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ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES May 2005

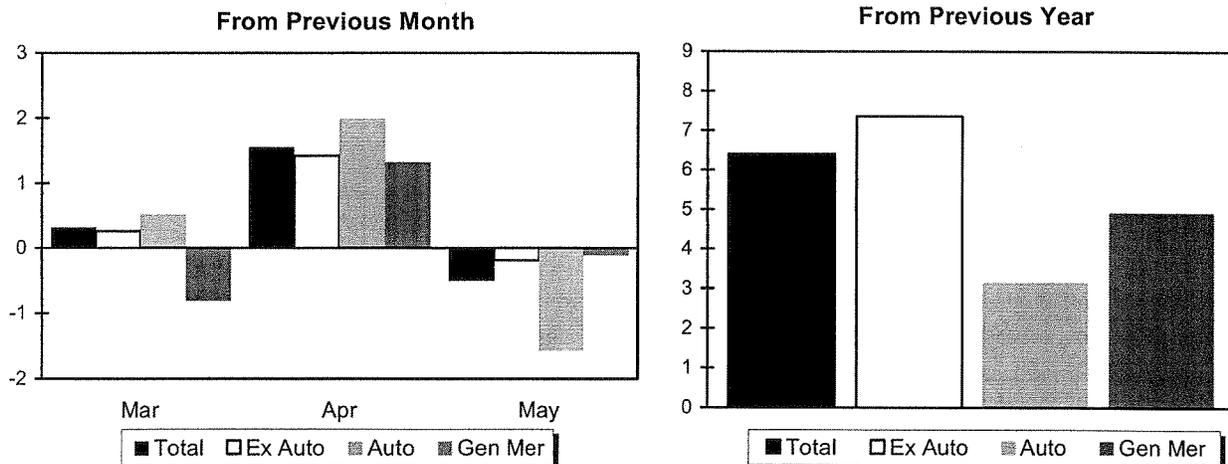
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for May, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$343.6 billion, a decrease of 0.5 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* from the previous month, but up 6.4 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$) from May 2004. Total sales for the March through May 2005 period were up 7.1 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The March to April 2005 percent change was revised from +1.4 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) to +1.5 percent ($\pm 0.3\%$).

Retail trade sales were down 0.5 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$)* from April, but were up 6.3 percent ($\pm 0.8\%$) above last year. Gasoline station sales were up 13.4 percent ($\pm 3.3\%$) from May 2004 and sales of nonstore retailers were up 11.9 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 June is scheduled to be released July 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 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				
		5 Month Total		2005			2004		2005			2004	
		2005	% Chg. 2004	May ³ (a)	Apr. (p)	Mar. (r)	May	Apr.	May ³ (a)	Apr. (p)	Mar. (r)	May (r)	Apr. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	1,643,508	6.5	353,688	343,216	346,309	332,446	318,847	343,623	345,339	340,075	322,966	317,103
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	1,266,439	7.1	271,888	263,149	263,385	253,704	244,520	267,327	267,823	264,071	249,007	246,133
	Retail	1,480,061	6.5	318,936	308,876	312,817	299,767	287,527	310,014	311,639	307,078	291,754	286,062
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	81,409	83,083	81,116	77,586	(*)	87,911	86,833	83,456	82,604
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	377,069	4.5	81,800	80,067	82,924	78,742	74,327	76,296	77,516	76,004	73,959	70,970
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	347,770	4.2	75,634	73,889	76,688	73,150	68,628	70,292	71,459	70,099	68,428	65,485
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	59,636	62,714	60,776	56,855	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,178	6,236	5,592	5,699	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	41,584	3.7	8,684	8,350	8,755	8,140	8,024	8,925	8,892	8,852	8,340	8,573
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,605	4,888	4,542	4,390	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,745	3,867	3,598	3,634	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	37,524	6.0	7,596	7,160	7,802	7,149	6,688	8,322	8,327	8,285	7,829	7,807
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,734	6,152	5,786	5,284	(*)	6,746	6,709	6,303	6,276
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,426	1,650	1,363	1,404	(*)	1,581	1,576	1,526	1,531
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	130,631	9.1	32,161	30,398	26,788	28,965	28,715	27,421	27,297	26,890	25,122	25,190
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	25,395	23,683	24,024	23,696	(*)	24,301	23,922	22,286	22,229
445	Food & beverage stores	209,057	4.0	43,889	41,958	43,135	42,544	40,404	43,162	43,132	42,729	41,264	40,926
4451	Grocery stores	188,546	3.7	39,334	37,640	38,895	38,272	36,352	38,639	38,605	38,282	37,085	36,794
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,671	2,555	2,659	2,529	(*)	2,782	2,765	2,656	2,637
446	Health & personal care stores	89,053	5.6	18,276	17,778	18,608	17,025	17,008	18,131	17,994	17,841	16,923	16,923
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	15,181	15,896	14,561	14,541	(*)	15,365	15,285	14,517	14,498
447	Gasoline stations	144,080	16.2	31,761	31,261	29,910	28,143	25,828	29,963	30,439	29,791	26,425	25,7
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	73,463	4.6	15,997	15,710	15,762	15,357	15,032	16,599	16,736	16,292	15,692	15,457
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	761	791	741	736	(*)	824	835	768	765
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,150	3,115	3,033	3,051	(*)	3,058	2,987	2,914	2,846
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,855	5,975	5,532	5,469	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,057	2,022	2,016	2,139	(*)	2,009	1,929	1,955	1,975
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	29,544	1.5	5,968	5,944	6,078	5,736	5,673	6,836	6,801	6,783	6,548	6,558
452	General merchandise stores	200,399	5.2	43,256	41,393	41,612	41,780	39,274	43,860	43,907	43,336	41,805	40,942
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	79,173	-0.9	16,895	16,633	16,561	17,482	16,713	17,826	17,990	17,826	17,952	17,723
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	16,804	16,724	17,730	16,934	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	24,760	25,051	24,298	22,561	(*)	25,917	25,510	23,853	23,219
45291	Warehouse clubs & superstores	(*)	(*)	(*)	21,542	21,769	21,002	19,355	(*)	22,533	22,168	20,570	19,974
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,218	3,282	3,296	3,206	(*)	3,384	3,342	3,283	3,245
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	44,662	5.3	10,027	8,868	9,049	9,333	8,533	9,533	9,406	9,342	9,110	8,908
454	Nonstore retailers	102,995	12.2	19,521	19,989	22,394	16,853	18,021	20,966	21,192	20,933	18,737	18,585
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,490	13,274	11,330	11,669	(*)	13,189	13,026	12,289	12,018
722	Food services & drinking places ...	163,447	6.5	34,752	34,340	33,492	32,679	31,320	33,609	33,700	32,997	31,212	31,041

