

Independent Business Forum 2007 Holiday Season Sales Trends Survey

About the Survey

This survey was undertaken by the Independent Business Forum, a network of trade associations and other organizations that represent independent businesses. Participating organizations include the American Booksellers Association, the American Independent Business Alliance, the American Specialty Toy Retailers Association, the Coalition of Independent Music Stores, the Gift & Home Trade Association, the Independent Florist Association, the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, the National Bicycle Dealers Association, and the North American Retail Dealers Association.

Each association asked its members to complete the survey, which was administered through an online survey tool and was conducted between January 2 and January 15, 2008.

Respondents

1,382 independent businesses completed the survey, including businesses in all 50 states and Washington, D.C. A wide variety of retailers participated, including bookstores, bicycle shops, gift stores, toy stores, appliance dealers, furniture and home décor retailers, florists, apparel shops, CD stores, jewelers, sporting goods retailers, art galleries, consumer electronics dealers, and hardware stores.

Does Local Ownership Matter

Question: "Does the fact that your business is locally owned and independent matter to your customers?"

It matters to most of my customers.	38%
It matters to some of my customers.	44%
It matters to only a few of my customers.	10%
It matters to none of my customers.	3%
I'm not sure.	5%

2007 Holiday Sales Compared to 2006 Holiday Season

Question: "Were your sales up or down this holiday season (defined as the months of November and December)?"

Respondents indicated a percentage increase or decrease in sales compared to last year. The average change in sales reported was:

All respondents	Up 0.6 %
Respondents in cities with "Buy Local" campaigns	Up 2.1 %
Respondents in cities without "Buy Local" campaigns	Up 0.3 %

Over the last few years, "Buy Local" campaigns have been launched by local business alliances in dozens of communities. The survey included responses from 32 cities with active campaigns: Albuquerque, NM; Ann Arbor, MI; Ashland, OR; Austin, TX; Bellingham, WA; Berkeley, CA;

Boulder, CO; Buffalo, NY; Cambridge, MA; Chicago, IL; Columbia, MO; Corvallis, OR; Davis, CA; Durango, CO; El Paso, TX; Louisville, KY; Madison, WI; Menlo Park, CA; Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN; New Orleans, LA; Oakland, CA; Petaluma, CA; Phoenix, AZ; Portland, ME; Portland, OR; Princeton, IL; Salt Lake City, UT; San Francisco, CA; Santa Cruz, CA; Santa Fe, NM; Warwick, NY; and Washington, DC. (Some cities with active "Buy Local" campaigns did not contribute data to this survey.)

Contact

If you would like more information about the Independent Business Forum or contact information for the organizations involved, or if you have questions about the survey, please contact Stacy Mitchell at the Institute for Local Self-Reliance at 207-774-6792 or smitchell@ilsr.org.