START your research by checking the library’s research guide for:
COMPANY INFORMATION – available at:

http://www.library.gatech.edu/research_help/subject/index.php?/company_info

Why you need info. on a company:

Company website only reveals what the company wants the general public to know

Use what you find out to:

- **ask** useful, probing and intelligent questions
- **differentiate** yourself from others interviewing
- **evaluate** the company’s work environment, future, etc.

Consider starting your research by reading an overview of the industry in which your target company operates:

- **Standard & Poor’s Industry Surveys** (Reference HC106.6.S74)
  - It’s the premier source for in-depth information & analysis for 60 major industries.
- **Business & Company Resource Center** (library web database)
  - Several pages of background/overview for most industries
- **Business Source Complete** (library web database)
  - Detailed reports for major industries (from Datamonitor)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>PUBLIC or PRIVATE?</th>
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If your target company is “public”, it issues stock, and has to report detailed financial information to the U.S. government (the SEC) – a **10-K** report. It also sends an **Annual Report** to its shareholders.

Note: the Annual Report is a **marketing** tool by the company – it won’t report negative info., and financial problems may be hard to identify (remember Enron?)

If your target company is “private”, financial information is **not** official; estimates may (or may not) be done by reporters, analysts, or consultants.

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<th>COMPANY PROFILES</th>
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Available for large corporations, each profile includes:

- Overview (from 1 to 30 pages)
- Key financials
- Key competitors
- Key officers/executives
- Key products/services

Key sources (all are library databases unless otherwise noted):

- **Hoover’s Company Capsules & Profiles** -- several pages per company
NEWS ABOUT YOUR COMPANY

Library databases for newspaper articles:

• LexisNexis Academic
• Factiva

Useful for late-breaking news or major announcements
Consider also searching the newspaper(s) of the city in which the headquarters or major division is located.

Library databases for periodical articles:

• ABI/Inform Complete
• Business & Company Resource Center
• Business Source Complete

Word combinations to search:

company name - AND – (select one or two similar concepts from this list)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management</th>
<th>Trend(s)</th>
<th>Acquisitions</th>
<th>Advertising</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
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<td>Planning</td>
<td>Growth</td>
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<td>Marketing</td>
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<td>Market share</td>
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<td>Products</td>
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<td>Services</td>
<td>Technology</td>
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<td>the specific product name (i.e., Coke)</td>
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DEVELOPING LISTS of POTENTIAL TARGET COMPANIES

Library databases:

• D&B Million Dollar Database - more than 200,000 U.S. companies
  o also includes bios of key executives/officers

• Reference USA – more than 12 million U.S. companies

With these sources, can limit by city/area, # of employees, or industry codes (SIC or NAICS), etc. to get a customized list.

RANKED LISTS

For the largest international corporations:

• “Global 500” – issued annually by Fortune magazine
  o http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/
• “World’s 2,000 Largest Public Companies” – annual list by Forbes magazine
  o http://www.forbes.com (select “Lists”, then “all lists”)

For the largest U.S. public corporations:
• “Fortune 500” - issued annually by Fortune
  o http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/

For the largest U.S. private companies:
• “Largest Private Companies” – issued annually by Forbes
  o http://www.forbes.com (select “Lists”)

For large U.S. corporations (including private) in many industries and in all states:
• Ward’s Business Directory (Reference HG4057.A46x)
  o Volumes 5-8 rank by industry codes and geography

For Atlanta-area companies:
• Atlanta Business Chronicle – annual “Book of Lists” (at Information Services Desk)

For fast-growing companies:
• “100 Fast-Growing Companies” – Fortune
  o http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/
• “Fastest-Growing Techs” - Forbes
  o http://www.forbes.com (select “Lists”, then “all lists”)

For “best” companies:
• “100 Best Companies to Work for” – Fortune
  o http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/

### ANNUAL REPORTS or DETAILED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Detailed financial information:
• Mergent Online (library web database)
• Morningstar.com (library web database)

Annual Reports:
• EDGAR (SEC)
  o http://www.sec.gov/edgar/searchedgar/webusers.htm
• Mergent Online (within company record, select “EDGAR” tab)
  o Note: searches EDGAR; retrieves the most recent filings for your company

Compiled by Patricia Kenly, Business Reference Librarian, September 2007