

# RETAIL SECTOR WEEKLY

## Key Retail News and Commentary

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### Strong Holiday Start

The nation's shoppers set aside worries about higher gas prices and a slumping housing market and proved their resilience over the Thanksgiving weekend, giving what the nation's merchants wished for – a strong start to the holiday shopping season.

Stores and malls opened the season as early as midnight, drawing bigger-than-expected crowds Friday for discounted flat-panel TVs, digital cameras and toys such as all things related to Disney Channel's "Hannah Montana." Strong sales continued through Saturday, according to one research group that tracks total sales at retail outlets across the country.

Clearly, the biggest draw was electronics, benefiting consumer electronics chains like Best Buy Co. and discounters such as Wal-Mart Stores Inc. and Target Corp. Popular priced department stores including J.C. Penney Co. and Kohl's Corp. drew in crowds with good deals. Toy stores like Toys "R" Us Inc. fared well too. Still, apparel sales appeared to be mixed at mall-based clothing stores, though a cold weather snap helped spur sales of outerwear and other winter-related items.

"This was a really good start. There seemed to be a lot of pent-up demand," said Bill Martin, co-founder of ShopperTrak RCT Corp., which tracks total sales at more than 50,000 retail outlets. ShopperTrak reported that sales on Friday and Saturday combined rose 7.2% to \$16.4 billion from the

*(Continued on page 2)*



### Global Credit Services 6th Annual Symposium Sanibel Harbour Resort, Fort Myers, Florida April 1st–4th, 2008



Global Credit Services is pleased to announce that it will be hosting its **6th Annual Credit Symposium** from **April 1st – 4th, 2008** at the **Sanibel Harbour Resort** in Fort Myers, Florida. Don't miss the opportunity to meet credit, financial, and legal professionals alike to exchange information and ideas regarding risk management.

Based upon the availability of annual-year information, clients and attendees have asked that we hold our symposium in the 2nd quarter of 2008 in

order to provide more detailed information and discussion regarding retailers and other companies that we monitor. We are happy to comply with those requests.

Likewise, this time of year gives us and our esteemed group of Panelists and Speakers a chance to offer a "year in review" perspective and to better comment on economic and credit related trends for the upcoming fiscal 2008.

And like every year, we will be offering Sponsors and Exhibitors unique networking opportunities to reach their target audience in both a professional and personal format. Detailed sponsorship information regarding this event will be available soon.

To learn more about last year's successful **5th Annual Credit Symposium**, please click into the Symposium Info tab on the Global Credit Services website below, or contact Amelia Labriola at 212.308.6060 ext104. [WWW.GCSZONE.COM](http://WWW.GCSZONE.COM)

### Remember

When it comes to getting things done, we need fewer architects and more brick-layers.

## Strong Holiday Start

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same two-day period a year ago.

Total sales on Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, rose to \$10.3 billion, up 8.3% from the same day a year ago. Mr. Martin had expected increases no greater than 5%.

Meanwhile, internet research firm comScore Inc. reported a 22% gain in online sales on the day after Thanksgiving compared with the same day a year ago and estimated online sales would exceed \$700 million online Monday, the official kickoff to the online shopping season.

The signs were encouraging, but stores are now wonder whether bargain hunters will keep up the pace as they face an escalating credit crunch, depreciating home values and rising daily living expenses.

Many stores were also more focused on discounting products that they knew shoppers wanted. Gail Lavielle, a spokeswoman at Sears Holding Corp., said the company zeroed in on great deals on electronics, instead of offering deep discounts on a wide range of products. Still, analysts say frustrations were high among shoppers who couldn't get their hands on limited deals at many different stores.

While the sales numbers are encouraging, we continue to be concerned about the price that was paid by retailers for those weekend sales. Consumers seemed to know what they wanted and at what price they were willing to pay. Always keep in mind that the rent for retailers is paid out of gross margin not gross sales.

The real question remains as to whether the sales volume experienced in the opening days of the holiday shopping season will be maintained through to Christmas. . . some are still skeptical.

### Did You Know...?

The difference between interest rates on speculative-grade debt and the 10-year Treasury not has reached the highest level since October 2003, meaning that distressed companies will struggle to refinance their debt and access new capital.

## Mass Merchant Musings

... **Sears Holding** bought a 13.7% stake in **Restoration Hardware** and is considering an acquisition of the retailer, according to its filing with the SEC. The move could spark a bidding war for Restoration, which agreed to be taken private by **Catterton Partners**.

