



Dear Company Official:

I am writing to ask that your company provide sales for the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MARTS). This is a voluntary monthly retail survey from the U.S. Census Bureau. Aggregated information published from this survey is released in the Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services report, which is a highly anticipated and critically important principal economic indicator of consumer spending. The survey results are used by public policymakers and private decision makers as one of our country's most important measures of economic performance and well-being.

The Administration and Congressional policymakers rely on monthly retail trend data from this survey for making budgetary decisions and policy decisions. The Federal Reserve System relies on these statistics for formulating sound monetary policy. In addition, these data provide vital input to the widely used estimates of the Gross Domestic Product. Businesses, like yours, combine internal company data with these publicly provided statistics to make sales projections and investment decisions.

I understand that you currently participate in the Monthly Retail Trade Survey. Participating in MARTS means that we will be asking you to provide sales data earlier in the month. If you currently report inventory information to us, you will receive two forms: (1) the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Report form to report sales and (2) the Monthly Retail Trade Report form to report inventories. Otherwise, you will only receive the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Report form requesting sales.

The information you provide is kept confidential by law, and is seen only by sworn Census Bureau employees with a work-related need-to-know. This information cannot be disclosed for any purpose, including taxation, regulation, or investigation. The same law mandates that we only use your information to develop summary reports that do not reveal information about your company.

Each month, fax your completed form by the due date printed on the form. Our 24-hour toll-free fax number is (800) 447-4613. Starting next month, we may fax your initial report form. If you prefer to be contacted by mail or phone instead of fax, please call (800) 772-7852 between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time, to speak with a Census Bureau representative. Please visit our website at <http://www.census.gov/retail> for more information, including Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey results.

An accurate report needs broad participation. I appreciate that completing any report takes time and thought. I urge you to consider participation both a public service and long-term investment in sound economic policy and informed business decisionmaking. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

MARK E. WALLACE
Chief, Service Sector Statistics Division
U.S. Census Bureau

Enclosures