1. Additional Resources for Getting Started

The following is helpful background material which will help you during your process of getting up to speed with model-based digital financial reporting including its core component XBRL. None of this material is required in order to fully use the material in this document.   However, in order to understand the reasoning behind many decisions, to understand the XBRL technical syntax which lies behind this model, this information can be helpful.

The point of this document is to keep XBRL behind the scenes as much as possible. Most of this will be achieved by implementing software applications which absorbed the complexity of the XBRL technical syntax, allowing the business user to achieve what they need to achieve safely, robustly, reliably, and consistently; never having to understand the details of XBRL.

That said, many people like to "dink" around with their cars in their garage. If you don't know what you are doing, this can be dangerous. But, with good training, resources, or other help it can be useful to "get under the hood" so to speak. This is likewise true of XBRL.

1.1. Digital financial reporting and XBRL, the big picture

A good source for background information about XBRL-based digital reporting, what it is, what it does, what it means, problem it is trying to solve, how it is being used by others and other such background information read *XBRL for Dummies*. This is not a required step, but this step can be helpful if you want to get a complete picture of the landscape surrounding model-based digital financial reporting. The following URL points you to information on where to obtain this resource, details of what it contains, and other helpful information:

http://xbrl.squarespace.com/xbrl-for-dummies/

1.2. Hello world! example

If you don't know what a hello world example is, you probably should not even bother with this. If you do know what a hello world example, here is a hello world example of XBRL:

http://xbrl.squarespace.com/journal/2008/12/18/hello-world-xbrl-example.html

Again, this level of understanding can be helpful, but it is optional.

1.3. An XBRL technical syntax primer

Again, while not necessary, an understanding of the basics of the XBRL technical syntax can be helpful. Chapter 4 of *XBRL for Dummies* (see above) has a concise, but more importantly correct, primer of the XBRL technical syntax. Weighing in at a mere 28 pages, for those who desire or need this level of detail this is a great place to start. The XBRL technical specification is like reading the owner's manual. Even if you want to wade through that 158 page document, the primer will help you grasp the bigger picture framework into which to fit the details you will collect about XBRL.

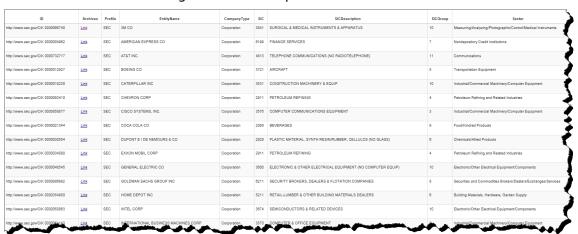## 1.4. Explore public company financial information

Ultimately, one of the primary reasons for taking the time and effort to structure financial information is so that the information can be extracted and used by automated machine-based processes. One very good example of this is the XBRL-based financial information reported by public companies to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and made available in their EDGAR system.

All that XBRL-based financial information is there and free to use.

The problem with that is that the information is made available in the raw XBRL technical syntax.

A software vendor, 28msec, has created a free publically available repository of public company financial information and provides access to machine-readable and human-readable information. That repository is called SECXBRL.info and is available here: http://app.secxbrl.info/. Information for the DOW 30 is available for free.

If you make your way to the list of the companies which make up the DOW 30, you can navigate through the information repository and explore. All the information came from XBRL-based digital financial reports.

ID	Archives	Profile	EntityName	CompanyType	SIC	SICDescription	SICGroup	Sector
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000066740	Link	SEC	3M CO	Corporation	3841	SURGICAL & MEDICAL INSTRUMENTS & APPARATUS	10	Measuring/Analyzing/Photographic/Control/Medical Instruments
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000004962	Link	SEC	AMERICAN EXPRESS CO	Corporation	6199	FINANCE SERVICES	7	Nondepository Credit Institutions
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000732717	Link	SEC	AT&T INC.	Corporation	4813	TELEPHONE COMMUNICATIONS (NO RADIOTELEPHONE)	11	Communications
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000012927	Link	SEC	BOEING CO	Corporation	3721	AIRCRAFT	5	Transportation Equipment
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000018230	Link	SEC	CATERPILLAR INC	Corporation	3531	CONSTRUCTION MACHINERY & EQUIP	10	Industrial/Commercial Machinery/Computer Equipment
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000093410	Link	SEC	CHEVRON CORP	Corporation	2911	PETROLEUM REFINING	4	Petroleum Refining and Related Industries
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000858877	Link	SEC	CISCO SYSTEMS, INC.	Corporation	3576	COMPUTER COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT	3	Industrial/Commercial Machinery/Computer Equipment
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000021344	Link	SEC	COCA COLA CO	Corporation	2080	BEVERAGES	9	Food/Kindred Products
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000030554	Link	SEC	DUPONT E I DE NEMOURS & CO	Corporation	2820	PLASTIC MATERIAL, SYNTH RESIN/RUBBER, CELLULOS (NO GLASS)	6	Chemicals/Allied Products
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000034088	Link	SEC	EXXON MOBIL CORP	Corporation	2911	PETROLEUM REFINING	4	Petroleum Refining and Related Industries
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000040545	Link	SEC	GENERAL ELECTRIC CO	Corporation	3600	ELECTRONIC & OTHER ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT (NO COMPUTER EQUIP)	10	Electronic/Other Electrical Equipment/Components
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000886982	Link	SEC	GOLDMAN SACHS GROUP INC	Corporation	6211	SECURITY BROKERS, DEALERS & FLOTATION COMPANIES	8	Securities and Commodities Brokers/Dealers/Exchanges/Services
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000354950	Link	SEC	HOME DEPOT INC	Corporation	5211	RETAIL-LUMBER & OTHER BUILDING MATERIALS DEALERS	6	Building Materials, Hardware, Garden Supply
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000050863	Link	SEC	INTEL CORP	Corporation	3674	SEMICONDUCTORS & RELATED DEVICES	10	Electronic/Other Electrical Equipment/Components
http://www.sec.gov/CIK 0000051143	Link	SEC	INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS MACHINES CORP	Corporation	3570	COMPUTER & OFFICE EQUIPMENT		Industrial/Commercial Machinery/Computer Equipment

Other sources are available, but what 28msec provides is one of the best organized financial information repositories. If you are really ambitious, you may want to explore the API reference and create something using Excel.

1.5. Putting the pieces together

Trying to understand calculus without knowing algebra is pointless. Often when you need to learn something it is important to breakdown what you want to learn into steps. You learn what you need to in step one, then you go to step two. You learn step two, then go to step three. And so on. Trying to skip steps causes frustration and other problems.

Learning about XBRL-based digital financial reporting requires you to progress through a series of steps. There are no short cuts. Master of model-based digital financial reporting will take an investment in time and effort, particularly today when software is not at the maturity level that it needs to be. If you don't want to put in this time and effort, wait for software to mature.

If you do want to make this investment, this material is laid out the way it is precisely to help you through these necessary steps. They will not turn you into a master, but they will set you on the path to mastery. Mastery takes even more time and effort. Again, there are no short cuts.

As such, progress through this material in the order provided, at least for the first time you work through it. After that, the material can be used as a reference.