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ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES November 2005

The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for November, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$353.9 billion, an increase of 0.3 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* from the previous month and up 6.3 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$) from November 2004. Total sales for the September through November 2005 period were up 6.3 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The September to October 2005 percent change was revised from -0.1 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* to $+0.3$ percent ($\pm 0.2\%$).

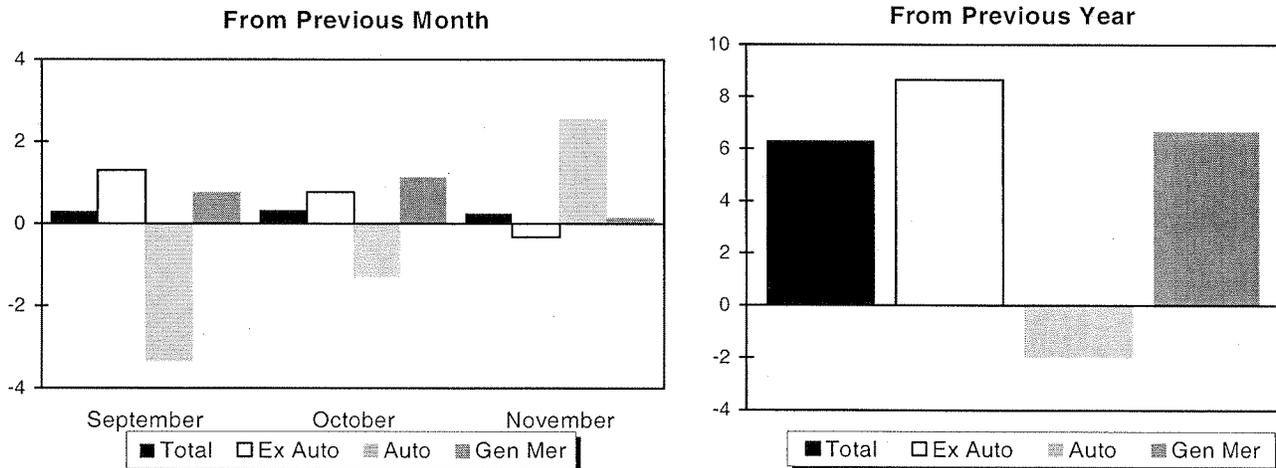
Retail trade sales were up 0.2 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$)* from October and were up 6.1 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$) above last year. Gasoline station sales were up 16.8 percent ($\pm 3.3\%$) from November 2004 and sales of building material and garden equipment and supplies dealers were up 14.5 percent ($\pm 2.0\%$) from last year.

The scheduled release dates for 2006 are as follows: January 13, February 14, March 14, April 13, May 11, June 13, July 14, August 11, September 14, October 13, November 14, December 13.

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 December is scheduled to be released January 13, 2006 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					
		11 Month Total		2005			2004		2005			2004	
		2005	% Chg. 2004	Nov. ³ (a)	Oct. (p)	Sept. (r)	Nov.	Oct.	Nov. ³ (a)	Oct. (p)	Sept. (r)	Nov. (r)	Oct. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	3,766,631	7.4	351,267	345,316	342,202	330,108	325,699	353,866	352,960	351,802	333,002	332,904
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	2,926,354	8.4	286,371	279,708	270,600	263,375	255,412	280,502	281,434	279,319	258,161	256,295
	Retail	3,395,678	7.4	318,146	310,378	308,436	299,470	292,750	318,928	318,334	317,487	300,717	300,569
	GAFO ⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	87,286	82,268	93,285	82,355	(*)	90,678	89,620	85,359	85,180
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	840,277	4.0	64,896	65,608	71,602	66,733	70,287	73,364	71,526	72,483	74,841	76,609
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	773,551	3.7	58,922	59,524	65,547	61,237	64,602	67,186	65,411	66,410	69,116	70,913
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	48,821	54,061	51,984	54,522	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,064	6,055	5,496	5,685	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	97,584	5.0	10,139	9,176	9,221	9,573	8,699	9,226	9,250	9,352	8,695	8,716
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,929	5,034	5,078	4,756	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,247	4,187	4,495	3,943	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	86,442	6.1	9,530	7,748	7,797	8,873	7,250	8,570	8,530	8,475	7,996	7,930
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,226	6,239	7,247	5,746	(*)	6,956	6,917	6,419	6,370
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,522	1,558	1,626	1,504	(*)	1,574	1,558	1,577	1,560
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	306,904	10.0	28,276	29,169	28,686	24,733	25,775	29,419	28,861	28,343	25,703	25,631
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,319	26,155	22,457	23,246	(*)	25,528	25,077	22,684	22,569
445	Food & beverage stores	473,288	4.9	44,310	43,783	43,320	41,782	41,835	44,439	44,280	44,036	42,232	41,949
4451	Grocery stores	424,788	4.4	39,466	39,192	38,774	37,487	37,657	39,624	39,548	39,325	37,942	37,695
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,875	2,850	2,752	2,712	(*)	2,895	2,885	2,688	2,699
446	Health & personal care stores	197,023	6.1	18,183	18,021	17,807	17,044	17,016	18,611	18,408	18,472	17,392	17,346
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	15,419	15,182	14,611	14,662	(*)	15,654	15,684	14,894	14,855
447	Gasoline stations	355,906	21.4	32,319	37,493	37,210	27,624	29,329	33,631	35,742	35,952	28,805	28,012
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	171,172	5.9	18,519	16,537	15,016	17,210	15,558	17,213	17,181	16,739	16,040	16,127
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	819	722	905	811	(*)	827	808	818	808
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,138	2,991	3,109	3,011	(*)	3,176	3,139	2,972	3,038
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,524	5,674	6,944	6,084	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,034	1,872	1,860	1,894	(*)	2,134	2,059	1,948	1,994
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	69,145	1.5	7,516	6,041	6,256	7,342	5,978	6,808	6,849	6,712	6,675	6,672
452	General merchandise stores	465,424	6.4	50,266	44,536	40,658	46,925	41,707	45,576	45,509	44,997	42,718	42,518
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	183,744	-0.2	21,151	17,400	15,468	20,760	17,447	18,065	17,977	17,697	18,008	18,043
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	17,568	15,619	21,003	17,654	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	27,136	25,190	26,165	24,260	(*)	27,532	27,300	24,710	24,475
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	23,724	22,003	22,486	21,013	(*)	24,036	23,813	21,375	21,182
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,412	3,187	3,679	3,247	(*)	3,496	3,487	3,335	3,293
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	102,134	6.0	9,755	9,639	9,562	9,421	8,997	9,644	9,734	9,648	9,287	9,047
454	Nonstore retailers	230,379	11.7	24,437	22,627	21,301	22,210	20,319	22,427	22,464	22,278	20,333	20,012
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	13,855	13,247	13,945	12,516	(*)	13,995	13,770	12,689	12,554
722	Food services & drinking places ...	370,953	7.0	33,121	34,938	33,766	30,638	32,949	34,938	34,626	34,315	32,285	32,335

