

**Introductory Paper for the United Nations Workshop on the
Good Practices for Dissemination of Official Statistics in the Countries of the
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia**

Doha, Qatar

February 2, 2003 - February 4, 2003

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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to give a general overview of marketing strategies to identify current and potential customers, develop products that meet the needs of these customers, develop efficient dissemination strategies, and measure an agency's success in meeting data user needs. Marketing goes beyond just the selling information. It also includes determining who one's customers are; gaining an understanding of customer needs; effectively communicating the benefits of an agency's products and services to these customers; developing an ongoing process for keeping customers aware of issues related to products and production; staying informed through a continuing dialogue with customers; determining the appropriate means of distributing information to different user segments, and developing a mechanism for finding and reaching out to potential customers.

The discussion and examples presented are based on work conducted by a number of federal statistical agencies in the United States. The federal statistical system in the United States is decentralized to the extent that the responsibility for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of federal statistics is spread throughout the government. For the most part, however, this discussion focuses on the marketing activities of the U.S. Census Bureau. I would point out, however, that even though there is a central marketing office within the Census Bureau, different divisions responsible for specific types of data (e.g. business statistics, decennial census products) conduct their own marketing. For a number of reasons, a centralized marketing function would be more efficient. I assume that the statistical agencies of the ESCWA nations plan to go or are already going in this direction. The balance of this paper reviews the following topics:

- * Outreach, promotion and public relations
- * Developing and maintaining customer lists
- * The importance of data timeliness

- * Marketing data within copyright guidelines
- * Keeping up with changing technology while serving all user segments
- * The importance of advisory groups
- * External and Internal Market Research
- * Confidentiality and data limitations vs. user needs
- * The role of private sector data vendors

Outreach, Promotion and Public Relations

A major criticism of federal agencies is that they do a poor job of letting users know what they've produced. The private sector understands only too well the need to promote its products through various forms of advertising. The same is true for statistical agencies. There are a number of devices that enable user communities to become aware of what's available. The U.S. Census Bureau sends out monthly product announcements on its Internet site as shown in Exhibit A. This announcement goes to all segments of the user community. The Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics also continually keep the media informed of new findings through press releases. Members of the government are sent briefings on almost a daily basis. When deemed necessary, press briefings and public announcements on radio and television take place about major findings. This is especially true when data are released about sensitive subjects such as changes in income and poverty, employment and inflation.

Not only must an agency promote its products, but equally important is the promotion of the organization. Promotion is the presentation of an organization, a product or a service for public acceptance through advertising and publicity. An agency may use a variety of different communication vehicles, such as videos, speeches, catalogs, conferences exhibits, and newsletters. Each of these can be targeted to specific audiences. Continuing promotion and public relations efforts are primary elements of any successful marketing function. In the public and private sectors, promotion is the driving philosophy of every marketing effort. The objective is to build and maintain public awareness and positive perceptions of both the agency, and its products and services. Historically, federal statistical agencies such as the U.S. Census Bureau have not placed major emphasis on promotion and public relations. When budgets had to be cut, these types of programs were the first to go. However, in today's world of increasing competition and public criticism (e.g. accuracy, confidentiality, relevance), continuous and consistent promotion and public relations efforts are keys to achieving the business objectives of the agency, and are vital to future success and survival.

To achieve and maintain the agency as a *supplier of choice*, the agency must reach

out to each of the key market segments it serves. These include: 1) the general public, 2) the various agencies of the government, 3) the media, 4) the data user communities.

1) General Public

The agency must establish a mechanism that gives it primary responsibility and therefore the credit for the collection, and dissemination of social and economic indicators. The agency should set up a telephone and Internet outreach system enabling the general public to ask the agency questions about its data. A staff needs to be trained to answer questions coming from the general public. Consider developing educational literature about the agency and its data products that can be taught at all grade levels in schools.

