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ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES October 2005

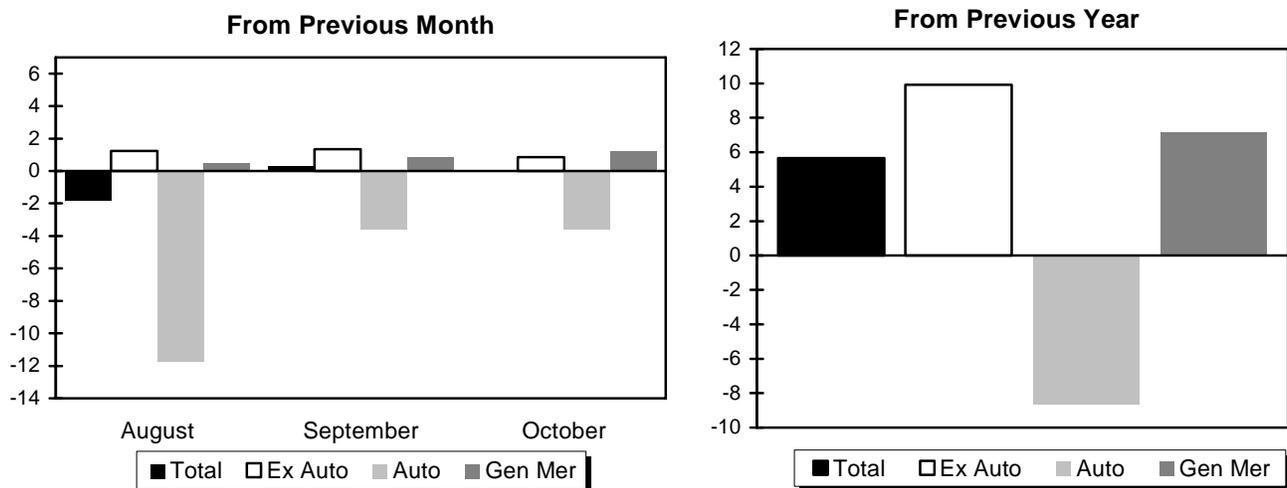
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for October, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$351.6 billion, a decrease of 0.1 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* from the previous month, but up 5.7 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from October 2004. Total sales for the August through October 2005 period were up 6.8 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The August to September 2005 percent change was revised from +0.2 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* to +0.3 percent ($\pm 0.2\%$).

Retail trade sales were down 0.2 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$)* from September, but were up 5.5 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$) above last year. Gasoline station sales were up 27.1 percent ($\pm 3.3\%$) from October 2004 and sales of building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers were up 13.1 percent ($\pm 2.0\%$) from last year.

The advance estimates are based on a subsample of the Census Bureau's full retail and food services sample. A stratified random sampling method is used to select approximately 5,000 retail and food services firms whose sales are then weighted and benchmarked to represent the complete universe of over three million retail and food services firms. Responding firms account for approximately 65% of the MARTS dollar volume estimate. For an explanation of the measures of sampling variability included in this report, please see the Reliability of Estimates section on the last page of this publication.

Percent Change in Retail and Food Services Sales

(Estimates adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes)



The Advance Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services for November is scheduled to be released December 13, 2005 at 8:30 a.m. EST.

For information, visit the Census Bureau's Web site at <<http://www.census.gov/retail>>. This report is also available the day of issue through the Department of Commerce's STAT-USA (202-482-1986).

* The 90 percent confidence interval includes zero. The Census Bureau does not have sufficient statistical evidence to conclude that the actual change is different from zero.

Table 1. Estimated Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services, by Kind of Business

(Total sales estimates are shown in millions of dollars and are based on data from the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, Monthly Retail Trade Survey, and administrative records.)

