

Library Guide Assessment: An In-Depth Look at Science, Engineering and Business Subject Guides



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LIBRARY**



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- **Introduction**
- **Methodology**
- **Discussion**
- **Future work**

Research Questions

How useful are subject guides for our users?

1

Do they provide a good user experience?

3

Are course based guides used more than subject guides?

5

How often are they used?

2

Are there more useful ways to provide our users with subject specific information and resources?

4

Methodology - Quantitative

[spreadsheet](#)

- Usage data was pulled for all Science/Engineering/Business LibGuides 2018-2020
- Spreadsheet included discipline, type of guide, year and librarian notes
- Guides chosen for detailed analysis:
 - Chemistry, Computing Science, Athabasca Oil Sands, Engl 199 (English for Engineering Students), Mechanical Engineering, Business 201, Finance, and Think Tanks
 - Include LibGuide statistics and Google Analytics
- Statistics were examined as well as possible reasons for increase/decrease (COVID, course not taught, etc)

Methodology - Qualitative

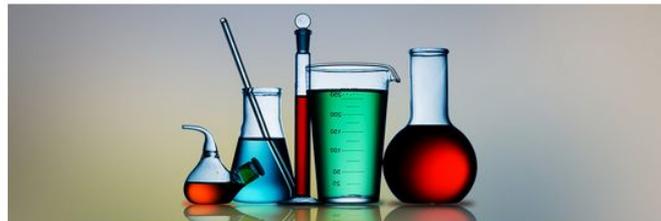
Examine chosen LibGuides - one sweep by a “non-owner” librarian, 2nd by LibGuide owner

Series of questions to answer

- Use of jargon?
- Location of zero-hit links or resources?
- Is it clear why someone would click each link? Presence of descriptions or explanations. Obvious curation?
- Databases displayed on the Guide vs. those on the A-Z list-
 - a) Are the Best Bets all on the guide?
 - b) Overall how do the two paths compare?
- General Observations - consistency, etc.

Chemistry Subject Guide

Chemistry

[Articles](#)[eBooks and eResources](#)[Properties and Reactions](#)[Resources for Undergraduates](#)[Resources for Writing and Publishing](#)[Free Resources](#)[Accessing Library Materials Remotely](#)

Databases for Finding Articles

Chemistry Databases

- [SciFinder / SciFinder-n](#)      

SciFinder is a key database for chemistry literature, chemical properties and reactions. Includes structure and reaction searching. Users must register for a SciFinder account.

- [Reaxys](#)    

Indexes literature related to chemical reactions. Coverage from 1771

Subject Librarian



[Lauren Stieglitz](#)

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Chemistry Subject Guide

Page	Views 2020	Time 2020	Bounce rate 2020
Articles (Homepage)	1338	00:04:36	42.86%
eBooks and eResources	201	00:01:46	62.50%
Properties and Reactions	152	00:01:46	75.00%
Resources for Undergraduates	66	00:00:44	33.33%
Resources for Writing and Publishing	134	00:02:39	78.18%
Free Resources	127	00:01:53	59.38%
Accessing Library Materials Remotely	49	00:02:55	71.43%

BUS 201 Course Guide

Start Here! - BUS 201- Introduction to Canadian Business

Getting Started

BUS 201- Introduction to Canadian Business

- [Start Here!](#)
- [Small Business Plans](#)
- [Industry/Market Analysis](#)
- [Competitive Analysis](#)
- [Articles](#)
- [Operational Plan](#)

Business Research

REMEMBER! Business research is different from other disciplines—it has many facets and you will need to use several resources to get a complete picture. There is no "magic database" that will have everything you need in one place.

Start By Assessing Your Idea

Start by watching our tutorial on finding information to help you decide if you have a good idea for a business:

- [Industry & Customer Analysis](#)

Primary & Secondary Research

Primary research is new research, carried out to answer specific issues or questions. It can involve questionnaires, surveys or interviews with individuals or small groups. For Business 201, primary research can include, for example, calling a landlord to find rent costs, contacting farmers about food costs, etc.

Secondary research makes use of information previously researched for other purposes & publicly available. Market research reports, articles, demographics--any information NOT INITIALLY COLLECTED by you.

Read "[The Difference Between Primary and Secondary Research](#)" (The Balance: Small Business) for more information.

Find Library Resources to Help You Plan

Ask us! We're here to help.

