



Research Brief

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Holiday Season

MIDDLETOWN, Pa—The holiday season is here and businesses in Pennsylvania are ready for the shopping rush.

There were 50,208 retail trade establishments in Pennsylvania in 1997, reports the Pennsylvania State Data Center. Data from the U.S. 1997 Economic Census show that these establishments employed 650,144 paid employees and generate nearly \$110 billion in sales in 1997 as well.

Electronics and appliances are popular gift items. There were 1,839 of these types of stores in Pennsylvania during 1997 with 12,781 paid employees. They generated more than \$2 billion in sales. Of these establishments, 734 were radio, television and other electronic stores, 421 were computer and software stores, and 179 were camera and photographic supplies stores.

Sporting good stores accounted for 1,023 shops in the Commonwealth in 1997. They employed 6,833 paid employees and generated \$749 million. The 512 hobby, toy and game stores generated more than \$704 million and had 5,169 paid employees.

Nearly 4,000 paid employees worked in general and specialty bookstores. The 440 stores generated more than \$400 million in sales. Pennsylvania was also home to 389 music stores (CDs, tapes and records) which had 2,599 paid employees and \$307 million in sales.

For those looking for that new outfit for the holiday season, there were many stores to choose from.



There were 4,007 clothing stores, 1,523 shoe stores and 1,319 jewelry stores in 1997. Combined sales generated nearly \$6 billion and 55,894 paid employees.

For those that would rather shop from home, the 412 electronic shopping and mail-order houses establishments can help. Those Pennsylvania establishments in 1997 employed 15,192 paid employees and generated \$6.647 billion in sales.

Other retail establishments can provide supplies for a party. There were 2,957 supermarkets and grocery stores in 1997. An additional 1,374 specialty food stores and 1,561 beer, wine and liquor stores were housed in Pennsylvania. More than 1,300 convenience stores were available for those last minute items. In total, food and beverage establishments included 152,042 paid employees and generated more than \$19 billion in annual sales.

The holiday is not complete without the flowers. The 1,272 Pennsylvania florists generated more than \$307 million in 1997 in sales with 6,264 paid employees.

The holiday season can be expensive. Pennsylvania was home to 5,476 commercial banks, savings institutions and credit unions in Pennsylvania in 1997 to assist. These establishments included 97,648 paid employees and generated more than \$22 billion in revenues.

The Pennsylvania State Data Center is the Commonwealth's official source of population and economic statistics and services. It is based at Penn State Harrisburg's Institute of State and Regional Affairs. The Pennsylvania State Data Center is part of the U.S. Census Bureau's national State Data Center Program.

Editors: For additional data, contact the Data Center's State Capital Office at (717) 772-2710, or for faculty comment on this topic contact Penn State Harrisburg's Public Information Office, (717) 948-6029. County-level data may be obtained from the American Fact Finder on the Census Bureau web site (www.census.gov and click on American Fact Finder).

Sources of Information: U.S. Census Bureau *1997 Economic Census Finance and Insurance Sector* (October 28, 2000) <<http://www.census.gov/epdc/www/97EC44.HTML>> November 17, 2000.

U.S. Census Bureau *1997 Economic Census Retail Sales Sector* (September 18, 2000) <www.census.gov/epdc/www/97EC52.HTM> November 7, 2000