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ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES February 2007

Intention to Revise Retail Estimates: Monthly retail sales estimates will be revised based on the results of the 2005 Annual Retail Trade Survey. Revised not adjusted and corresponding adjusted data are scheduled for release on March 29, 2007.

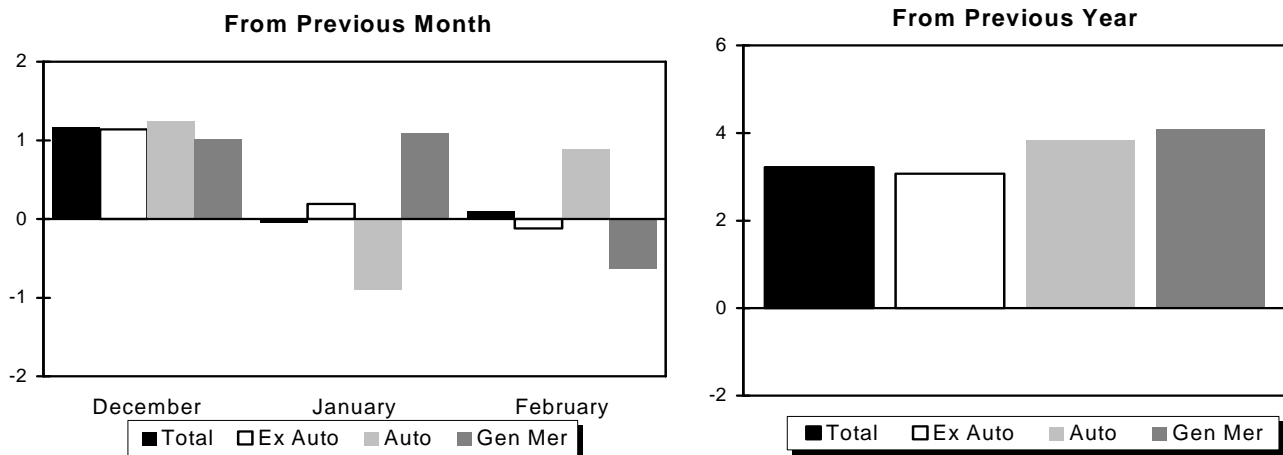
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for February, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$370.5 billion, an increase of 0.1 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* from the previous month and up 3.2 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) from February 2006. Total sales for the December 2006 through February 2007 were up 3.7 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The December 2006 to January 2007 percent change was unrevised from 0.0 percent ($\pm 0.3\%$)*.

Retail trade sales were up 0.2 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* from January 2007 and were 3.1 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$) above last year. Nonstore retailers were up 9.1 percent ($\pm 4.5\%$) from February 2006 and sales of health and personal care stores were up 6.1 percent ($\pm 1.7\%$) 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 March is scheduled to be released April 16, 2007 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				
		2 Month Total		2007			2006		2007		2006		
		2007	% Chg. 2006	Feb. ³ (a)	Jan. (p)	Dec. (r)	Feb.	Jan.	Feb. ³ (a)	Jan. (p)	Dec. (r)	Feb. (r)	Jan. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	664,773	3.8	328,847	335,926	424,946	318,184	322,222	370,495	370,169	370,314	358,926	362,063
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	526,195	3.9	258,126	268,069	352,916	250,199	256,007	292,712	293,066	292,512	284,004	284,141
	Retail	597,199	3.7	295,453	301,746	386,553	286,273	289,603	333,999	333,218	332,967	324,051	326,799
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	83,627	146,882	79,726	79,023	(*)	96,914	95,804	92,494	92,741
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	138,578	3.3	70,721	67,857	72,030	67,985	66,215	77,783	77,103	77,802	74,922	77,922
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	127,332	3.8	65,198	62,134	66,130	62,261	60,435	71,646	70,929	71,492	68,569	71,521
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	50,522	54,991	50,426	49,726	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,723	5,900	5,724	5,780	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	18,705	5.3	9,176	9,529	11,832	8,838	8,929	10,207	10,380	10,053	9,842	9,977
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,156	5,550	4,879	4,854	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,373	6,282	3,959	4,075	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	16,957	4.1	8,244	8,713	15,300	7,882	8,400	9,150	9,180	9,427	8,785	8,992
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,049	12,622	6,455	6,848	(*)	7,499	7,464	7,212	7,395
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,664	2,678	1,427	1,552	(*)	1,681	1,963	1,573	1,597
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	46,155	-4.5	22,271	23,884	25,322	23,948	24,381	28,628	29,034	29,095	30,621	30,431
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	21,775	22,585	21,865	22,406	(*)	25,379	25,376	27,161	26,898
445	Food & beverage stores	87,767	6.0	42,658	45,109	51,562	40,502	42,323	47,006	46,705	46,615	44,660	44,286
4451	Grocery stores	78,685	5.8	38,063	40,622	43,981	36,190	38,153	41,644	41,409	41,258	39,639	39,292
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,783	4,588	2,667	2,562	(*)	3,305	3,287	3,141	3,102
446	Health & personal care stores	37,727	7.5	18,250	19,477	21,263	17,226	17,871	19,292	19,284	19,243	18,190	18,033
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,611	17,734	14,371	14,904	(*)	16,382	16,240	15,080	14,979
447	Gasoline stations	60,859	-0.4	29,745	31,114	32,785	29,694	31,385	34,749	34,342	34,511	34,528	35,146
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	29,251	6.3	15,213	14,038	31,611	14,544	12,970	18,354	18,685	18,234	17,441	17,524
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	716	1,453	606	620	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,597	4,978	2,541	2,536	(*)	3,304	3,314	3,164	3,268
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,247	11,902	5,051	4,699	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,704	2,953	1,874	1,681	(*)	2,210	2,197	2,171	2,218
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	12,304	-2.6	5,530	6,774	12,494	5,742	6,888	7,063	7,123	7,067	7,315	7,343
452	General merchandise stores	82,068	5.3	41,070	40,998	69,990	39,424	38,541	47,443	47,743	47,234	45,581	45,420
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	28,682	-0.3	14,512	14,170	30,617	14,771	14,006	17,633	17,915	17,742	17,908	17,994
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	14,826	31,308	15,136	14,337	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,828	39,373	24,653	24,535	(*)	29,828	29,492	27,673	27,426
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	23,897	34,023	21,699	21,692	(*)	26,232	25,972	24,218	23,916
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,931	5,350	2,954	2,843	(*)	3,596	3,520	3,455	3,510
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	18,319	1.8	9,120	9,199	12,461	8,993	9,001	10,015	9,984	10,148	9,876	9,870
454	Nonstore retailers	48,509	9.8	23,455	25,054	29,903	21,495	22,699	24,309	23,655	23,538	22,290	21,855
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	15,730	21,077	13,174	14,347	(*)	15,793	15,955	14,638	14,595
722	Food services & drinking places ...	67,574	4.7	33,394	34,180	38,393	31,911	32,619	36,496	36,951	37,347	34,875	35,264