2) Governmental Agencies

These agencies are some of the most important customers. In the United States, one major key to success in gaining the support of government agencies is to understand that most members of government represent regions with specific issues and problems. Therefore it's necessary to develop case studies that are relevant to local issues. At the same time, the statistical agency should form partnerships with other government agencies to understand the special needs for statistical products and services.

3) The Media

The importance of the media is critical. They have the power and resources to shape public opinion that can have a serious effect an organization. Therefore, it is a priority that the statistical agency establish and maintain good relations with the members of the media. A customer survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau showed that Ain general, the most satisfied customers receive news/press release, printed reports, and demographic statistics.¹ I suggest establishing a public affairs specialist who understands how to develop and implement a communications strategy that focuses on both national and local media. The agency should hold press conferences for important data releases, and also encourage one-on-one meetings with agency specialists. The agency should also set up Internet news releases for easy insertion into newspapers.

4) Data Users

Promotion and public relations are key to the successful marketing of products and services to the entire range of users. This begins with the development of potential

¹Bureau of the Census, External Customer Survey, Final Report, August 1993

customer lists, and ends with the feedback from users of information supplied by the agency. The balance of this paper will cover this spectrum in depth.

Developing and Maintaining Customer Lists

Customer lists to reach potential customers are the best, and usually the cheapest means of promotion. These lists can be used for selling by direct mail, market research, new product and services announcements, and general information about the agency. A natural outgrowth of promotion and public relations is the use of product promotional tools to accumulate lists of potential customers. These include 1) paid advertising using direct mail, and 2) various types of unpaid advertising.

1) Paid Advertising

In the United States and elsewhere, companies exist that sell lists of specific audiences.

For example, if a U.S. federal statistical agency is interested in reaching business-to-business users who they believe will benefit from economic data series, they can purchase specific lists that match the data series under consideration. Although such organizations might not be available in a specific country, there exist companies, Elsevier being one of them, that make company names, addresses and key personnel available. As a rule of thumb, in the private sector, a response rate of five percent is expected. Of those five percent responding, one or two percent can be expected to end in a sale. Other than direct mail, advertising in journals that reach targeted populations should be considered. However, in my experience, it should be noted that the cost to develop good ads is often more expensive than the cost of placement. Also, placing ads just once is usually of little value. If the agency decides to use paid advertising, professional journals are often the best vehicle. These types of journals are both targeted, and tend to be less expensive than the general media.

2) Unpaid Advertising

Rather than placing advertising, it's often more powerful to place notices or articles in newspapers, and public and private organization newsletters. On the Internet, it's often possible to send free information via electronic bulletin boards. The agency should also look into using across ads in other federal agency publications. Public service announcements are used, but be aware that broadcast media will invariably place these types of ads at times when there are very few listeners or viewers. One variation of unpaid advertising that can be used to generate new names is to put inserts in promotional materials. Another is to have sales promotions such as introductory offers for new and special products. The Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) in the United States developed a Transportation Data Sampler, as shown in Exhibit B. This CD-ROM was used as a handout at conferences and as part of a direct mail

campaign. A post card came with the Sampler. By sending in the card, users would receive updates of the CD-ROM. At the same time, BTS would start developing a user list. The cost to produce CD-ROM disks is very low, however, mailing costs can be a factor. Finally, an agency should have an exhibit booth developed that it can show at conferences, exhibitions and meetings of professionals and other special population groups.

Once you've developed a customer list, or series of lists, it is imperative that the lists are merged and properly coded by market segment and customer type. Further, the agency can be assured that the lists will grow old rapidly. Therefore, it's necessary to update the lists by continually asking for updated information when promotional material is sent out.

