Sources of Estimation Data
1. Company’s Own Cost Data From Previous Projects

- **Advantages**
  - It reflects quality and productivity of its own equipment and crews.
  - It reflects company’s management system and construction methods.

- **Limitations**
  - Accurate field information should be collected and updated.
## Company's Historical Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Div.</th>
<th>Work Desc.</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Avg.</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Site work</td>
<td>sf</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Excavation</td>
<td>cy</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>4.57</td>
<td>4.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Formwork</td>
<td>sfca</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Reinforcement</td>
<td>lb</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Masonry (...)</td>
<td>sf</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>6.21</td>
<td>7.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SOURCE OF COST DATA (Cont.)

2. Commercial cost books

- published and updated periodically
- contain specifications, labor rates, labor productivity, prices, photos, calculations, etc.

The most common references are:

- **Means Building Construction Cost Data**, R.S. Means Company
- **Walker Building Estimator’s Reference Book**, Frank R. Walker Company
Limitations of Commercial Cost Books

- They represent composite data (average of many projects)
- They fail to recognize technological changes
- There is a reporting time lag.
SOURCE OF COST DATA (Cont.)

3. Published Data

- These guides are valuable to estimators who do not have access to actual job records.

- Vendor's Data
  - information published by the manufacturer or distributor which usually gives the unique features and specifications relating to the product
  - e.g. Sweet's catalog

- Periodicals
  - gives various construction cost indices for all cities all over North America.
  - e.g. Engineering News Records (ENR)

DR. Nabil Dmaidi
4. **Prototype Modeling**
   - Build a model for unique work where no published literature is available,
   - examples: spread concrete on an airfield parking ramp or mock up for building facade

5. **Professional Associations**
   - American Association of Cost Engineering AACE
   - National Estimating Society

*Seminars, training organizations, publications*
6. Previous Bid Tabulations

- Available from previous bid openings (public works)
- Generally, limited to the lowest three bidders