

## January Retail Sales Continue Slow Road to Recovery, According to NRF

Washington, February 12, 2010 – Post holiday sales and gift cards helped consumers open up their wallets to take advantage of special deals on popular apparel, electronics and sporting goods items. According to the National Retail Federation, January retail industry sales (which exclude automobiles, gas stations, and restaurants) increased 0.5 percent seasonally adjusted month-to-month and decreased 0.2 percent unadjusted year-over-year.

January retail sales released today by the U.S. Commerce Department show total retail sales (which include non-general merchandise categories such as autos, gasoline stations and restaurants) increased 0.5 percent seasonally adjusted over December and 3.2 percent unadjusted year-over-year.

“We continue to see the economy show subtle signs of improvement,” said Rosalind Wells, Chief Economist for NRF. “While the recovery still has a long way to go, we remain encouraged by the latest retail sales figures.”

Retailers offered special deals aimed at enticing shoppers to hit the stores to use gift cards they received over the holiday season and stock up on clearance items.

Sales at electronics and appliance stores increased 1.2 percent seasonally adjusted and decreased 7.6 percent unadjusted year-over-year. Clothing and clothing accessory store sales increased 0.3 percent seasonally adjusted month-to-month and decreased 1.7 percent unadjusted from January 2009. Sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores also saw solid increases, with sales jumping 1.0 percent seasonally adjusted from December and 5.5 percent unadjusted year-over-year.

Sales at health and personal care stores increased 0.1 percent seasonally adjusted month-to-month and 2.3 percent unadjusted year-over-year. The housing market is still showing signs of uncertainty as sales at furniture and home furnishing stores fell 1.4 percent seasonally adjusted over the previous month and 6.4 percent unadjusted year-over-year.

The [National Retail Federation](#) is the world's largest retail trade association, with membership that comprises all retail formats and channels of distribution including department, specialty, discount, catalog, Internet, independent stores, chain restaurants, drug stores and grocery stores as well as the industry's key trading partners of retail goods and services. NRF represents an industry with more than 1.6 million U.S. retail establishments, more than 24 million employees - about one in five American workers - and 2009 sales of \$4.1 trillion. As the industry umbrella group, NRF also represents more than 100 state, national and international retail associations. [www.nrf.com](http://www.nrf.com).

###