... Taking **Sears** out of the mall, **Sears Holding** opened a new Sears at a former **Kmart** location in Marietta, Georgia. The new Sears is offering customers a "store-of-shops," and different flooring, fixtures, and displays, including a 23,000 square foot Lands' End shop.

... **Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.** celebrated the opening of its 3,000<sup>th</sup> international store, a Supercenter in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Since opening its first international store in Mexico in 1991, the company's International Division has grown to become a \$77.1 billion business that, stand alone, would rank as the world's fifth largest retailer in terms of sales revenue.

... **Target Corp** is testing sales of used electronics on its Web site. Customers can purchase "pre-owned" Apple Inc. iPods, video games consoles and televisions. While results have been positive, the company has not made a decision on whether or not it will continue the business.

... Breaking ground this year for a new store the first in six years, **ShopKo** will add two new stores to the chain in the fall of 2008 with locations selected in Sussex, Wisconsin and Northbranch, Minnesota.

... **FAO Schwarz** acquired **Best & Co.**, a leading retailer and manufacturer of luxury children's apparel and accessories. Best & Co. currently has a flagship store in Greenwich, Connecticut and a boutique in **Bergdorf Goodman** in New York City in addition to its catalog and Web site operations.

... **AAH Holdings Corporation** consummated the merger of AAH Holdings' indirect wholly-owned subsidiary, Amscan Acquisition, Inc., with and into **Factory Card & Party Outlet Corp.** As a result of the transaction, Factory Card & Party Outlet is now a wholly-owned subsidiary of **Amscan Holdings**.

... **PriceSmart, Inc.** opened its third warehouse club in Guatemala City, Guatemala, bringing to 24 the number of warehouse clubs in operation for the company. The opening of the company's 25<sup>th</sup> warehouse club, its third warehouse club in Trinidad, is currently scheduled for early December.

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## Management on the Move

... **John Rishton**, who as been serving as acting President and CEO of **Royal Ahold NV**, was named permanent CEO, more than six months after the departure of **Anders Moberg**. **Kimberly Ross**, who had been deputy CFO, will replace Mr. Rishton as CFO. Mr. Rishton joined Ahold in January 2006 as CFO.

... Regional grocer **Harris Teeter**, a unit of **Ruddick Corporation**, promoted **Rodney C. Antolock** to serve as EVP of Ops and Merchandising, while **Jerry L. Clontz** will become SVP of Ops.

... **Eric Richer La Fleche** was named President and CEO of **METRO Inc.**, a leading Canadian grocer. Mr. La Fleche has been EVP and COO of the company since January 2005. His appointment follows the resignation of **Pierre H. Lessard**, President and CEO since 1990.

... **Rite Aid** named **Robert K. Thompson**, formerly a SVP at **Target Corporation**, as SVP of its Western Division where he will supervise operations of more than 900 stores.

... **Eddie Bauer Holdings, Inc.** named **Marv Toland** as its SVP, CFO; **Freya R. Brier** as its SVP, General Counsel and Secretary; and **Ronn Hall** as its SVP, Sourcing and Supply Chain. Mr. Toland joins the company from **London Fog Group**, where he most recently served as EVP and CFO. Ms. Brier most recently served as SVP, General Counsel and Secretary of **Wild Oats Markets, Inc.** Mr. Hall joins the company from **Coldwater Creek**, where he served as VP of Sourcing and Production.

... **AnnTaylor Stores Corporation** announced the resignation of **Robert C. Grayson** from the company's Board of Directors to devote more time to his other business obligations. Mr. Grayson is President of **The Grayson Company** and has served as a Director of the company since 1992.

... **Charming Shoppes Inc.** promoted **Tim White** to Chief Marketing Officer, and created a Corporate Marketing Group to consolidate the management of its marketing functions for its retail brands.

... **Ross Stores, Inc.** elected **John W. Froman** to its Board of Directors. Mr. Froman served as President and CEO of **NAMCO Pool & Patio** from 2005 to 2007. Prior to that, Mr. Froman spent almost 20 years in various management roles at **Circuit City**, ultimately serving as its EVP and COO.

