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ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES January 2009

Intention to Revise Retail Estimates: Monthly retail sales estimates will be revised based on the results of the 2007 Annual Retail Trade Survey. Revised not adjusted and corresponding adjusted data are scheduled for release on April 30, 2009.

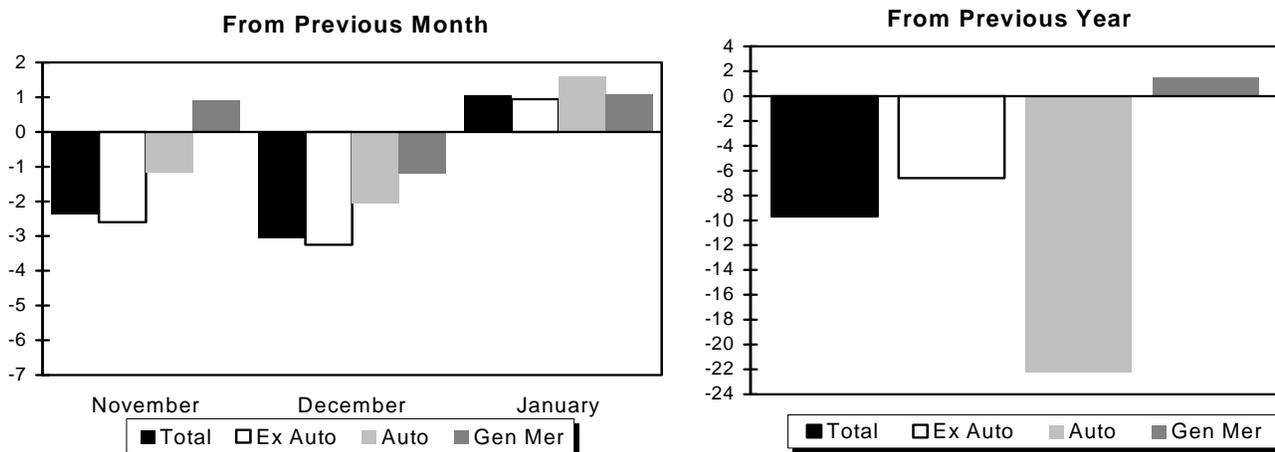
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for January, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$344.6 billion, an increase of 1.0 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the previous month, but 9.7 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) below January 2008. Total sales for the November 2008 through January 2009 period were down 9.5 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The November to December 2008 percent change was revised from -2.7 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) to -3.0 percent ($\pm 0.2\%$).

Retail trade sales were up 1.1 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) from December 2008, but were 11.0 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) below last year. Gasoline stations sales were down 35.5 percent ($\pm 1.5\%$) from January 2008 and motor vehicle and parts dealers sales were down 22.2 percent ($\pm 2.3\%$) 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 February is scheduled to be released March 12, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. EDT.

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 than 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				
		1 Month Total		2009	2008			2007	2009	2008		2007	
		2009	% Chg. 2008	Jan. ³ (a)	Dec. (p)	Nov. (r)	Jan.	Dec.	Jan. ³ (a)	Dec. (p)	Nov. (r)	Jan. (r)	Dec. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	315,603	-9.0	315,603	393,117	343,376	346,951	429,953	344,649	341,072	351,777	381,673	380,968
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	263,882	-5.8	263,882	338,718	293,611	280,111	360,089	286,003	283,348	292,852	306,246	304,440
	Retail	279,270	-10.5	279,270	354,751	306,489	312,020	391,457	306,201	302,935	313,152	343,910	343,078
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	137,607	103,990	84,711	146,167	(*)	93,334	95,394	98,425	98,066
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	51,721	-22.6	51,721	54,399	49,765	66,840	69,864	58,646	57,724	58,925	75,427	76,528
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	45,752	-25.1	45,752	48,063	43,580	61,063	63,997	52,050	51,131	52,317	69,154	70,172
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	38,838	34,724	49,443	53,038	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,336	6,185	5,777	5,867	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	7,623	-13.9	7,623	9,836	9,071	8,858	11,172	8,286	8,392	8,525	9,670	9,690
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,638	4,617	4,989	5,329	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,198	4,454	3,869	5,843	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	8,177	-7.4	8,177	13,879	10,277	8,832	15,292	8,706	8,486	9,013	9,444	9,435
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	11,079	8,266	7,092	12,430	(*)	6,719	7,219	7,626	7,579
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,800	2,011	1,740	2,862	(*)	1,767	1,794	1,818	1,856
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	18,518	-15.5	18,518	22,271	23,374	21,906	23,429	24,260	25,059	25,657	27,608	27,454
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,036	19,962	19,707	20,780	(*)	20,896	21,511	23,743	23,913
445	Food & beverage stores	48,612	3.5	48,612	52,514	49,444	46,981	52,470	49,303	48,293	49,447	48,265	48,018
4451	Grocery stores	44,231	3.2	44,231	45,505	44,139	42,843	45,463	44,143	43,174	44,227	43,320	42,930
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,773	3,629	2,830	4,611	(*)	3,528	3,582	3,397	3,388
446	Health & personal care stores	20,926	3.5	20,926	23,618	19,879	20,219	21,839	20,947	20,938	20,838	20,179	19,854
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	19,288	16,450	16,968	17,951	(*)	17,330	17,243	16,701	16,499
447	Gasoline stations	24,828	-34.5	24,828	24,953	28,674	37,914	38,358	27,016	26,322	31,201	41,894	40,633
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	13,300	-8.0	13,300	27,445	19,185	14,459	31,235	17,179	16,910	17,617	19,141	18,777
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,215	863	731	1,491	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,222	3,304	2,570	4,904	(*)	2,946	3,091	3,368	3,387
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	10,805	7,984	5,325	11,283	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,751	2,165	1,744	2,936	(*)	2,113	2,154	2,245	2,221
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	6,725	-4.6	6,725	12,021	7,479	7,049	12,072	7,079	7,113	7,184	7,539	7,308
452	General merchandise stores	43,514	3.5	43,514	69,687	54,754	42,052	71,346	49,700	49,167	49,765	48,979	49,274
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	12,819	-4.4	12,819	27,505	19,634	13,412	29,700	16,083	16,128	16,467	17,118	17,330
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	28,230	20,192	13,790	30,490	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	42,182	35,120	28,640	41,646	(*)	33,039	33,298	31,861	31,944
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	36,989	31,139	25,504	36,266	(*)	29,497	29,656	28,119	28,289
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,193	3,981	3,136	5,380	(*)	3,542	3,642	3,742	3,655
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	8,396	-9.3	8,396	11,264	9,134	9,253	11,687	9,262	9,384	9,540	9,984	9,948
454	Nonstore retailers	26,930	-2.6	26,930	32,864	25,453	27,657	32,693	25,817	25,147	25,440	25,780	26,159
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	24,400	17,961	17,507	23,030	(*)	18,101	17,925	17,613	17,894
722	Food services & drinking places ...	36,333	4.0	36,333	38,366	36,887	34,931	38,496	38,448	38,137	38,625	37,763	37,890

