactions from notable firms like WilmerHale and Baker and Hostetler; and economists from the United States, Switzerland, and Singapore.

This is a valuable reference for individuals that are looking for more than an explanation of what Bitcoin is and how it works. The book offers basic explanations of digital currency concepts and in-depth discussions, making it suitable for a variety of audiences. It is recommended for undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and finance professionals.—*Erin Wachowicz, Yale University*

Dictionary of Corporate Social Responsibility: CSR, Sustainability, Ethics and Governance. Samuel O. Idowu, editor-in-chief; Nicholas Capaldi, Matthias S. Fifka, Liangrong Zu, René Schmidpeter, co-editors. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2015. 603 p. \$229 hardcover (ISBN: 9783319105352), \$179 e-book: (ISBN: 9783319105369)

This dictionary would be an outstanding addition to any academic or public library collection as it provides definitions for more than six hundred terms critical to understanding the concept of corporate social responsibility. The group of 128 contributors from 25 countries makes it an international effort: predominantly European, Australian and American academics. The Springer series of which it is part, “CSR, Sustainability, Ethics and Governance,” offers a comprehensive overview of the latest theoretical and empirical research and provides sound concepts for sustainable business strategies. Colleges and universities with undergraduate

and graduate business programs should seriously consider acquiring this series on standing order.

In his foreword, the distinguished Archie B. Carroll, author of dozens of books (in various editions) and scores of articles on corporate social responsibility, and the recipient of numerous research awards and states, “individuals, organizations, and libraries are encouraged to use this dictionary as a touchstone to the field. Practicing managers and academics will find this volume to be required reading.” Another distinguished academic, Stephen J. Perkins, author of seven books and scores of articles on management states in his forward that the publication of this “magnificent” dictionary “will make a significant impact among business and management learners and those who educate them.”

Definitions are in the 250–500 word range and all include a short (1–4 page) bibliography. A broad range of terms is provided, from “Acid Rain” to “Money Laundering” to “Reporting” (“companies communicating their corporate principles, social and/or environmental initiatives as well as the social and environmental effects of their economic activities”) to “Solar Energy” and “X-Efficiency” (“a strand of thought that challenges the maximizing approach to economic behavior”). The index is adequate but, of course, the e-book version will allow full text searching depending on the platform: for example, EBL provides a hyperlinked table of contents and full-text search capability.

The dictionary provides a foundation to which teachers may refer their students for research in the areas of CSR, business ethics, corporate citizenship, stakeholder management, and sustainability.—*Anthony Raymond, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, California*

NOTABLE

The Oxford Handbook of Gender in Organizations. Edited by Savita Kumra, Ruth Simpson, and Ronald J. Burke. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014. 548 p. \$150 hardcover (ISBN: 9780199658213).

The editors of this reference resource begin by identifying that there has been significant growth in the number of women entering and remaining in the workforce. However, despite these advances, women still face numerous obstacles, particularly with advancement in many professions.

While not a new subject, the study of gender in organizations continues to evolve. Arranged in twenty-four chapters, this resource covers many timely topics including sexual harassment, leadership, career advancement, entrepreneurship, and men working in professions that are traditionally recognized as female occupations. For example, in the area of leadership, the authors of one of the chapters ask if leadership is a matter of gender and note that there are more management opportunities for women, but they are mostly restricted to lower and middle management positions. The authors also note that there are conflicting studies on whether gender plays an advantage in being a successful leader.

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All of the chapters in this resource cover topics in great depth, are well researched, and include an extensive list of references mostly from academic journals. There are more than forty contributors, of which many are professors in subject areas such as management, leadership, psychology, and organizational studies. The resources includes an introduction that provides an overview of each chapter, an easy to use table of contents, along with a detailed index.

As research in the area of gender in organizations continues to evolve, the *Oxford Handbook of Gender in Organizations* can serve as a helpful reference resource in academic libraries, for students and faculty in the fields of management, leadership, human resources, and gender studies.—*Ed Hahn, Weber State University, Ogden, Utah*

The Encyclopedia of the Industrial Revolution in World History. Edited by Kenneth E. Hendrickson III. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014. 1130 p. \$240 hardcover (3 volume set, ISBN: 978081088887), \$299, e-book (ISBN: 978081088883)

Industrialization had a singularly important effect on today's world, reaching into every aspect of daily life, from home technology to manufacturing, transportation to communication, and everything in between. The implications for modern business are staggering. As a result, *The Encyclopedia of the Industrial Revolution in World History*, while a historical encyclopedia, is worth examination in the world of business as a notable business reference source. Kenneth E. Hendrickson III, a professor of history at Sam Houston State University, is the general editor of this three-volume encyclopedia set.

The purpose of this reference set is to pull together the disparate pieces representing the Industrial Revolution. Because it occurred so unevenly, across vast spreads of geography, spanning class lines and social groups, an alphabetical encyclopedia is the best way to bring the ideas, events, inventions, and people together. The result is an A-to-Z set, three volumes long, of scholarly entries. These entries vary in length, from roughly a column in the case of "Vichy Water" or some of the lesser known inventors, to a couple pages, as is the case for the "United States" entry. Additionally, each entry lists the author as well as at least one option for further reading. There are some differences in how the contributor(s) for each entry achieve their goal. For the most part, entries look like other the familiar encyclopedia entries—introduction of the topic, then details of what it is and why it is important.