... **dELiA\*s, Inc.** appointed **Paul Raffin** to its Board of Directors. Mr. Raffin is the CEO of **Frette, Inc.** Mr. Raffin served in various positions at **Limited Brands**, most recently as President of the **Express, Inc.** division, prior to assuming his present

position with **Frette, Inc.**

... **Lou Spagna**, a 30-year retail apparel segment veteran who most recently served as President of **Haggar Clothing Co.'s** retail division was named President of **Finish Line's** street fashion retailer, **Man Alive**.

... **Paul Jones** was appointed President and Chief Merchandising Officer of **ShopKo**, responsible for the direction of all merchandising and marketing activities of the company, replacing Paul White. Mr. Jones brings over 20 years of retail experience, including leadership positions at **Kohl's** and most recently at **Sears**.

... **Shoe Pavilion, Inc.** appointed **Michael P. McHugh** as EVP and CFO. Mr. McHugh previously spend 12 years as the SVP and CFO of **J. Crew Group, Inc.**, than a privately owned \$875 million specialty store retailer and five years as the SVP and CFO of **Authentic Fitness Inc.**

... The **Home Depot** appointed **F. Duane Ackerman**, **Ari Bousbib** and **Karen Katen** to its Board of Directors as part of the succession process to replace four existing Board members. Mr. Ackerman is the retired Chairman and CEO of the **Bell-South Corporation**. Mr. Bousbib is the President of **Otis Elevator**, a unit of **United Technologies Corp.** and Ms. Katen currently serves as Chairman of the **Pfizer Foundation**, and recently retired as Vice Chairman of **Pfizer Inc.**

... Industry sources report that two **Office Depot** employees with ties to the home furnishings industry, **Scott Koerner**, SVP of Merchandising, and **Barbara Pizzella**, former VP of Furniture, are no longer with the company. The company recently reported to the **SEC** the termination of four employees in merchandising, but did not name them.

... In other news, **Office Depot** appointed **Kim Maguire** to lead the company's merchandising organization and **Randy Wick** as the company's VP, Merchandising, Strategy and Services. Mr. Maguire brings 30 years of retail merchandising to the company including nearly two years at **QVC** as EVP and Chief Merchandising Officer and three years at **Circuit City** as EVP, Merchandising. Mr. Wick most recently served as SVP and General Merchandise Manager for Consumer Electronics at **Circuit City**.

... **Sharper Image Corporation** named **Joyce Maruniak** its SVP of Operations, responsible for customer service, distribution and quality control. Ms. Maruniak most recently served as VP of Supply Chain Solutions for **Best Buy**.

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## Health & Beauty Aids

... **Walgreen** opened its 100<sup>th</sup> in-store clinic. The company plans to have 400 of these facilities by the end of 2008. Expansion during 2007 will be focused on the Cleveland and Nashville markets.

... **Walgreen** chairman Jeffrey Rein suggested that the retailer might slow down the pace of new store openings. This strategic move would allow the company to reduce its cost structure.

... **Kerr Drug** announced that it will be opening its second community health care center in Sanford, NC. The facility will include a health care center, a drug store, and a café.

... **Pharmaca** announced that it has opened its 18<sup>th</sup> store in Los Gatos, California. The Colorado-based firm specializes in blending traditional pharmacy with herbal and alternative medicines.

... On November 19, **Cardinal Health** increased its AR Securitization line to \$850 million and extended its length by 364 days.

... The **Mayo Clinic** is expanding its footprint in the retail-based clinic business. The hospital currently operates a facility under the name **ALMC Express Care**. A network of these facilities are to open up across Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin. These facilities are similar to MinuteClinic, which is run by **CVS**.

... **Geopharma, Inc.** reported sales for its second fiscal quarter ended September 30, 2007 of \$6.0 million, down from sales of \$16.7 million for the comparable period last year, mainly the result of the discontinued PBM segment. For the quarter, the company reported a net loss of \$1.6 million, down from net income of \$0.9 million last year.

## The Global World of Sports and Footwear

... The war of words continues between **Genesco**, **The Finish Line** and **UBS Loan Finance LLC** regarding the occurrence of a "Material Adverse Effect" regarding the acquisition by Finish Line of Genesco, to be funded by loans from UBS. The financial institution continues to fight being held to its commitment letter for the financing of the deal. I think we can all forget this deal ever happening, though someone will have to pay dearly.

