

Basics of Individual Research

Is this individual a prospect?

1. Capacity – does the person have the financial ability to make a sizable gift?
2. Inclination – is the individual interested in making a sizable gift to your organization?
 - a. Affinity – involvement/relationship with or feelings for your organization
 - b. Interest – “soft spot” for your cause

What do I need to know for an initial visit?

1. Name, address, phone number, title, **confirmed** – can often be done with single phone call
2. Nature of business – quick online search, often via Web; newspapers, magazines, business journals, etc.
3. Giving history with your organization – internal records
4. History of relationship with your organization (prior meetings, volunteer involvement, event attendance) – internal records
5. Relationships with current board members, volunteer leaders, leading donors, etc. – internal records

After first contact: Did you document your visit?

1. Contact reports can be one of the best sources of information for research. Well documented visits can reveal: unknown relationships, unknown wealth indicators (real estate, art collections, automobiles, etc.), feelings about your organization or those similar.
2. Facilitates future cultivation/solicitation with your organization by insuring a complete history of relationship is available.

What do I need to know to solicit a gift?

1. Complete picture of institutional relationship to determine best time to solicit, appropriate solicitor, and project to solicit for.
2. Wealth indicators to ascertain appropriate ask amount:

- a. Real Estate
- b. Securities
- c. Salary
- d. Private company ownership
- e. Foundations
- f. Gifts to others

Remember:

1. Research should be about what you NEED to know to get the best gift you can for your organization, not about what would be nice to know or what would make you more comfortable.
2. "Net worth" is impossible to ascertain.
3. Research cannot answer all questions.

Some Low Cost/No Cost Research Resources

Google

You need a search engine in your arsenal, and Google is still the biggest, fastest and the best. The “King of the Hill” in the search engine games changes often (remember when we all used Alta Vista), but if you had to live with only one, this is *the* one. It’s beta News search is just another added bonus.

www.google.com

The Wayback Machine

Ever wanted an Internet time machine? Well it’s not science fiction, it’s here! A bio on a partner long retired from that law firm? You may just find it using the Internet Archive’s Wayback Machine.

www.archive.org/index.html

Martindale Hubble

Researching lawyers is a dream assignment, and Martindale Hubble makes it even easier. Forget about those bulky books or paying for it on Lexis (the website contains the same information and is updated just as frequently). Find bios, birth dates, school affiliations, email addresses and law firm websites. All at one site, with a fairly flexible search interface.

www.martindale.com

Guide Star

A few years ago, we all dreamed of IRS 990s on the web – for free. Guide Star made that dream come true, at least in part. For 850,000 foundations and non-profit organizations, Guide Star offers significant financial, leadership, and historical information. You can also search by name to find if a person is affiliated with a foundation or non-profit.

www.guidestar.com

Yahoo!

Forget about using it as a search engine (it’s powered by Google and doesn’t index nearly as much as the big guy). Use it for its strengths: its hierarchical directory and its financial and real estate data. One stop shopping for stock quotes, insider trading, SEC filings, real estate sales data, and financial news alerts.

www.yahoo.com

<http://finance.yahoo.com/> (yahoo! Finance)

<http://list.realestate.yahoo.com/re/homevalues/> (yahoo! Real Estate)

<http://biz.yahoo.com/f/g/g.html> (yahoo! Alerts)

Daypop

Google's beta news search may eventually give it a run for its money, but if you are searching for current news, Daypop is still the place to go. Indexes 7,500 live news sites at least daily as well as Weblogs.

www.daypop.com

Superpages

You need an online phone directory, and there are many to choose from. Verizon's Superpages is updated monthly, has a quick, simple interface, and seems to hold up on the accuracy end.

www.superpages.com

Salary.com

Using the salary wizard, choose from broad job categories, then zero in based on specific job titles and geographic regions.

www.salary.com

Legacy.com

The obituary portal on the web. Death announcements for the past 30 days from over 1,000 newspapers in the U.S. and Canada.

www.legacy.com

IPO Central

Hoover's offers a free, weekly email service, called IPO Update, highlighting S-1 registrations, pricings, and other IPO news. While there are other weekly email IPO newsletters, Hoover's has better coverage, more timely updating, and convenient features.

www.hoovers.com/ipo/

News Alert

This comprehensive source for real time financial and business news offers 25 free, user defined ClipAlerts. It searches 15 news sources, including Business Wire, PR Newswire, UPI, CBS Marketwatch and Knight Ridder/Tribune Business News. Take advantage of this tool to track mentions of your institution and your top prospects. The best free news alert site on the Web.

www.newsalert.com

AMA Physician Select

Thanks to the American Medical Association, search a database of over 650,000 MDs.

www.ama-assn.org/aps/amahg.htm

Open Secrets

The Center for Responsive Government has created an elegant site. Click on the Who's Giving tab, and see if your prospect is a heavy political donor, and to whom. May also help you with employment, spouse and address information.

<http://www.opensecrets.org>

Ten K Wizard (\$125/year)

Despite the quirky search engine, still the one stop shopping S.E.C. (Securities and Exchange Commission) information site, with particularly powerful tools that you should be taking advantage of. Register at the site and then create alerts based on prospect or institutional names or other key words that may be helpful to your prospecting. You'll be notified via e-mail when a new S.E.C. filing meets your search criteria.

www.TenKwizard.com

Wall Street Journal Interactive (\$59/year)

Registered members can search the 30-day WSJ archive as well as establish 5 news folders as part of the site's Personal Journal feature. Four folders can be named at your discretion and track up to 8 searches each (for a total of 32), using a combination of ticker symbols and/or keywords. A fifth Company News folder tracks up to 25 companies. Remember, you can only access full text of WSJ articles here or via Factiva.

www.WSJ.com

Hoover's (call 888-310-6087 for pricing)

An excellent portal for business information on both public and private companies. Company capsules, news and SEC links, executive bios, you name it, it's here. Much useful information is free, but to access the full power of the source and utilize alerts, you'll need to subscribe.

www.hoovers.com

Pink Sheets

If you're looking for financial or pricing information for the hard to find over the counter(OTC)/bulletin board securities market, you'll probably find it at Pink Sheets. Often includes company background, news, SEC filings. Also houses a particularly useful OTC symbol lookup feature.

www.pinksheets.com

Anybirthday

A classic example of a site the designers had no idea would be useful to prospect researchers, but it is! Claims 135 million birthdays in its database, and has proved to be a fairly reliable source. A good last resort.

www.anybirthday.com

Association of Professional Researchers for Advancement (APRA)

International organization of prospect researchers. Join and participate in local and national meetings, conferences. Make sure to check out the research links and forms library.

www.aprahome.org

Domania

According to their website: "27 million U.S. home purchase price records, making it the Internet's largest free collection of home prices."

www.domania.com

Newslink

Comprehensive list of links to newspapers, magazines, television and radio outlets, indexed by state and locality. Includes international media as well.

www.newlsink.com

Find Articles

Archive of more than 300 magazines dating back to 1998, and all free. A partnership between LookSmart, which provides the search infrastructure, and the Gale Group, which provides the published editorial content.

<http://www.findarticles.com/PI/index.jhtml>

Prscpt-L

List serv for prospect researchers.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/PRSPCT-L/>

Internet Prospector

An online magazine produced by prospect researchers from across the country, it's an excellent, free source for keeping current on internet resources.

www.internet-prospector.org/