Data Relevance and Timeliness

There are two major aspects to the issue of timeliness. The first is one of relevance and shelf life. For example, economic data almost always become outdated well before demographic information - especially in inflationary times. Certainly the best example of this is in the United States with the rise in gasoline prices. For example, the U.S. Bureau of the Census is now releasing retail trade data at the local area level for its every five year economic census, for the year 1997. However, anyone using the gasoline data from the 1997 Economic Census will not have data reflecting current trends. The further the data are from the year of collection, the greater the need to seek other sources for more current information. Although I will cover private sector issues later in this paper, I will point out that the ability of consulting firms to make current estimates is one of the major reasons for their success. For example, in Exhibit C, Sales & Marketing Management made estimates for 1997 retail trade data at least three years before the Census Bureau released the actual retail trade census. A key issue here is, how good were the private sector estimates? Under the assumption that they were reasonable, the ability to have current information for marketing purposes heavily outweighed the degree to which they were off from the true figures. Indeed, at this point in time, the actual census data may be of little value. To be fair to the Census Bureau, they certainly could not have released the data before 1998, since they needed the full 1997 year's worth of information. However, the question users ask is, why does it take three years to tabulate the information? Ironically, decennial census information, with much more information to produce, is released on a more timely basis. Perhaps if the Census Bureau changed its sequence of release it could improve on its delivery schedule. This is an issue that has to be carefully researched by any agency.

The second issue is meeting the dates that are promised. Exhibit\ D is the current schedule for the release of United States 2000 data products. It's quite ambitious, and each data product has a strong constituency of users. Companies, universities, and state and local governments are already developing analytical programs that will use the information. They are also setting schedules for the delivery of these programs. This, of course, puts the burden on the Census Bureau to deliver on time. The key point here is that once the Census Bureau sets a schedule, that has broad implications, and barring unforeseen disasters, it must deliver on that schedule. The Census Bureau is better off showing a conservative schedule it can meet than promising a time line that will fall short. For this process to be successful, there is a need to develop an internal culture within the an agency that understands user needs and can balance them with the realities of the production limitations within the agency. This is best achieved through a continuing dialogue with the various user communities. I will discuss how do develop this dialogue later in the paper.

Marketing Data and the Value of Copyright Restrictions

A vexing problems is how an agency balances wide spread access to information as a public good, with the objective to make money on the sale of the data. To make the issue more complex, how is this balance accomplished when the agency has copyright protection, yet has to face the realities of the Internet?

For the United States, the issues are quite different. The United States may be the only country whose federal statistical system does not have copyright restrictions. Does this fact restrict the ability of the agencies to sell their data? An immediate answer would probably be yes. However, this would most likely be incorrect. In the United States, with much thanks to the former chief statistician Hermann Habermann, data are deemed a public good. This translates into the Unites States Office of Management of Budget issuing a directive that the cost of data to the public should be limited to retrieving the cost of dissemination. The cost of collection would already have been captured as part of the basic taxation system. Therefore, with no copyright, and a policy that makes data inexpensive, there is wide dissemination of information. Of course, this also means that anyone can tear the cover off a U.S. federal statistical agency publication, put their own cover on it, and sell the book for whatever they wish. Indeed, in some instances this does exist. However, data users are not stupid. Unless value is added to the publication, something I will discuss later under the subject of private sector vendors, users will gravitate to the less expensive U.S. federal statistical agency publications. Low cost and lack of copyright insures a

wide use of the information. It also insures that all types of users, including the one time, unaffiliated user, has data ready availability. Again, this is in line with the concept of information being a public good.

The lack of copyright and the limitation on pricing is also true for electronic products. Indeed, the current thinking of the U.S. Census Bureau is not to charge for the retrieval of cross-tabulations on the Internet, unless the data requested are extremely complex. From a marketing point of view, the decisions on the part of the United States government make great sense. Instead of restricting use, the government creates an environment where the information becomes wide spread. This yields, for the agencies, the ability to sell to a much wider audience. The problem this poses for the agencies of some countries is obvious. Simply put, can they afford to do this? It must be remembered however, that in the United States, the federal government supports, through appropriations, the statistical agencies operations. Although one will hear from the Congress the request for a U.S. federal statistical agency to recover its costs, this rarely happens. In the situation where a U.S. federal statistical agency does not have this type of financial support, then the situation changes dramatically.