(*) 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					
		Feb. 2007 Advance from --		Jan. 2007 Preliminary from --		Dec. 2006 through Feb. 2007 from --	
		Jan. 2007 (p)	Feb. 2006 (r)	Dec. 2006 (r)	Jan. 2006 (r)	Sep. 2006 through Nov. 2006	Dec. 2005 through Feb. 2006
	Retail & food services, total	0.1	3.2	0.0	2.2	1.4	3.7
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	-0.1	3.1	0.2	3.1	1.5	4.0
	Retail	0.2	3.1	0.1	2.0	1.3	3.4
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	0.9	3.8	-0.9	-1.1	1.0	2.5
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	1.0	4.5	-0.8	-0.8	1.3	2.9
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	-1.7	3.7	3.3	4.0	1.2	4.3
443	Electronics & appliance stores	-0.3	4.2	-2.6	2.1	2.7	6.0
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	-1.4	-6.5	-0.2	-4.6	-0.4	-3.2
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.6	5.3	0.2	5.5	1.7	5.4
4451	Grocery stores	0.6	5.1	0.4	5.4	1.8	5.1
446	Health & personal care stores	0.0	6.1	0.2	6.9	0.6	6.8
447	Gasoline stations	1.2	0.6	-0.5	-2.3	4.3	0.8
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	-1.8	5.2	2.5	6.6	1.2	6.0
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	-0.8	-3.4	0.8	-3.0	-2.2	-1.5
452	General merchandise stores.....	-0.6	4.1	1.1	5.1	1.9	4.9
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-1.6	-1.5	1.0	-0.4	0.3	-0.8
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	0.3	1.4	-1.6	1.2	-0.2	3.7
454	Nonstore retailers	2.8	9.1	0.5	8.2	0.9	7.8
722	Food services & drinking places	-1.2	4.6	-1.1	4.8	1.6	6.2

(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

Penalty for Private Use, \$300

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	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.2
	Retail	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.3
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.0	1.5	0.7	1.4	0.3	0.9
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	2.2	1.6	0.8	1.6	0.3	1.0
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	2.1	1.7	0.9	1.9	0.4	0.4
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.4	0.6	0.9	1.0	0.0	1.0
444	Building material & garden eq. &.....						
	supplies dealers.....	2.3	1.1	0.7	1.2	-0.4	0.8
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.6	0.3	0.4	0.5	-0.1	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.7	0.3	0.4	0.5	-0.1	0.1
446	Health & personal care stores	1.6	0.7	0.6	1.0	0.0	0.3
447	Gasoline stations	2.8	0.7	0.7	1.2	0.0	0.3
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	1.5	0.5	0.8	0.9	0.3	0.3
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book &						
	music stores.....	2.3	1.5	1.5	2.1	-0.2	0.3
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.5	3.0	2.0	3.1	0.4	0.7
454	Nonstore retailers	1.5	1.1	0.9	2.7	-0.1	0.5
722	Food services & drinking places ..	1.6	0.9	0.8	1.1	0.1	0.4

- (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 period August 2006 to present.
- (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>

