



## How Does A Top Ad Agency Use Business Research To Create Opportunities And Shatter Roadblocks?

Company: GSD&M Advertising  
 Operations: Advertising agency  
 Web site: <http://www.gsdm.com>

“The idea of articulating and building momentum around what a company stands for instead of what it sells is called Purpose-based Branding, and GSD&M strives to be the best in the world at it.”

### Business Roadblock

Getting the skinny on your competition and customers is vital to your company’s profitability and growth. Accurate, timely data is key to making effective business decisions and developing successful strategies.

No one knows this better than GSD&M, the brash, Austin, Texas-based advertising agency whose client roster includes Southwest Airlines, DreamWorks, and the US Olympics Committee. The firm requires an online source of business information that will provide background information on financials, executives, corporate relationships, and more, in order to get a complete view of its competition and business environment.

### GSD&M’s Answer

To get what it needs, GSD&M turns to Hoover’s.

“I’m constantly asked to find out about our clients’ competition, their executives, and latest acquisitions,” said Todd Van Horne, head of GSD&M’s research department. “My department builds reports on the clients we have as well as the competition, and we’re constantly updating these reports. Hoover’s is where we begin this process.”

Van Horne identified three main uses at GSD&M for Hoover’s business information:

- ▶ To determine new business opportunities
- ▶ To identify the competition
- ▶ To drill down into company profiles to get a view of their financial operations, their executives, and their corporate relationships

### Bottom Line

In at least one instance, Hoover’s corporate relationship coverage has allowed GSD&M to identify an attempt by a client’s competitor to thwart a campaign launch. By identifying the conflict of interest and bringing up legal issues, GSD&M was able to outwit the competition and successfully launch the campaign. “Hoover’s information has saved us several times in that capacity,” Van Horne said.

At around 2,400 research requests per year, and nearly one-half of those for Hoover’s information, Van Horne’s department has little time for long, involved research operations. The company estimates that Hoover’s saves each researcher 10 minutes per request, which Van Horne called conservative.

“That’s approximately 160 hours per year we can spend accomplishing goals rather than putting baseline information together for reports piecemeal,” Van Horne said.

### Conclusion

Hoover’s business information helps GSD&M manage business relationships, analyze its competitors’ strengths and weaknesses, and identify corporate and executive connections that further its goals and its clients’ successes. With the data Hoover’s provides, the firm can leverage its knowledge of its competition and marketplace to support its strategy and objectives.

For more information:

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