... **Nike** and **Foot Locker** opened the doors to **House of Hoops by Foot Locker** on Harlem's 125<sup>th</sup> Street, a basketball retail experience with Nike, Jordan Brand and Converse exclusively under one roof. The Harlem location is the first of up to 50 stores that Nike and Foot Locker expect to open in the U.S. over the next three years.

... Based on the better than expected results for the third quarter, **Dick's Sporting Goods** now expects earnings per share for the full year to be approximately \$1.29 per share, up from previous guidance in the range of \$1.24 to \$1.25 per share.

... While predicting a strong return to favorable fashion winds in the next six to 18 months, **Foot Locker** expects to open eight new stores and close up to 142 unproductive stores in the fourth quarter of this year. The cash impact of the closings is expected to be minimal.

... The **Forzani Group Ltd.** announced its proposed acquisition of **Athletes World Limited**, a national retailer of athletic and recreational footwear and apparel, out of bankruptcy protection. The transaction will be financed through existing credit facilities. In its most recently completed fiscal year, Athletes World generated \$186 million in revenues, and currently operates 138 stores.

... **Big Dog Holdings**, the parent of Big Dog and The Walking Co. is formally changing its corporate name to **The Walking Co. Holdings** in early 2008. Meanwhile, the company signed a letter of intent to acquire the assets of **Natural Comfort Footwear**, an eight door chain selling comfort footwear in Florida.

... **NexCen Brands**, parent of **The Athlete's Foot** franchised operation, purchased the nine-door, high-end **Shoe Box** retail chain in New York City. NexCen intends to expand Shoe Box globally through franchising at least 500 storefronts.

... In other news, **The Athlete's Foot** opened its first next generation **TAF** performance store in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The location is the first in the world to feature the new store design, logo and merchandising system that was announced by **NexCen Brands, Inc.** last June.

... **Crocs, Inc.** opened retail stores in Boston and New York City, its first East Coast locations. The new stores join the recently opened Santa Monica store as the first three retail locations in the U.S. The company currently operates more than 25 company-owned retail stores in shopping destinations around the globe.

... **Converse Inc.** reached an agreement to sell its One Star footwear and apparel collection exclusively to **Target** stores, beginning February 2008. The collection will be supported by an integrated marketing campaign.

... **Winmark Corporation** amended its 364-day Revolving Credit Agreement with **LaSalle Bank National Association** allowing the company to increase the commitment from the initial amount of \$25.0 million up to \$50.0 million, provided certain conditions are met.

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## FYI for the DIY

... Given that the softness in the housing market is expected to continue for the balance of 2007, **Home Depot** expects its earnings per share from continuing operations will decline by as much as 11% from last year, exclusive of the 53<sup>rd</sup> week in the fiscal calendar. In spite of the decline, the forecast is significantly better than analyst's had predicted.

... **Eddie Lampert**, the Chairman of **Sears Holdings Corp.** has taken a \$485 million stake in **Home Depot Inc.** during the third quarter through **ESL Investments Inc.**, the hedge fund run by Mr. Lampert. Home Depot declined to comment on ESL's investment.

... Appearing to be another victim of the credit crunch, **United Rentals, Inc.** announced that **Cerberus Capital Management, L.P.** is not prepared to proceed with the purchase of United Rentals on the terms set forth in its merger agreement,

dated July 22, 2007.

... As a result of the above actions by **Cerberus Capital Management, United Rentals** filed a lawsuit against **RAM Holdings, Inc.** (Cerberus Capital Management) to compel Cerberus to complete the acquisition of United Rentals. This looks like another **Genesco/Finish Line** fiasco.

... **Lowe's Companies, Inc.** is planning a new flat-bed distribution center in Purvis, Mississippi. The 200,000 square foot facility will supply product to more than 60 Lowe's retail stores in Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama and Florida.

... **Central Garden & Pet Company** will announce results for its fiscal year end and fourth quarter ended September 29, 2007, on Tuesday, November 27<sup>th</sup> after the close of trading. Be sure to look for the results on Global's web site shortly thereafter.

## Specialty Items

... **Restoration Hardware** agreed to be taken private in a \$267 million buyout led by an affiliate of **Catterton Partners**. Under the agreement, Restoration Hardware's stockholders would be paid \$6.70 per share in cash. However, **Sears Holding** disclosed in a filing with the SEC that it intends to evaluate the desirability of proposing to acquire Restoration.

