
Outstanding Business Reference Sources

The 2007 Selection of Recent Titles

RUSA BRASS Business Reference Sources Committee

Working group members from the **BRASS Business Reference Sources Committee** included: Lee Pasackow (Selections Editor), Anne Bradley (Nominations Coordinator), Chris LeBeau (Chair), Jian Bai, Leticia Camacho, Karen Chapman, John Heintz, Patricia Kenly, Elizabeth Malafi, Peter McKay, Monica Singh, and Ning Zou. For more information, contact Lee Pasackow, Business Librarian, Emory University, Atlanta, GA 30322-2710; 404-727-0144; e-mail: lee.pasackow@emory.edu

A BRASS Business Reference Sources Committee working group, after year-long discussions, voted for three titles to be included in the outstanding category. Four additional titles were selected as noteworthy. In order to qualify for inclusion on the list, the works must have been published since May 2006, must be a source for frequently asked business reference questions, and must be suitable for mid-size to large academic and public libraries. The outstanding titles feature a new Web-based mapping application, an encyclopedia on the burgeoning topic of industrial and organizational psychology, and an encyclopedia to help us with those challenging statistics questions. Notable titles include a standard reference that is now electronic and three books that feature common business concepts and functions—new and classic.

OUTSTANDING TITLES

Encyclopedia of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Ed. by Steven G. Rogelberg. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2006. 2 vols. \$375 (ISBN 1-4129-2470-7).

In today's global, competitive marketplace, firms are concerned with developing, retaining, and rewarding their workforce. With the proliferation of self-service human resource management applications, workplace issues are no longer the sole purview of the human resources department. Line managers need to be aware of legal and ethical issues as well as of the latest techniques to evaluate and motivate their employees. The *Encyclopedia* covers more than four hundred key topics that affect the workplace environment daily.

The editor is the director of the interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in organizational science and directs the Industrial/Organizational Psychology Graduate Program at University of North Carolina Charlotte. He was a consultant in private industry. The more than three hundred contributors are academics from universities worldwide and practitioners.

Signed entries, averaging three pages, provide an overview of the topic. Illustrating the timeliness and thoroughness of the volume, the entry for "Emotional Intelligence" defines the trait- and competency-based approaches as well as the measurement of EI and its predictive validity. It also mentions the popularity of a recent trade book that led to some relabeling of existing approaches and models. Cross-references and additional readings allow the advanced researcher to further explore the topic. Attesting to the academic level of this encyclopedia, the additional readings are monographs and academic journals, not Web sites. Graphs, charts, and tables clarify complex concepts.

The target audiences are undergraduates, beginning graduate students, the general public seeking non-technical explanations, and practitioners. This title handily gets a student started on such popular research topics as corporate social responsibility and succession planning. A small business owner can find ideas for managing cyberloafing at her company.

The Reader's Guide quickly orients the novice researcher. The Foundations section includes history; ethical and legal issues; research methods; and measurement theory and statistics. The "Industrial Psychology" section includes:

- understanding and assessing individual differences;
- employment, staffing, and career issues;
- developing, training, and evaluating employees;
- productive and counterproductive employee behavior;
- motivation and job design;
- leadership and management;
- groups, teams, and working with others;
- employee well-being and attitudes; and
- organizational structure, design, and change.

The index is cross-referenced based on topic and subtopic keywords. The appendixes are useful for students wanting to enter the profession, listing guidelines for masters and doctoral level education, graduate programs, I/O journals, job titles, and groups and organizations for I/O professionals.

The *International Encyclopedia of Business and Management* and the *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Management* provide coverage of most topics in this set. For business and related social science reference collections that do not have these titles, or for larger libraries that prefer an edition with the latest terms in this fast evolving field, the *Encyclopedia* is an excellent choice. Sage also offers this title in their eReference collection.—*Leticia Camacho, Brigham Young University, Provo, and Lee Pasackow, Emory University, Atlanta*

Encyclopedia of Measurement and Statistics. Ed. by Neil J. Salkind. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2007. 3 vols. \$395 (ISBN 978-1412916110).

This three-volume encyclopedia is designed to provide a comprehensive overview of topics in the fields of measurement and statistics for a general audience. The editor, who also is the author of the bestselling book *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*, is fully aware the subjects are daunting for most people. Therefore, the encyclopedia's goal is to be informative without being overly technical.

