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ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES AUGUST 2015

SPECIAL NOTICE: Beginning with the December 11, 2015 release for the November 2015 data, the estimates will be based on a new sample. A new sample for the Advanced Monthly Retail Trade Survey is selected about once every two and a half to three years. For further information on the sample revision, see our website at http://www.census.gov/retail/marts_sample_revision_faqs.html.

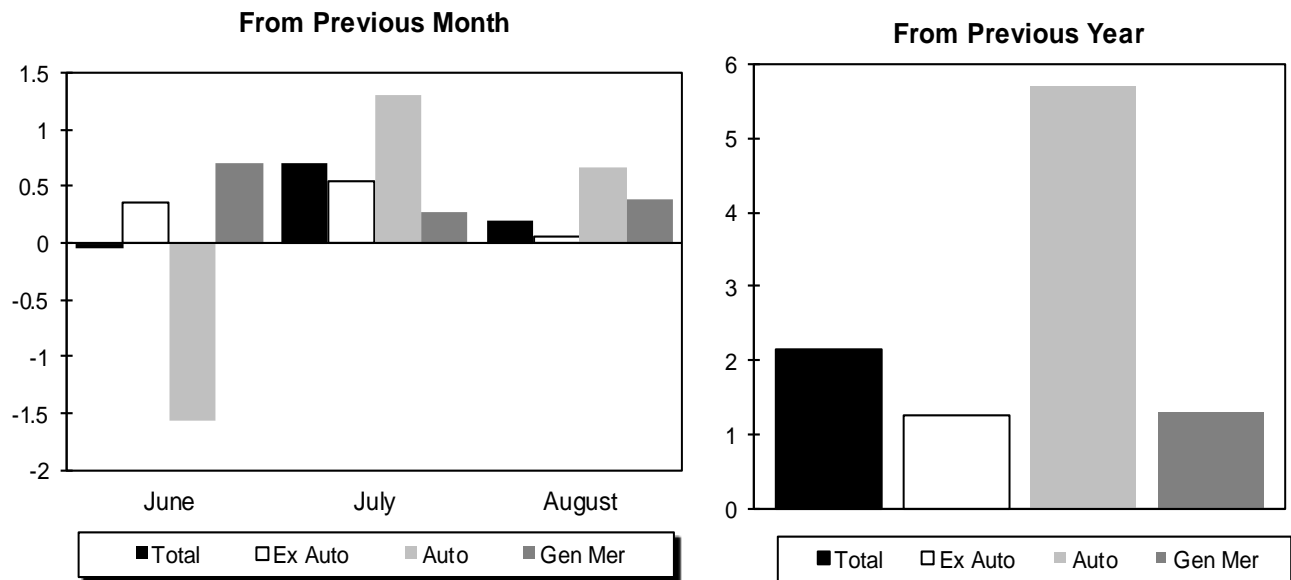
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for August, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$447.7 billion, an increase of 0.2 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$)* from the previous month, and 2.2 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above August 2014. Total sales for the June 2015 through August 2015 period were up 2.2 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) from the same period a year ago. The June 2015 to July 2015 percent change was revised from +0.6 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$) to +0.7 percent ($\pm 0.1\%$).

Retail trade sales were up 0.1 percent ($\pm 0.5\%$)* from July 2015, and 1.4 percent ($\pm 0.7\%$) above last year. Food services and drinking places were up 8.2 percent ($\pm 3.3\%$) from August 2014 and nonstore retailers were up 6.9 percent ($\pm 1.4\%$) 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 4,900 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 60% 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 14, 2015 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 learn more about this release and the other indicators the U.S. Census Bureau publishes, join us for the Investigating Economic Indicators Webinar Series. For more information, visit <http://www.census.gov/econ/webinar>.

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.

The U.S. Census Bureau updated its Application Programming Interface (API) with monthly and quarterly economic indicators. The API allows developers to combine Census Bureau statistics with other data sets to create tools for research on a variety of topics. For more information, visit www.census.gov/developers.