... **RedEnvelope, Inc.** reported sales for its second quarter ended September 30, 2007 of \$15.9 million, up 2.2% versus sales of \$15.5 million for the comparable period last year. The net loss for the quarter was \$10.3 million, up from a net loss last year of \$3.7 million.

... **A.C. Moore Arts & Crafts, Inc.**, which has not filed its quarterly report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended September 30, 2007 due to the ongoing review of its inventory accounting methods, received a notice of delisting from Nasdaq. The company has appealed.

... **Zale Corporation** completed the sale of its **Bailey Banks & Biddle** brand to **Finlay Fine Jewelry Corporation** for a purchase price of \$200 million. The company expects to realize estimated after-tax proceeds of approximately \$175 million. The company is expected to use the proceeds to repurchase company stock.

... In other news, **Zale Corporation** reported net sales for its first fiscal quarter ended October 31, 2007 of \$377.3 million, down 1.3% versus sales

of \$382.3 million for the comparable period last year. The net loss for the quarter was \$28.4 million, up from a net loss of \$26.4 million last year.

... **Finlay Enterprises, Inc.**, the parent of **Finlay Fine Jewelry Corporation**, secured a \$550 million asset-based credit facility with **GE Commercial Finance Corporate Lending** replacing a previous facility with GE. The new facility is being used to support the acquisition of **Bailey Banks & Biddle**.

... **Mathis Bros.** opened its largest home furnishings store at The Ontario Center in Ontario, California. The 500,000 square foot complex is billed by Mathis as the largest furniture store in California.

... **Wickes** opened its 19<sup>th</sup> metro Chicago furniture store and 43<sup>rd</sup> nationwide. The 40,000 square foot showroom is in Wheeling, Ill.

... Reflecting its third quarter performance, **Barnes & Noble, Inc.** raised its full-year earnings guidance to a range of \$1.91 to \$2.09 per share, compare to previous guidance of \$1.69 to \$1.87 per share.

... **School Specialty, Inc.** reported sales for its second quarter ended October 27, 2007 of \$392.9 million, up 5.8% versus sales of \$371.2 million for the comparable period last year. Net income for the quarter was up 25.2% to \$36.6 million from \$29.2 million last year.

### Did You Know...?

An estimated \$30 billion will be spent on gift cards this year, a 10% increase from the year before. Gift cards trail only apparel as the most frequently given holiday gift.

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## Bankruptcy Blotter

... The court agreed to let a joint venture comprised of **Hilco Consumer Capital LLC** and an affiliate of **Gordon Brothers Retail Partners LP** serve as lead bidder at an auction for **Bombay Company Inc.'s** intellectual property with an offer of \$1.25 million. Competing bids are due by December 14<sup>th</sup>.

... Also, the **Bombay Company** plans to hire **DJM Realty** to sell off all 335 of its store leases and five distribution centers leases in the U.S. DJM Realty is part of Gordon Bros.

... In other news, the deadline to file claims for the **Bombay Company** bankruptcy has been set for March 26, 2008.

... For the four weeks ended September 22<sup>nd</sup>, **Interstate Bakeries** reported total revenue of \$220.8 million and a net loss of \$7.7 million, including restructuring and reorganization charges of \$2.8 million.

... **Big A Drug Stores Inc.**, a California-based chain of 19 pharmacies, sought Chapter 11 protection last week with plans to liquidate its assets. **PNC Bank N.A.**, owed more than \$31.3 million under existing loans, has agreed to provide up to \$750,000 in new funding to finance the company's operations through liquidation.

... An Ocean City, New Jersey **Golf Etc.** franchisee owned by **Paul L. Raley** filed for bankruptcy protection and will be liquidating. The business owes only \$51,798.

... **Movie Gallery Inc.** won final court approval to borrow \$150 million from **Goldman Sachs Credit Partners** to finance its reorganization, with the company's plan of reorganization to be delivered by November 27<sup>th</sup>.

... **Pike Family Nurseries**, which has survived a half-century of weather extremes in Georgia, filed

for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, blaming the drought. The company will continue to operate most of its 22 nurseries in Georgia, Alabama and North Carolina with the help of \$11.75 million in financing, although it is considering closing two locations in metro Atlanta.

... The unsecured creditors committee of **M. Fabrikant & Sons Inc.** has enough ammunition to sue the estate of **Philip Hahn**, a former co-chairman of the company who died in 2005. After his death Fabrikant bought his 16% stake in the company for \$10.3 million when the company was already in financial distress.