NAICS ¹ code	Kind of Business	Not Adjusted							Adjusted ²				
		10 Month Total		2005			2004		2005			2004	
		2005	% Chg. 2004	Oct. ³ (a)	Sept. (p)	Aug. (r)	Oct.	Sept.	Oct. ³ (a)	Sept. (p)	Aug. (r)	Oct. (r)	Sept. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	3,414,156	7.4	343,963	342,347	364,805	325,699	319,134	351,561	351,777	350,742	332,693	329,876
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	2,640,329	8.3	279,803	270,851	281,065	255,412	243,939	281,860	279,462	275,739	256,411	253,770
	Retail	3,076,414	7.5	309,066	308,630	329,580	292,750	287,953	317,010	317,547	316,807	300,390	297,797
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	82,400	89,201	82,355	77,389	(*)	89,683	89,148	85,236	84,572
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	773,827	4.4	64,160	71,496	83,740	70,287	75,195	69,701	72,315	75,003	76,282	76,106
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	713,023	4.1	58,022	65,443	77,115	64,602	69,591	63,551	66,238	68,914	70,603	70,508
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	53,941	63,587	54,522	59,517	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,053	6,625	5,685	5,604	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	87,757	5.2	9,438	9,271	9,622	8,699	8,413	9,466	9,403	9,252	8,682	8,611
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,088	5,209	4,756	4,587	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,183	4,413	3,943	3,826	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	76,884	5.9	7,718	7,799	8,354	7,250	7,293	8,503	8,467	8,374	7,931	7,955
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,242	6,734	5,746	5,712	(*)	6,905	6,795	6,377	6,382
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,557	1,620	1,504	1,581	(*)	1,562	1,579	1,554	1,573
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	278,866	9.6	29,408	28,685	29,642	25,775	26,028	28,906	28,298	27,826	25,550	25,769
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,146	26,854	23,246	23,664	(*)	25,068	24,614	22,503	22,754
445	Food & beverage stores	429,375	4.8	44,006	43,494	44,103	41,835	41,016	44,492	44,169	43,895	41,919	41,812
4451	Grocery stores	385,682	4.4	39,358	38,968	39,519	37,657	36,989	39,715	39,481	39,283	37,657	37,590
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,850	2,853	2,712	2,599	(*)	2,882	2,856	2,701	2,668
446	Health & personal care stores	179,083	6.2	18,258	17,813	18,342	17,016	16,537	18,555	18,478	18,269	17,293	17,226
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	15,189	15,623	14,662	14,227	(*)	15,724	15,654	14,810	14,758
447	Gasoline stations	323,284	21.7	37,163	37,237	37,184	29,329	27,083	35,768	36,047	34,303	28,147	26,526
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	152,788	5.8	16,673	15,015	16,751	15,558	14,209	17,212	16,693	16,748	16,154	15,852
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	722	842	811	707	(*)	808	831	804	793
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,988	2,891	3,011	2,795	(*)	3,139	3,119	3,005	2,939
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,674	6,475	6,084	5,360	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,872	2,383	1,894	1,793	(*)	2,053	2,021	1,994	1,972
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	61,591	1.4	5,921	6,338	7,389	5,978	6,246	6,782	6,743	6,810	6,709	6,716
452	General merchandise stores	415,198	6.3	44,578	40,656	43,461	41,707	38,074	45,556	45,027	44,651	42,529	42,196
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	162,600	-0.4	17,407	15,468	17,155	17,447	16,006	17,904	17,641	17,743	18,004	18,042
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	15,619	17,317	17,654	16,199	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	25,188	26,306	24,260	22,068	(*)	27,386	26,908	24,525	24,154
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	22,003	23,069	21,013	19,108	(*)	23,890	23,468	21,225	20,883
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,185	3,237	3,247	2,960	(*)	3,496	3,440	3,300	3,271
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	91,963	5.8	9,267	9,518	9,768	8,997	8,777	9,508	9,611	9,395	9,088	9,009
454	Nonstore retailers	205,798	11.8	22,476	21,308	21,224	20,319	19,082	22,561	22,296	22,281	20,106	20,019
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	13,270	13,801	12,516	11,926	(*)	13,837	13,912	12,579	12,501
722	Food services & drinking places ...	337,742	6.8	34,897	33,717	35,225	32,949	31,181	34,551	34,230	33,935	32,303	32,079

(*) Advance estimates are not available for this kind of business.