For an agency anywhere in the world that does not have strong financial support from the government for data collection and dissemination, the scenario is quite different. For example, instead of having wide dissemination of all their data products, one country makes only basic information is widely available. More detailed, in-depth files are sold to contractors under strict guidelines, with copyright control. Indeed, this country carefully monitors these contracts. As an aside, at my former company, we found some foreign data purchasing systems so burdensome that we eventually stopped obtaining their data. From an international perspective, unless the agency has the capability to carefully monitor where its data are going, the value of maintaining copyright restrictions comes into question. At the same time, without it, can the agency expect to satisfactorily retrieve enough revenues to sustain its operations? I believe that the best way out of this problem, is for the agency to develop strategic alliances with third parties. These will include international book publishers distributors such as Elsevier, Internet data providers such as Beyond 20/20 Corporation, and consulting firms such as DRI/McGraw-Hill, the WEFA Group, the Conference Board, Reuters, and other research/consulting companies. Each one of these contracts has to be individually negotiated and the income will be in the form of royalties. Another group that will pay royalties is the geographic information system suppliers such as Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), and MapInfo.

These firms basically make their money by selling the data that are linked to their mapping software, with royalties being paid to the agency producing the information.

Perhaps statistical agencies from the ESCWA countries should consider developing a single source copyright as part of ESCWA. I strongly recommend that no matter the approach taken, the agencies bring on staff someone with experience who knows both the value of the data to organizations and how much the marketplace will pay.

Keeping Up With Changing Technology While Serving All User Segments

Before determining what technology to use for dissemination, the agency must first determine who are its users and are the products being designed meeting the needs of the various user types. One of the most important users, of course, is the federal government. In my experience, they are often the least sophisticated of users from a technology point of view. Paper reports, therefore, are critical for their use. This is often true of local users of data such as cities and towns. Usually only the large cities have the capability to use electronic media. This is often also true for libraries, which are some of the heaviest of users. Universities and corporations tend to be the most sophisticated users of information, where electronic media such as CD-ROM and the Internet are widespread. Little, I believe is really known about the individual or unaffiliated user. Because of these vagaries, an agency must be very careful when it decides to fundamentally change its dissemination policy.

The U.S. Census Bureau is radically changing its processes for disseminating information. The Census Bureau printed only 15% of the amount information for the 2002 Decennial Census, as compared to 1990. Put another way, virtually all of the 2000 Decennial Census data products are in electronic form. Indeed, the original plan was to only print 5% of 1990 style products. A concerted effort on the part of the user community effected the increase. This reliance on electronic media puts a large burden on both the Census Bureau and local areas. It is the responsibility of the Bureau to insure that whatever tables are put on CD-ROM will be easily accessible on the part of users, especially unsophisticated users. This required the development and purchase of software to link up with the hundreds of data tables that were made available. Such software has analytical and data extract capabilities, and simultaneously is not difficult to use. What has been lacking, but I suggest is critical are tutorials to train all variety of users, from the least to the most sophisticated.

The Internet poses another challenge. The Census Bureau is in the ongoing process of developing a retrieval system on the Internet with multi-levels of sophistication. These will range from simple table viewing to the ability to gain access to the entire set of

census records (carefully screened for confidentiality), in order to create customized cross tabulations. Both the CD-ROM and the Internet system are very ambitious programs. From the user perspective, however, what has happened is that the need for a paper copy has been transferred to the user. What an agency such as the Census Bureau must ask itself is whether, through the use of technology, they are making it easier or harder for the majority of users to gain access to the data. Certainly technology is enabling the Census Bureau to reduce costs by eliminating costly print runs. But is this the best scenario for its users? Indeed, most likely, agencies will shift from CD-ROM to small DVD's that hold ten times as much information.

