# Locating Business Records

The Business Search is designed to identify/verify a business and return data relevant to that entity.

Returned elements vary (depending on your input) but may include: company name, FEIN, address, address report date, contact name, contact title, contact SSN, and company phone.

The business databases contain records on both private businesses and government agencies.

Topics in this help are listed below:



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## Quick Start

First, try to find a business record using one or more of the following search techniques:

- Search by **Company Name** and **State**.
- Search by the nine-digit **FEIN** of the company.
  **Note**: You can include the hyphen in the search. The system automatically strips it off.
- Search using a company's **Street Address**, **City**, and **State**.
- Search by an individual's **Last Name**, **First Name**, and **State**.
  **Note**: This individual has to be a listed officer of the company.

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## Search Tips

### *Reference*

This is an optional field. It can be your case name or number. You can enter an alpha-numeric string. This information may be used to track all the searches for a case or for billing. For a normal user you will find Reference in the Comprehensive Report for person; for an administrator, you will find the Reference in the Activity and Billing Info.

### Search by FEIN

One FEIN search may result in multiple business records. A parent company can possess a FEIN and each subsidiary can be given this same FEIN. All businesses associated with a FEIN will be returned in the search.

On the other hand it is not unusual for a business to possess multiple FEINs. Also some of the records in the database may contain a FEIN; some may not. So providing a FEIN could eliminate records you wish to include.

### Search by Address

Address search is the one of the most commonly used techniques, even if the address is dated. An old address may lead to the current address.

Address search returns all the companies historically and currently located at the address. If you are missing the current information for the subject business, other businesses at the same address may be useful contacts.

For an address search, names are not required.

To search all houses on a street in a certain block, enter the block number and an asterisk (*). For example, to search the 1200 block of Main Street, type "12* Main St."

**Note**: A search of the 100 block (1*) will also match addresses in the 1000 and 10000 range.

If you are unsure of the exact address, you can perform an address range search by using a colon (:) or a comma (,). For example, to search for every business between 120 Main Street and 327 Main Street, enter "120:327 Main St." or "120,327 Main St."

### Search by Personal Information

If you search with personal information (Name and Address), all the businesses and individuals related to this person will display. They too may serve as leads in the identification/investigation of a subject business.

**Caution**: Not all business records have contact persons/business executives listed. So searching with SSN or name and address may eliminate some records you want to include.

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## Results Display

Once you enter the intended search criteria and click the Search button, a list of results will display. This list includes current and historical data on the business.

The results display in the order that they match the search criteria. The most closely matched records are on the top of the result set.

Returned elements may include some or all of the following:

- Company Name
- Parent Company Name
- FEIN
- Full Address
- Address Report Date
- Phone Number
  **Note**: The check mark by the phone number indicates it is mostly likely the current phone number for the company.
- Time Zone Indicator of the Phone

### *Find the Subject in the List*

Identify the subject business entities by carefully examining the information displayed. Make sure the record(s) you pick fits what is already known about the business.

### *Expand / Narrow the List of Results*

If too few or no results are returned, loosen the search by removing the most precise or uncertain criteria, like the exact **Street Address**. In the extreme case you can search by **Company Name** without a **State**. That will give you all the companies in the United States with the same company name.

If your search returns a long list of results, it is recommended that you add more search criteria. The more specific the search, the less records returned.

If you search by **Company Name** alone, your results list may be really long. We recommend adding the following criteria, if known, in this order:

1. State - Entering a state narrows the results to businesses in that state.
2. City - Entering a city, in addition to the state, further narrows the results to businesses in the specified city and state.

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## Source Documents

Government/Law Enforcement customers frequently question the credibility of data they are analyzing. They have expressed that the more frequent a data item shows up in a resulting search, the more credibility is assigned to it. The Source Documents feature is designed to address this interest by generating a list of sources, number of hits, and timeframe to give the end users a gauge of what level of credibility they want to assign to a result. Based on the source information they will be in a better position to direct their investigation by making more informed decisions as it relates to following up on tips and leads and conducting investigations.

### *Accessing Source Documents Information*

Source Documents information for business is obtainable after a Business Search. There is a ***View Sources** link under the Name column on the search results page. A number with the "~" sign, which indicates the approximate number of unique data sources used for this record, is placed by the right side of the link.

Clicking the ***View Sources** link leads to a pop-up box with source documents summary.

**Note**: The response time varies. Businesses records with a large number of sources behind them may take longer.

Only one pop-up box is displayed at one time. The box closes automatically when you click the ***View Sources** link for another subject.

### *Managing the Source Documents*

You can do one or all of the followings from the source documents summary box.

- Click on the top right to print the source information summary.
- Click the plus sign by **Expand All** to reveal details of every data component; or click the plus sign by a specific component (for example, Address) to reveal that particular source details.
- Click after clicking the plus sign(s) to print the full or partial source details.
- Click the minus sign by **Collapse All** or by a specific component to close the details sections.
- Click to close the pop-up source information box.

### *Data Components in Source Documents*

The following is a list of components included in the Source Documents for business:

- Name
- Address
- Phone

**Note**: Depending on the subjects, not all the components may be present. For example, if a business never registers a phone number, the Phone information may be missing.

The list below is the Source Documents information available for each of the components above:

- Source – a list of named sources of a component. See below for more information.
- # of Occurrences – the number of times a component is found within a named source. For example, if the number of occurrences for Corporate Filings is 3, it means the same record is found three times in that source.

- Dates Seen – the time range a component was first and last seen within a named source. The format of this piece of information may vary depending the availability of data. For example, you may see **November, 2006 – December, 2009**; or **January 2, 2006 – March, 2009**; or **November 13, 2008 – February 1, 2009**. It is also possible that you see only one date (for example, Dec, 2000) instead of a date range.