(*) 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					
		Nov. 2005 Advance from --		Oct. 2005 Preliminary from --		Sept. 2005 through Nov. 2005 from --	
		Oct. 2005 (p)	Nov. 2004 (r)	Sept. 2005 (r)	Oct. 2004 (r)	Jun. 2005 through Aug. 2005	Sept. 2004 through Nov. 2004
	Retail & food services, total	0.3	6.3	0.3	6.0	-0.1	6.3
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	-0.3	8.7	0.8	9.8	2.7	9.5
	Retail	0.2	6.1	0.3	5.9	-0.3	6.2
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.6	-2.0	-1.3	-6.6	-9.5	-4.5
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	2.7	-2.8	-1.5	-7.8	-10.4	-5.5
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	-0.3	6.1	-1.1	6.1	1.4	6.9
443	Electronics & appliance stores	0.5	7.2	0.6	7.6	2.3	7.1
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	1.9	14.5	1.8	12.6	4.6	12.3
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.4	5.2	0.6	5.6	1.4	5.4
4451	Grocery stores	0.2	4.4	0.6	4.9	1.1	4.7
446	Health & personal care stores	1.1	7.0	-0.3	6.1	1.6	6.8
447	Gasoline stations	-5.9	16.8	-0.6	27.6	6.8	26.4
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.2	7.3	2.6	6.5	1.9	6.5
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	-0.6	2.0	2.0	2.7	-0.1	1.5
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.1	6.7	1.1	7.0	1.9	6.8
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.5	0.3	1.6	-0.4	0.3	-0.7
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	-0.9	3.8	0.9	7.6	1.8	6.2
454	Nonstore retailers	-0.2	10.3	0.8	12.3	2.5	11.3
722	Food services & drinking places	0.9	8.2	0.9	7.1	2.4	7.4

(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	0.1	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1
	Retail	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.1	1.5	0.7	1.7	0.2	0.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	2.2	1.6	0.7	1.9	0.2	0.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	4.0	1.4	1.0	2.0	0.0	0.5
443	Electronics & appliance stores	2.0	0.6	0.4	1.0	0.3	0.3
444	Building material & garden eq. & ...						
	supplies dealers	2.1	1.0	0.6	1.2	0.3	0.3
445	Food & beverage stores	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
446	Health & personal care stores	3.1	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.0	0.2
447	Gasoline stations	1.7	0.6	0.5	2.0	0.3	0.3
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	1.4	0.6	0.6	0.7	-0.1	0.2
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book &						
	music stores	2.7	1.7	1.2	1.9	0.0	0.6
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	4.2	3.7	1.7	4.1	0.2	0.6
454	Nonstore retailers	4.4	1.8	0.8	2.3	0.2	0.5
722	Food services & drinking places ..	3.0	0.7	0.7	1.6	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>

