

Bulletin

April 2009 Retail Sales • Released June 19, 2009

APRIL SALES REMAIN COOL AS CONSUMER CONFIDENCE WARMS UP

Consumer confidence was on the rise for the third month in a row this year. Up over six points from April, May's consumer confidence climbed to 81.4.

While All Stores sales fell by -6.7% for the month of April, the positive trending in consumer confidence provides some light at the end of what has been a dark tunnel for retailers. Even more encouraging is that All Stores Less Automotive sales were up 1.9%.

Sales of Food and Beverage Stores grew considerably by 8.7%, accounted for largely by rising food costs of 7.1% in the 12-month period to April. Retailers like Loblaw Companies Ltd., also posted positive, first quarter, sales gains of 2.1% over last year.

General Merchandise Stores were up, by 4.3% for the month. Despite indications of sustained growth in this sector, Walmart Canada continued to seek a larger piece of the pie, as it expands some of its eco-friendly private label products.

Pharmacies and Personal Care Stores sales grew by 1.7% in April. Same-

store sales growth for the first quarter for Shoppers Drug Mart, Inc. was 4%. Sales growth for Sporting Goods, Hobby, Music and Books Stores was level at 0.2%. The Forzani group also reported flat, same-store sales growth of -0.4% for the first quarter 2009.

Clothing and Accessories Stores were down -6.1% in April over the same month last year. Clothing retailer, Reitman's was down only -0.8% for the first quarter this year. Cooler weather across Canada will have influenced consumer purchasing behaviour for spring products.

Building and Outdoor Home Supplies Stores saw a decline in April sales of -4.2%. Computer, Software, Home Electronics, and Appliance Stores' sales were down -7.2% for the month. Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores fell by a whopping -13.3%. While the home retail sector has yet to improve, growth in pockets of the resale housing

market may provide opportunities for the retailers that can capture it.

A regional outlook shows a common theme of greater declines in retail trade in British Columbia and Alberta compared to other parts of Canada.

Overall as April's retail sales figures show, consumer wants have not vanished completely; they have been merely refined; the retailers who can match value to the 'wants' can hope to see more heartening results.

Look for our May bulletin to see whether retail sales growth finally catches up with the growth visible in consumer confidence.

**Release Date of the Next
NATIONAL RETAIL BULLETIN**
July 22, 2009

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 April	2009	2008	2009/2008
All Stores	33,654,174	36,090,246	-6.7%
Automotive	11,309,253	14,154,499	-20.1%
All Stores Less Automotive	22,344,921	21,935,747	1.9%
Food and Beverage Stores	8,005,626	7,365,594	8.7%
Pharmacies and Personal Care Stores	2,401,817	2,362,767	1.7%
All Stores Less Automotive, Food, Pharmacies	11,937,478	12,207,386	-2.2%
General Merchandise Stores	4,186,703	4,013,139	4.3%
Furniture, Home Furnishings and Electronics Stores	2,087,536	2,335,462	-10.6%
Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores	1,127,616	1,300,781	-13.3%
Computer, Software, Home Electronics, and Appliance Stores	959,920	1,034,681	-7.2%
Clothing and Accessories Stores	1,816,885	1,935,454	-6.1%
Clothing Stores	1,411,611	1,511,820	-6.6%
Shoes, Clothing Accessories, and Jewellery Stores	405,274	423,634	-4.3%
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Music, and Book Stores	843,640	842,239	0.2%
Building and Outdoor Home Supplies Stores	2,140,435	2,233,302	-4.2%
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	862,281	847,789	1.7%

Year to Date Sales Ending April	2009	2008	2009/2008
All Stores	120,578,559	128,592,412	-6.2%
Automotive	38,108,543	46,962,764	-18.9%
All Stores Less Automotive	82,470,016	81,629,648	1.0%
Food and Beverage Stores	30,822,612	29,135,204	5.8%
Pharmacies and Personal Care Stores	9,530,159	9,371,237	1.7%
All Stores Less Automotive, Food, Pharmacies	42,117,245	43,123,207	-2.3%
General Merchandise Stores	14,544,643	14,131,623	2.9%
Furniture, Home Furnishings and Electronics Stores	8,274,581	9,057,817	-8.6%
Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores	4,322,735	4,884,939	-11.5%
Computer, Software, Home Electronics, and Appliance Stores	3,951,846	4,172,878	-5.3%
Clothing and Accessories Stores	6,292,169	6,541,973	-3.8%
Clothing Stores	4,871,716	5,073,869	-4.0%
Shoes, Clothing Accessories, and Jewellery Stores	1,420,453	1,468,104	-3.2%
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Music, and Book Stores	3,091,089	3,080,094	0.4%
Building and Outdoor Home Supplies Stores	6,705,950	7,096,624	-5.5%
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	3,208,812	3,215,077	-0.2%

