

Bulletin

U.S. Data

Advance April 2007 Retail Sales • Released May 11, 2007

APRIL BREATHER

Consumers took a breather from their break-neck spending spree in April. Total retail sales gained 3.1% with All Stores, less Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers and Gasoline Stations only pulling ahead 2.7%. Mild weather, an early Easter, and confidence jitters are all partly to blame.

The housing market's troubles have hit the Building Material and Garden Equipment Stores hard. Sales fell 3.8% in April. For first quarter results the larger sub-category Building Material and Supplies Stores fell 6.1% whereas Hardware Stores pushed ahead an impressive 14.6%. The same is true for home furniture and furnishings. While the home building and investment category is soft, expenditure on home decorating is still relatively strong. Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores performed well, rising 5.8% in April. This is above year-to-date growth.

Despite the housing market troubles, most other indicators point to a robust retail market. A well performing job market equates to money to spend at retailers.

Other categories that are well above the curve include Health and Personal Care Stores, where sales grew 8.7% higher than April last year. Again, this is higher than year-to-date growth.

Clothing Store retailers had a disappointing month in April. Sales grew by 2.3% but for the first quarter

sales growth averaged 8.3%. Family Clothing Stores and Men's Clothing Stores have been the real winners. In the first quarter, the larger category, Family Clothing Stores gained 11.5% and the relatively small category, Men's Clothing Stores gained 13.9%.

While Sporting Goods has been a star performer, the other retailers in the Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores category have weighed down the growth into negative territory. Sales fell 0.8% in April however, Sporting Goods Stores have gained 6.8% in the first quarter.

There are mixed results for General Merchandise Stores. Sales for April grew by 1.8% which was well off their year-to-date growth of 4.8%. Most discount, conventional, and national department stores experienced a weak April (on same store sales). Wal-Mart, Target, Macy's, JC Penney, and Dillards, all reported negative comparable store growth. Alternatively, luxury department stores beat the trend.

Comparable store growth ranged from 1.0% for Neiman Marcus to 3.1% for Nordstrom, and 11.7% for Saks. The warehouse club Costco's sales growth was also positive and more in-line with the Warehouse Clubs and Superstores growth for the first quarter (10.5%).

Electronic Shopping and Mail-Order Houses continued a consistent positive sales growth trend. Sales for the first quarter advanced 7.4%.

RELEASE DATE OF THE NEXT NATIONAL RETAIL BULLETIN:

June 13, 2007

Please note:

The J.C. Williams Group National Retail Bulletin compares the latest monthly release of "raw" (i.e., unadjusted for seasonality, holiday, and trading day) retail sales figures to those in the *same calendar month of the previous year*. The U.S. Census Bureau 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. Definitions can be found on the U.S. Census Website: www.census.gov.