### *List of Sources*

The search utilizes more than 50 data sources, regardless of your search criteria. In the User Interface most of the sources are self explanatory. For example, Tax Assessor Records. A few may need brief explanations.

- **Better Business Bureau – Member** – information is derived from the Better Business Bureau member list.

- **Better Business Bureau – Non-Member** – information is derived from the Better Business Bureau but the business is not a member of the Better Business Bureau.

- **Business Contacts** –data is extracted from multiple business sources that contain officer and owner information.

- **Business Finder** – data is extracted from multiple business sources that contain business names, addresses, and phone numbers.

- **Experian Business Report** – this report contains information on U.S. businesses and owners including financial information, sales, and organizational structure.

- **IRS Form 5500** – information is obtained from IRS Form 5500 (an annual report that must be filed by a business on employee benefit plans).

- **IRS Form 990** – information is obtained from IRS Form 990 (the yearly tax document filed by tax-exempt nonprofit organizations).

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## Next Steps

There are a few things you can do with the results records. You can copy/print/email one or all records, export the results list to Excel, search deeper on elements with hyperlinks, launch Relavint, and order reports.

### *Copy/Print/Email the Record*

To copy a record so you can paste it in another application,

1. Click the icon to the most left of the record. The **Record Utilities** screen opens, with **Quick Links** box in the middle and the record information at the bottom in text format.
2. Highlight the record text and right click your mouse. Several options display.
3. Select **Copy**.

4. Open the application where you want to store the record and paste the text.

To print/email a record,

1. Click the  icon to the most left of the record. The **Record Utilities** screen opens, with **Quick Links** box in the middle and the record information at the bottom in text format.
2. From the Quick Links box, select either **Print** or **Email**.
3. If you select **Print**, your printer box will open up, from where you can print the selected record. If you select **Email**, your default email application will launch, with the record information auto populated in the content area. Just enter the recipient's email address and send the email.

To copy/print/email all records on the list,

1. Click the **All** link on top left. The **Record Utilities** screen opens, with **Quick Links** box in the middle and all the records information at the bottom in text format.
2. Copy/Print/Email the records as indicated above.

### *Export the Results List to Excel*

Make sure you have Excel in your computer. If not exporting is not an option.

- Click the **Export to Excel** link on the top right of the results list. The Download box pops up.
- Check one of the two radio buttons to choose to download the records on the first page (records 1 to 25) or all of the records.
- Click the Download button. The **File Download** prompt appears momentarily.
- Click either the Save button. The **Save As** dialog box displays with **File name** populated, and file extension as .csv (which is Excel compatible).
- Accept the default **File name** or change it to anther name as desired.
- Click the Save button again.

You can later open the .csv file in Excel and then save it as an .xls file.

### *Search Deeper*

In the results list, Company Name, FEIN, Address, and Phone contain links for further searches on a subject.

1. Click the desired link. A **Search Selection** box opens that contains all the possible options for further searches.
   **Note**: The search options vary depending on the element you pick for further searches. For example, the Search Selection box has more options for an address than for a FEIN.
2. Make a selection from the **Search Selection** screen. The system automatically performs the search selected and populates the results.

## *Launch Relavint*

1. Click **Relavint Report** link or the icon . The **Relavint™ Visual Link Analysis** screen appears.
2. Click the **Start Relavint** button. The **Relavint™ Software License Agreement** text displays.
3. Click **I Agree**.
4. **Click to Continue**.

The Relavint chart is ready in a matter of seconds.

To learn more about this linking tool, click the **?HELP** button at the bottom left.

## *Order Reports*

Two reports are available on the results list: **Business Report** (which covers every aspect of the subject) and **Address Report** (which returns people/businesses that are currently or historically associated with the address).

The following is the steps to order a Business Report.

1. Click the **Business Report** link or icon . The Request Report screen with report options (see below) appears.
2. Make sure all the information items you want to include in the report are checked, and those you don't need are unchecked.
3. Click the **Request Report** button on the top. The report populates the page in a matter of seconds.

**Report Options**

These report options can be set up in the Preferences screen and apply to all reports. Here is just another chance for you to manually set your preferences for this particular report.

- **Select Report Type** – The default is **Interactive Web Page**. This type returns report with links for further research. Or use the down arrow to select a different format.

- **Save report for later access** - If you check this option, this report will be saved to the Report Manger in My Account in PDF format and will stay there for seven calendar days. You can access this report anytime within the seven-day limit by clicking the **View Report** icon . If you do not check this option, you will need to re-run the report to access the same information.
  **Note**: If you check this option once, it will be checked by default next time you run a report. You can decide each time if you want to turn this feature on or off.

- **Prompt me for these options for each report** – Check this option if you want to see the Request Report window every time you run a report. If you uncheck it, next time you will be brought to the reports directly. You will not have a chance to change the report options at this point.
  **Caution**: It is recommended that you leave this checked all the time. Once you uncheck it, if you need to see the Request Report screen again, you will have to change the report options via the Preferences screen of My Account.

- From the **My Account** screen click the **Preferences** tab.
  **Note**: If this is your first time since login to access My Account, you will be prompted to **Verify Password**.

- Once you enter the password, click the Continue button. You are brought to the **Preferences** tab.

- Click the down arrow by **Other User Settings** and select a specific report from the list. The options for the report display in the middle of the page.

- Check the box by Prompt me for these options.

- Click the **Save Preferences** button. You will see “Your Preferences have been Saved” in the middle of the page.

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