Citing Business Sources in APA Style

General In-Text Citations:

APA style uses author-date format for in-text citations. The last name of the author should be followed by a comma and then by the publication date. For example, (Smith, 2016). If you name the author within the sentence of your paper itself, you only need to include the year after the author’s name (you do not need to list the author again in the parentheses). For example, according to Smith (2016), “the data implies…” or Smith (2016) outlined several possibilities for...

A note about page numbers: If you are quoting directly from a book or article that has stable page numbers the page number of the quote should also be included in your in-text citation. For example, (Jones, 2017, p. 97). Or, if you name the author in your sentence, Jones (2017) stated that “the data clearly shows…” (p. 97).

For examples that don’t follow this pattern (no date, multiple authors, no author, etc.), check out the APA Publication Manual or the Purdue OWL website

References List Entries for Business Sources:

Some databases will provide you with a citation tool for formatting your references. These automatically generated citations need to be double-checked, but they are a helpful starting point. Other databases do not have these tools and so you will need to create citations from scratch. Some common materials you may come across in your research are yearly/quarterly financial reports and company or industry profiles. The databases and websites that provide these kinds of reports generally do not have citation generator tools; you will need to create them yourself. Use the guidelines below (based on APA 6th edition) for suggestions on how to format a Reference entry for these types of reports.

Yearly/Quarterly Financial Reports

These are reports created by the company itself. The company should therefore be listed as the author in the reference entry. The most commonly referenced reports are the yearly 10-K’s and Annual Reports. A 10-K is submitted every year to the SEC and follows a pre-set, standardized form. An Annual Report is usually a summary or overview of the information in the 10-K created for a company’s shareholders or investors. The specific formatting and content changes from company to company. Also, keep in mind that some companies may not create a separate Annual Report and will just use their 10-K for both purposes. Annual Reports can be found on the company website or in databases. 10-K forms can be found on the company website, in databases or on the SEC EDGAR Company Filings website.
For other reports (10-Q, etc.), replace the form title as necessary. Include the month and day of publication if that information is available.

Citing from a company website:


Citing from the SEC website:


Don’t forget to indent entries longer than one line, like the one above!

Citing from a database:


Company and Industry Profiles

These are reports that are compiled by third parties about a company or industry. They usually do not have individuals listed as authors. In that case, use the name of the third party market research firm that compiled the report (e.g. MarketLine). If this information is not available, then use the name of the database where you found the report (Hoovers, First Research, Mergent, etc.). Include the month and day of publication if that information is available.

Company Profile:


Industry Profile:


Additional Resources for Help with APA:

The library has multiple copies of the APA Publication Manual available for in-library use. Ask at the Reference Desk for help!

The Purdue OWL website is also a great resource, available here: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html