Retail Sales by Store Category

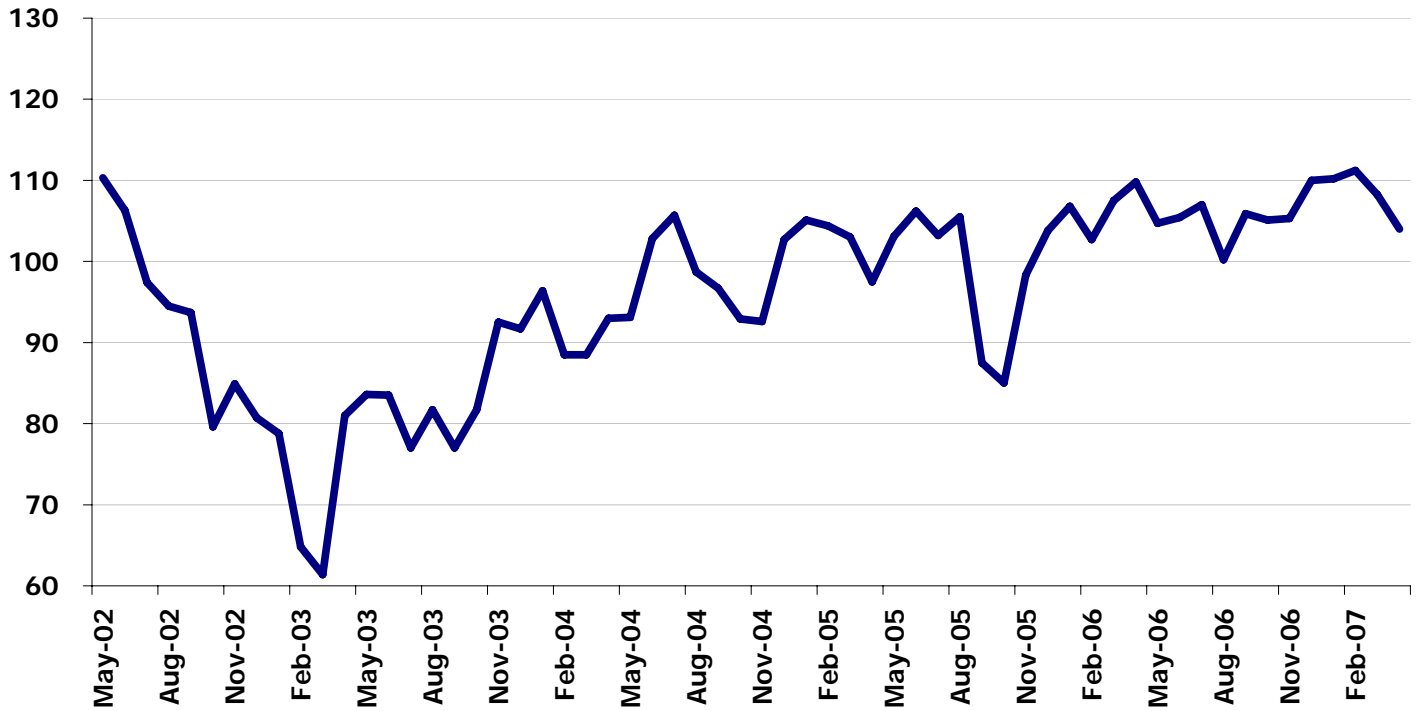
Sales for the Month of April	2007	2006	2007/2006
All Stores	365,409	354,484	3.1%
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	77,812	76,173	2.2%
Gasoline Stations	35,377	34,696	2.0%
Food and Beverage Stores	45,847	43,687	4.9%
Grocery Stores	41,043	39,104	5.0%
Health and Personal Care Stores	19,389	17,833	8.7%
Building Material and Garden Equipment Stores	32,118	33,377	-3.8%
General Merchandise Stores	44,822	44,047	1.8%
Department Stores (excluding leased departments)	16,033	16,709	-4.0%
Clothing and Accessories Stores	17,369	16,975	2.3%
Furniture, Home Furnishings, Electronics and Appliance Stores	17,547	16,747	4.8%
Furniture and Home Furnishing Stores	9,664	9,136	5.8%
Electronics and Appliance Stores	7,883	7,611	3.6%
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book and Music Stores	6,282	6,331	-0.8%
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	9,653	9,148	5.5%
Nonstore Retailers	22,559	20,111	12.2%
Food Services and Drinking Places	36,634	35,359	3.6%

Year to Date Sales Ending April	2007	2006	2007/2006
All Stores	1,406,374	1,354,071	3.9%
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	300,242	292,035	2.8%
Gasoline Stations	127,219	125,549	1.3%
Food and Beverage Stores	180,636	170,124	6.2%
Grocery Stores	162,292	153,035	6.0%
Health and Personal Care Stores	77,625	72,071	7.7%
Building Material and Garden Equipment Stores	108,774	113,355	-4.0%
General Merchandise Stores	172,863	164,898	4.8%
Department Stores (excluding leased departments)	61,074	61,781	-1.1%
Clothing and Accessories Stores	65,053	61,009	6.6%
Furniture, Home Furnishings, Electronics and Appliance Stores	72,857	69,840	4.3%
Furniture and Home Furnishing Stores	38,966	37,126	5.0%
Electronics and Appliance Stores	33,891	32,714	3.6%
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book and Music Stores	25,616	25,757	-0.5%
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	37,546	36,635	2.5%
Nonstore Retailers	95,708	87,181	9.8%
Food Services and Drinking Places	142,235	135,617	4.9%

Source: US Census Bureau. All Values are expressed in millions of US dollars and are not seasonally adjusted