(NA) Not available. (a) Advance estimate. (p) Preliminary estimate. (r) Revised estimate.

(1) For a full description of the NAICS codes used in this table, see <http://www.census.gov/epcd/www/naics.html>

(2) Estimates are concurrently adjusted for seasonal variation and for holiday and trading day differences, but not for price changes. Concurrent seasonal adjustment uses all available unadjusted estimates as input to the X-12 ARIMA program. The factors derived from the program are used in calculating all seasonally adjusted estimates shown in this table. Year-to-date seasonally adjusted sales estimates are not tabulated. Adjustment factors and explanatory material can be found on the Internet at <http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/mrts.html>

(3) Advance estimates are based on early reports obtained from a small sample of firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS) sample. All other estimates are from the MRTS sample

(4) GAFO represents firms which specialize in department store types of merchandise and is comprised of furniture & home furnishings (442), electronics & appliances (443), clothing & accessories (448), sporting goods, hobby, book, and music (451), general merchandise (452), office supply, stationery, and gift stores (4532).

(5) Estimates include data for leased departments operated within department stores. Data for this line are not included in broader kind-of-business totals.

Note: Table 3 provides estimated measures of sampling variability. Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/mrts.html>

Table 2. Estimated Change in Monthly Sales for Retail and Food Services, by Kind of Business

(Estimates are shown as percents and are based on data from the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey, Monthly Retail Trade Survey, and administrative records.)

NAICS code	Kind of Business	Percent Change ¹					
		Oct. 2005 Advance from --		Sept. 2005 Preliminary from --		Aug. 2005 through Oct. 2005 from --	
		Sept. 2005 (p)	Oct. 2004 (r)	Aug. 2005 (r)	Sept. 2004 (r)	May 2005 through Jul. 2005	Aug. 2004 through Oct. 2004
	Retail & food services,						
	total	-0.1	5.7	0.3	6.6	0.1	6.8
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	0.9	9.9	1.4	10.1	3.1	9.9
	Retail	-0.2	5.5	0.2	6.6	-0.1	6.8
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-3.6	-8.6	-3.6	-5.0	-10.3	-3.6
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-4.1	-10.0	-3.9	-6.1	-11.3	-4.6
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	0.7	9.0	1.6	9.2	3.9	8.3
443	Electronics & appliance stores	0.4	7.2	1.1	6.4	1.7	6.7
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	2.1	13.1	1.7	9.8	3.1	10.7
445	Food & beverage stores	0.7	6.1	0.6	5.6	1.8	5.8
4451	Grocery stores	0.6	5.5	0.5	5.0	1.7	5.2
446	Health & personal care stores	0.4	7.3	1.1	7.3	1.5	6.9
447	Gasoline stations	-0.8	27.1	5.1	35.9	11.9	30.7
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	3.1	6.5	-0.3	5.3	1.2	6.3
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	0.6	1.1	-1.0	0.4	-0.4	0.8
452	General merchandise stores	1.2	7.1	0.8	6.7	1.7	6.9
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	1.5	-0.6	-0.6	-2.2	-0.8	-1.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	-1.1	4.6	2.3	6.7	-0.6	5.6
454	Nonstore retailers	1.2	12.2	0.1	11.4	4.4	12.3
722	Food services & drinking places	0.9	7.0	0.9	6.7	1.6	7.1

(p) Preliminary estimates. (r) Revised estimates.

(1) Estimates shown in this table are derived from adjusted estimates provided in Table 1 of this report.

Note: Table 3 provides estimated measures of sampling variability. Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/mrts.html>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Survey Description

The U.S. Census Bureau conducts the Advance Monthly Retail Trade and Food Services Survey (MARTS) to provide an early estimate of monthly sales by kind of business for retail and food service firms located in the United States. Each month, questionnaires are mailed to a probability sample of approximately 5,000 employer firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS). Firms responding to MARTS account for approximately 65% of the total national sales estimate. Advance sales estimates are computed using a link relative estimator. The change in sales from the previous month is estimated using only units that have reported data for both the current and

previous month. There is no imputation or adjustment for nonrespondents in MARTS. The total sales estimate is derived by multiplying this ratio by the preliminary sales estimate for the previous month (derived from the larger MRTS sample). Detailed industry estimates are summed to derive total estimates at broad industry levels. The monthly estimates are adjusted using annual survey estimates and for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences. Additional information on MARTS and MRTS can be found on the Census Bureau website at: <http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/mrts.html>.