... The committee of unsecured **Levitz** creditors wants the court to liquidate the troubled retailer under chapter 7, arguing that's where Levitz is likely headed in any case.

... The court extended **Delphi Corp.'s** \$4.5 billion DIP loan for six months to June 30, 2008, to give the company more time to exit Chapter 11 after changing its reorganization plan and \$2.55 billion equity-investment pact.

... The court also authorized **Delphi Corp.** to enter into a preliminary \$6.8 billion bankruptcy-exit-financing pact with **JP Morgan Securities Inc.**, **JP Morgan Chase Bank** and **Citigroup Global Markets Inc.**

... And finally, **Delphi Corp.** won preliminary court approval to sell some of its brake-operations assets to **TRW Automotive Holdings Corp.** for \$42.6 million. A final hearing on the sale is scheduled for November 29<sup>th</sup> unless a rival bidder emerges.

... The U.S. Trustee monitoring **Dura Automotive Systems Inc.'s** bankruptcy reorganization claims the company's plan is unconfirmable and asked the court to block the company's exit from Chapter. The confirmation hearing for the plan is scheduled for December 6<sup>th</sup>.

Feedback?

Questions?

Suggestions?

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## Rating Changes and Outlooks

S&P Rating Changes				
Company	Credit Rating		Credit Outlook	
	Current	Prior	Current	Prior
TARGET CORP	A+	A+	STABLE	NM
JC PENNEY CO INC	BBB-	BBB-	STABLE	POSITIVE
NORDSTROM INC	A-	A	STABLE	STABLE
OFFICE DEPOT INC	BBB-	BBB-	NEGATIVE	STABLE
BUILDING MATERIALS HOLDINGS INC/BMC WEST	BB-	BB	NM	NM

## Heard in the Grocery Aisle

... The organic retailer, **PCC Natural Markets**, has announced that it will open its 9<sup>th</sup> store in Edmonds, Washington during 2008.

... The 25,000 unionized workers who are employed by **Raley's** and **Save Mart** Supermarkets in Northern California have ratified to a new four-year contract. **Safeway** remains the only major Northern California grocer without a long-term labor deal.

... **Golub Corp.**, parent of Price Chopper, announced plans to move into a 6-story 240,000 square-foot headquarters in Schenectady, NY. In addition, the firm expects to open 30 to 40 new stores during the next few years.

... The **Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company** has given the Federal Trade Commission two weeks notice of its plans to close the **Pathmark** transaction. The transaction is expected to close in early December.

... In other news, the **Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Company** has announced plans to purchase **Best Cellars**, a New York City based wine retailer. The details of the transaction were not disclosed.

... The private equity group **Willis Stein & Partners** has confirmed that **Roundy's** is for sale.

... **Kroger Co.** has agreed to lease a 552,000 square-foot facility in Paramount, California. The grocer plans to use the Southern California building as a dry grocery warehouse.

... **Whole Foods Market** is expected to terminate 52 employees at **Wild Oats Markets'** former headquarters. Following the lay-offs, only 103 workers would be left at the Boulder, CO location.

... **Whole Foods** announced that it expects to grow sales by 25% to 30% during the next year. Ap-

proximately 10% of the new business is expected to come from the Wild Oats stores.

... **K-VA-T Food Stores** has opened a 55,000 square-foot **Food City** in Kingsport, TN. This location, which is the largest the company has ever built, includes an in-store café and a full-service meat and seafood departments.

... **Hy-Vee** is reportedly ready to launch its own mobile phones and plan cards with prepaid minutes. These plans include no long-term contracts.

... **Albertsons LLC** awarded **Jones Lang LaSalle** with an exclusive marketing agreement to sell a portfolio of 72 owned stores in nine southeastern, central and western states. The company hopes to garner \$240 million in the sale.

... **Standard & Poor's** has removed **Bi-Lo** from its watch list. **The Lone Star Holdings** owned retailer remains a "B" rated company.

... **Straub's Markets** has said that it will develop a 40,000 square-foot store in Ellisville, MO. This new facility will be approximately three times the size of a typical Straub location.

... **United Natural Foods** announced that it has lost its supply business with Supervalu owned Shaw's locations. The loss is expected to cut the firm's sales growth in half.

... **Unified Grocers**, who supplies 2,800 independently owned grocery stores in the Northwest, has joined the **Independent Grocers Alliance** (IGA).