Cameron Library Public Service Team

Contact:
Cameron Library for
Sciences, Engineering & Business
cameronhelp@ualberta.ca
780-492-8440

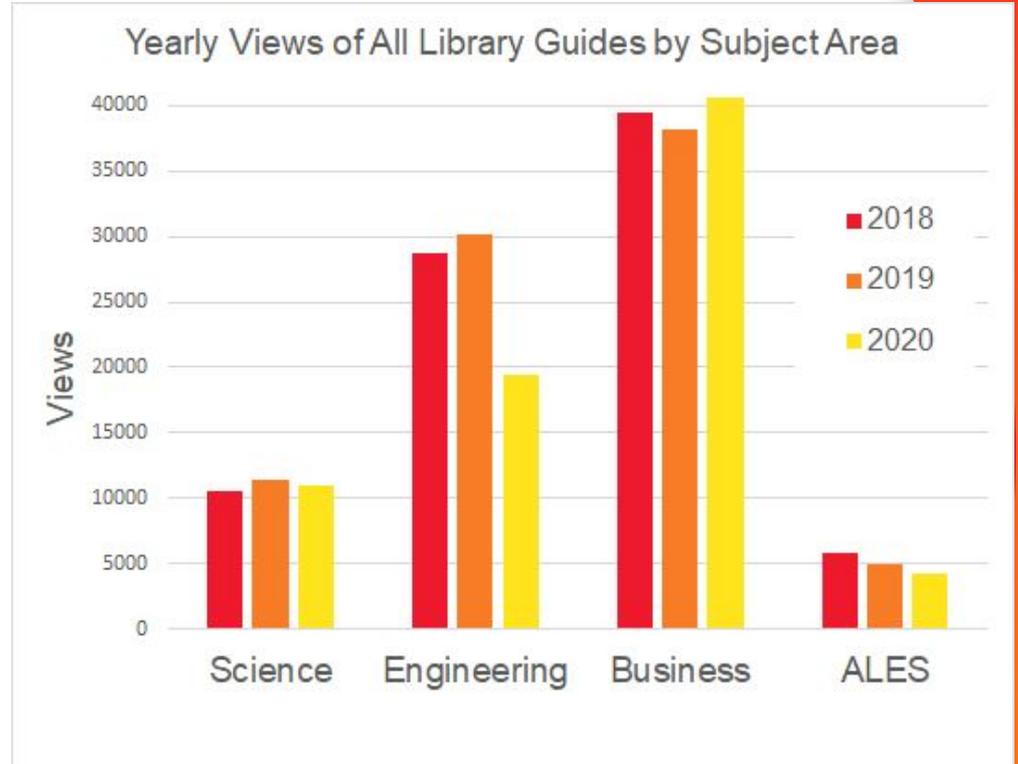
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2021-05-31

BUS 201 Course Guide

Page	Views 2020	Time 2020	Bounce rate 2020
Start Here!	2961	00:00:39	24.25%
Industry Reports	2336	00:04:03	70.25%
Industry/Market Analysis	1565	00:00:24	28.09%
Market Research	898	00:02:56	52.41%
Consumer Characteristics	447	00:01:11	28.57%
Demographics/Expenditures	420	00:01:24	54.55%
Small Business Plans	395	00:00:52	68.52%
Competitive Analysis	375	00:01:20	62.86%
Articles	236	00:02:26	68.97%
Suppliers	70	00:01:49	91.67%
Operational Plan	96	00:00:08	57.14%
Financials, Operating Stats, Labour Costs	53	00:03:12	30.00%
Licenses/Taxes/Grants	24	00:03:16	100.00%

Discussion - General

Average drop in library guide views in 2020 for Science, Engineering, ALES



Discussion - General

- Many links unused, particularly in large lists of resources
- Databases most widely used links
- Links on main page have higher use
- Bounce rate and average length on page not correlated

Guide specific findings

- 42% increase for Commodities Prices section of Finance LibGuide
- Rise in use of Standards LibGuide in both 2019 and then again in 2020.
- Surprising rise in use of Computing Science LibGuide: **993.94%** increase in 2020!

Future Work

- Survey Information Service Specialists
 - Library guides for reference
- Survey students on library guide usage
- User testing with students
- Revamp our guides
- Continue tracking library guide statistics



Thank You

Adapted from Slides Carnival