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		2015			2014		2015			2014	
		2015	% Chg. 2014	Aug. ³ (a)	Jul. (p)	Jun. (r)	Aug.	Jul.	Aug. ³ (a)	Jul. (p)	Jun. (r)	Aug. (r)	Jul. (r)
	Retail & food services,												
	total	3,485,746	2.1	457,352	456,635	447,608	450,365	443,153	447,715	446,872	443,734	438,243	435,576
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	2,740,693	0.8	358,077	357,846	351,895	356,572	350,695	354,555	354,325	352,381	350,111	348,849
	Retail	3,072,638	1.3	404,201	403,643	395,674	400,267	394,494	395,401	394,919	391,955	389,886	387,541
	GAFO⁴	(*)	(*)	(*)	102,088	99,657	107,249	99,088	(*)	105,377	105,009	103,774	103,330
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	745,053	7.1	99,275	98,789	95,713	93,793	92,458	93,160	92,547	91,353	88,132	86,727
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	686,620	7.7	91,663	90,966	87,987	86,374	84,938	85,827	85,174	84,037	81,026	79,679
44111	New car dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	76,719	73,192	73,352	71,246	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	7,823	7,726	7,419	7,520	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	66,255	5.3	8,794	8,838	8,350	8,591	8,262	8,580	8,656	8,591	8,276	8,140
4421	Furniture stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,736	4,591	4,667	4,403	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,102	3,759	3,924	3,859	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	Electronics & appliance stores	63,737	-1.4	8,278	8,025	8,019	8,519	8,259	8,640	8,620	8,696	8,861	8,834
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,091	5,981	6,475	6,285	(*)	6,312	6,356	6,501	6,506
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers	221,865	3.5	27,063	30,140	31,800	26,852	29,078	27,153	27,659	27,155	26,921	26,576
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers	(*)	(*)	(*)	26,317	26,903	23,866	25,600	(*)	23,730	23,353	23,239	23,001
445	Food & beverage stores	449,830	3.1	57,686	58,683	56,275	56,553	56,680	57,297	56,882	56,802	55,458	55,298
4451	Grocery stores	402,383	2.9	51,430	52,160	50,073	50,468	50,568	50,971	50,641	50,579	49,478	49,335
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,527	4,243	4,223	4,249	(*)	4,247	4,230	4,072	4,074
446	Health & personal care stores	206,145	4.6	26,175	26,097	25,898	25,107	25,053	26,547	26,334	26,186	25,463	25,383
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	21,862	21,535	20,707	20,980	(*)	21,928	21,775	21,194	21,128
447	Gasoline stations	298,042	-19.6	40,039	41,664	40,839	48,302	49,438	37,142	37,842	38,061	44,849	45,273
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	158,742	2.7	22,329	20,480	19,565	21,855	19,700	21,533	21,452	21,324	20,896	20,815
44811	Men's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	721	778	762	713	(*)	816	821	810	795
44812	Women's clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,598	3,623	3,894	3,574	(*)	3,886	3,879	3,941	3,902
44814	Family clothing stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	8,209	7,586	8,198	7,789	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,849	2,513	3,645	2,807	(*)	2,869	2,820	2,832	2,864
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores	54,283	6.2	8,382	7,043	6,924	8,050	6,494	7,477	7,453	7,358	7,049	6,968
452	General merchandise stores	427,183	0.6	57,457	54,961	54,286	57,071	53,669	56,683	56,464	56,308	55,961	55,836
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	100,545	-2.0	13,749	12,691	12,712	14,156	12,716	13,827	13,852	13,903	14,099	14,141
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) ⁵	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,835	12,864	14,440	12,974	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	42,270	41,574	42,915	40,953	(*)	42,612	42,405	41,862	41,695
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	36,643	35,963	37,598	35,603	(*)	36,864	36,697	36,397	36,219
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,627	5,611	5,317	5,350	(*)	5,748	5,708	5,465	5,476
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	78,405	5.3	10,680	10,585	10,469	10,186	9,936	10,338	10,244	10,048	9,810	9,622
454	Nonstore retailers	303,098	5.7	38,043	38,338	37,536	35,388	35,467	40,851	40,766	40,073	38,210	38,069
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses	(*)	(*)	(*)	33,381	32,509	29,785	29,784	(*)	35,027	34,292	31,485	31,286
722	Food services & drinking places ...	413,108	8.5	53,151	52,992	51,934	50,098	48,659	52,314	51,953	51,779	48,357	48,035

(*) Advance estimates are not available for this kind of business. (NA) Not available (a) Advance estimate (p) Preliminary estimate (r) Revised estimate

(S) Estimate does not meet publication standards because of high sampling variability (coefficient of variation is greater than 30%), poor response quality (total quantity response rate is less than 50%), or other concerns about the estimate's quality.

(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. 2015 Advance from --		Jul. 2015 Preliminary from --		Jun. 2015 through Aug. 2015 from --	
		Jul. 2015 (p)	Aug. 2014 (r)	Jun. 2015 (r)	Jul. 2014 (r)	Mar. 2015 through May 2015	Jun. 2014 through Aug. 2014
	Retail & food services, total	0.2	2.2	0.7	2.6	1.3	2.2
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts)	0.1	1.3	0.6	1.6	1.4	1.2
	Retail	0.1	1.4	0.8	1.9	1.3	1.4
441	Motor vehicle & parts dealers	0.7	5.7	1.3	6.7	1.0	6.1
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	0.8	5.9	1.4	6.9	0.9	6.3
442	Furniture & home furn. stores	-0.9	3.7	0.8	6.3	0.4	4.9
443	Electronics & appliance stores	0.2	-2.5	-0.9	-2.4	0.2	-1.9
444	Building material & garden eq. & supplies dealers.....	-1.8	0.9	1.9	4.1	-0.1	1.8
445	Food & beverage stores.....	0.7	3.3	0.1	2.9	0.7	2.9
4451	Grocery stores	0.7	3.0	0.1	2.6	0.6	2.7
446	Health & personal care stores	0.8	4.3	0.6	3.7	1.8	3.7
447	Gasoline stations	-1.8	-17.2	-0.6	-16.4	2.5	-16.7
448	Clothing & clothing accessories stores	0.4	3.0	0.6	3.1	1.0	3.1
451	Sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores.....	0.3	6.1	1.3	7.0	1.7	6.4
452	General merchandise stores.....	0.4	1.3	0.3	1.1	1.7	1.2
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	-0.2	-1.9	-0.4	-2.0	-0.2	-1.7
453	Miscellaneous store retailers	0.9	5.4	2.0	6.5	3.1	5.3
454	Nonstore retailers	0.2	6.9	1.7	7.1	1.9	6.0
722	Food services & drinking places	0.7	8.2	0.3	8.2	1.3	8.3

(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 4,900 employer firms selected from the larger Monthly Retail Trade Survey (MRTS). Firms responding to MARTS account for approximately 60% 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 $\pm 1.753 \times 0.9$ percent or ± 1.6 percent, and the 90 percent confidence interval is -0.4 percent to +2.8 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 $\pm 1.753 \times CV \times$ (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. 2015

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

(1) Estimated measures of sampling variability are based on estimates not adjusted for seasonal variation or holiday or trading day variation. 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.