... **Alimentation Couche-Tard Inc.** has announced it is interested in purchasing 700 U.S.-based convenience stores that **British Petroleum** is looking to sell off.

### Did You Know...?

According to the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts, 7,167 businesses filed for bankruptcy protection from July through September, a 35% increase over the same period in 2006.

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## Hi Tech Entertainment

... Newly public electronics dealer **hhgregg** has released some more good news. The company raised its annual profit forecast after beating estimates during the third quarter. The company expects profits to fall in the range of \$0.95 to \$1.03 per share for the year, up from previous forecasts of \$0.87 to \$0.97 per share. The company's estimates are becoming more bullish, after the results for the most recent quarter beat most estimates by around \$0.04 per share.

... **Blockbuster** has announced that the company is kicking around some major ideas for a shift in corporate strategy. Under leadership of new CEO **James Keyes**, Blockbuster will be diving into the retail segment. Mr. Keyes has plans in place to begin selling PS3 systems in some locations, as well as other small electronics devices and soundtrack CDs. He will also try to get the ball rolling on what he feels is the next generation of movies, which are digital download kiosks. These are just a couple of the focuses for the troubled retailer, which has seen revenues plunge in recent years. The company has been losing ground to its rival Netflix, which is in good position to start a price war that Blockbuster would not be able to compete with.

... In other **Blockbuster** news, billionaire **Carl Icahn** has announced an even larger stake in the chain. Icahn now holds 20.6 million shares of Class A common stock, about 16% of those outstanding. He also owns 5.6 million shares of Class B shares, or 7.7%. As most investors are fleeing, Icahn is buying. Icahn has been a pest to Blockbuster for some time, and was a vocal critic of ex-CEO John Antioco. Icahn seems to have thrown his support behind new CEO James Keyes.

... Investors don't seem to be impressed with CEO **Robert Higgins'** offer to buy **TransWorld** for \$5 per share. Higgins already owns 40% of outstanding shares. Sherwood Investment Overseas, which owns 4.34% of the company, calls the bid grossly inadequate. Sherwood feels that a simple liquidation would fetch investors around \$8 per share. The feud comes in the same week where TransWorld announced that its third quarter loss widened from last year. The company lost \$14.3 million during the quarter compared to \$11.4 million during the same period last year. Sales for the quarter were down 12% on comps of negative 4%.

... **Hastings Entertainment** surprised everybody last week by announcing that it turned profits of \$0.1 million for the quarter. The profits equate to around \$0.01 per share, but crushed most estimates, which had the company losing \$0.12 per share for the quarter. Strong sales in video games, electronics and apparel led the charge.

... **Amazon** continues to prove that it is a retail force to be reckoned with. The company launched Amazon Kindle, which allows users to download books, magazines, newspapers and blogs in minutes. More than 90,000 books were made available on the service. Kindle is being priced at \$399 and sells books for around \$9.99. The service uses Amazon Whispernet to provide the data, which runs on the same network as advanced cell phones. This means that there is no need for a PC or any internet connection.

... Hedge fund manager **William Ackman** has raised his ownership stake in **Borders Group** to 17.1%. **Pershing Square Capital** owns 10.1 million shares of the country's second largest bookstore according to the most recent SEC filings. Ackman has discussed various corporate governance issues with the board, and claims his opinions were solicited by that of the board.

... **Radioshack** has paid around \$8.8 million to settle various class action lawsuits that were brought against the company. The lawsuits stem from former managers who claimed that company misclassified the workers as exempt from overtime.

... **Overstock** has struck a deal with **PayPal**, which will give shoppers an additional payment option at checkout. PayPal claims over 164 million accounts worldwide and Overstock feels it will help lure customers into making purchases that are easier to account for.

... **Office Depot** saw its third quarter profits fall 9%, as the company was hard hit by lower consumer spending and the weak housing market. Profits for the quarter were \$117.5 million, which included a \$33 million tax benefit. Sales rose just 2% to \$3.94 billion as comps fell 5% for the three months.

### Did You Know...?

U.S. home construction starts were up 3% in October, the biggest monthly gain in eight months, but building permits were down 6.6% to a level not seen in 14 years. Housing starts set at an annual pace of 1.229 million units in October from a 1.193 million unit pace in September.