The nearly five hundred entries vary in length from succinct, five-hundred-word definitions, to lengthy, four-thousand-word topic explorations. Each entry is signed by the author, most of who are affiliated with academic institutions. Bibliographies also are included with each entry; some have as few as one citation, while others have more than a dozen. "See also" references are included as necessary to assist readers with finding related topics. Entries are arranged in alphabetical order, and there is a decent index to assist users.

A helpful Reader's Guide—a listing of the entries grouped into related areas—also is included at the front of each volume.

The meat of the encyclopedia consists of entries pertaining to statistical techniques and tests. These entries start by defining the technique or test and continue with an example of how it is used and how the resulting data can be interpreted. The examples are generously illustrated with charts and tables to clarify the accompanying textual explanation. Bibliographies for these types of entries frequently include references to articles that utilize the technique or test under discussion, providing motivated users with plenty of options for further exploration.

Nontechnical concepts and issues related to statistics and measurement also are covered in the encyclopedia (for example, high-stakes testing). Brief entries are sparingly included for people such as Babbage, Markov, and Poisson; for major testing instruments such as Myers Briggs, Rorschach, and Strong Interest Inventory; and for important statistical publications and organizations. Topics with aspects in multiple fields get a well-rounded entry. For example, the entry on Six Sigma includes a discussion of Six Sigma as a management philosophy and a metric for denoting level of quality as well as a methodology for improving quality.

Additional materials in volume three include a list of recommended statistical Web sites (for example, FedStats and statistics.com), a comprehensive bibliography, a glossary of terms, and two appendixes of material reprinted from *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*. If your library users aren't exactly flocking to the shelf to use your print reference collection, the good news is Sage also offers this title in their eReference collection.

Overall, this is an outstanding encyclopedia. Statistical methods are used in all types of research, including business, so while this is not strictly a business reference book, it is still a highly valuable resource for any library collection serving business users. Sure, there are plenty of statistics textbooks out there, but rare is the reference book that takes such an accessible and nontechnical approach to the fields of measurement and statistics.—*Anne Bradley, California State University, Sacramento*

SimplyMap. New York: Geographic Research, Inc. <http://geographicresearch.com> (accessed July 23, 2007). Pricing available upon request.

SimplyMap is an exquisite solution to frequently asked business reference questions. It combines mapping capabilities with extensive demographic, business, and marketing data that enables novice users to create their own interactive thematic maps and reports using a Web browser. The maps can be exported as high-resolution images for use in reports and presentations, and data can be exported into Microsoft Excel worksheets and Microsoft Word documents. Business applications for this product include target marketing, advertising campaigns, commercial and residential real estate development, retail store site selection, ranking studies, and social and demographic analyses.

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Data from the U.S. Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and various other sources can be selected, sorted, and compared across multiple locations. Data partners Easy Analytic Software Inc. (EASI) and Applied Geographic Solutions provide additional data, projections, and estimates as relevant. Geographies include census block groups, census tracts, ZIP codes, cities, counties, states, and the entire United States. Users can define their own geographical areas by combining selected subunits. Each registered user has a workspace with as many as three projects, which can be shared with others.

The standard data package has typical demographic variables: population, age, race, income, ancestry, marital status, housing, employment, and more. Business variables include consumer expenditure, business and employee counts by NAICS codes, consumer price indexes, quality of life, consumer profiles, and market segments. Pricing is based on the number of concurrent users. The standard package, with more than two thousand variables (from the year 2000, current estimates, and five-year projections) starts at \$7,995 for two concurrent users and includes remote access. Consortium discounts and small school and small public library discounts are available. Historical census data, as well as two additional data packages, are offered as add-ons.

SimplyMap divides the workspace into two main areas. On the left are Map and Report tabs. On the right is a window to display either a map or a report. The tabs enable users to select specific locations, the geographic unit of analysis, and as many variables as desired. Double-clicking variable names opens a pop-up window with the definition. Maps display a single variable in color-coded units such as counties or cities. A legend shows the numerical ranges corresponding to the colors. Optional landmark layers show cities, highways, and other features. A map toolbar allows users to zoom in and out, pan around, draw boxes around specific locations, and manipulate the map manually. Reports may have multiple variables and multiple locations for comparative analyses and rankings. Variables are grouped in a variety of ways, and they can be flagged for repeated use.

