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## ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES October 2006

**Special Notice** – This is our final report on the current sample. Beginning with the December 13, 2006 release for November 2006, data will be based on a new sample. In addition, a special release providing estimates on a new sample basis is tentatively scheduled for the week of November 27, 2006. 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>.

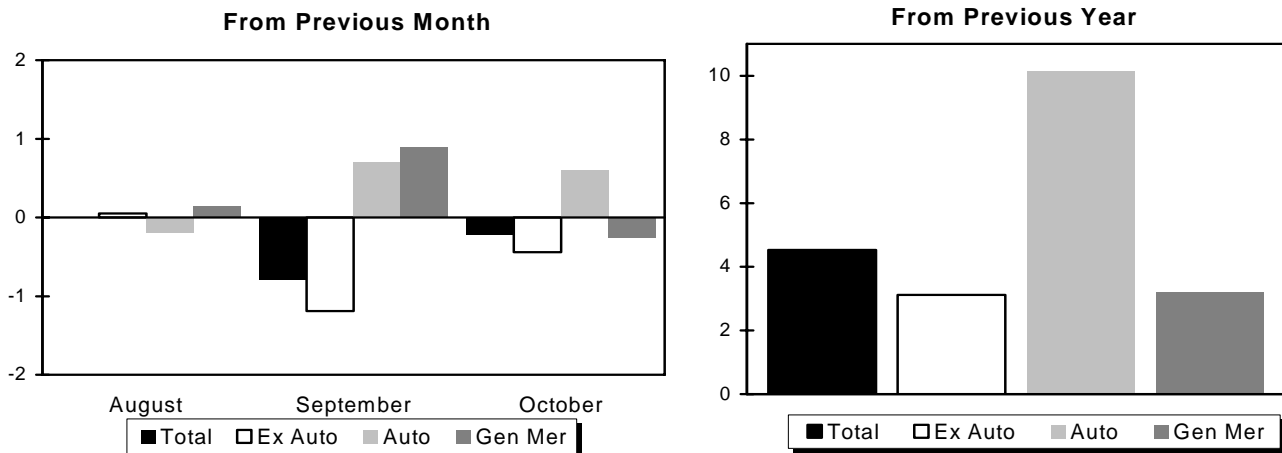
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for October, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$363.7 billion, a decrease of 0.2 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ )\* from the previous month, but up 4.5 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ ) from October 2005. Total sales for the August through October 2006 period were up 5.3 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ) from the same period a year ago. The August to September 2006 percent change was revised from -0.4 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ )\* to -0.8 percent ( $\pm 0.2\%$ ).

Retail trade sales were down 0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.7\%$ )\* from September, but were 4.2 percent ( $\pm 0.8\%$ ) above last year. Motor vehicles and parts dealers were up 10.1 percent ( $\pm 2.3\%$ ) from October 2005 and sales of nonstore retailers were up 8.6 percent ( $\pm 4.5\%$ ) 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 November is scheduled to be released December 13, 2006 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 <sup>1</sup> code	Kind of Business	Not Adjusted							Adjusted <sup>2</sup>				
		10 Month Total		2006			2005		2006			2005	
		2006	% Chg. 2005	Oct. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Sep. (p)	Aug. (r)	Oct.	Sep.	Oct. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Sep. (p)	Aug. (r)	Oct. (r)	Sep. (r)
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>												
	<b>total</b> .....	3,576,173	6.4	354,525	352,344	382,600	339,826	336,696	363,673	364,482	367,406	347,916	346,582
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	2,806,673	7.9	283,562	278,516	298,748	275,623	266,658	286,828	288,095	291,556	278,145	275,075
	Retail .....	3,220,179	6.3	318,125	316,340	345,319	305,801	303,761	327,273	328,188	331,490	314,161	313,145
	<b>GAFO<sup>4</sup></b> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	88,306	94,295	87,041	82,063	(*)	95,092	94,011	90,800	88,718
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	769,500	1.4	70,963	73,828	83,852	64,203	70,038	76,845	76,387	75,850	69,771	71,507
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	705,536	1.1	64,307	67,561	76,938	58,110	63,974	70,281	69,939	69,501	63,647	65,413
44111	New car dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	55,283	62,997	47,051	52,130	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,267	6,914	6,093	6,064	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	96,669	8.4	9,766	9,945	10,620	9,355	9,446	9,986	10,056	10,076	9,536	9,590
4421	Furniture stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,186	5,544	4,939	5,051	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,759	5,076	4,416	4,395	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	81,458	5.6	8,008	8,152	8,776	7,781	7,807	8,833	8,837	8,830	8,552	8,468
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,648	7,126	6,178	6,179	(*)	7,305	7,257	6,903	6,843
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,504	1,650	1,603	1,628	(*)	1,532	1,573	1,649	1,625
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	302,817	10.6	29,767	28,567	31,665	28,657	28,193	28,983	29,081	29,600	28,460	27,944
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	25,770	28,623	25,795	25,646	(*)	25,439	26,021	25,117	24,683
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	446,442	4.7	44,859	44,995	46,594	43,508	43,050	45,967	45,515	45,743	43,985	43,764
4451	Grocery stores .....	397,748	4.0	39,838	39,918	41,472	38,905	38,498	40,693	40,281	40,579	39,219	39,045
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,222	3,228	2,939	2,914	(*)	3,261	3,231	2,984	2,961
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	183,396	7.4	18,838	18,044	18,869	17,281	16,971	19,125	18,874	18,888	17,634	17,660
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	15,205	15,830	14,422	14,184	(*)	15,806	15,830	14,686	14,683
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	359,939	11.0	32,862	34,555	41,178	37,594	37,330	31,357	33,354	37,537	35,838	36,313
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	163,497	7.0	17,685	16,824	17,914	16,579	15,015	18,489	18,462	17,938	17,191	16,524
44811	Men's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	716	790	778	687	(*)	798	781	777	763
44812	Women's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,229	2,990	3,101	2,940	(*)	3,360	3,250	3,126	3,063
44814	Family clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,646	7,074	6,644	5,775	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,138	2,588	2,045	1,879	(*)	2,284	2,197	2,126	2,036
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	66,671	7.3	6,426	7,127	7,820	6,077	6,314	7,386	7,401	7,274	6,961	6,653
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	431,528	5.4	44,653	42,588	45,133	43,906	40,059	46,512	46,634	46,220	45,072	44,058
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	161,013	-1.0	16,653	15,773	16,963	17,406	15,460	17,634	17,752	17,628	17,986	17,464
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) <sup>5</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,146	17,370	17,855	15,867	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,815	28,170	26,500	24,599	(*)	28,882	28,592	27,086	26,594
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	23,614	24,831	23,153	21,473	(*)	25,364	25,107	23,650	23,189
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,201	3,339	3,347	3,126	(*)	3,518	3,485	3,436	3,405
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	97,199	8.4	10,310	9,775	10,190	9,350	9,272	10,249	10,034	9,907	9,489	9,416
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	221,063	12.5	23,988	21,940	22,708	21,510	20,266	23,541	23,553	23,627	21,672	21,248
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses ....	(*)	(*)	(*)	14,676	15,271	13,682	13,066	(*)	15,613	15,410	13,961	13,554
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ...	355,994	8.1	36,400	36,004	37,281	34,025	32,935	36,400	36,294	35,916	33,755	33,437