The importance of the Industrial Revolution cannot be understated; it permeates everything in the modern world. The extreme breadth of content defines why it is tackled in encyclopedia form, but it also points to potential limitations. Because of the format, connections can be difficult to make. To address this, some sections do provide *see also* terms to begin to build a more complete picture. This work is best for research in business history.—*Valerie Freeman, Johnson and Wales University, Charlotte, North Carolina*

Disaster Recovery, Crisis Response, and Business Continuity: A Management Desk Reference. By Jamie Watters. New York: Apress, 2013. 316 p. \$44.99 softcover (ISBN: 9781430264064), \$31.99, e-book (9781430264071).

Divided into four parts, this notable book has practical advice for businesses who want to be proactive about ways to recover from disasters that can be natural or manmade. The first part provides an "Introduction to Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery"; the second "Plan for Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery"; the third "Test and Maintain Your Continuity and Recovery Plans"; and lastly "Execute the Plan." The twelve appendixes are the sections of most interest to business librarians to share with businesses. These appendixes provide succinct example forms to fill in with an individual company's information; for example: responsibilities, useful resources and contacts (the e-book has hyperlinks to sites), business continuity, key contacts and action plan, as well as impact analysis questions, critical activities, recovery time objectives and more. The page numbers in the index of the e-book provide easy hyperlinks to topics within the text.

Both experienced and new managers will find this book helpful. It is the kind of book that should be read by information technologists, those responsible for continuity in the running of a business, and staff with responsibilities after a disaster, among others. *Disaster Recovery* is a reference book in the sense that it is something to have handy before, during, and just after a disaster; first for planning and second (if needed) to react sequentially in an appropriate and speedy manner. While considered reference, it is a title for an individual business to have available for ongoing consultation. Because IT aspects are such a great concern these days, libraries that do not currently have emergency plans will find *Disaster Recovery* useful in conjunction with Alire's *Library Disaster Planning and Recovery Handbook* (Neal-Schuman 2000).—*Naomi Lederer, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado*

Guide to Reference in Business and Economics. Edited by Steven W. Sowards and Elisabeth Leonard. Chicago: American Library Association, 2014. 298 p. \$65 softcover (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1234-8).

Since the original 1902 pamphlet titled *Guide to the Study and Use of Reference Books*, *Guide to Reference* has developed into a major reference work published by ALA and a stalwart of library school education where it was often referred to by the editor's name—Mudge, Winchell, Sheehy, etc. In 2008 it transitioned to an online subscription service, and in February 2016 it will become freely accessible. ALA has now published in print (and e-book) the part of *Guide to Reference* that deals with Business and Economics, and edited by the primary editor/contributor to the Economics and Business section of the online guide.

Sections of this guide include: "General Works," "Economic Conditions and World Trade," "International Information," "Functional Areas of Business," "Company

Information,” “Basic Industry Information,” “Specialized Industry Information,” and “Occupations and Careers.” There are subsections, such as “Guides and Handbooks,” “Periodicals,” “Statistics,” and “Internet Resources,” that may vary for each section. Entries are numbered and the index refers to the entry number rather than the page number. If a source fits into more than one section, its entry is repeated verbatim with a new entry number. Although sometimes confusing, the introduction notes that this allows “easy browsing and comparison to other sources without the trouble of following cross references.” Entries are compared to other similar sources. Important sources that have ceased are noted. Entries include both print and online sources and provide URLs when available.

Guide to Reference in Business and Economics continues to be useful to both LIS and other students and practitioners. As the most recent book on business and economic resources, *Guide to Reference in Business and Economic* is a notable addition to the long line of “Guide to Reference” publications.—*Suzanne Sweeney, Central Park Campus Library, Collin College, McKinney, Texas*

Handbook of Emerging Multinational Corporations. Edited by Mehmet Demirbag and Attila Yaprak. Cheltenham, UK, and Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2015. \$190 hardcover (ISBN: 9781782544999).

This reference book provides an overview of emerging markets (EMs) and the expansion of EM internationalizing firms (EMMNEs) throughout the world. An important development in the world economy, EMMNEs are of interest for all students and researchers of international business. This work, as an advanced collection of research articles, studies the rise of these multinational firms from Brazil, China, India, Israel, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, and Turkey.

The work is divided into three sections consisting of chapters focused upon theories, empirical studies, and case studies of EMMNEs. The most valuable feature of this work is the inclusion of the case studies. The case studies are useful in that they offer real-world examples of theory in action. The power of the case study is its distinctive ability to address a more comprehensive variety of evidence, including documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations. One criticism could be that more case studies could be included to show the relevance of these companies. The inclusion of only four case studies does not seem to do justice to the scope of the book. Nevertheless, these studies, while brief, offer valuable explanations regarding the “how,” the “what,” and the “why” to each of the EMMNE cases. An index and bibliography are also included.

