'panoramic' research." This report also expresses, as do many other business users of consumer expenditure data, the need for continuing expenditure survey data, i.e. panel surveys.[14]

CONSUMER SERVICE USES

The use of consumer expenditure survey data by family counsellors and by families themselves, as guides for appraising family spending and to improve family financial practices, is probably as old as the surveys themselves. (One of the early BLS studies gathered information on the cleanliness and neatness of the home.) The data have been used in unnumber books and articles on the general and specific aspects of careful spending. The most recent such publication by a Federal Government agency is "Helping Families Manage Their Finances" by the Agricultural Research Service.[15]

However, until recently, this use could hardly have been considered a "marketing" use, although for many years research departments of life insurance companies, household lending organizations, and banks have used the data in their operations and publications. During the past year, the computer and publication of the 1960–61 survey data in considerable detail for various types of families have transformed these spending guides into a marketed service. Such a service called "Family Money Profile," was initiated in 1966 by the Pittsburgh National Bank. Families are invited to fill out a confidential application which give monthly income, age, family size, and occupation.

Based on the BLS consumer expenditure survey averages and spending patterns for similar families in the Pittsburgh area, a computer analysis prepares a guide to spending and saving for the individual family.[16]

In the April 1967 issue of "Changing Times," The Kiplinger Magazine initiated a similar service on a nationwide basis.[17] Upon receipt of the completed questionnaire, the 1960–61 published survey data, sorted to match the applicants characteristics, are converted into a "Spending Yardstick" by which the family can compare its spending pattern with the average for similar families. The charge for this service is $1.75. After 6 days, returns were being received at the rate of 1000 per day. One request was from the sales manager of a small concern, asking if he could have 150 copies of the questionnaire for distribution to employees as part of the company's consumer education program. He indicated that the company would bear the cost of the service as a "fringe benefit."

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF CES DATA FOR MARKET USES

Those of us who have struggled with the problems of collecting, processing, and interpreting consumer expenditure survey data realize the strains that uses, such as those which I have just described, place on data. We are often concerned that these sample survey data, designed primarily for the development of consumer price indexes, standard budgets, and analyses of levels and standards of living, may be inappropriate for many of the uses to which they are put. On the other hand, we are constantly reminded of the inadequacy of data sources on consumer spending otherwise available to the business community and agree that maximum use should be made of data collected at public expense.

The advantages, as I see them, of the Federal consumer expenditure survey data for marketing and general business use are as follow:

(1) The consumer expenditure surveys are unique in that they provide complete and detailed information on expenditures, incomes and changes in assets and liabilities in relation to a great variety of socioeconomic characteristics of families and for many localities, including classifications based on spending for related or competing goods and services. As levels and standards of living and spending habits change, the expenditure data, even though not on a continuing basis, are a unique source of data for

---

[14] For a discussion of this need, see "Improved Statistics for Economic Growth—A Compendium of Views and Suggestions From Individuals, Organizations, and Statistics Users" and "Comments by Government Agencies on Views" (p. 46), Subcommittee on Economic Statistics, Joint Economic Committee, 89th Congress of the United States, U.S. Government Printing Office, July 1965 and March 1966.

[15] "Helping Families Manage Their Finances," Home Economics Research Report 21, Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C., June 1963. See also, "Socioeconomic Research Abstract Series of the Home Economics Education Service," Miscellaneous 2230–3, U.S. Office of Education, September 1940.

[16] "Family Money Profile," a news release; "How to Manage Your Money to Get More Out of Life"; and "Record Book for Thousandaires"; Public Relations Department, Pittsburgh National Bank, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 1966.

[17] "Check Up on Your Family Spending," in *Changing Times*, April 1967, pp. 48–49.