(\*) 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 <sup>1</sup>					
		Oct. 2006 Advance from --		Sep. 2006 Preliminary from --		Aug. 2006 through Oct. 2006 from --	
		Sep. 2006 (p)	Oct. 2005 (r)	Aug. 2006 (r)	Sep. 2005 (r)	May 2006 through Jul. 2006	Aug. 2005 through Oct. 2005
	<b>Retail &amp; food services, total .....</b>	-0.2	4.5	-0.8	5.2	0.1	5.3
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	-0.4	3.1	-1.2	4.7	-0.5	5.0
	Retail .....	-0.3	4.2	-1.0	4.8	-0.1	5.0
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	0.6	10.1	0.7	6.8	2.4	6.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	0.5	10.4	0.6	6.9	2.4	6.5
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores .....</b>	-0.7	4.7	-0.2	4.9	0.2	5.7
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	0.0	3.3	0.1	4.4	0.4	4.3
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers.....</b>	-0.3	1.8	-1.8	4.1	-2.1	4.5
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	1.0	4.5	-0.5	4.0	0.8	4.6
4451	Grocery stores .....	1.0	3.8	-0.7	3.2	0.6	3.8
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	1.3	8.5	-0.1	6.9	1.9	8.0
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	-6.0	-12.5	-11.1	-8.1	-9.4	-3.7
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	0.1	7.6	2.9	11.7	2.8	8.6
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	-0.2	6.1	1.7	11.2	1.2	7.4
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	-0.3	3.2	0.9	5.8	1.0	4.6
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.7	-2.0	0.7	1.6	-0.2	-0.5
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	2.1	8.0	1.3	6.6	1.1	7.2
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	-0.1	8.6	-0.3	10.8	0.2	10.2
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ....</b>	0.3	7.8	1.1	8.5	2.4	8.2

(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

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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  $\pm 1.5$  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 <sup>(1)</sup> for Current Mo. (%)	Median standard error <sup>(1)</sup> for Percent change			Revision for month-to-month change <sup>(2)</sup>	
			Previous Mo. to Current Mo.	Previous Qtr. to Current Qtr.	Current Mo. to same Mo. Last Yr.	Average revision	Median absolute revision
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>						
	total .....	0.8	0.4	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.3
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.0	0.1
	<b>Retail .....</b>	0.8	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.3
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	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	1.6	0.7	1.3
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores.....</b>	3.9	1.4	1.2	1.9	0.2	0.6
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	1.9	0.6	0.4	1.0	0.3	0.6
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp;.....</b>						
	<b>supplies dealers.....</b>	2.6	0.8	0.6	1.2	-0.1	0.5
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.5	-0.1	0.2
4451	Grocery stores .....	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.5	-0.1	0.1
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	3.4	0.5	0.4	1.0	0.0	0.2
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	2.0	0.6	0.5	1.2	-0.4	0.3
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories</b>						
	<b>stores .....</b>	1.6	0.7	0.5	0.9	0.0	0.2
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp;</b>						
	<b>music stores.....</b>	3.0	1.9	1.2	2.1	0.0	0.4
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	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	0.2
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	3.5	2.8	1.6	3.1	0.7	0.7
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	5.1	2.0	1.0	2.7	0.0	0.5
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ..</b>	3.1	0.6	0.5	1.1	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>