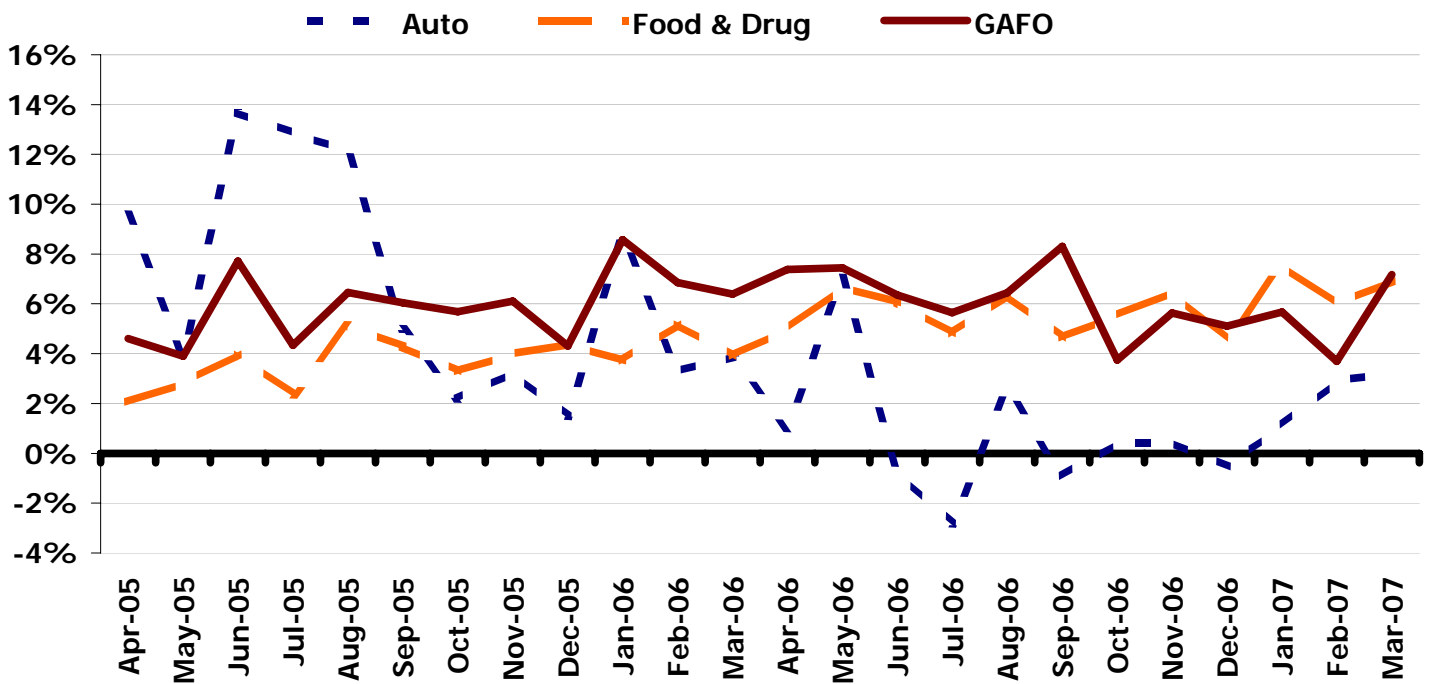
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U.S. Consumer Confidence Index



Source: U.S. Conference Board

U.S. Monthly Retail Sales by Major Category Percentage Change from Same Month, Previous Year



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Retail Sales by Store Category

Revised Year to Date Sales Ending March	2007	2006	2007/2006
All Stores	1,040,965	999,587	4.1%
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	222,430	215,862	3.0%
Gasoline Stations	91,842	90,853	1.1%
Food and Beverage Stores	134,789	126,437	6.6%
Grocery Stores	121,249	113,931	6.4%
Beer, Wine and Liquor Stores	8,638	7,992	8.1%
Health and Personal Care Stores	58,236	54,238	7.4%
Pharmacies and Drug Stores	49,441	45,549	8.5%
Building Material and Garden Equipment Stores	76,656	79,978	-4.2%
Building Material and Supplies Stores	68,135	72,568	-6.1%
Hardware Stores	4,658	4,063	14.6%
GAFO (general merchandise, apparel, furniture, and other)	261,274	247,492	5.6%
General Merchandise Stores	128,041	120,851	5.9%
Department Stores (excluding leased departments)	45,041	45,072	-0.1%
<i>Discount Department Stores (excluding leased departments)</i>	27,996	27,541	1.7%
<i>Conventional and National Dept. Stores (ex. Leased depts.)</i>	17,045	17,531	-2.8%
Warehouse Clubs and Superstores	73,580	66,611	10.5%
All Other General Merchandise Stores	9,420	9,168	2.7%
Clothing and Accessories Stores	47,684	44,034	8.3%
Men's Clothing Stores	2,224	1,952	13.9%
Women's Clothing Stores	8,753	8,362	4.7%
Family Clothing Stores	17,929	16,078	11.5%
Shoe Stores	6,065	5,882	3.1%
Jewellery Stores	6,229	6,118	1.8%
Furniture, Home Furnishings, Electronics and Appliance Stores	55,310	53,093	4.2%
Furniture Stores	16,211	15,457	4.9%
Home Furnishing Stores	13,091	12,533	4.5%
Household Appliance Stores	4,237	4,145	2.2%
Radio, TV and Other Electronics Stores	15,749	15,137	4.0%
Computer and Software Stores	5,284	5,048	4.7%
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book and Music Stores	19,334	19,426	-0.5%
Sporting Goods Stores	7,776	7,278	6.8%
Book Stores	4,186	4,359	-4.0%
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	27,893	27,487	1.5%
Nonstore Retailers	73,149	67,070	9.1%
Electronic Shopping and Mail-Order Houses	46,143	42,966	7.4%
Fuel Dealers	14,630	12,149	20.4%
Food Services and Drinking Places	105,601	100,258	5.3%

Source: US Census Bureau. All Values are expressed in millions of US dollars and are not seasonally adjusted

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