The publisher is open to suggested improvements. Enhancements scheduled for completion in fall 2007 include one-, three-, and five-mile ring studies; additional geographies, including congressional districts, school districts, and voting districts; the ability to upload personal data sets and map lists; and points of interest data, such as businesses, hospitals, restaurants, and other locations. SimplyMap, in partnership with EASI and Mediamark Research, Inc. (MRI), will use data from MRI's *Survey of the American Consumer* to provide local estimates of usage and consumption (propensity) for thousands of products and services. This will be offered as an add-on.

Although Census and BLS data can be freely downloaded, this product provides current year estimates and forecasts and integrates data from a wide range of sources into a unified database with software that makes it simple for the novice and experienced researcher to create customized maps and

reports. Millennial students, who tend to be visual learners, may even have fun completing their marketing assignments with this innovative product. Public librarians will be thanked by their users for adding this resource that produces professional-quality thematic maps and reports.—*Peter McKay, University of Florida, Gainesville*

OTHER NOTEWORTHY TITLES

Anatomy of a Business: What It Is, What It Does, and How It Works. By Sasha Galbraith. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 2007. 307p. \$75 (ISBN: 0-313-33793-4).

Sasha Galbraith, a partner with Jay R. Galbraith Management Consultants, has scored a hit with this refreshingly different reference book. Greenwood Press sought out an author to write a basic business book with “attitude” aimed at high schoolers, undergraduates, and lay people. This is not an encyclopedia with dozens of entries; rather its twelve chapters explain the essential functions of business operations, punctuated with cartoons and pithy quotes. Before one even gets into the first sentence, Oscar Wilde reminds us that “work is the curse of the drinking classes.” Let the attitude begin!

Galbraith moves the reader quickly from the barter system to financial spread sheets. Your old history texts never had chapter subheadings such as “Trader As Raider” to explain the commerce of the Vikings, the Crusades, and the Mongols. Michael Dell sets the stage for the business strategy chapter by saying, “I believe that you have to understand the economics of a business before you have a strategy, and you have to understand your strategy before you have a structure. If you get these in the wrong order, you will probably fail.” Other chapters focus on leadership, finance and accounting, marketing, sales, MIS, human resources, supply chain, research and development, and other staff functions. “A Day in the Life” section is useful for career guidance. There also is a career resource section in the appendix.

Special features, such as a table listing major marketing blunders, keep the book interesting. Business concepts are clearly explained and boiled down to their essence. In the finance and accounting chapter, the author walks the reader through an income statement and balance sheet. Table, charts, and graphs are visually clean. Chapters end with a list of select Internet resources. A short list of common abbreviations is included at the beginning of the book, and a glossary is found at the end.

The appendix includes chapter notes that cite Philip Kotler, Jack Welch, Michael Porter, and others. The work ends with an annotated bibliography, and a detailed index connects readers to more precise terms, names, and concepts. The book is so engaging that readers may be in danger of reading more topics than necessary. Does it have a great glossary—no; does it have the most extensive articles—no. It's just a great basic business reference book that also could serve as an introduction to business for librarians who provide business reference service but have no business background.—*Chris LeBeau, University of Missouri/University of Missouri–Kansas City*

Bulls, Bears, Boom, and Bust: A Historical Encyclopedia of American Business Concepts. By John M. Dobson. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2007. 423p. \$95 (ISBN 1-85109-553-5).

Historian John Dobson has written an intriguing reference work; he includes concepts, business leaders (focus is on key inventors and entrepreneurs), and significant financial events in United States business history.

The reader is transported to major time periods in United States history, as each section consists of a concise historical review followed by key concepts. Brief biographical entries also are included. The entry for “Bubble,” in the section on the Colonial time period, showcases the author’s expertise in making a financial speculation topic readable, interesting, and relevant.

While each appendix lists the entries by subject, the 160 biographical entries are listed by broad industry categories; the 210 topical entries have additional groupings (for example, “Antitrust,” “Business Cycles,” “Strategy”). The detailed index is impressive.