The shift from paper to electronic media also raises the issue of the need to maintain archives of data for future generations. Who knows if the Internet will be in use in ten years. Perhaps a new form of communications will be developed. Also, can one be sure that CD-ROM products will maintain their usability? What will happen if no one produces CD-ROM or DVD computer drives ten years from now? This certainly has happened with 5 and 1/4 inch disks in the United States. To summarize, any development of data dissemination today, must now attempt to take the future into account. I have noticed in the United States that each of the federal agencies goes their own way in developing software, file structures, and CD-ROM products. I believe this is a mistake. Agencies, and I believe this includes those from the ESCWA nations, have to get together to develop a set of common standards and take advantage of technology to produce unified products.

The Importance of Advisory Groups

The importance of advisory groups cannot be overstated. No agency can have all the expertise to meet the needs of information users. Throughout the process of designing a census, organizing a collection procedure, or developing a dissemination process an agency needs continual feedback from users. Even at the end of the process, it's invaluable to have feedback to determine what went right vs. wrong. By using advisory groups, the natural inclination on the part of the agency to build bureaucratic protective walls is kept to a minimum. It's hard to take the attitude that "if there was a better way, we would have thought of it" when you have experts in the field looking at what you do. Keeping the walls down protects the agency by allowing it to make changes before it's too late. Of course, if the agency believes the users are wrong, they can still take whatever actions they deem appropriate, explaining why they did what they did.

Our experience in the United States leads us to the conclusion that advisory groups can either be huge successes or dismal failures. Which way this goes is totally a function of action taken on the part of the statistical agency. If, on the one hand, the agency sees an advisory group as a body to merely show and tell what they've done, without really asking for any advice, then this scenario fails. The easiest thing to do is to bring into the group people who either are not completely engaged in the subject, or who are the type of member who will not vociferously argue a point, even if they believe in it. I have seen this approach taken on the part of agencies, and it's failed. The more successful approach is to first develop the philosophy that the advisory group has a lot to offer, and that the agency is willing and flexible enough to listen. The Decennial Census Advisory Committee to the Secretary of Commerce of the United States is an example of a success story. Members are selected from all sectors of the user community. They are also selected based upon their known willingness to work hard, delve deeply into details, and where necessary challenge the Census Bureau's ideas. This committee works on many levels. Although it is supposed to give advice to the Secretary, the groups set up close working relationships with members of the Census Bureau in order to give direct advice to the Census Bureau. Thanks to the Committee, the Bureau has the ability to hear from users on such issues as software, hardware, sample designs, collection procedures, local area input to geographic coding, the needs of each of the user groups, cognitive concepts and questionnaire design, among many others. Official recommendations are sent to the Secretary, and unofficial recommendations are given to the Bureau through working groups on each of the topics. Even if the overall Committee does not meet often, the working groups meet and work separately, filling in with conference calls. Final reports bring all the ideas together.

It's important that an agency doesn't get too comfortable with its outside advisors. After a while, agencies find that there is a core set of users that they will naturally turn to. It's therefore important to work with the current set of advisors to find new members with new views and approaches to meeting user needs. One question that arises is whether an agency should include who they perceive as potential competitors as advisors. I would argue in the affirmative, to the degree that the those selected as advisors realize that they've been chosen to aid the agency, and not meet the needs of a hidden agenda. As I will discuss later in this paper, perceived competitors can actually turn out to be the best front line for selling the agency's products.

External and Internal Market Research

There are two types of external market research commonly conducted by U.S. federal

statistical agencies. These are focus groups and survey sampling. Focus groups are an invaluable tool to take a snapshot of an activity of an agency. These groups usually consist of about 12 members drawn from the user community. Why twelve? Over time, this amount of people has proven to be a good size to gather a good mix of comments and at the same time not being so large as to be uncontrollable. Materials are given to the group at the time of the meeting, which usually lasts about two hours. The meeting is run by a professional facilitator trained to work with focus groups. The meeting is viewed behind a one way mirror, and also taped for future analysis. The group is told this in advance, and they quickly learn to ignore these facts as long as they are told them at the beginning of the session. I believe the most successful approach is to use the services of an outside marketing research organization with experience in finding representative people. For example, if the agency wants feedback on proposed software, or to determine how easy it is to fill out a questionnaire, or a critique of promotional material, a focus group setting is ideal. Indeed, a series of focus groups might be better where different user communities are represented each time. There's nothing statistical about these groups, in the sense that the agency can make inferences about the overall population. However, the group setting almost always generates new ideas, and at the very least will almost always uncover flaws in the agency's plans.

