
The Economic Census has the daunting task of describing the activities of 21 million businesses and nearly 1,100 industries. 1997 Economic Census products will tell us what those businesses produce or sell, where they are located, and the markets they serve. The result is a vital information resource for both government and business.

We hope you find this special issue of the *Government Information Quarterly* both interesting and illuminating. The Census Bureau is especially grateful to all the U.S. businesses who took the time and effort to complete and return their 1997 Economic Census report forms.

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