

# Bulletin

Canadian Data

May 2004 Retail Sales • Released July 26, 2004

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## Who's Hot, Who's Not?

May heralds the start of summer for Canadians. Consumers are flush with expectations for a hot summer and the spending frenzy begins: patio and garden furniture; plants; summer fashions; home renovations; steaks; beer; and gasoline. May is traditionally the second largest retail month after December and retailers are right to pin their hopes on a strong May ramping up for a robust summer.

May's retail sales numbers read like a good summer romance. There are a number of different stories at play. The mild, wet weather experienced during the month helped to dampen sales for a number of traditional summer items. However, the sales growth numbers for May 2004 were up against some exceptionally solid numbers in May 2003. Overall, most retailers should be feeling that sales are increasing but not at the same pace as last year.

All Stores advanced 0.4% bringing year-to-date sales to 3.8% ahead of last year. The combination of very low automotive sales and very high gasoline sales had the overall impact of lowering sales by 1.8%. All Stores Less Automotive, Food, and Pharmacies fared better. These retailers gained 3.3% in May. The slower May brought year-to-date sales down to 7.8%.

So, who's hot on the retail scene? Building and Outdoor Home Supplies Stores (6.9%) and Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores (6.4%) continued to reign over the retail world. Miscellaneous Store

Retailers, which includes Office Supplies, topped the charts at 10.3%.

The 'not hot' stores include Other General Merchandise Stores. This category (e.g., Warehouse Clubs and Superstores), which had been growing at an average rate of 13%, skipped a beat and only gained 1.5% on the month. Shoes, Clothing Accessories, and Jewellery (-5.1%) and Sporting Goods, Hobby, Music, and Book Stores (-4.1%) were unable to impress consumers and, as a group, lost sales.

Regionally, the west is hot and the east is not. Individually, all four western provinces posted gains ranging from 0.8% in Manitoba to 8.1% in Alberta for May 2004. Ontario continues to languish with slow to negative sales growth. In May, Ontario sales fell by 1.4% in May bringing year-to-date sales to 1.8%. Despite sustained job growth nationally, Ontario appears to be ill-affected by the higher Canadian dollar.

The Consumer Confidence Index took a hit in the spring, falling by just over 7

points to 117. Overall, the cooling off period this spring brings into line more sustainable growth patterns for most retailers. This is a trend that should continue for most of the rest of the year.

## NAICS RECAP

As stated last month, Statistics Canada has shifted from SIC recording to NAICS. This means that new retailers have been added (e.g., big box retailers) and some have fallen off. Note that Statistics Canada will be releasing more detailed information within the next year.

## Dynamic Digital Merchandising

Looking for new ways to attract your customers? Effective management, scheduling, and distribution of your marketing content is essential. Read this two page brief to learn more. Click here to download.

[Dynamic Digital Merchandising](#)

**RELEASE DATE OF THE NEXT NATIONAL RETAIL BULLETIN**  
August 23, 2004

## Please note:

The J.C. Williams Group National Retail Bulletin compares the latest monthly release of "raw" (i.e., unadjusted for seasonality) retail sales figures to those in the *same calendar month of the previous year*. Statistics Canada also reports seasonally adjusted sales that are compared to the *previous month within the current calendar year* to measure change in Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Although other sources use seasonally adjusted figures, J.C. Williams Group believes that using raw figures and making comparisons to the previous year's performance more accurately reflects the seasonality of the retail industry and, therefore, are more useful in analysis.