There is some overlap with two recent titles. The *Encyclopedia of American Business History* (Facts on File, 2006) has fewer concepts and is arranged alphabetically; entries for companies, federal agencies, and laws also are included. The three-volume *A Financial History of the United States* (M. E. Sharpe, 2002) has, understandably, extensive detail about the financial topics it covers.

Overall, the *Encyclopedia* is an excellent resource. Ideal for students and general readers, the *Encyclopedia* is recommended for all collections.—*Patricia Kenly, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta*

Business: The Ultimate Resource. 2nd ed. New York: Basic Books, 2006. 1,973p. \$59.95 (ISBN: 0-465-00830-5).

The second edition of *Business: The Ultimate Resource* merits inclusion in our list due to the extensive revisions and new material added since the first edition was published in 2002. Business theory and practice changes rapidly, and this hefty tome (weighing more than six pounds) covers a vast array of the latest business and management thinking. Daniel Goleman states in the introduction that “business advantage is gained by harnessing smart ideas—not just amorphous data, the latest technology, or a larger-than-life C.E.O.” This volume provides a unique format for students and practitioners to learn the basics of business so they can plan, execute, and launch the next Google or Netflicks.

Business is arranged into six sections. “Best Practice” presents essays on management issues by leading business writers and practitioners. Topics range from tackling sexual harassment to creating an entrepreneurial mindset. “Viewpoint,” with authors such as Paul Saffo and Warren Bennis, explores the future of management. “Management Checklists” offer two-page answers to everyday challenges, such as small business cash flow and setting up an energy management program. “Actionlists” give tips for completing tasks and solving problems. Marketing majors will love the

“Planning an Advertising Campaign” and “Measuring Advertising Performance” sections. With more than one hundred entries (40 percent are new), including *The Tipping Point*, *Getting to Yes*, and *Barbarians at the Gate*, the “Management Library” section is an ideal resource for anyone, librarian or layperson, looking to start or expand a business collection. “Business Thinkers” and “Management Giants” profile more than one hundred business pioneers. Challenge your business colleagues to name the contributions of Mary Parker Follett and Frederick Herzberg!

The dictionary contains seven thousand international business terms. The final section has short lists of business information sources on more than one hundred topics. The list of contributors is stellar, but it would have been nice to have seen more from outside the United States and Europe.

Business is an ideal reference for librarians, students, and practitioners, and it belongs in every public and academic library, large or small.—*Elizabeth Malafti, Middle Country Public Library, Centereach, and Lee Pasackow, Emory University, Atlanta.*

Directory of American Firms Operating in Foreign Countries/Directory of Foreign Firms Operating in the United States. Beverly, Mass.: Uniworld Business Publ., www.uniworldbp.com (accessed July 20, 2007). Pricing available upon request.

Uniworld has released online database versions of two much-used print directories of companies that do business internationally; the databases allow users to identify companies within their geographies of interest.

Individual records in the *Directory of American Firms Operating in Foreign Countries* include name and headquarters address of the firm, key executive personnel, phone numbers and Web address, number of employees, sales revenues, and a brief business description, followed by location and contact information for the company’s foreign subsidiary locations. Individual records in the *Directory of Foreign Firms Operating in the United States* contain the same data points but are organized by foreign firm, with location and contact information for the company’s United States subsidiary locations. The user can search individual companies or generate a list based on various criteria. Results may be exported to Microsoft Excel.

The advantages of the online directories over the printed counterparts are currency (updated continuously rather than biennially) and the variety and flexibility of search functions. Users can search (individually or in combination) by country, region, state, company name, zip code, industry code (NAICS), postal code, and revenues. Potential improvements noted by our committee include a little friendlier searching of the company index (for example, found Wal-mart but not Walmart); a larger results screen to be able to see more without scrolling; searchable and browseable indexes for industry code, zip code, and so on; and wider displays on a few of the drop-down menus to avoid truncated search option labels. These suggestions aside, the committee found these

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directories quite functional, with the online format providing much improved capability over the static print directories.

The directories have a multitude of business applications for marketing, job search, supply chain management, and

business development. Recommended for larger public and all academic business library collections.—*John P. Heintz, University of St. Thomas, Minneapolis and St. Paul*