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

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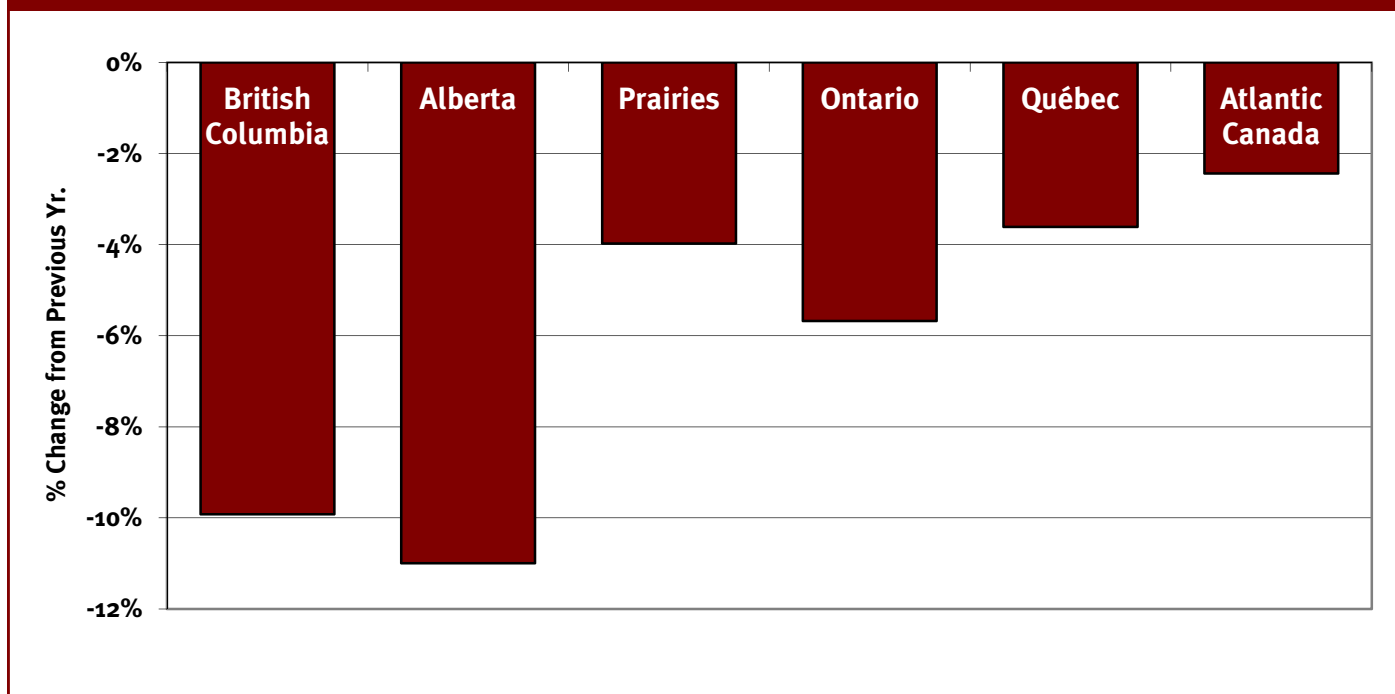
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Retail Trade, Canada, All Stores, by Region

