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ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES AUGUST 2012

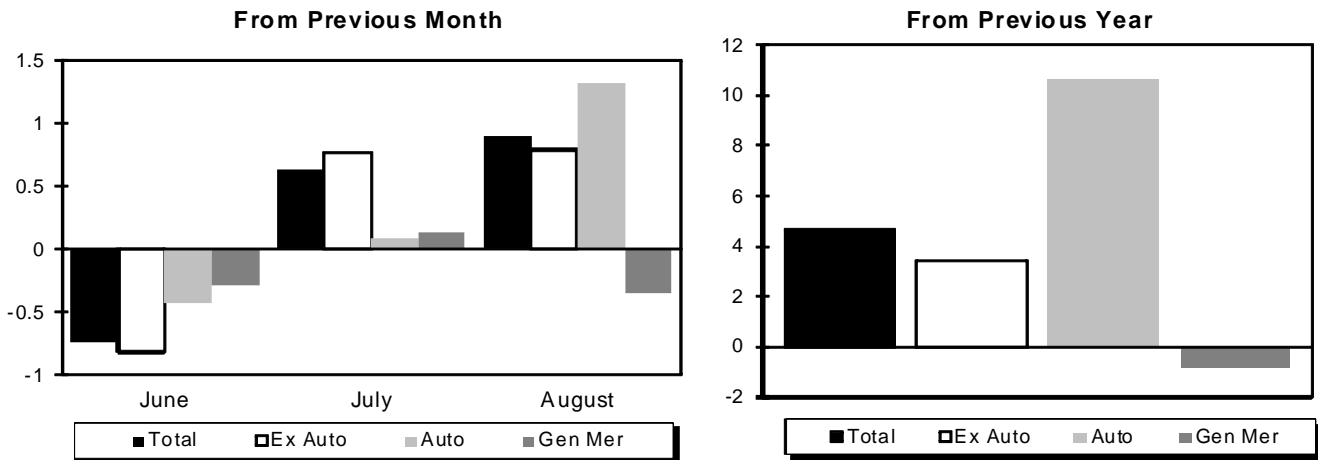
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for August, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$406.7 billion, an increase of 0.9 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the previous month and 4.7 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above August 2011. Total sales for the June through August 2012 period were up 4.0 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The June to July 2012 percent change was revised from 0.8 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) to 0.6 percent ($\pm 0.2\%$).

Retail trade sales were up 0.9 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from July 2012 and 4.4 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above last year. Auto and other motor vehicle dealers were up 12.3 percent ($\pm 2.5\%$) from August 2011 and nonstore retailers sales were up 10.6 percent ($\pm 3.1\%$) 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 15, 2012 at 8:30 a.m. EDT.

For customized retail time series estimates by industry, visit the Census Bureau's web site at <www.census.gov/timeseries>.

To receive the latest updates on the nation's key economic indicators, download the America's Economy app for Apple and Android smartphones and tablets.

For additional survey information, visit <www.census.gov/retail>.

* 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					
		8 Month Total		2012			2011		2012			2011	
		2012	% Chg. 2011	Aug. ³ (a)	Jul. (p)	Jun. (r)	Aug.	Jul.	Aug. ³ (a)	Jul. (p)	Jun. (r)	Aug. (r)	Jul. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	3,207,701	5.8	421,436	400,945	406,128	398,950	388,749	406,748	403,176	400,635	388,595	388,064
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	2,605,540	5.2	341,109	325,429	329,843	326,393	318,246	332,534	329,930	327,453	321,526	319,714
	Retail	2,854,265	5.6	375,754	355,982	360,752	356,718	345,661	362,696	359,352	356,962	347,312	346,949
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	93,670	95,620	98,373	93,214	(*)	99,525	99,040	97,618	97,169
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	602,161	8.5	80,327	75,516	76,285	72,557	70,503	74,214	73,246	73,182	67,069	68,350
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	546,135	9.1	72,917	68,350	69,062	64,919	63,514	67,453	66,295	66,342	60,055	61,485
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	56,984	56,737	53,711	51,993	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,166	7,223	7,638	6,989	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	62,002	9.2	8,496	7,925	7,745	7,772	7,316	8,038	8,013	7,944	7,416	7,338
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,276	4,201	4,157	4,020	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,649	3,544	3,615	3,296	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	61,787	-0.2	8,116	7,828	7,647	8,293	7,882	8,109	8,223	8,141	8,299	8,277
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,969	5,787	6,384	6,067	(*)	6,231	6,124	6,378	6,340
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,859	1,860	1,909	1,815	(*)	1,992	2,017	1,921	1,937
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	198,252	6.4	24,913	24,982	26,990	24,540	24,256	24,013	23,779	23,504	23,680	23,537
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	21,708	22,636	21,499	21,071	(*)	20,193	20,175	19,980	20,010
445	Food & beverage stores	418,867	3.7	54,243	53,385	53,181	52,054	53,005	52,808	52,833	52,621	51,598	51,415
4451	Grocery stores	376,898	3.4	48,691	47,877	47,579	46,841	47,570	47,365	47,356	47,155	46,377	46,184
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,777	3,861	3,658	3,825	(*)	3,714	3,734	3,611	3,619
446	Health & personal care stores	183,076	2.0	23,238	22,259	22,143	23,032	21,909	23,031	22,995	22,618	22,872	22,727
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	18,420	18,279	19,349	18,406	(*)	19,049	18,767	19,291	19,153
447	Gasoline stations	365,948	3.8	49,227	45,835	45,734	47,602	47,493	45,750	43,363	43,186	44,655	44,511
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	148,097	6.4	20,537	18,274	18,684	19,056	17,776	19,949	19,970	19,826	18,862	18,928
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	643	742	596	639	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,095	3,366	2,909	2,938	(*)	3,485	3,428	3,125	3,243
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,488	7,272	7,685	7,249	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,271	2,166	2,824	2,195	(*)	2,429	2,367	2,274	2,279
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	56,510	7.2	8,781	6,858	7,248	8,239	6,441	7,537	7,536	7,464	7,127	6,904
452	General merchandise stores	404,191	1.9	52,000	49,830	51,398	51,642	50,990	52,424	52,606	52,536	52,868	52,691
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	111,742	-0.2	15,215	13,576	14,351	14,811	14,015	15,316	15,308	15,180	15,295	15,404
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	13,796	14,581	15,051	14,252	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	36,254	37,047	36,831	36,975	(*)	37,298	37,356	37,573	37,287
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	31,565	32,204	32,611	32,727	(*)	32,341	32,464	33,074	32,825
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,689	4,843	4,220	4,248	(*)	4,957	4,892	4,499	4,462
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	79,203	7.9	10,608	10,191	10,502	10,087	9,559	10,166	10,148	9,988	9,733	9,582
454	Nonstore retailers	274,171	11.8	35,268	33,099	33,195	31,844	28,531	36,657	36,640	35,952	33,133	32,689
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,226	26,223	24,965	22,352	(*)	28,569	28,106	25,397	25,143
722	Food services & drinking places ...	353,436	8.0	45,682	44,963	45,376	42,232	43,088	44,052	43,824	43,673	41,283	41,115