There are times that major decisions about user needs calls for more wide spread market research. The agency can conduct such research using its customers lists, and developing a questionnaire sent to a sample of users. Customer lists can be supplemented with lists from trade associations, universities, and mailing list companies. This type of research, which is almost always very expensive, is only justified in the situation where there is a major change in current procedures, or the agency is developing a new program. In Appendix A is a copy of a draft questionnaire I helped develop for the National Statistical Committee of Kyrgyzstan to evaluate their 1999 Census of Population. This questionnaire is based on similar questionnaires used by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Another approach might be for the agency to consider setting up town meetings to get the advice of data users at the local level. This also enables the agency to meet people beyond the walls of the bureaucracy and discover how important its information is. Indeed, throughout this discussion, the ultimate objective is to breach the walls between the producing agency and the outside user. Shifting from a producer mentality to a mix of producer-user thinking will always lead to a better product.

Internal market research within the agency is also needed to improve your knowledge of your ability to meet the needs of your customers. Data from an internal survey will enable the agency to better understand basic strengths and weaknesses with regards to those items that are critical in developing an overall marketing strategy. I suggest that the following information be collected:

1) Statistical:

- * Are the censuses and surveys of sufficient statistical reliability that they are of use to potential customers?
- * What are the measures for statistical and non-statistical error?
- * What are the response rates for both censuses and surveys?
- * How current are the data?
- * What is the frequency of collection?
- * What are the levels of detail for geography and item classification?
- * What are the current confidentiality rules?

2) Production

- * What are the types of media available to the agency (e.g. paper, tape, CD-ROM, Internet)?
- * What is the usual turnaround for production of information?
- * Are the production capabilities in-house or contracted?
- * Who is responsible for production?
- * What are the current geographic information system capabilities?

3) Marketing Capabilities

- * Current customer types and knowledge of potential markets.
- * Ability to service customers and/or answer general questions.
- * Current pricing strategies.
- * Current outreach and promotion strategies.
- * Current staff devoted to or involved in marketing.
- * Current legislative limitations on marketing.
- * Readiness to develop new marketing strategies.
- * Readiness to form partnerships with third parties.
- * The current marketing plan.

Confidentiality and Data Limitations vs. User Needs

At present, there is a major debate taking place at the U.S. Census Bureau. Basically, the question comes down to how to best balance user needs and at the same time insure individual confidentiality. The current method of insuring confidentiality is through data item switching for individual census records. The vast majority of data, therefore, are what was originally filled out. However, in some cases, some information for one household has been substituted with the data from another household. This worked quite well in 1990, and the approach was repeated for the 2000 Census. With the introduction of the Internet, however, the Census Bureau is faced with another problem.

As mentioned previously, users would have to gain access to the entire file in order to tabulate customized cross-tabulations. The problem now becomes one of first developing one in-depth tabulation for a small area of geography and then developing the almost exact table but changing one of the criteria only very slightly. For example, a table might be constructed for a set of socio-economic variables such as age, by sex, by race, by income, for a small geographic area. Another table could then be constructed with only changing one variable slightly, let us say one age group. If the second table is subtracted from the first, would it then be possible to figure out the identity of any one individual or household? The alternative is to only allow the user to gain access to geographies so large that whatever table is developed will still have enough cells in it to insure confidentiality.

