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Timothy Winters / Ian Thomas  
Service Sector Statistics Division  
(301) 763-2713

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## ADVANCE MONTHLY SALES FOR RETAIL AND FOOD SERVICES FEBRUARY 2010

**Intention to Revise Retail Estimates:** Monthly retail sales estimates will be revised based on the results of the 2008 Annual Retail Trade Survey. Revised not adjusted estimates and corresponding adjusted data are scheduled for release on April 30, 2010.

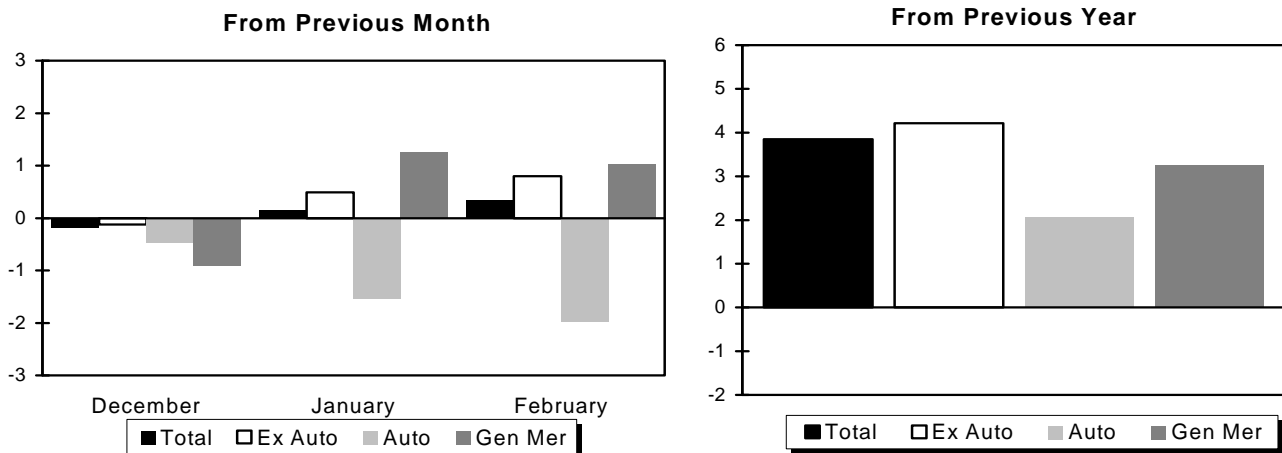
The U.S. Census Bureau announced today that advance estimates of U.S. retail and food services sales for February, adjusted for seasonal variation and holiday and trading-day differences, but not for price changes, were \$355.5 billion, an increase of 0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ )\* from the previous month and 3.9 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ) above February 2009. Total sales for the December 2009 through February 2010 period were up 4.5 percent ( $\pm 0.3\%$ ) from the same period a year ago. The December 2009 to January 2010 percent change was revised from +0.5 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ )\* to +0.1 percent ( $\pm 0.3\%$ )\*.

