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ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES September 2005

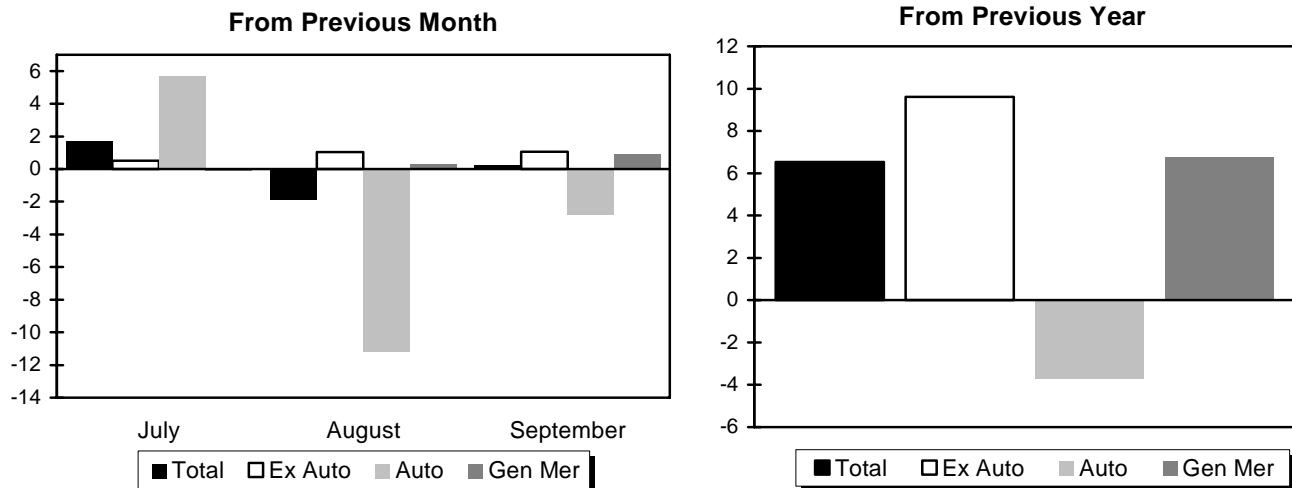
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for September, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$351.5 billion, an increase of 0.2 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* from the previous month and up 6.5 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$) from September 2004. Total sales for the July through September 2005 period were up 8.3 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The July to August 2005 percent change was revised from -2.1 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) to -1.9 percent ($\pm 0.3\%$).

Retail trade sales were up 0.2 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* from August and were up 6.7 percent ($\pm 1.0\%$) above last year. Gasoline station sales were up 34.8 percent ($\pm 3.3\%$) from September 2004 and sales of nonstore retailers were up 11.1 percent ($\pm 3.6\%$) 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 October is scheduled to be released November 15, 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					
		9 Month Total		2005			2004		2005			2004	
		2005	% Chg. 2004	Sep. ³ (a)	Aug. (p)	Jul. (r)	Sep.	Aug.	Sep. ³ (a)	Aug. (p)	Jul. (r)	Sep. (r)	Aug. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	3,069,448	7.6	341,813	364,594	360,366	319,134	331,754	351,461	350,634	357,285	329,872	324,257
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	2,359,249	8.1	269,687	280,952	270,029	243,939	253,816	278,093	275,177	272,354	253,689	251,574
	Retail	2,767,134	7.7	308,593	329,403	324,497	287,953	298,902	317,598	316,829	323,510	297,693	292,729
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	89,115	83,957	77,389	83,569	(*)	88,978	88,622	84,417	83,881
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	710,199	5.9	72,126	83,642	90,337	75,195	77,938	73,368	75,457	84,931	76,183	72,683
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	655,588	5.7	66,129	77,016	84,101	69,591	72,029	67,341	69,384	78,894	70,579	67,129
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	63,538	70,442	59,517	60,826	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,626	6,236	5,604	5,909	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	78,257	4.8	9,199	9,632	8,956	8,413	8,855	9,330	9,217	9,111	8,611	8,673
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,204	4,899	4,587	4,851	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,428	4,057	3,826	4,004	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	69,130	5.7	7,756	8,361	7,778	7,293	7,805	8,436	8,367	8,338	7,965	7,876
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,736	6,290	5,712	6,244	(*)	6,804	6,763	6,389	6,346
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,625	1,488	1,581	1,561	(*)	1,563	1,575	1,576	1,530
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	249,207	9.0	28,438	29,638	28,290	26,028	26,545	27,969	27,681	27,480	25,766	25,487
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,839	25,269	23,664	24,126	(*)	24,533	24,391	22,688	22,611
445	Food & beverage stores	385,389	4.8	43,506	44,111	44,930	41,016	41,350	44,125	43,847	43,602	41,787	41,547
4451	Grocery stores	346,436	4.4	39,082	39,517	40,132	36,989	37,232	39,517	39,242	39,001	37,552	37,344
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,854	2,980	2,599	2,600	(*)	2,851	2,846	2,674	2,656
446	Health & personal care stores	160,819	6.1	17,790	18,359	17,688	16,537	16,933	18,474	18,268	18,235	17,226	17,208
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	15,641	15,056	14,227	14,376	(*)	15,672	15,602	14,743	14,730
447	Gasoline stations	285,815	21.0	36,890	37,225	34,839	27,083	28,370	35,712	34,340	32,836	26,500	26,539
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	136,033	5.6	15,027	16,657	15,236	14,209	15,556	16,673	16,712	16,627	15,771	15,646
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	843	735	707	799	(*)	839	831	788	793
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,870	2,753	2,795	2,665	(*)	3,096	3,100	2,933	2,884
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,426	6,006	5,360	5,972	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,389	1,989	1,793	2,281	(*)	1,997	2,009	1,957	1,917
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	55,662	1.6	6,339	7,380	6,233	6,246	7,181	6,744	6,808	6,790	6,716	6,749
452	General merchandise stores	370,729	6.3	40,764	43,462	42,711	38,074	40,727	44,955	44,567	44,439	42,109	41,735
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	145,269	-0.4	15,547	17,152	16,271	16,006	17,203	17,619	17,707	17,768	17,982	17,841
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	17,313	16,429	16,199	17,404	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,310	26,440	22,068	23,524	(*)	26,860	26,671	24,127	23,894
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	23,073	23,214	19,108	20,477	(*)	23,424	23,261	20,860	20,663
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,237	3,226	2,960	3,047	(*)	3,436	3,410	3,267	3,231
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	82,549	6.0	9,397	9,742	9,193	8,777	9,126	9,569	9,364	9,549	9,032	8,917
454	Nonstore retailers	183,345	12.0	21,361	21,194	18,306	19,082	18,516	22,243	22,201	21,572	20,027	19,669
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	13,771	12,146	11,926	12,093	(*)	13,840	13,586	12,449	12,403
722	Food services & drinking places ...	302,314	6.8	33,220	35,191	35,869	31,181	32,852	33,863	33,805	33,775	32,179	31,528