I don't think there's any easy answer to the above problem, and neither does the Census Bureau. Indeed, upon experimentation the ability to disclose individuals might never occur. However, should the Census Bureau still take the chance, especially when the political fallout can be very harmful? Ultimately, what the Census Bureau must do is make the rationales for its disclosure decisions clear to the users. Over the years, the user communities have complained about what was perceived as overly conservative disclosure limitations put on data series. They have managed to use the data anyway. From the Census Bureau's perspective, what was important was to simultaneously maintain confidentiality along with publically explaining what it did.

In the United States there's the phrase "data take on a life of their own." It's one way of saying that once the data are available, they are used as if they have no statistical

error or other limitations. There is no doubt that there is nothing that can really be done about this problem. Statistical literacy has never been widespread in the United States no matter how hard agencies try to show what the data are really saying. One could argue that it's the right of every citizen in a free society to misuse information.

Even though the above might be true, the agencies still have the responsibility to give the user as much information about what the data mean, and the limits of reliability. This includes the basic documentation of how the data were collected, the errors (statistical and non-statistical) associated with the figures, and the metadata showing how the data fit with other data series. This responsibility is heightened with the advent of the Internet. Footnotes in paper products are difficult to miss if placed properly. The user always knows they are there, and must make a conscious decision not to look at them. On the Internet, the issue is different. Most systems enable the user to gain access to the footnotes if they wish. However, they don't automatically pop-up. With the lack of paper products produced for the decennial census in the United States the need for automatic footnotes are essential. I have yet to see what the Census Bureau will do about this.

The Needs of the Private Sector

Users of Basic Data

One example of a basic user of official statistics is a local newspaper. In my experience we found three types of use. First, when data were initially released by a federal agency, the newspaper wished to highlight the local area at the city county, and metropolitan levels. This was done for more than one local area, usually to make comparisons for readers. The second use was as a leave behind for promotional purposes. The data were given away to show strong a market they were in. This in turn was used by the retailer in their presentations to their parent companies. The third use was to advertise the strength of the paper in competition to other markets and against other media. Usually this is in the form of both data and rankings. A paper will always find some series where they rank at or near the top. Another example are local development organizations that uses the data as profiles to highlight the positive aspects of the local area.

Power Users

The decision processes to allocate sales quotas, change the structure of sales quotas, determine where to open new establishments, hire and/or fire sales people based upon performance call for data from both internal and external sources. For sophisticated marketer, these decisions are rarely made simply using the data from the previous year

and extrapolating. Reports rely upon a combination of what's happening in the market place along with comparative data within the company. Sometimes the best salesperson is not the one bringing in the most sales. How service and sales are combined, whether territories have been updated regularly, the existence of special accounts, training, all play a role. Therefore, even with the power user, the Census data are only one input of many.

Data Vendors

In the United States, the data vendor has tended to act in the role of advertiser of the availability of federal statistical data. The prices charged by agencies in the United States are so low that it doesn't pay to purchase raw data from a vendor. Instead value must be added. This is usually in the form of updating the information, repackaging the data to make it more usable, adding features such as geographic information systems to the package, combining one data series with external information such as client data to give the information more relevance and yield an analytical report, combining the data with other U.S. federal statistical agency information to give a more complete picture, and developing new types of data series from the basic U.S. federal statistical agency information.

Looking back at Exhibit C one sees that in 1997 Sales & Marketing Management accomplished a number of the above concepts. First, the population, income and trade data are all shown together on the same page. Second, the data are updated to the current year. Third, data are combined using indexes such as the Buying Power Index where percentages of total population, income and retail trade are weighted together to give an overall weight for the area.

How the Private Sector Helps Solve a Sales Allocation Problem

In Exhibit E, we've developed a simple analysis that shows how information from an agency can be combined with a company's sales data to yield an analysis of sales performance. As shown in the report, some of the SPAR Corporation's sales people are not performing up to par. This can be determined by simply dividing the percentage of actual sales by the percentage expected sales, which in this case is the Buying Power Index. Sales opportunity can then be calculated by dividing actual sales by the Performance Index for those areas below 1.00 and subtracting actual sales from the derived figure. Although the analysis is simple, and there are many factors that go into determining what constitutes a good sales territory, the data certainly aid the manager in evaluating performance.