Retail trade sales were up 0.3 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ )\* from January 2010 and 4.4 percent ( $\pm 0.5\%$ ) above last year. Gasoline stations sales were up 24.0 percent ( $\pm 1.5\%$ ) from February 2009 and nonstore retailers sales were up 11.8 percent ( $\pm 1.7\%$ ) 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 March is scheduled to be released April 14, 2010 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 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 <sup>1</sup> code	Kind of Business	Not Adjusted							Adjusted <sup>2</sup>				
		2 Month Total		2010		2009			2010		2009		
		2010	% Chg. 2009	Feb. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Jan. (p)	Dec. (r)	Feb.	Jan.	Feb. <sup>3</sup> (a)	Jan. (p)	Dec. (r)	Feb. (r)	Jan. (r)
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>												
	<b>total</b> .....	638,470	3.4	316,673	321,797	408,925	304,056	313,593	355,546	354,339	353,817	342,356	340,439
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	534,726	3.9	264,152	270,574	351,287	252,560	262,237	297,662	295,288	293,849	285,640	283,159
	Retail .....	567,672	3.9	281,722	285,950	370,921	269,015	277,402	317,306	316,446	315,927	304,018	302,263
	<b>GAFO<sup>4</sup></b> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	83,446	138,315	82,918	83,323	(*)	95,190	94,208	94,957	94,321
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	103,744	0.9	52,521	51,223	57,638	51,496	51,356	57,884	59,051	59,968	56,716	57,280
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	92,471	1.7	46,747	45,724	51,524	45,544	45,385	51,483	52,738	53,671	50,103	50,653
44111	New car dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	36,984	42,193	35,304	36,032	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4413	Auto parts, acc. & tire stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,499	6,114	5,952	5,971	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	14,161	-3.3	7,084	7,077	9,333	7,219	7,428	7,854	7,803	7,883	8,021	8,013
4421	Furniture stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	4,110	4,428	4,296	4,230	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4422	Home furnishings stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,967	4,905	2,923	3,198	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	16,561	-3.3	8,459	8,102	13,532	8,481	8,641	8,953	8,636	8,453	9,096	9,129
44311, 13	Appl., T.V. & camera.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	6,224	10,551	6,759	6,907	(*)	6,657	6,549	7,260	7,317
44312	Computer & software stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,878	2,981	1,722	1,734	(*)	1,979	1,904	1,836	1,812
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	34,780	-6.9	17,640	17,140	21,131	18,457	18,918	23,429	23,323	23,516	24,392	24,680
4441	Building mat. & sup. dealers .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	14,692	17,770	15,944	16,497	(*)	19,006	19,336	20,441	20,570
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	94,793	2.1	45,919	48,874	54,050	44,201	48,629	50,547	49,888	49,499	48,693	49,072
4451	Grocery stores .....	85,887	2.3	41,455	44,432	46,807	39,800	44,177	45,207	44,610	44,199	43,450	43,870
4453	Beer, wine & liquor stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,949	4,733	2,897	3,036	(*)	3,473	3,475	3,486	3,506
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	41,080	1.4	20,142	20,938	23,985	19,843	20,664	21,269	21,409	21,492	20,931	20,726
44611	Pharmacies & drug stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	17,372	19,547	16,485	17,321	(*)	17,654	17,738	17,316	17,235
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	61,289	26.4	29,664	31,625	32,593	23,801	24,681	34,776	34,677	34,490	28,034	26,798
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	28,621	0.3	15,005	13,616	27,969	14,930	13,605	17,700	17,598	17,337	17,827	17,285
44811	Men's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	589	1,133	589	618	(*)	(S)	(S)	(S)	(S)
44812	Women's clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	2,226	4,082	2,343	2,233	(*)	2,937	2,909	2,936	2,900
44814	Family clothing stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	5,093	10,737	5,687	5,382	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4482	Shoe stores .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	1,717	2,910	1,930	1,675	(*)	2,198	2,206	2,178	2,107
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	13,125	2.3	5,930	7,195	12,408	5,727	7,097	7,450	7,364	7,412	7,222	7,264
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	89,847	3.2	45,313	44,534	70,799	43,640	43,424	51,167	50,650	50,022	49,558	49,336
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	25,658	-0.5	13,186	12,472	26,903	13,127	12,653	15,913	15,733	15,704	15,892	15,851
4521	Department stores (incl. L.D.) <sup>5</sup> .....	(*)	(*)	(*)	12,783	27,548	13,495	13,035	(*)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)
4529	Other general merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	32,062	43,896	30,513	30,771	(*)	34,917	34,318	33,666	33,485
45291	Warehouse clubs & supercenters.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	28,663	38,245	27,188	27,670	(*)	30,787	30,426	29,844	29,753
45299	All oth. gen. merch. stores.....	(*)	(*)	(*)	3,399	5,651	3,325	3,101	(*)	4,130	3,892	3,822	3,732
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	16,843	-0.3	8,512	8,331	11,603	8,570	8,331	9,582	9,352	9,637	9,654	9,031
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	52,828	11.7	25,533	27,295	35,880	22,650	24,628	26,695	26,695	26,218	23,874	23,649
4541	Elect. shopping & m/o houses ....	(*)	(*)	(*)	18,416	27,089	15,118	16,379	(*)	19,183	18,957	16,911	16,765
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ...	70,798	-0.6	34,951	35,847	38,004	35,041	36,191	38,240	37,893	37,890	38,338	38,176