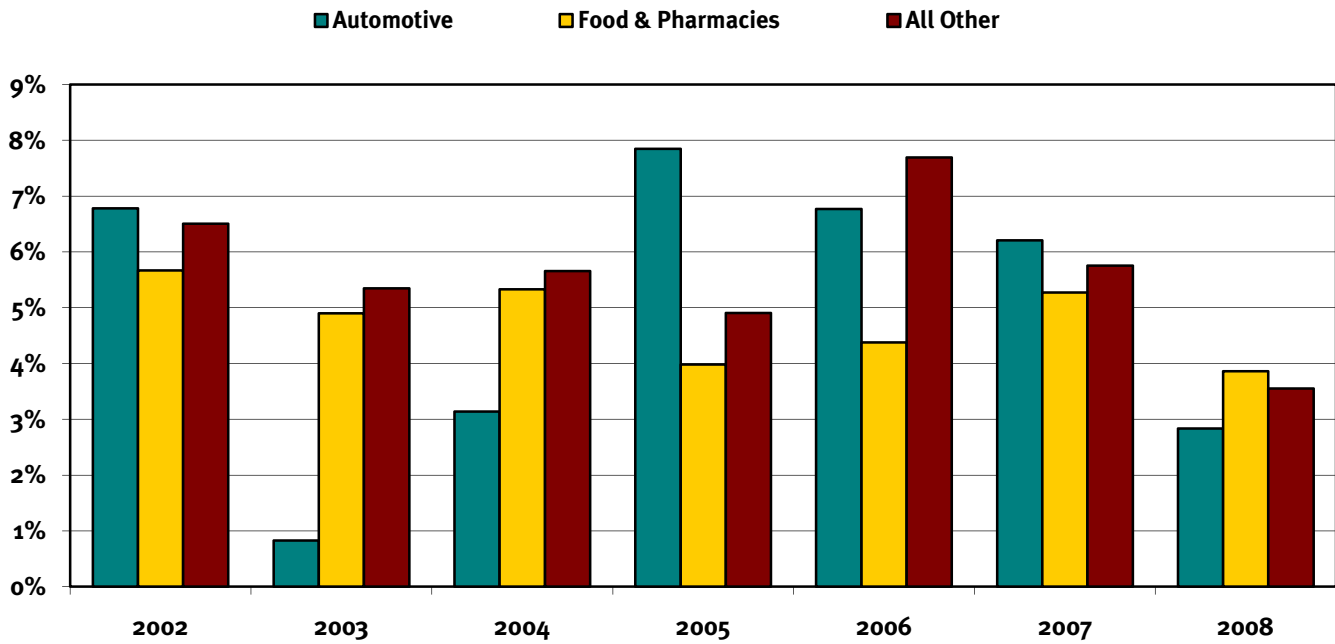
	Year-to-date 2009	Same period 2008	Change 2009/2008
British Columbia	15,772,751	17,510,025	-9.9%
Alberta	16,671,213	18,730,781	-11.0%
Prairies	8,411,411	8,760,137	-4.0%
Ontario	43,033,532	45,624,377	-5.7%
Québec	27,509,943	28,540,593	-3.6%
Atlantic Canada	8,725,195	8,943,576	-2.4%