(*) 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					
		Sep. 2005 Advance from --		Aug. 2005 Preliminary from --		Jul. 2005 through Sep. 2005 from --	
		Aug. 2005 (p)	Sep. 2004 (r)	Jul. 2005 (r)	Aug. 2004 (r)	Apr. 2005 through Jun. 2005	Jul. 2004 through Sep. 2004
	Retail & food services,						
	total	0.2	6.5	-1.9	8.1	1.6	8.3
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	1.1	9.6	1.0	9.4	2.3	9.1
	Retail	0.2	6.7	-2.1	8.2	1.8	8.5
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-2.8	-3.7	-11.2	3.8	-0.5	5.5
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-2.9	-4.6	-12.1	3.4	-0.6	5.2
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	1.2	8.3	1.2	6.3	3.1	5.9
443	Electronics & appliance stores	0.8	5.9	0.3	6.2	1.1	6.0
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	1.0	8.6	0.7	8.6	1.0	8.7
445	Food & beverage stores	0.6	5.6	0.6	5.5	1.4	5.5
4451	Grocery stores	0.7	5.2	0.6	5.1	1.4	5.1
446	Health & personal care stores	1.1	7.2	0.2	6.2	1.3	6.7
447	Gasoline stations	4.0	34.8	4.6	29.4	11.2	29.1
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	-0.2	5.7	0.5	6.8	-0.4	6.2
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	-0.9	0.4	0.3	0.9	-0.5	0.7
452	General merchandise stores	0.9	6.8	0.3	6.8	1.1	6.7
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.5	-2.0	-0.3	-0.8	-1.7	-1.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	2.2	5.9	-1.9	5.0	-0.1	6.2
454	Nonstore retailers	0.2	11.1	2.9	12.9	3.1	11.5
722	Food services & drinking places	0.2	5.2	0.1	7.2	0.4	6.4

(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	0.2	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	0.2	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.0	1.4	0.6	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	1.9	0.1	0.5
443	Electronics & appliance stores	2.1	0.6	0.5	0.9	0.3	0.4
444	Building material & garden eq. &....						
	supplies dealers	2.1	1.0	0.6	1.2	0.3	0.4
445	Food & beverage stores	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2
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	0.2
447	Gasoline stations	1.7	0.7	0.6	2.0	0.3	0.3
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	1.5	0.6	0.5	0.8	-0.1	0.3
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	0.1	0.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.8	3.3	1.8	3.8	0.1	0.6
454	Nonstore retailers	4.4	1.9	0.9	2.2	0.2	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>

