

# Business Research

Bureaus of business research were a natural outgrowth of the development of university business schools and colleges. With the rapid expansion of business and the growing complexities of large scale production since the turn of the century, businessmen must be trained if they are to fully understand the business world and take advantage of the increased knowledge. As a means to this end, business schools and colleges were started.

One of the first things these institutions learned was that if they were to render the services for which they were formed, they had to keep in contact with the business world. They had to have a working-ground, not only to improve ways and means of keeping up to date on new methods and procedures, but also to participate in advancing such measures. It was in this light that business bureaus were conceived. In a sense they can be likened to research laboratories in the field of medicine; they serve as a bridge to keep education and practice in balance and at the same time increase the know-how of both.

Today these bureaus have reached a stage in their development which justifies recognition not only to reward them for past achievements but also to make the public aware of the research data they make available. The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta is pleased to call attention to the twelve bureaus in the Sixth District states and to the type of research they engage in, as well as to point out some of the contributions they have made.

Since 1929 when the first bureau in the area originated, the growth in number of agencies and in work completed has been steady and achievements have been noteworthy. The twelve bureaus existing today seem to be fairly uniform in purpose and function. In general, they were started as service agencies for the state governments and for citizens and business groups in the surrounding areas. The service function, however, did not always develop in the same way. In some instances, college faculty members felt they had information that would interest the public, and bureaus were formed as a means of centralizing and publishing that information. In other cases, bureaus were developed in response to requests for information from outside organizations.

The bureaus now have a unique and important role in the modern economy. They provide specialized services, such as compiling and publishing local statistics and making special studies of local conditions either for the general public or for specific groups. They also serve as collection agencies for other research organizations that publish data for larger geographical areas.

In the county and in the small community, the bureau is frequently the only source of certain information. Data on retail sales, employment, bank debits, building permits, and the like, useful in determining sales potentials of a given area, are available upon request. Interesting articles on local problems and developments are also prepared by competent staffs at the business bureaus and chambers of commerce and are circulated throughout the entire country.

Usually, the people who conduct or supervise the projects at the bureaus are professors at the business school or are experts hired by the bureau. Being apart from the business world and a part of an educational institution, they are generally responsible and unbiased, and can be relied upon to safeguard the confidential information they receive. They have therefore gained the respect and cooperation of the reporting firms and organizations. As a result the statistical series they publish cover a period of time, which enhances their usefulness.

As part of an educational system however, the bureaus are confronted with many problems that universities and colleges face. For one thing, they often do not have sufficient funds for clerical personnel or facilities to conduct independent research. As a result they are inclined to resort to contract research for particular firms, agencies, or groups and neglect studies of general interest. They have been fairly successful, however, in striking a balance between contract and independent research, and in some cases they have used funds obtained from contract studies to help finance public projects.

Following is a brief description of the bureaus in the Sixth District states, the method by which they accomplish their purposes, and their latest publications. Copies of these publications and of other articles and releases are available upon request to the bureaus.

