

Business Acumen for Communicators

“Be a business leader first, a communicator second.”¹

Big Picture

- Business Model
- Corporate Vision/Strategy
- Executive Priorities
- Board of Directors Priorities
- Regulatory Environment
- Competition
- Industry Pressures/Trends
 - Customer needs/tastes
 - Raw materials
 - Consolidation
- Risks
 - Safety
 - Environmental
 - Ongoing legal issues
- Labor
- Community

Key Financial Terms

Revenue, Sales, “Top Line”	Money a company receives from selling goods and/or services
Net Revenue, Net Sales:	Revenue minus returns, negotiated discounts, etc.
Operating income:	Profit made after operating expenses are paid for
Net income, “Bottom Line”	Profit made after factoring in interest expenses and taxes
EBITDA	Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, Amortization. Another measure of profitability; commonly used for private companies with debt
EPS	Earnings Per Share: Net income divided by shares outstanding

Finding Info

- Public companies:
 - Quarterly earnings press release
 - Gov filings (US: 10-Q, 10-K)
 - Conference calls
 - Investor conferences
- Private companies:
 - Some issue press releases or other public disclosures
- Non-profits:
 - Gov filings (US: Form 990)
- Sources:
 - Online (US: EDGAR)
 - News aggregators
 - Guidestar (non-profits)
 - Finance department

1. Burton, Grates, Lurch. “Best-In-Class Practices in Employee Communication: Through the lens of 10 global leaders,” (white paper), Institute for Public Relations, 2013.