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Scott Scheleur / Aneta Lukasik
Service Sector Statistics Division
(301) 763-2713

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ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES August 2006

Special Notice – Beginning with the December 13, 2006 release for November 2006, data will be based on a new sample. In addition, a special release providing historic data on a new sample basis will be provided in November after the November 14, 2006 release covering October 2006 data. A new sample for the Advance Monthly Retail Trade Survey is selected about once every two and a half years. For further information on the sample revision, see our website at <http://www.census.gov/retail>.

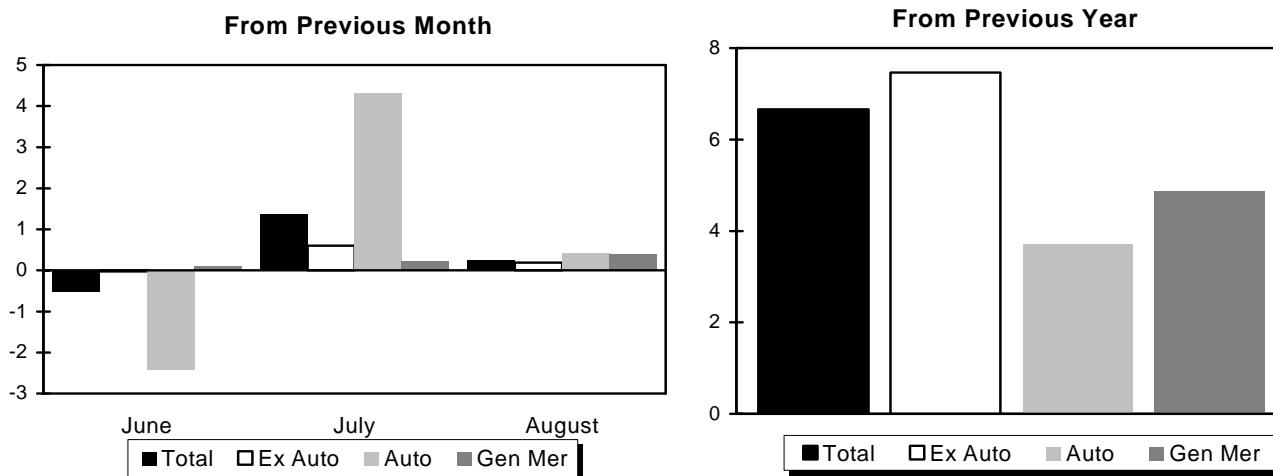
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for August, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$368.2 billion, an increase of 0.2 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* from the previous month and up 6.7 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) from August 2005. Total sales for the June through August 2006 period were up 5.6 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The June to July 2006 percent change was unrevised from +1.4 percent ($\pm 0.3\%$).

Retail trade sales were up 0.2 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* from July and were 6.6 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$) above last year. Nonstore retailers were up 12.5 percent ($\pm 4.5\%$) from August 2005 and sales of gasoline stations were up 11.0 percent ($\pm 2.0\%$) 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 13, 2006 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 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		2006			2005		2006			2005	
		2006	% Chg. 2005	Aug. ³ (a)	Jul. (p)	Jun. (r)	Aug.	Jul.	Aug. ³ (a)	Jul. (p)	Jun. (r)	Aug. (r)	Jul. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	2,870,259	7.0	383,460	368,706	373,279	358,936	354,414	368,233	367,351	362,439	345,226	350,635
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	2,244,246	9.0	298,327	286,975	291,742	276,998	266,100	291,772	291,215	289,465	271,502	268,229
	Retail	2,587,174	6.9	346,633	331,842	336,885	324,612	319,462	332,686	332,041	327,208	312,031	317,599
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	88,042	89,566	88,966	83,701	(*)	93,739	93,386	88,936	88,365
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	626,013	0.2	85,133	81,731	81,537	81,938	88,314	76,461	76,136	72,974	73,724	82,406
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	574,891	-0.2	78,161	75,215	74,802	75,307	82,072	70,100	69,773	66,668	67,601	76,346
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	61,078	59,569	61,325	67,945	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,516	6,735	6,631	6,242	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	76,760	9.0	10,437	9,828	10,051	9,808	9,125	10,016	10,049	10,051	9,404	9,255
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,151	5,149	5,181	4,873	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,677	4,902	4,627	4,252	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	65,293	6.1	8,773	8,183	8,228	8,362	7,788	8,837	8,827	8,764	8,391	8,349
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,770	6,761	6,668	6,233	(*)	7,303	7,223	6,735	6,673
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,413	1,467	1,694	1,555	(*)	1,524	1,541	1,656	1,676
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	244,163	12.5	31,341	30,266	33,982	29,133	27,808	29,743	29,721	29,634	27,498	27,290
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,764	29,162	26,330	24,773	(*)	26,137	26,131	24,223	24,145
445	Food & beverage stores	356,651	5.0	46,665	46,666	45,744	43,824	44,635	45,913	45,617	45,428	43,475	43,229
4451	Grocery stores	318,024	4.2	41,520	41,437	40,600	39,238	39,847	40,706	40,505	40,358	38,850	38,611
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,322	3,252	2,916	3,047	(*)	3,228	3,204	2,928	2,919
446	Health & personal care stores	146,413	7.2	18,722	18,106	18,522	17,448	16,852	18,797	18,685	18,634	17,413	17,373
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	15,183	15,458	14,561	14,062	(*)	15,669	15,583	14,605	14,512
447	Gasoline stations	292,825	17.5	41,419	40,847	39,376	37,284	34,884	37,688	38,068	37,465	33,956	32,360
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	129,033	6.5	17,978	16,341	16,606	16,757	15,271	17,887	17,933	17,765	16,775	16,597
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	690	772	800	698	(*)	786	789	787	785
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,956	3,223	2,845	2,713	(*)	3,325	3,269	3,076	3,035
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,607	6,397	6,592	6,131	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,049	2,010	2,393	1,997	(*)	2,126	2,125	2,016	2,046
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	53,239	7.1	7,949	6,517	6,717	7,464	6,266	7,306	7,249	7,285	6,867	6,856
452	General merchandise stores	344,242	5.8	45,107	43,862	44,684	42,843	42,106	46,221	46,040	45,940	44,078	43,906
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	128,530	-0.9	16,922	15,969	16,666	17,155	16,286	17,539	17,574	17,672	17,782	17,834
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,362	17,082	17,601	16,712	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	27,893	28,018	25,688	25,820	(*)	28,466	28,268	26,296	26,072
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	24,631	24,602	22,513	22,656	(*)	24,981	24,800	22,926	22,724
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,262	3,416	3,175	3,164	(*)	3,485	3,468	3,370	3,348
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	77,144	8.6	10,222	9,433	10,153	9,511	8,910	9,950	9,915	9,960	9,242	9,312
454	Nonstore retailers	175,398	13.4	22,887	20,062	21,285	20,240	17,503	23,867	23,801	23,308	21,208	20,666
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	13,368	14,287	13,641	12,014	(*)	15,174	15,071	13,779	13,590
722	Food services & drinking places ...	283,085	7.9	36,827	36,864	36,394	34,324	34,952	35,547	35,310	35,231	33,195	33,036