(*) 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/eos/www/naics>

(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-13ARIMA-SEATS 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/retail>

(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/retail>

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. 2012 Advance from --		Jul. 2012 Preliminary from --		Jun. 2012 through Aug. 2012 from --	
		Jul. 2012 (p)	Aug. 2011 (r)	Jun. 2012 (r)	Jul. 2011 (r)	Mar. 2012 through May 2012	Jun. 2011 through Aug. 2011
	Retail & food services, total	0.9	4.7	0.6	3.9	-0.3	4.0
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.8	3.4	0.8	3.2	-0.5	3.1
	Retail	0.9	4.4	0.7	3.6	-0.3	3.7
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.3	10.7	0.1	7.2	0.6	8.5
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	1.7	12.3	-0.1	7.8	0.7	9.6
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	0.3	8.4	0.9	9.2	1.3	8.8
443	Electronics & appliance stores	-1.4	-2.3	1.0	-0.7	-1.0	-1.5
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	1.0	1.4	1.2	1.0	-3.5	0.8
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.0	2.3	0.4	2.8	0.4	2.6
4451	Grocery stores	0.0	2.1	0.4	2.5	0.5	2.3
446	Health & personal care stores	0.2	0.7	1.7	1.2	-0.4	0.5
447	Gasoline stations	5.5	2.5	0.4	-2.6	-3.4	-0.7
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	-0.1	5.8	0.7	5.5	1.2	5.2
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	0.0	5.8	1.0	9.2	0.0	6.7
452	General merchandise stores.....	-0.3	-0.8	0.1	-0.2	-0.8	-0.5
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.1	0.1	0.8	-0.6	-0.4	-1.2
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	0.2	4.4	1.6	5.9	0.9	5.4
454	Nonstore retailers	0.0	10.6	1.9	12.1	2.3	11.1
722	Food services & drinking places	0.5	6.7	0.3	6.6	0.0	6.5

(p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

(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/retail>.

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/retail>.

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 Aug. 2012

(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	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
	Retail	0.9	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.0	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	2.5	1.0	0.5	1.3	0.0	0.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	2.6	1.0	0.6	1.5	-0.1	0.5
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	3.2	1.4	0.8	1.8	0.4	0.4
443	Electronics & appliance stores	1.5	0.6	0.5	1.0	-0.6	0.5
444	Building material & garden eq. &....						
	supplies dealers.....	3.3	1.6	1.1	2.0	0.0	0.5
445	Food & beverage stores.....	1.2	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.0	0.1
4451	Grocery stores	1.3	0.2	0.3	0.5	-0.1	0.1
446	Health & personal care stores	1.7	0.3	0.3	0.9	0.0	0.3
447	Gasoline stations	2.4	0.5	0.4	0.9	-0.2	0.5
448	Clothing & clothing accessories						
	stores	2.8	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.1	0.3
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book &						
	music stores.....	4.6	1.6	1.5	2.6	0.0	0.7
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.2	-0.2	0.1
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.2	0.2
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	3.9	2.4	1.4	3.5	0.5	0.7
454	Nonstore retailers	2.2	1.0	0.7	1.9	0.2	0.3
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.1	0.7	0.6	1.1	0.2	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 revisions are based on estimates for the most recent 12 months.