## Retail Sales by Store Category

Sales for the Month of: May	2004	2003	2004/2003
<b>All Stores</b>	<b>30,503.9</b>	<b>30,369.5</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
Automotive	10,892.9	11,186.0	-2.6%
<b>All Stores Less Automotive</b>	<b>19,611.0</b>	<b>19,183.5</b>	<b>2.2%</b>
Food and Beverage Stores	6,919.2	6,896.8	0.3%
Pharmacies and Personal Care Stores	1,867.5	1,793.3	4.1%
<b>All Stores Less Automotive, Food, Pharmacies</b>	<b>12,691.9</b>	<b>12,286.7</b>	<b>3.3%</b>
<b>General Merchandise Stores</b>	<b>3,608.4</b>	<b>3,532.8</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
Department Stores	1,784.6	1,736.7	2.8%
Other General Merchandise Stores	1,823.8	1,796.0	1.5%
<b>Furniture, Home Furnishings and Electronics Stores</b>	<b>1,881.2</b>	<b>1,808.1</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores	1,064.3	1,000.0	6.4%
Computer, Software, Home Electronics, and Appliance Stores	816.9	808.0	1.3%
<b>Clothing and Accessories Stores</b>	<b>1,694.2</b>	<b>1,700.4</b>	<b>-0.4%</b>
Clothing Stores	1,278.5	1,262.3	1.3%
Shoes, Clothing Accessories, and Jewellery Stores	415.7	438.1	-5.1%
<b>Sporting Goods, Hobby, Music, and Book Stores</b>	<b>651.5</b>	<b>679.1</b>	<b>-4.1%</b>
<b>Building and Outdoor Home Supplies Stores</b>	<b>2,166.5</b>	<b>2,027.5</b>	<b>6.9%</b>
<b>Miscellaneous Store Retailers</b>	<b>822.5</b>	<b>745.6</b>	<b>10.3%</b>

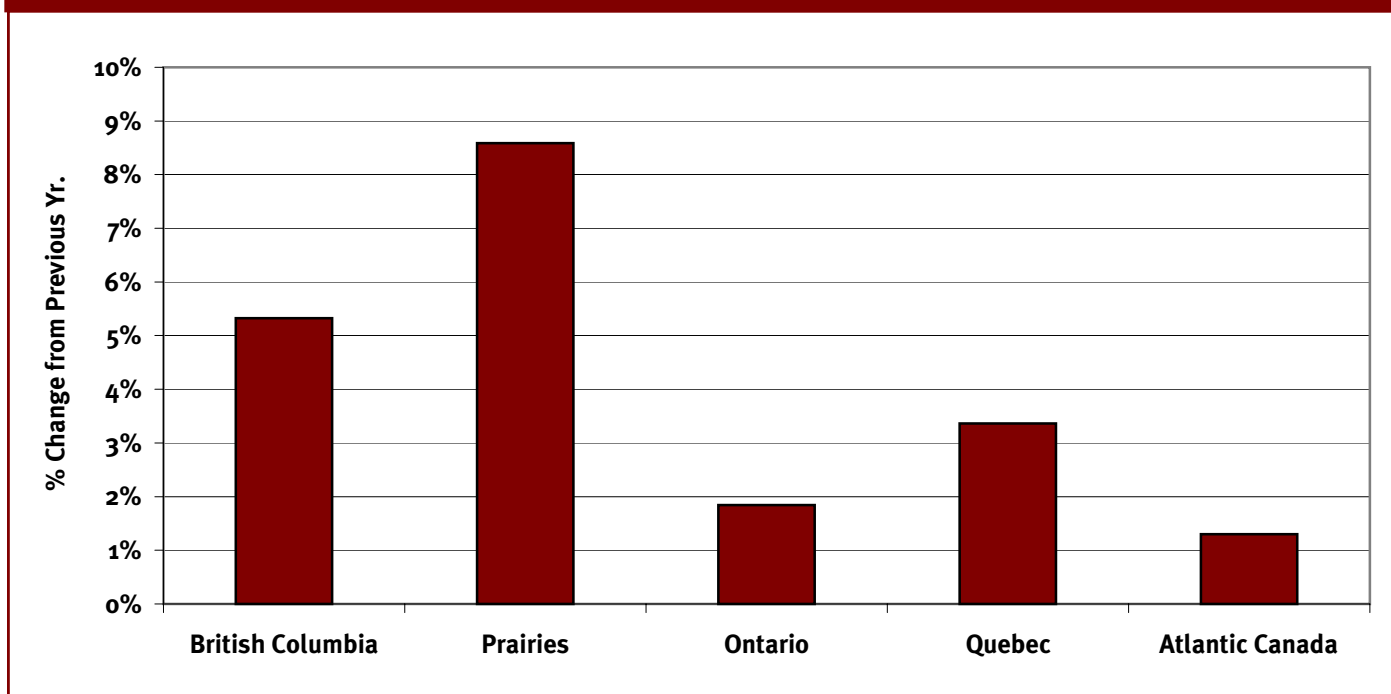
Year-to-date Sales	2004	2003	2004/2003
<b>All Stores</b>	<b>132,909.5</b>	<b>128,012.6</b>	<b>3.8%</b>
Automotive	46,578.9	46,739.6	-0.3%
<b>All Stores Less Automotive</b>	<b>86,330.6</b>	<b>81,273.0</b>	<b>6.2%</b>
Food and Beverage Stores	31,921.5	30,802.9	3.6%
Pharmacies and Personal Care Stores	9,179.4	8,486.6	8.2%
<b>All Stores Less Automotive, Food, Pharmacies</b>	<b>54,409.1</b>	<b>50,470.0</b>	<b>7.8%</b>
<b>General Merchandise Stores</b>	<b>15,091.5</b>	<b>14,114.8</b>	<b>6.9%</b>
Department Stores	7,618.7	7,120.8	7.0%
Other General Merchandise Stores	7,472.9	6,994.0	11.7%
<b>Furniture, Home Furnishings and Electronics Stores</b>	<b>8,810.0</b>	<b>8,119.4</b>	<b>8.5%</b>
Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores	4,779.0	4,278.0	11.7%
Computer, Software, Home Electronics, and Appliance Stores	4,031.0	3,841.4	4.9%
<b>Clothing and Accessories Stores</b>	<b>7,058.0</b>	<b>6,784.5</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
Clothing Stores	5,343.4	5,082.4	5.1%
Shoes, Clothing Accessories, and Jewellery Stores	1,714.5	1,702.1	0.7%
<b>Sporting Goods, Hobby, Music, and Book Stores</b>	<b>3,134.7</b>	<b>3,073.2</b>	<b>2.0%</b>
<b>Building and Outdoor Home Supplies Stores</b>	<b>7,401.4</b>	<b>6,760.8</b>	<b>9.5%</b>
<b>Miscellaneous Store Retailers</b>	<b>3,734.1</b>	<b>3,130.8</b>	<b>19.3%</b>