## Bureau of Business Research

H. H. Chapman, *Acting Director*  
University of Alabama, University, Alabama

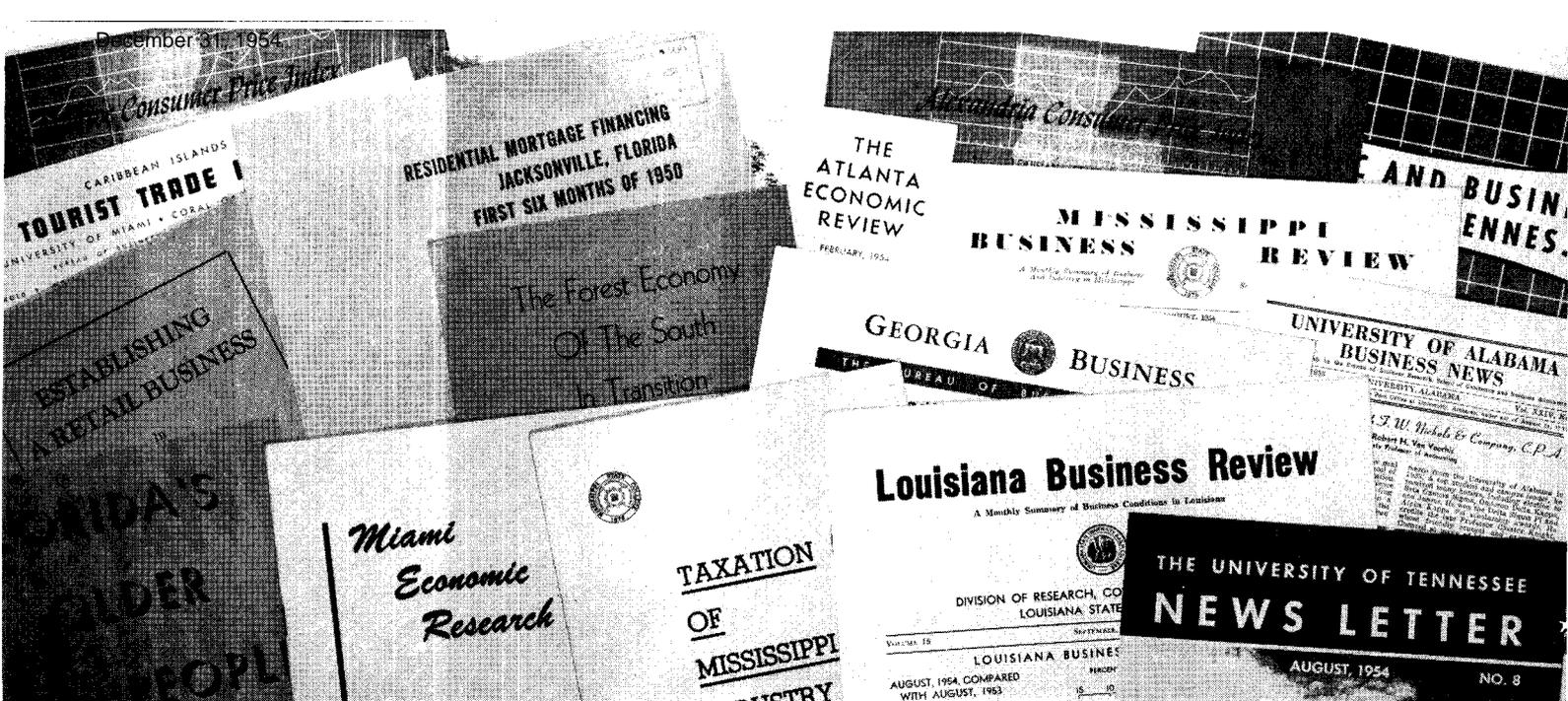
The School of Commerce and Business Administration established the bureau in 1930 for the purpose of making studies of economic and business conditions of the state and publishing certain data. The bureau publishes two monthly periodicals: *Business News* contains short articles on university and economic events and statistics and related discussions on industry, construction, employment, trade, finance, and the like for the state and selected cities. *Retail Trade Report* gives a comprehensive review of retail sales in selected counties and cities.

The bureau also prepares noteworthy articles covering studies made for specific organizations as well as those made for the general public. Among the special projects are studies on the economic potentials of Mobile and Gardo, Alabama. Studies of a more general type include the iron and steel industries of the South, the insurance business in Alabama, county income estimates, and the structure of manufacturing in Alabama.

## Bureau of Economic and Business Research

George B. Hurff, *Director*  
University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida

To further the understanding of the economy of the South and that of Florida, the bureau was established in 1929. Although it does not publish a periodic summary of business conditions in the state, it does research on economic



and business developments. Some of these results are published monthly in *Economic Leaflets*, which covers such subjects as the electric power industry in Florida, commercial banking, and the guaranteed annual wage. Separate studies published are *Income Payments to Individuals in Florida Counties, 1950*, and *Florida's Older People*, and an analysis of the Jacksonville mortgage market. Others dealt with industrial location, retail and wholesale and service trades.

Bureau of Business and Economic Research  
 Reinhold P. Wolff, *Director*  
 University of Miami, Coral Gables 46, Florida

Authorities at the university established the bureau in 1950 to undertake research in applied economics, marketing, population, housing, and other areas of the social sciences. In the quarterly *Miami Economic Research* the bureau publishes selected business indicators by month, such as real estate sales, employment, electricity sales, and airline passengers for the Dade County area; a few of the indicators, however, cover a smaller area. The bulletin also carries articles on current business. Monthly publications are *Food Cost Index* for the Miami area, *Greater Miami Tourist Trade Index*, and *Tourist Trade Index for the Caribbean Islands*.

Active in special research, the bureau has undertaken a study on contract with the Housing and Home Finance Agency of housing trends in 75 areas. A study on farming prospects in the Everglades, a survey on the housing market in Jacksonville, and a market survey of Hollywood, Florida, were completed recently.

Bureau of Business Research  
 John P. Gill, *Director*  
 The University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia

In order to disseminate economic data for Georgians and to provide a service to the business community, the College of Business Administration organized the bureau in 1929. The monthly publication *Georgia Business*, in addition to

presenting articles on general business topics, gives statistics on retail sales by type for the state and selected cities. The articles cover advertising, air freight, sales supervision, construction, and many other topics. Published separately are papers on such problems as county government financial conditions and the role of state governments in the marketing and merchandising of industrial products. A revised edition of the *Georgia Statistical Abstract* is to be published shortly.

Division of Research  
 Paul H. Rigby, *Chairman*  
 University of Georgia, Atlanta Division, Atlanta, Ga.

This division began in 1951 as the Council on Economic Research with two broad objectives: to encourage faculty research and to serve the Atlanta area and the South by collecting and disseminating business and economic data and ideas. The *Atlanta Economic Review*, a monthly publication, presents selected data on current business conditions in Atlanta and Georgia and carries articles of general interest on business developments and problems. Recent articles dealt with the legislative regulation of business in Georgia, high price of coffee, and development associations. Statistics cover such segments as employment, construction, finance, and trade.