An example of the development of an entire new data series as an outgrowth of census

data, is seen in Exhibit F. Using cluster analysis, Claritas Company has combined vast amount of data for small geographic areas such as postal delivery areas and developed new geographies that they call cluster areas. Each of these areas is basically statistically independent of any of the others based upon the demographic and socio-economic characteristics that go into their development. This enables the user to target their specific product to the geographic areas that best match the life style that the marketer wants to reach. If the marketer plans to send information via the mail, millions of dollars can be saved in postage by only mailing to those areas that match the perceived product profile.

The above examples show that vendors understand that in order to stay in business they have to have their own special approach to data dissemination. As shown in Exhibit G, the vendor has to develop a wide range of services. Merely reselling census or census-related data can only be a small part of any business, and will disappear as the data age. Therefore, the vendor, rather than being a competitor, often ends up becoming a sort of ambassador by highlighting the importance of federal statistical agency data in developing their own products.

The Need For Trained Personnel

Should a statistical agency have someone trained in marketing on its staff? Or, is the marketing function one that can be accomplished by someone not trained in marketing? In my experience those involved in outreach are very different from those who, for example, are involved in statistical analysis. Marketing calls, in my opinion, for a different mind set. There is a science to good marketing. Promotion, public relations, packaging, market research, and sales, for example, are processes that require training. For some nations without a lot of resources this becomes a circular problem. Without professional marketing it's difficult to raise funds from the sales of products. However, the initial funds aren't available to develop a professional marketing process. The first step is to find people interested in the marketing function. To accomplish finding these people, the statistical agency may have to reach out beyond the current personnel. Some countries have universities with either marketing departments, or at least some courses in marketing. Others, have yet to address marketing as a science. If training capabilities do not exist within the statistical agency, or perhaps not even within the country, then I suggest looking to federal statistical agencies from other countries that might be of help. I do not think there are currently specific internships for the marketing function from organizations such as the ESCWA, OECD, Eurostat, or even the U.S. Census Bureau. Although there are many papers, and symposia on marketing, I'm not aware of statistical agencies sending experts to countries specifically to train local personnel in marketing. I suggest these

organizations think about developing training programs for marketing federal statistical agency data. I also suggest that statistical agencies in countries that are beginning the processes to market statistical information begin searching for these avenues of support.

Appendix A

[DRAFT] Survey of Users of 1999 Census of Population Data

1. **How did you find out about the availability of this report?**
 - 9 Received unsolicited copy from the National Statistical Committee.
 - 9 Read advertisement in the newspaper.
 - 9 Saw press conference on television.
 - 9 Other, please specify below:

2. **Which language version of this report did you find most useful?**
 Russian
 Kyrgyz
 English
3. **What general topics in this report are most useful to you?**
 Gender
 Income
 Family characteristics
4. On what additional topics do you need information?
 Price indices
 Imports and exports
 Education
 Other, please specify below:

5. **Do you use other report series from the National Statistical Office?**
 No
 Yes. Please check all that apply.
 Monthly report on
- Quarterly report on
- Annual report on etc.
6. **If these data were made available in other media, please indicate how useful the media would be.**
- | | Very useful | Useful | Not useful |
|----------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| CD-ROM | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| DVD | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Internet | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Diskette | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
7. **We plan to release additional reports from the 1999 Population Census over the next 12 months. Would you like to be notified when these reports are available?**

- 9 Yes
- 9 No

8. Please indicate which of the following best characterizes your organization.

- 9 Kyrgyz National Government
- 9 Oblast government
- 9 Academic institution
- 9 International organization
- 9 Embassy
- 9 Financial Institution
- 9 Media
- 9 Business, please specify: _____ -
- 9 Other, please specify: _____.

9. Please provide your name, address, phone number and e-mail address so that we may notify you when reports are released.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail address: _____