ALL DOLLAR VALUES EXPRESSED IN MILLIONS OF CANADIAN DOLLARS; UNADJUSTED FIGURES; SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

## Retail Trade, Canada, All Stores, by Region

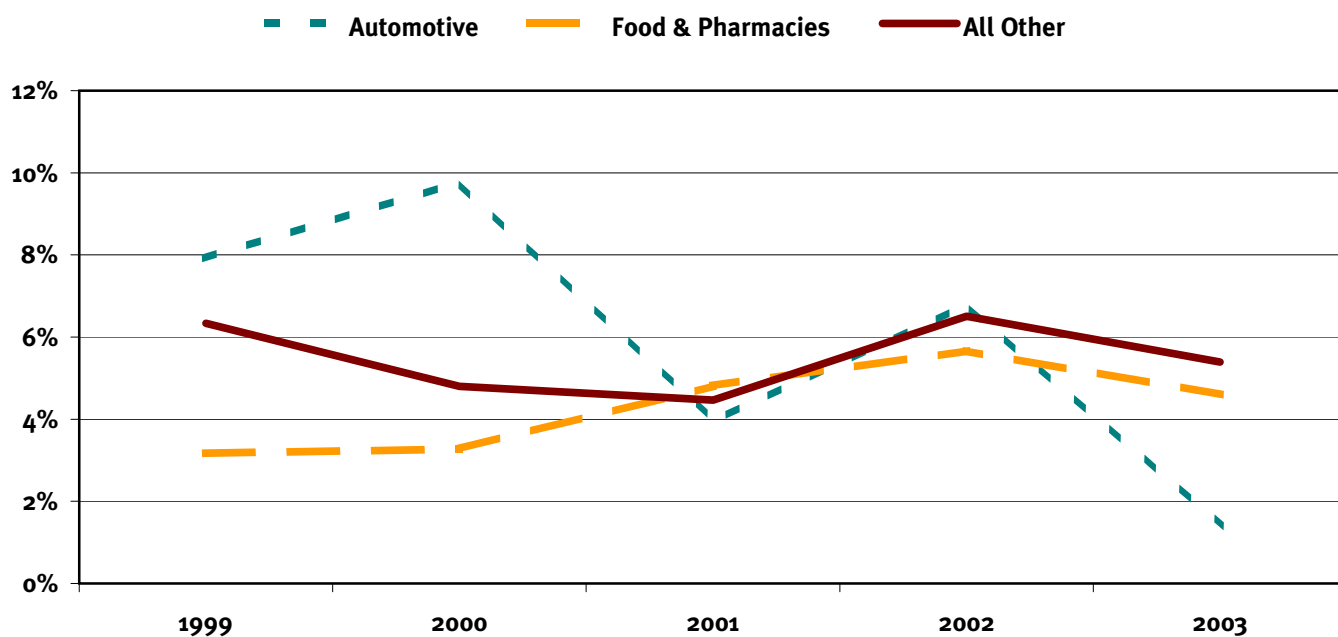
	Year-to-date 2004	Same Period 2003	Change 2004/2003
British Columbia	18,088.9	17,174.2	5.3%
Prairies	25,135.4	23,147.8	8.6%
Ontario	49,155.7	48,265.6	1.8%
Quebec	30,519.8	29,526.4	3.4%
Atlantic Canada	9,555.9	9,433.1	1.3%

