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ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES August 2005

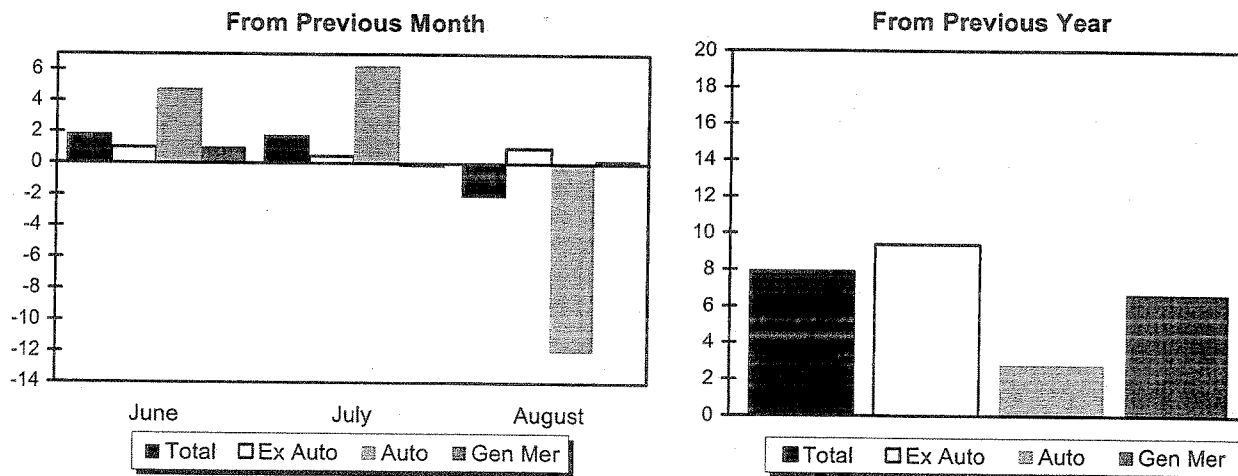
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for August, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$350.1 billion, a decrease of 2.1 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) from the previous month, but up 7.9 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$) from August 2004. Total sales for the June through August 2005 period were up 9.4 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The June to July 2005 percent change was unrevised from +1.8 percent ($\pm 0.3\%$).

Retail trade sales were down 2.3 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) from July, but were up 8.0 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) above last year. Gasoline station sales were up 29.3 percent ($\pm 3.3\%$) from August 2004 and sales of nonstore retailers were up 11.0 percent ($\pm 3.5\%$) 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 September is scheduled to be released October 14, 2005 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 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					
		8 Month Total		2005			2004		2005			2004	
		2005	% Chg. 2004	Aug. ³ (a)	Jul. (p)	Jun. (r)	Aug.	Jul.	Aug. ³ (a)	Jul. (p)	Jun. (r)	Aug. (r)	Jul. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	2,726,446	7.6	363,263	360,510	359,578	331,754	333,020	350,106	357,629	351,320	324,501	323,929
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	2,089,647	7.8	280,915	270,151	271,553	253,816	252,710	274,921	272,225	270,962	251,368	251,186
	Retail	2,457,471	7.7	328,186	324,644	325,140	298,902	299,236	316,346	323,857	317,623	292,943	292,296
	GAFO ⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	83,999	84,805	83,569	80,227	(*)	88,614	88,776	83,834	84,053
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	636,801	6.9	82,348	90,359	88,025	77,938	80,310	75,185	85,404	80,358	73,133	72,743
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	588,201	6.8	75,743	84,116	81,509	72,029	74,374	69,109	79,355	74,302	67,569	67,185
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	70,509	66,778	60,826	62,452	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,243	6,516	5,909	5,936	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	68,969	4.0	9,558	8,941	8,948	8,855	8,973	9,155	9,077	9,075	8,873	8,838
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,888	4,832	4,851	4,936	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,053	4,116	4,004	3,937	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	61,381	5.7	8,360	7,786	7,802	7,805	7,446	8,354	8,327	8,297	7,867	7,886
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,290	6,287	6,244	5,952	(*)	6,734	6,724	6,326	6,318
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,496	1,515	1,561	1,494	(*)	1,593	1,573	1,541	1,568
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	220,701	8.9	29,559	28,301	31,926	26,545	26,974	27,615	27,465	27,530	25,473	25,249
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	25,270	27,440	24,126	24,068	(*)	24,321	24,369	22,569	22,389
445	Food & beverage stores.....	341,903	4.6	44,160	44,901	43,600	41,350	43,223	43,800	43,534	43,455	41,509	41,373
4451	Grocery stores	307,414	4.3	39,614	40,095	39,005	37,232	38,784	39,222	38,927	38,888	37,307	37,185
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,986	2,831	2,600	2,840	(*)	2,849	2,834	2,658	2,652
446	Health & personal care stores	143,454	6.2	18,750	17,722	17,886	16,933	16,848	18,509	18,289	18,140	17,121	17,070
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	15,092	15,254	14,376	14,329	(*)	15,623	15,518	14,714	14,592
447	Gasoline stations	249,009	19.0	37,260	34,888	32,698	28,370	28,857	34,152	32,728	31,471	26,415	26,415
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	120,965	5.5	16,604	15,248	15,607	15,556	14,636	16,650	16,649	16,801	15,614	15,604
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	735	816	799	706	(*)	833	849	790	790
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,750	3,059	2,665	2,616	(*)	3,090	3,112	2,894	2,884
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,014	5,848	5,972	5,693	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,002	1,909	2,281	1,952	(*)	2,018	2,001	1,915	1,933
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	49,439	1.9	7,460	6,269	6,129	7,181	6,177	6,869	6,836	6,787	6,743	6,729
452	General merchandise stores.....	329,955	6.2	43,453	42,710	43,316	40,727	40,111	44,522	44,409	44,492	41,730	41,688
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	129,704	-0.1	17,134	16,271	17,108	17,203	16,440	17,741	17,793	18,064	17,864	17,863
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,429	17,292	17,404	16,651	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,439	26,208	23,524	23,671	(*)	26,616	26,428	23,866	23,825
45291	Warehouse clubs & superstores	(*)	(*)	(*)	23,214	22,822	20,477	20,549	(*)	23,214	22,983	20,642	20,570
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,225	3,386	3,047	3,122	(*)	3,402	3,445	3,224	3,255
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	73,387	6.2	9,983	9,187	9,631	9,126	8,749	9,591	9,581	9,562	8,895	8,871
454	Nonstore retailers	161,507	11.7	20,691	18,332	19,572	18,516	17,032	21,944	21,558	21,655	19,770	19,495
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,129	12,726	12,093	11,278	(*)	13,598	13,567	12,480	12,339
722	Food services & drinking places ...	268,977	6.7	35,077	35,866	34,438	32,852	33,784	33,760	33,772	33,697	31,558	31,633

