Competitive Intelligence / Business Analysis Resources

Competitive Intelligence is all about having the information you need to make good business decisions that will impact the future of your company. Good competitive analysis is the next best thing to having a crystal ball. It is the artful analysis of information gathered from publicly available sources and personal interviews to form a picture of the competitive landscape that will inform business strategy.

Some of the publicly available resources commonly used in CI data gathering are press releases, journal articles, job announcements, web pages, public records, patents, and business directories. Much of this information is available on the web from free and fee-based databases or at a library with a good business collection.

Keep an eye on your competitor's website with these tools.

ChangeDetection.com:
This free service monitors any webpage daily for changes and sends you e-mail notification whenever the page is updated.

Infominder:
This fee-based service enables users to track web sites and receive e-mail notification when content changes in text, HTML, or digest format. Notifications can also be sent to multiple users and delivery can be scheduled anywhere from hourly to monthly

TracerLock:
This fee-based service stores your Internet searches; monitors search engines results, and notifies you via email when a new instance of your search is found.

WatchThatPage:
This free service enables you to automatically collect new information from Internet pages. Select pages to monitor and WatchThatPage will find changes and collect all new content for you. The new information is presented to you in an email and/or a personal web page.

Some of the best competitor news comes from the company's hometown newspaper and radio or television station. Find local news media web sites with the help of these web directories.

AJR NewsLink: This Web site includes links to newspapers, magazines, radio and TV stations, and newswires. National and international news organizations are organized geographically and by media type.

NewsDirectory: This Web site provides a directory of English language newspapers, magazines, television stations, colleges, visitor bureaus, and government agencies.

NewsVoyager: This Web site bills itself as the "ultimate newspaper portal" and a "comprehensive gateway to newspaper Web sites around the world." It offers access to U.S., Canadian, and international newspaper sites.

Patents are another good source of information about new technologies and much of it available free of charge on the web. Here is a sample of some patent sites available on the web.

Canadian Patent Database: This database lets you access over 75 years of Canadian patent descriptions and images. You can search, retrieve and study more than 1,500,000 patent documents

European Patent Office: This collection of patent databases enables you to search for information about published patent applications from over 70 different countries and regions.

USPTO Web Patent Databases: The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office offers full-text patent access from their Web site. You can access text in html format or view individual page images.

Competitive technical information gathered from journal articles, conference papers, and technical reports can identify lead researchers, companies, and technologies in a field of interest. Subscription resources available at the **Hanford Technical Library** are a good source for this information. These databases are available to the public at the user stations inside the library.

ACM Digital Library: Full-text access to all Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) journals, transactions, proceedings, and magazine.

Cambridge Scientific Abstracts: This collection of database (see below) indexes to scientific and technical literature in a variety of fields.

- ASFA: Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts
- Corrosion Abstracts
- METADEX: Metals Index
- NTIS: National Technical Information Service
- Oceanic Abstracts
- Pollution Abstracts
- Toxicology Abstracts
- Water Resources Abstract

ChemNetBase: This database provides access to information on chemistry, medicine, materials science and physics from a variety of major reference sources. The Hanford Technical Library subscription includes *The Combined Chemical Dictionary*, the *Handbook of Chemistry and Physics*, *Polymers: a Property Database*, and *Properties of Organic Compounds.*

Compendex: This database covers the areas of chemical, electrical, mechanical, computer and civil engineering as well as applied physics.

IEEE/IEE Electronic Library: These databases provides full-text access to IEEE transactions, journals, magazines and conference proceedings published since 1988 plus select content back to 1950, and all current IEEE standards. IEE journals and conference proceedings are also available here.

INSPEC: This database covers the areas of engineering, electronics, physics, and computer science and contains links to some full-text articles.

Journals: The Hanford Technical Library subscribes to more than 2400 scientific, technical, and business journals in electronic and print format.

Knovel: This full-text database includes over 550 reference book sources including *Patty's Toxicology*, *Perry's Chemical Engineers' Handbook*, and *Sax's Dangerous Properties of Industrial Materials.*