For the advanced business student or the academic researcher, this is a useful reference for business collections supporting undergraduate and graduate courses in international business. This work would be a valuable addition to many academic, business reference collections.—*Glenn S. McGuigan, Penn State University Libraries, Middletown, Pennsylvania*

The Oxford Handbook of Management Theorists. 1st ed. Edited by Morgen Witzel and Malcolm Warner. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. 592 p. \$170 hardcover (ISBN: 978-0-19-958576-2)

Oxford Handbooks offer authoritative and up-to-date surveys of original research and *The Oxford Handbook of Management Theorists* continues this tradition. It covers significant nineteenth- to twenty-first-century management theorists from Frederick Taylor to W. Edward Deming and later Michael Porter. Organized in three parts. Part 1, “Pioneers,” includes Frederick Taylor, Frank and Lillian Gilbreth, and Chester Barnard among others. Part 2, “Post War Theorists,” has chapters on The Tavistock Group, W. Edwards Deming, Peter Drucker, and Herbert Simon. Part 3, “Business School Theorists,” covers Alfred Chandler, James March, Richard Cyert, Henry Mintzberg, Michael Porter, and C. K. Prahalad. Each chapter examines and evaluates these and other seminal figures, both well-known and lesser known, and provides a current and detailed analysis of their ideas and influence in the context of their time. Contributions come from leading management and management history scholars and include references and bibliography for each chapter. While some references are only a few pages, Herbert Alexander Simon’s chapter has a fifteen-page bibliography.

Illuminating the foundational theories of the field of management, *The Handbook of Management Theorists* makes a significant contribution to the understanding of these ideas—the how and why management theories have emerged, and the ways in which they are currently developing and likely to evolve in the future. Based on the importance and significance of the information contained in *The Handbook of Management Theorists*, it deserves recognition as a notable business reference resource.—*Suzanne Sweeney, Central Park Campus Library, Collin College, McKinney, Texas*

The Investment Assets Handbook: A Definitive Practical Guide to Asset Classes. By Yoram Lustig. Petersfield, Hampshire, UK: Harriman House, 2014. 472 p. \$45 softcover (ISBN: 978-0857194015), \$35 e-book (ISBN: 9780857194091).

Investment information can often be complex, confusing, and hard to find. *The Investment Assets Handbook: A Definitive Practical Guide to Asset Classes* is a helpful guide that gives the reader the opportunity to understand different asset classes in a way that is not intimidating or complicated, and it deserves recognition as a notable business reference resource. This handbook contains eighteen chapters that are organized into four distinct parts. In the first part, different asset classes are described, including a description of the role each asset class plays in a portfolio. The second part of this handbook focuses on traditional assets such as global equities and cash, and the third part describes mainstream alternative assets such as commodities and real estate. Finally, the fourth part focuses on new alternative investments, including currency, art, and timber. The second, third, and fourth parts of the handbook include an introduction to

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each asset class, and they also include detailed descriptions of individual assets within each asset class.

While *The Investment Assets Handbook* serves as an introductory guide aimed at those with who are inexperienced with investment information, most users will find the information contained in its pages detailed and helpful. In addition to making complex financial information accessible, this handbook is quite timely. Libraries are increasingly expanding their financial information resources and services in an effort to promote the financial literacy of their user groups. As such, this handbook will serve as an excellent resource for users and librarians in both public and academic libraries.—*Jordan Nielsen, San Diego State University, San Diego, California*

SIGNIFICANT NEW EDITION

Gower Handbook of Project Management, 5th ed. Edited by Rodney Turner. Burlington, VT: Gower, 2014. 581 p. \$180 hardcover (ISBN: 9781472422965), \$180 e-book (ISBN: 9781472422972)

The new edition of the *Gower Handbook of Project Management* deserves recognition as a significant new edition. When asked to edit a 5th edition of the *Gower Handbook of Project Management*, Rodney Turner agreed. With an entire new slate of authors (with two exceptions), an effort to bring in more viewpoints and better represent the growing field of project

management, he dramatically changed this edition from the previous version. One of the bigger changes that he made, and more controversial, was to drop the section on managing people on projects, but that is addressed in another publication. The other primary structural change made involves the sequence of chapters; the fifth edition starts with chapters on projects and expands out from there.

The book itself is split into five sections—"Projects," "Performance," "Process," "Portfolio," and "Perspective"—with a few incidentals on either end, such as lists of included tables and figures, in addition to the editor's introductory chapter. The chapters themselves, each authored by a different person, tend to have the same direct and simple approach, favoring bullet points and subheadings. This approach makes it easy for the researcher to find the section they need for a given problem, but easy to read for the big picture as well. Each individual chapter includes resources for further reading.

This edition is shorter than the previous one, an effect of the editor dropping the personnel side of the equation as well as a conscious effort on his part to streamline the product. While this can be easily explained by the release of an entire book on that topic, doing so ultimately requires that the user then pick up another book to gain that set of knowledge. Project management is growing in such a way that cramming as much information as possible into one volume is increasingly challenging.—*Valerie Freeman, Johnson and Wales University, Charlotte, North Carolina*