

Manchester Business Answers 24/7: online help from MBS Library Service

INTRODUCTION

Finding business and management research information can be difficult. It can be hard to know which resources might have the relevant information. It can be hard to know how to use specialist resources effectively, adapting techniques that other researchers have found effective.

One approach, tried and tested by many business school libraries, is an online database of frequently asked questions (FAQ) to complement the library enquiry service.



Manchester Business Answers 24/7 is the online FAQ database from the MBS library service. It is a searchable knowledgebase for all users of business and management resources. It is not a database or a search engine but a resource finding tool. It provides:

- **Questions and answers** - based on what users ask
 - How do I access e-journals?
 - How do I access analysts' reports?
 - Where do I find company profiles?
 - How can I find info on market research?
 - How do I renew my loans?
 - How can I access my course handbook online?
 - How do I find information about Harvard citation style/EndNote?
- **Search** - to find relevant questions and answers
 - Example Searches : e-journals, share price, company strategy, off-campus, exam papers, EndNote, Thomson One Banker, Factiva
- **Feedback statistics** - for service improvement
 - New questions and answers are created based on what users have been looking for, the most accessed answers are reviewed, and significant changes are highlighted in Business Research Plus, the MBS Library Service blog.
 - Business Research Plus also provides an easy way for users to provide their feedback.

ACCESSING

Manchester Business Answers 24/7 is easy to access, just use the Quick Response (QR) code or URL:

- <http://go.mbs.ac.uk/bizlib247>

Business Research Plus, the MBS Library blog includes posts on ongoing improvements to Manchester Business Answers 24/7, and information pages including the most popular questions and searches.

- <http://bizlib247.wordpress.com>



BACKGROUND

Manchester Business Answers 24/7 is based on the "Business FAQ" developed at the Lippincott Library, University of Pennsylvania (UPenn) for Wharton Business School. Their original prototype was adopted by many leading business schools libraries; MBS is the first in the UK.

BROWSING

Manchester Business Answers 24/7 provides two ways for users to access questions and answers of interest: browsing and searching. Browsing is the quickest and easiest way to get an overview of the service. From the Manchester Business answers 24/7 home page <http://go.mbs.ac.uk/bizlib247>:

- Select “Careers”
 - A small list of careers related questions will be displayed
 - Select one of the questions to see the answer
- Select “Markets and Industries”
 - Browse this set of questions
- Select “Business Databases”
 - A longer list of questions is displayed. Note that there are some questions that relate to specific databases, “How can I screen companies on Thomson One Banker?”, and others that relates to several, “Why are there different databases providing journal articles?”



Careers

Tip: To return to the Manchester Business Answers 24/7 home page select *Manchester Business Answers 24/7*, or the *Browse ...* links on the left hand side.

Each question is assigned to a broad category, e.g. business databases, finance, statistics. Selecting a category displays a list of questions and selecting a question displays its answer.

SEARCHING

The home page also offers a search box. Users provide a word or phrase and the system returns a list of matching questions. The matching is done using the keywords linked to each question and answer.

- Search for “*analyst reports*”
This will return answers that identify Thomson Research as the database that you need to access, and provide some advice on searching.
- Search for “*off-campus*”
This will return answers that provide tips on how to access electronic resources off-campus.
- Search for “*referencing*”
This will return answers about referencing, including the reference management software EndNote.



Search box

Zero Hits when searching

There are several cases where a search may return nothing (no matching questions).

- Company name – search for company profile, company strategy, accounts, share price ...
- Journal name – search for journals, e-journals
- Your essay keywords – select and search a journal database

Searching is rather different from a Google search. Google takes arbitrary terms, searches the web and ranks results by popularity. Manchester Business Answers 24/7 takes search terms and returns the frequently asked questions that have been (manually) indexed by those terms. This is a simple way of screening the questions and giving users possible answers to their specific query.

Tip: Quick links to some searches are on the left-hand side, and the blog has a popular searches tab.

Tip: You can access the “Business FAQ” services of other business school libraries and view their suggestions (but you can’t access their resources).

Feedback: Please use Business Research Plus - <http://bizlib247.wordpress.com/bizlib247>

Further Support: For further research support contact the **MBS Library Enquiry Service:**

- MBS Library Enquiry Service Tel: 0161 275 6507 email: libdesk@mbs.ac.uk