(*) 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, stationary, 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					
		May 2005 Advance from --		Apr. 2005 Preliminary from --		Mar. 2005 through May 2005 from --	
		Apr. 2005 (p)	May 2004 (r)	Mar. 2005 (r)	Apr. 2004 (r)	Dec. 2004 through Feb. 2005	Mar. 2004 through May 2004
	Retail & food services,						
	total	-0.5	6.4	1.5	8.9	1.6	7.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	-0.2	7.4	1.4	8.8	1.9	7.7
	Retail	-0.5	6.3	1.5	8.9	1.7	7.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	-1.6	3.2	2.0	9.2	0.8	5.2
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-1.6	2.7	1.9	9.1	0.9	4.9
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	0.4	7.0	0.5	3.7	0.8	4.3
443	Electronics & appliance stores	-0.1	6.3	0.5	6.7	2.4	6.6
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	0.5	9.2	1.5	8.4	3.2	7.8
445	Food & beverage stores	0.1	4.6	0.9	5.4	1.1	4.9
4451	Grocery stores	0.1	4.2	0.8	4.9	0.8	4.4
446	Health & personal care stores	0.8	7.1	0.9	6.3	2.0	6.0
447	Gasoline stations	-1.6	13.4	2.2	20.7	4.5	17.4
8	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	-0.8	5.8	2.7	8.3	1.4	5.2
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	0.5	4.4	0.3	3.7	2.1	3.6
452	General merchandise stores	-0.1	4.9	1.3	7.2	0.8	5.6
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.9	-0.7	0.9	1.5	-1.4	-0.4
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	1.4	4.6	0.7	5.6	1.7	5.5
454	Nonstore retailers	-1.1	11.9	1.2	14.0	1.9	13.4
722	Food services & drinking places	-0.3	7.7	2.1	8.6	1.4	7.4

(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

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 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	0.2	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.2	0.2
	Retail	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.5	0.2	0.1
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	1.8	1.4	0.6	1.6	0.3	0.4
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	1.9	1.5	0.7	1.8	0.4	0.4
442	Furniture & home furn. stores.....	3.7	1.5	1.2	2.1	-0.1	0.6
443	Electronics & appliance stores	2.1	0.6	0.5	1.0	0.3	0.4
444	Building material & garden eq. &... supplies dealers.....	1.8	1.0	0.6	1.3	0.4	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	0.0	0.1
446	Health & personal care stores	3.1	0.5	0.4	0.8	0.1	0.3
447	Gasoline stations	1.6	0.7	0.5	2.0	0.2	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.....	2.6	1.7	1.3	1.8	-0.1	0.6
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.2	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	3.5	3.0	1.7	3.5	0.2	0.6
454	Nonstore retailers	4.2	1.8	0.8	2.2	0.2	0.7
722	Food services & drinking places ..	2.6	0.6	0.7	1.4	0.3	0.4

(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>