(\*) 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-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/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 <sup>1</sup>					
		Feb. 2010 Advance from --		Jan. 2010 Preliminary from --		Dec. 2009 through Feb. 2010 from --	
		Jan. 2010 (p)	Feb. 2009 (r)	Dec. 2009 (r)	Jan. 2009 (r)	Sep. 2009 through Nov. 2009	Dec. 2008 through Feb. 2009
	<b>Retail &amp; food services,</b>						
	<b>total</b> .....	0.3	3.9	0.1	4.1	1.7	4.5
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ...	0.8	4.2	0.5	4.3	1.8	4.5
	Retail .....	0.3	4.4	0.2	4.7	1.9	5.1
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers</b> .....	-2.0	2.1	-1.5	3.1	1.3	4.0
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers ..	-2.4	2.8	-1.7	4.1	1.5	5.1
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores</b> .....	0.7	-2.1	-1.0	-2.6	1.5	-2.3
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores</b> .....	3.7	-1.6	2.2	-5.4	1.7	-2.8
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp; supplies dealers</b> .....	0.5	-3.9	-0.8	-5.5	0.9	-4.6
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores</b> .....	1.3	3.8	0.8	1.7	0.7	2.7
4451	Grocery stores .....	1.3	4.0	0.9	1.7	0.8	2.7
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores</b> .....	-0.7	1.6	-0.4	3.3	-0.2	3.0
447	<b>Gasoline stations</b> .....	0.3	24.0	0.5	29.4	7.1	28.7
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores</b> .....	0.6	-0.7	1.5	1.8	-0.1	1.4
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores</b> .....	1.2	3.2	-0.6	1.4	1.7	3.0
452	<b>General merchandise stores</b> .....	1.0	3.2	1.3	2.7	1.0	2.7
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	1.1	0.1	0.2	-0.7	0.7	-0.7
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers</b> .....	2.5	-0.7	-3.0	3.6	-0.9	2.5
454	<b>Nonstore retailers</b> .....	0.0	11.8	1.8	12.9	5.8	12.2
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places</b> ....	0.9	-0.3	0.0	-0.7	0.3	-0.3

(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 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

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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 Feb 2010**

(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 .....	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.3	-0.1	0.1
	Total (excl. motor vehicle & parts) ..	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.1
	<b>Retail .....</b>	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.3	-0.1	0.1
441	<b>Motor vehicle &amp; parts dealers .....</b>	2.2	1.6	0.7	1.5	-0.7	0.8
4411, 4412	Auto & other motor veh. dealers .	2.5	1.8	0.8	1.6	-0.7	0.9
442	<b>Furniture &amp; home furn. stores.....</b>	2.7	1.6	0.8	1.9	-0.1	0.6
443	<b>Electronics &amp; appliance stores .....</b>	1.5	0.7	0.5	1.0	0.4	0.9
444	<b>Building material &amp; garden eq. &amp;... supplies dealers.....</b>	2.7	1.2	0.9	1.1	0.0	0.4
445	<b>Food &amp; beverage stores.....</b>	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.1	0.1
4451	Grocery stores .....	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2
446	<b>Health &amp; personal care stores .....</b>	1.9	0.4	0.4	0.8	-0.2	0.4
447	<b>Gasoline stations .....</b>	2.4	0.6	0.4	0.9	0.4	0.6
448	<b>Clothing &amp; clothing accessories stores .....</b>	2.5	0.7	0.6	1.0	-0.3	0.5
451	<b>Sporting goods, hobby, book &amp; music stores.....</b>	3.1	1.6	1.1	1.8	-0.2	0.4
452	<b>General merchandise stores.....</b>	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	-0.2	0.3
4521	Department stores (ex. L.D.).....	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-0.2	0.3
453	<b>Miscellaneous store retailers .....</b>	3.3	2.4	1.6	3.2	1.2	1.1
454	<b>Nonstore retailers .....</b>	2.0	0.8	0.5	1.0	0.2	0.3
722	<b>Food services &amp; drinking places ..</b>	1.9	0.8	0.6	1.2	0.1	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 revisions 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/retail>