

What are industry codes and how do they help me?

Industry codes are used to group together similar companies based on the types of products or services they offer to make it easier to collect statistical data. Searching by industry codes enables you to retrieve targeted information, thus making it easier to research and analyze industries and the companies that operate within them. Many of the databases you have access to at Saint Mary's allow you to search by industry codes, so knowing how to use these codes will make you a more effective researcher.

Types of Industry Codes

In North America, we typically use SIC and NAICS codes that have been developed by government statistical agencies. However, it is important to note that there are many different industry classification systems used by other governments and database providers. Below is a list of some classification systems you may come across while researching:

FTSE's [Industry Classification Benchmark](#) (ICB)
S&P and MSCI's

412*) or to simply omit these digits (e.g., 41 or 412). Others will only allow searching by the full code. Use the Help feature of the database to determine the proper search technique.

How to Find SIC Codes

To find U.S. government SIC codes:

Go to the US Department of Labor website: <https://www.osha.gov/data/sic-search>

You can also type the name of the company into the EDGAR Company Search (<http://www.sec.gov/edgar/searchedgar/companysearch.html>) on the US Securities and Exchange Commission website.

You can find codes by starting with a company (or a few) that you know are in the industry you are researching and seeing what SIC codes are associated with the records. For example, Mergent Online gives the primary SIC in company search results and on the overview page for each.

Note:

A company may have more than one SIC code if they are engaged in multiple industries. SIC code(s) assigned to a company may differ from one database to the next.

The Canadian government has almost phased out the use of SIC codes, but you may still find Canadian SIC codes useful for historical research. You can find Canadian SIC codes at:

Statistics Canada website:

- o [Standard Industrial Classification – Establishments \(SIC-E 1980\)](#)
- o [Standard Industrial Classification – Companies and Enterprises \(SIC-C 1980\)](#)

NAICS and SIC Codes

North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) codes were introduced in 1997 to replace SIC codes. Both codes serve the same function, but NAICS codes allow for greater specificity. NAICS codes also allow for a higher degree of comparability within the North American economy because they were developed jointly between Canada, the United States, and Mexico. The Statistics Canada website and the US Census Bureau website both offer concordances which will allow you to cross-reference NAICS codes with SIC codes and vice versa.

Statistics Canada Concordances

<https://www.statcan.gc.ca/en/concepts/concordances-classifications>

Example:

SIC-E 1980	NAICS 2002
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Example:

SIC (U.S.)

NAICS 2002