Official Business

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Reliability of Estimates

Because the estimates presented in this report are based on a sample survey, they contain sampling error and nonsampling error.

Sampling error is the difference between the estimate and the result that would be obtained from a complete enumeration of the sampling frame conducted under the same survey conditions. This error occurs because only a subset of the entire sampling frame is measured in a sample survey. Standard errors and coefficients of variation (CV), as given in Table 3 of this report, are estimated measures of sampling variation.

The margin of sampling error, as used on page 1, gives a range about the estimate which is a 90 percent confidence interval. If, for example, the percent change estimate is +1.2 percent and its estimated standard error is 0.9 percent, then the margin of sampling error is $\pm 1.65 \times 0.9$ percent or ± 1.5 percent, and the 90 percent confidence interval is -0.3 percent to +2.7 percent. If the interval contains 0, then one does not have sufficient statistical evidence to conclude at the 90

percent confidence level that the change is different from zero and therefore the change is not statistically significant. Estimated changes shown in the text are statistically significant unless otherwise noted. For a monthly total, the median estimated coefficient of variation is given. The resulting confidence interval is the estimated value $\pm 1.65 \times CV \times$ (the estimated monthly total). The Census Bureau recommends that individuals using estimates in this report incorporate this information into their analyses, as sampling error could affect the conclusions drawn from the estimates.

Nonsampling error encompasses all other factors that contribute to the total error of a sample survey estimate. This type of error can occur because of nonresponse, insufficient coverage of the universe of retail businesses, mistakes in the recording and coding of data, and other errors of collection, response, coverage, or processing. Although nonsampling error is not measured directly, the Census Bureau employs quality control procedures throughout the process to minimize this type of error.

Table 3. Estimated Measures of Sampling Variability and Revision to Advance Estimates

(Estimates are shown as percents and are based on data from the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey and Monthly Retail Trade Survey)

NAICS Code	Kind of Business	Median CV ⁽¹⁾ for Current Mo. (%)	Median standard error ⁽¹⁾ for Percent change			Revision for month-to-month change ⁽²⁾	
			Previous Mo. to Current Mo.	Previous Qtr. to Current Qtr.	Current Mo. to same Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	Retail & food services,						
	total	0.8	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.2
	Retail	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.1	1.4	0.6	1.6	0.1	0.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	2.2	1.5	0.7	1.8	0.1	0.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	3.9	1.5	1.0	2.0	0.2	0.5
443	Electronics & appliance stores	2.1	0.6	0.4	0.9	0.3	0.3
444	Building material & garden eq. &... supplies dealers	2.1	0.9	0.6	1.2	0.4	0.4
445	Food & beverage stores	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.1
4451	Grocery stores	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
446	Health & personal care stores	3.0	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.1	0.1
447	Gasoline stations	1.7	0.6	0.5	2.0	0.4	0.3
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	1.5	0.6	0.5	0.8	-0.1	0.2
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	2.7	1.6	1.2	1.9	-0.1	0.5
452	General merchandise stores	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	4.1	3.5	1.8	4.0	0.0	0.4
454	Nonstore retailers	4.4	2.0	0.9	2.4	0.1	0.7
722	Food services & drinking places ..	3.0	0.6	0.7	1.5	0.2	0.1

(1) Estimated measures of sampling variability are based on estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation or holiday or trading-day differences. Medians are based on estimates for the most recent 12 months.

(2) These columns provide measures of the difference between the advance-to-preliminary and preliminary-to-final estimates of month-to-month change for the same pair of months as measured by the Advance sample and MRTS sample. The average and median differences are based on estimates for the most recent 12 months.

Note: Additional information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, sample design, and definitions may be found at <http://www.census.gov/mrts/www/mrts.html>

