



BUSINESS ALERT

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A REVIEW OF BUSINESS META-PAGES

by Nancy R. Marino

People are constantly looking for great web pages that will help them get that key piece of business information. Search engines, such as HotBot, Lycos and Excite are useful, but a single search can bring up thousands of sites. Many of the sites are outdated or irrelevant. Sifting through useless web sites is time-consuming and frustrating. There is another, often overlooked, method of beginning a search on the Internet. Why not start searching by using a business meta-page?

A meta-page is a page that contains links to many other pages. The number of links varies depending on the meta-page – some link to as few as 20 sites while others may link to thousands of web sites. In the world of the Internet, where giant search engines scan through millions of web pages, even large meta-pages link to relatively few sites. While this may seem like a detriment, it is the very reason that meta-pages are useful. Even though there are fewer sites to choose from, each site is carefully evaluated to provide the user with focused and relevant information. Meta-pages are often created and maintained by people who are familiar with the industry and know how to evaluate information. Librarians and researchers frequently provide meta-pages for their users, and often use the same criteria for linking web pages as they do for selecting books and other information materials. Sites are evaluated for currency of data, relevancy to a topic, and the authority of a source. Searching the Web can be made easier by starting with a meta-page. Here is a list of web pages that can provide a springboard into the sea of business information on the World Wide Web.

A Business Researcher's Interests (also called the Brint site) <http://www.brint.com/interest.com> started out as a relatively modest site produced by Ph D. student Yogesh Malhorta at the University of Pittsburgh. Now, this mega business web site links to hundreds of other business sites and is especially strong in the areas of business and information technology. The site is searchable, but you often have to go through several layers of pages to find what you want. However, if you're looking for information on business process re-engineering, knowledge management, virtual corporations, or electronic commerce, its links to business journals, magazines, newsletters, bibliographic information, and salary surveys make it well worth the effort.

CEO Express <http://www.ceoexpress.com> was created by a "busy executive for busy executives." According to the web page's creator Patricia Pomerleau, the site can be customized and is designed to be used as an opening page. CEO Express is crammed with links to business and international news, technology magazines, newsfeeds, financial markets, stock quotes, company research and more. All of the links are on one page for easy access and the categories are well organized. A pair of sunglasses indicates "Cool sites".

Virtual International Business and Economic Sources (VIBES) <http://libweb.uncc.edu/ref-bus/vibehome.htm> is an award-winning site created and maintained by the librarians at the University of North Carolina. A valuable site for anyone interested in international business, VIBES contains links to over 1,500 international business and economic sources. Links include full-text files of recent articles, statistical tables or graphs, and more meta-pages.

Smart Business Supersite <http://www.smartbiz.com> strives to have the "largest possible collection of business information under one cyber roof." Even more impressive than its size is its ease of navigation. The site has key-word search capability and a scrolling box that make searching easy. Each of the more than 80 categories links to articles, associations, profiles of books, directories, publications, and other resources on the Internet. Despite its size, its useful categories and the lack of graphics make it easy to navigate.

The Center for Business Research Virtual Business Sources <http://www.liu.edu/cwis/cwp/library/cbr/cbrvl.htm.com>

While it may appear self-serving to mention our own web page in this article, the CBR's virtual library web page was mentioned in an article in ONLINE magazine as "providing an extensive, categorized hotlinked list of web sites." The site is updated monthly, and has categories for finance, international business, small business, stocks, etc. All sites linked to this site are evaluated for currency and relevancy. Keeping in mind that anyone can create a web page, the integrity of the source is of primary concern. Please give it a try and let us know what you think.

Start Your Engines! A Jump-Start to the Internet! Internet for Novices!

These headlines will give you a hint as to what the CBR has been up to. Since last year, the CBR has been conducting a series of breakfast programs and evening seminars on finding information on the Internet. Each seminar is customized for a specific user group and is designed to provide users with hints and suggestions on how to use some of the most popular search engines as well as to provide industry-specific web site recommendations. This June, the CBR presented a seminar to the International Association for Financial Planners. Recent seminars have been conducted for the Glen Cove Chamber of Commerce and the Harvard-Radcliffe Club. If you would like more information about these seminars and would like to arrange one for your group or company, please call Martha Cooney at (516) 299-2310.

RECENT PROJECTS

From a management consultant:

"I've been asked to give a speech on the Y2K problem, but want to strike a balance in my talk between

dire predictions and the more manageable side of the issue. Can you supply a few targeted examples?"

The CBR surveyed current articles and Web sites on the topic to provide a mix of gloom and doom and positive responses.

Cost of this project: \$45.00

From a commercial bank:

"We need daily stock quotes on a competitor bank from 1968 – 1973. We've searched the Internet and can't find what we need. There may have been a change in the exchange the stock is traded on. Can you help? We need the information as soon as possible."

Using Standard & Poor's *Daily Stock Price Record* for OTC and NYSE securities, the CBR located the needed data and faxed the information within the hour.

Cost of this project: \$75.00 (super rush)

From an automotive industry expert:

"I'm preparing to teach a marketing seminar on brand equity in the auto aftermarket. I need an overview of the subject from 1994 to present including all pertinent market reports, brand studies, trade magazine and journal articles, and a list of books published since that date."

The CBR was able to supply a comprehensive package on the subject utilizing a host of online databases, bibliographic resources, and its collection of scholarly marketing journals.

Cost of this project: \$375.00

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