(*) 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. 2006 Advance from --		Jul. 2006 Preliminary from --		Jun. 2006 through Aug. 2006 from --	
		Jul. 2006 (p)	Aug. 2005 (r)	Jun. 2006 (r)	Jul. 2005 (r)	Mar. 2006 through May 2006	Jun. 2005 through Aug. 2005
	Retail & food services, total	0.2	6.7	1.4	4.8	0.8	5.6
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	0.2	7.5	0.6	8.6	1.2	8.1
	Retail	0.2	6.6	1.5	4.5	0.9	5.4
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	0.4	3.7	4.3	-7.6	-0.7	-3.2
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	0.5	3.7	4.7	-8.6	-0.9	-3.9
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	-0.3	6.5	0.0	8.6	1.3	8.0
443	Electronics & appliance stores	0.1	5.3	0.7	5.7	0.6	5.3
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	0.1	8.2	0.3	8.9	-2.4	8.5
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.6	5.6	0.4	5.5	1.8	5.5
4451	Grocery stores	0.5	4.8	0.4	4.9	1.7	4.8
446	Health & personal care stores	0.6	7.9	0.3	7.6	2.1	7.9
447	Gasoline stations	-1.0	11.0	1.6	17.6	4.1	15.8
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	-0.3	6.6	0.9	8.0	1.7	6.7
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	0.8	6.4	-0.5	5.7	0.0	6.7
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.4	4.9	0.2	4.9	0.7	4.7
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.2	-1.4	-0.6	-1.5	-1.1	-1.7
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	0.4	7.7	-0.5	6.5	0.1	7.0
454	Nonstore retailers	0.3	12.5	2.1	15.2	3.1	13.4
722	Food services & drinking places	0.7	7.1	0.2	6.9	0.3	7.0

(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	0.8	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.3
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.1
	Retail	0.8	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.3
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.1	1.3	0.6	1.4	0.6	1.2
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	2.2	1.4	0.6	1.5	0.7	1.3
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	4.1	1.5	1.1	1.9	0.3	0.6
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.9	0.6	0.4	1.0	0.3	0.6
444	Building material & garden eq. &.....						
	supplies dealers.....	2.6	0.8	0.6	1.2	0.1	0.5
445	Food & beverage stores.....	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.5	-0.1	0.1
4451	Grocery stores	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.5	-0.1	0.1
446	Health & personal care stores	3.3	0.5	0.4	1.0	-0.1	0.2
447	Gasoline stations	2.0	0.7	0.5	1.2	-0.2	0.3
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	1.6	0.7	0.6	0.9	0.1	0.3
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book &						
	music stores.....	3.0	1.8	1.1	2.1	0.0	0.2
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	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	3.6	3.0	1.5	3.3	0.6	0.8
454	Nonstore retailers	5.0	2.0	1.0	2.7	0.3	0.4
722	Food services & drinking places ..	3.1	0.6	0.5	1.2	0.1	0.3

- (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>