**Percentage Change in Retail Trade, All Stores, By Region  
Year-to-date Compared to Same Period Last Year**

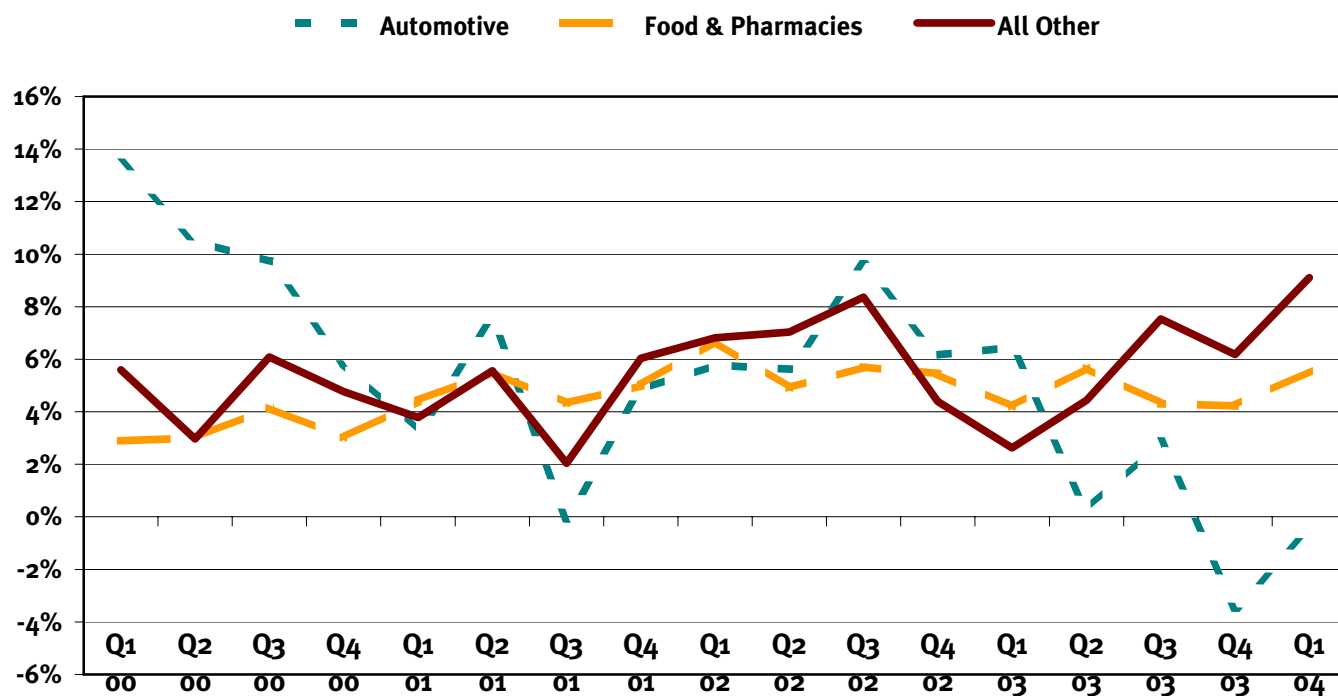


**For more detailed information on retail sales, please contact J.C. Williams Group**

Canadian Retail Sales by Major Product Category, Year Over Year (1999–2003)



Canadian Retail Sales by Major Product Category, From the Same Quarter a Year Earlier



Consumer Price Index

June 2004

vs.

June 2003

2.5%

Canadian Consumer Confidence Index 1999–2004



Source: Conference Board of Canada

Canadian Consumer Expenditures Index 1999–2004