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

(NA) Not available. (S) Suppressed. (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					
		Jan. 2009 Advance from --		Dec. 2008 Preliminary from --		Nov. 2008 through Jan. 2009 from --	
		Dec. 2008 (p)	Jan. 2008 (r)	Nov. 2008 (r)	Dec. 2007 (r)	Aug. 2008 through Oct. 2008	Nov. 2007 through Jan. 2008
	Retail & food services,						
	total	1.0	-9.7	-3.0	-10.5	-6.7	-9.5
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	0.9	-6.6	-3.2	-6.9	-6.5	-6.0
	Retail	1.1	-11.0	-3.3	-11.7	-7.5	-10.8
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.6	-22.2	-2.0	-24.6	-7.8	-23.7
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	1.8	-24.7	-2.3	-27.1	-8.9	-26.2
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	-1.3	-14.3	-1.6	-13.4	-4.7	-13.6
443	Electronics & appliance stores	2.6	-7.8	-5.8	-10.1	-4.2	-8.4
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	-3.2	-12.1	-2.3	-8.7	-7.6	-10.1
445	Food & beverage stores	2.1	2.2	-2.3	0.6	-1.3	2.0
4451	Grocery stores	2.2	1.9	-2.4	0.6	-1.1	2.0
446	Health & personal care stores	0.0	3.8	0.5	5.5	1.1	4.5
447	Gasoline stations	2.6	-35.5	-15.6	-35.2	-33.0	-32.0
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	1.6	-10.3	-4.0	-9.9	-6.0	-9.4
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	-0.5	-6.1	-1.0	-2.7	-2.5	-4.1
452	General merchandise stores	1.1	1.5	-1.2	-0.2	-0.4	1.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.3	-6.0	-2.1	-6.9	-1.2	-6.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	-1.3	-7.2	-1.6	-5.7	-5.4	-5.6
454	Nonstore retailers	2.7	0.1	-1.2	-3.9	-2.9	-2.6
722	Food services & drinking places	0.8	1.8	-1.3	0.7	-0.2	1.9

(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 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	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.4	-0.1	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.2
	Retail	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.4	-0.1	0.2
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.1	1.4	0.6	1.4	-0.1	0.9
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	2.1	1.6	0.7	1.5	-0.1	0.8
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	2.7	1.6	0.8	2.2	-0.3	0.4
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.5	0.7	0.5	1.1	-0.4	0.7
444	Building material & garden eq. &... supplies dealers.....	2.4	1.4	0.8	1.6	0.2	0.5
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.9	0.3	0.2	0.6	-0.1	0.3
4451	Grocery stores	0.9	0.3	0.2	0.6	-0.1	0.3
446	Health & personal care stores	1.6	0.4	0.4	1.1	-0.1	0.1
447	Gasoline stations	2.1	0.6	0.4	0.9	-0.3	0.5
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	2.0	0.7	0.6	1.0	-0.3	0.8
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	2.4	1.5	1.2	1.6	-0.1	0.5
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.1	0.3
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.8	2.6	1.5	3.3	-0.1	0.7
454	Nonstore retailers	1.6	0.9	0.6	1.3	0.2	0.6
722	Food services & drinking places ..	1.9	0.8	0.6	1.4	0.3	0.5



- (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 revisions 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>