(*) 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					
		Aug. 2005 Advance from --		Jul. 2005 Preliminary from --		Jun. 2005 through Aug. 2005 from --	
		Jul. 2005 (p)	Aug. 2004 (r)	Jun. 2005 (r)	Jul. 2004 (r)	Mar. 2005 through May 2005	Jun. 2004 through Aug. 2004
	Retail & food services,						
	total	-2.1	7.9	1.8	10.4	2.7	9.4
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	1.0	9.4	0.5	8.4	2.2	8.8
	Retail	-2.3	8.0	2.0	10.8	2.9	9.6
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-12.0	2.8	6.3	17.4	4.5	11.3
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-12.9	2.3	6.8	18.1	4.8	11.5
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	0.9	5.6	0.0	2.7	2.6	4.6
443	Electronics & appliance stores	0.3	6.2	0.4	5.6	0.5	5.6
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	0.5	8.4	-0.2	8.8	1.2	8.8
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.6	5.5	0.2	5.2	1.3	5.4
4451	Grocery stores	0.8	5.1	0.1	4.7	1.3	4.9
446	Health & personal care stores	1.2	8.1	0.8	7.1	1.8	7.1
447	Gasoline stations	4.4	29.3	4.0	22.7	8.2	23.3
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.0	6.6	-0.9	6.2	0.8	6.9
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	0.5	1.9	0.7	1.6	0.3	2.0
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.3	6.7	-0.2	6.5	1.5	7.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.3	-0.7	-1.5	-0.4	-0.3	0.3
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	0.1	7.8	0.2	8.0	1.5	8.0
454	Nonstore retailers	1.8	11.0	-0.4	10.6	2.9	11.7
722	Food services & drinking places	0.0	7.0	0.2	6.8	0.9	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>.

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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	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.2
	Retail	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.6	0.1	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.9	1.4	0.7	1.7	0.2	0.3
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	2.1	1.5	0.7	1.9	0.2	0.3
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	3.7	1.5	1.0	2.0	0.1	0.6
443	Electronics & appliance stores	2.1	0.6	0.5	1.0	0.2	0.6
444	Building material & garden eq. &....						
	supplies dealers.....	1.9	1.0	0.6	1.2	0.3	0.4
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.8	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2
4451	Grocery stores	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1
446	Health & personal care stores	3.1	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.1	0.2
447	Gasoline stations	1.7	0.6	0.6	2.0	0.3	0.3
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	1.5	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.0	0.3
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book &						
	music stores.....	2.7	1.8	1.2	1.9	-0.2	0.6
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.1	0.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.5	3.0	1.7	3.5	0.2	0.6
454	Nonstore retailers	4.2	1.8	0.9	2.1	0.1	0.6
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.9	0.6	0.7	1.5	0.1	0.2

(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>