Results of special studies published by the division have received nationwide recognition. Recently, cooperating members of the faculty completed a study on a large department store in Atlanta and an income payments study for Atlanta and Georgia.

Division of Research  
 P. Francis Boyer, *Director*  
 Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Although the history of this organization dates back to about 1930, the division was not officially established until 1936, when the University supplied the necessary funds for operations. It has been active in compiling and publishing periodic business data and in conducting studies

for government agencies and many business organizations.

The *Louisiana Business Review* presents monthly summary data on different aspects of the state economy such as agriculture, construction, finance, manufacturing, and retail trade. Much of the information given is also for local areas. The *Consumer Price Index* is published quarterly for New Orleans and semi-annually for Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, Monroe, and Shreveport.

In addition to these periodicals, the division publishes results of special studies undertaken and sometimes initiated by faculty members. Recent studies cover the industrial tax exemption program in the state and an analysis of life insurance contracts. Earlier studies dealt with estimates of income payments by parishes and also union-management contract agreements.

#### Division of Economic and Business Research

Frank L. Keller, *Director*

The Tulane University of Louisiana, New Orleans, La.

The University reactivated the division in 1948 to stimulate interest in economic and business research. The division has no periodicals, but it issues much material on specialized research. Some projects were instigated by members of the faculty; others were requested by business firms. Recently completed were a community survey for Houma, Louisiana, and a few studies on establishing certain new businesses in New Orleans. Projects underway cover capital accumulation in the South and the development of economic relationships between the south central United States and South America and Africa.

#### Business Research Station

Robert C. Weems, Jr., *Dean*

Mississippi State College, State College, Mississippi

This college started its research activities in 1939. The major objective was to engage in business, social and economic research that would aid private industry and state and local governments. The *Mississippi Business Review* covers such subjects as banking and finance, industry, manufacturing, and construction in the state and in districts of the state. The *Mississippi Statistical Abstract* carries biennial summaries. In conjunction with the Social Science Research Center, which is also part of the School of Business and Industry, the station publishes many special projects. Recent studies covered hospital facilities in Mississippi, the forest economy of the South, taxation of Mississippi industry, county development programs, methods of establishing a retail business in the state, and working forces in selected industrial plants.

#### Bureau of Business Research

Robert B. Highsaw, *Director*

University of Mississippi, University, Mississippi

In 1942 the bureau was established to conduct research in business and economics with special emphasis on the problems and needs of Mississippi. Since 1947 it has been a part of the Department of Research in Business and Public Administration. Although the bureau does not publish a monthly statistical release, it does issue *Mississippi's Business* monthly, which is primarily concerned with cur-

rent economic and business topics. Tax burdens by state, changes in living standards, and purchasing power in Mississippi counties were subjects recently covered. The business indicators are published for the state only and include construction, public finance, bank debits, department store sales, and cotton spinning activity.

Some of the recent contract studies are *Economic Patterns in Pontotoc County, Mississippi*. Similar studies were completed for Heidelberg, Laurel, and Natchez. Studies of general interest include *Income Payments to Mississippians: County Estimates, 1939, 1947, and 1950*. The bureau has also completed many projects for state agencies and has served as a consulting agency for local organizations.

#### Bureau of Research

Charles P. White, *Director*

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee

The bureau was organized in 1937 to make surveys and conduct research for various public and private groups. It does not publish indexes on business conditions, but it does supply much of the statistical data that are contained in the *University Business Bulletin*. The *News Letter*, published quarterly by the College of Business Administration, contains data on construction, finance, employment, agriculture, retail sales, and production. These items are usually given for the state but some are on a county level. Recently, the bureau published economic development studies on three cities and also released projects on taxes. The latest publication was a comprehensive treatment of state economic and business statistics from 1935 to 1953.

#### Social Science Institute

Fisk University, Nashville 8, Tennessee

Fisk University has a Social Science Institute, rather than a bureau of business research, which sponsors and conducts research in the social sciences, particularly those concerned with racial problems. Faculty members of the university also conduct independent research. At present they are completing *The New Negro Market*, which covers the sources and uses of income, buying power, savings and investments, and occupational status as well as attitudes toward advertising. Neither the institute nor the Department of Economics and Business Administration compiles general business data.

#### Institute of Research and Training in the Social Sciences

George W. Stocking, *Director*

Vanderbilt University, Nashville 5, Tennessee

With the aid of a foundation grant, the institute was established in 1940 to encourage research by individual staff members in the social sciences, to assist in the publication of the results of their studies, and to train graduate students who receive research assistantships from the institute.

The institute does not publish indexes or other periodical data, but does publish results of special studies, most of which are originated by faculty members. Its accomplishments include *Wages, Earnings, and Employment; N. C. and St. L. Railway, 1866-1896*; and *Street Address Coding Guide for Census Tracts of Nashville, Tennessee*.

CHARLES S. OVERMILLER