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

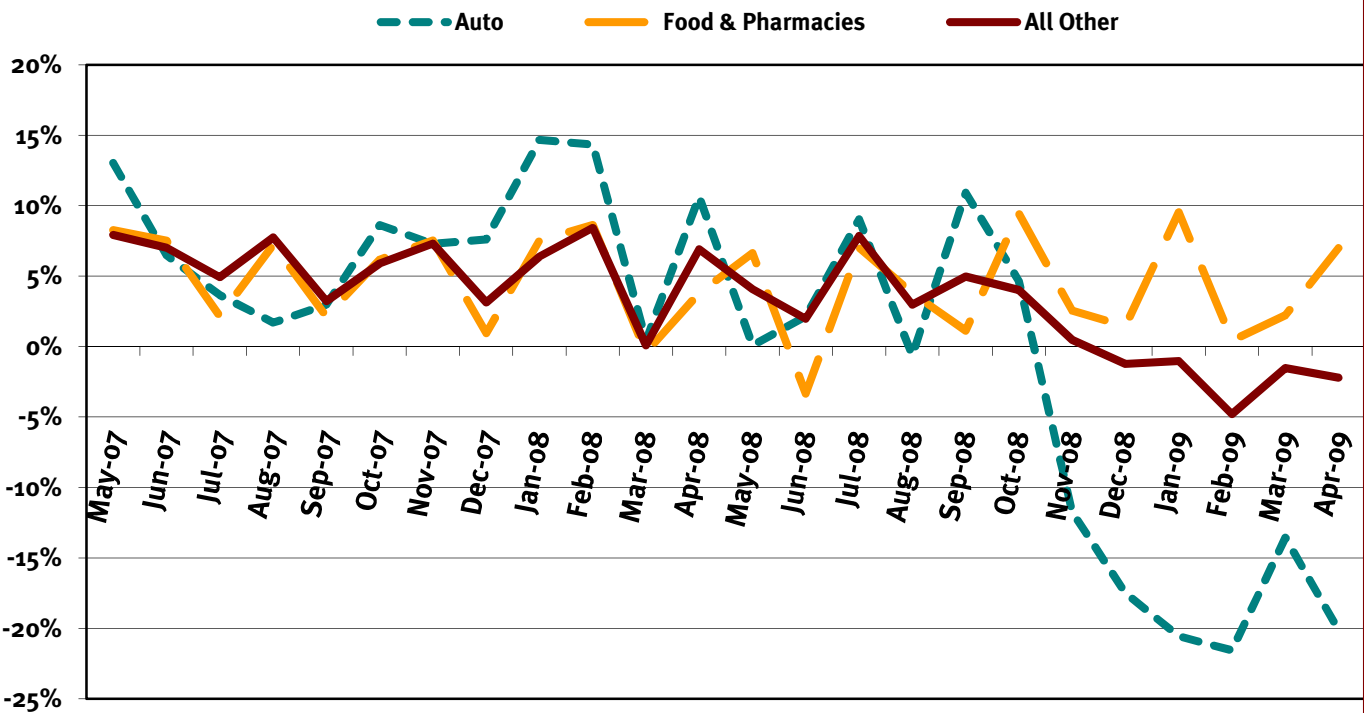


For more detailed information on retail sales, please contact J.C. Williams Group

Canadian Retail Sales by Major Product Category, Year Over Year



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



Consumer Price Index

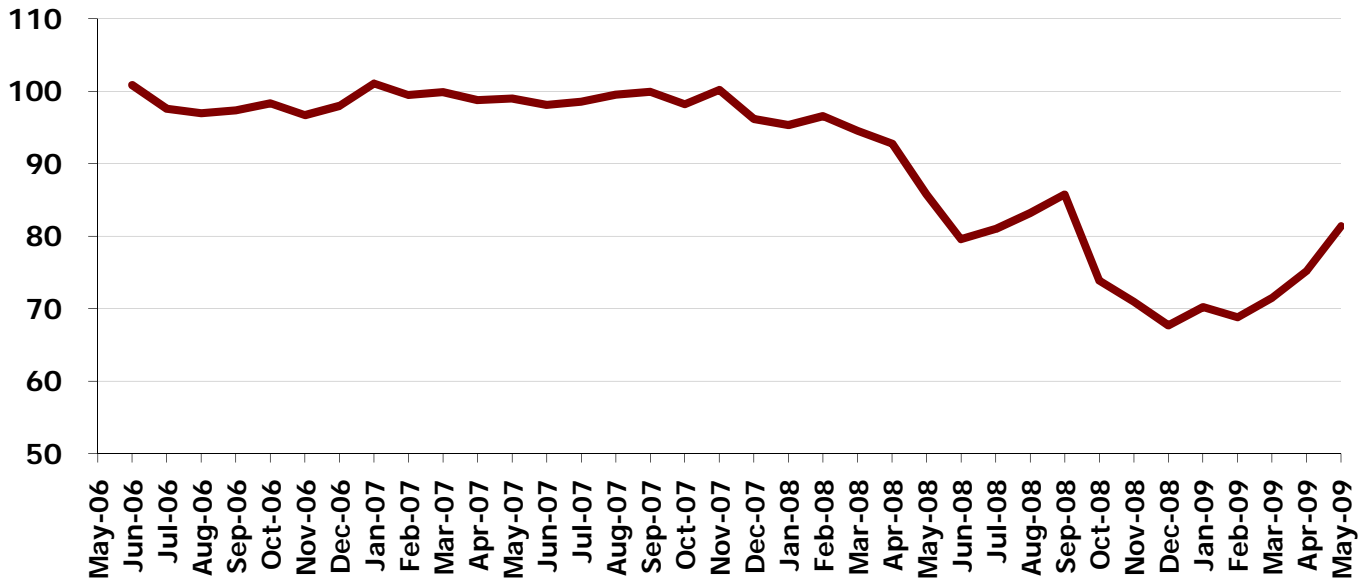
May 2009

vs.

May 2008

0.1%

Canadian Consumer Confidence Index (1985 = 100)



Canadian Consumer Expenditures Index (Q1 2003 = 100)