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## Off the Rack

... **Macy's** is in the process of working out a deal to bring a 20,000 square foot grocery store to the basement of its State Street flagship location in Chicago sometime early next year. Macy's is not the only Chicago department store looking at possibly bringing in an upscale grocery operator to the Loop, as **Carson Pirie Scott** has also been rumored to be looking at a grocery partner.

... **Charlotte Russe Holding, Inc.** reported sales for its fiscal year ended September 29, 2007 of \$740.9 million, up 8.7% versus sales of \$681.5 million for the prior year. Net income for the year was \$36.3 million, up 44.4% versus last year.

... **Aeropostale, Inc.** entered into an amended and restated revolving credit facility which expanded its availability from a maximum of \$75 million to \$150 million with Bank of America, N.A.

... Poor earnings at **JC Penney** are being blamed on bad weather, high fuel prices, credit crunches and declining housing prices. The company claims that it is very focused on the fourth quarter, and remains very bullish in opening new locations.

... Taking a more cautious view of the consumer environment, **JC Penney** now expects full year earnings to be in the range of \$4.63 to \$4.78 per share, down from previous guidance of \$5.50 per share.

... **Kohl's Corporation** and **Fila Luxembourg S.a.r.l.** signed a multi-year licensing agreement naming Kohl's as the exclusive U.S. retailer of the FILA SPORT® collection.

... Reflecting the disappointing results in the third quarter, **Kohl's** now expects earnings per share for the full year to be in the range of \$3.52 to \$3.58 per share versus previous guidance in the range of \$3.77 to \$3.87 per share.

... **Limited Brands** now expects fourth quarter earnings per share of between 90 cents and \$1.05 versus \$1.08 last year reflecting issues related to the opening of a new distribution center for Victoria's Secret Direct and the challenging overall retail environment.

... **Neiman Marcus, Inc.** will release its operating results for its first quarter on December 5, 2007. Be sure to look for **Global's** updated analysis and assessment shortly thereafter.

... As a result of the improvement in its third quarter, **Gap Inc.** increased its fiscal year guidance to a range of 92 cents to 98 cents per share from prior guidance of 83 cents to 88 cents per share.

... **Abercrombie & Fitch Co.** plans to open a Tokyo flagship store in late 2009, the company's first store in Asia. In addition, the company remains on plan to introduce its new concept store in January of 2008 with the opening of four stores.

... Citing the weak October traffic and ongoing macroeconomic uncertainty, **Ann Taylor Stores Corp.** now sees earnings of \$2.05 to \$2.15 for the fiscal year, down from a previous projection for a profit of \$2.15 to \$2.25 per share.

... **Stage Stores** saw its third quarter profits fall 14% to \$2.4 million, as the company points to warm weather, which hurt demand for winter clothing. Revenues for the quarter were up marginally to \$355.1 million. In turn, the company raised its fourth quarter guidance by raising the lower end. The company expects profits of \$483 million to \$495 million for the quarter, up from the previous guidance of \$480 million to \$495 million.

... **Charming Shoppes** saw its third quarter results swing to a loss. The company reported a net loss of \$3.6 million for the quarter compared to profits of \$19.4 million last year. Total revenue fell 3.7% to \$669.4 million for the company, hurt by a comp store loss of 8%. Estimates have the company losing another \$0.06 to \$0.08 per share during the fourth quarter. Fourth quarter revenue guidance of \$795 million to \$805 million are well below previous estimates of \$840.7 million. Charming Shoppes has also cut its 2008 profit guidance by nearly half.

... **Saks** has officially settled another lawsuit. The latest suit has the company paying out \$2.7 million in after tax expenses associated with lawsuits filed by two vendors. The lawsuits claimed abusive practices against the vendors.

### Did You Know...?

Consumer sentiment fell in November from the prior month as the Consumer Sentiment index fell from 80.9 in October to 76.1 in November, significantly below the 92.1 during the same period in the prior year.

## Options and Resources

**Feedback and Questions:** Should you have any feedback to provide us or questions to ask, please email us at [inbox@globalcreditservices.com](mailto:inbox@globalcreditservices.com)

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## Third Quarter Earnings

\$ in Millions	Sales		Change	3rd Qtr Comps	Net Income		
	2006	2007			2006	2007	Change
<b>Apparel</b>							
Abercrombie & Fitch	\$863.4	\$973.9	12.8%	1.0%	\$102.0	\$117.6	15.2%
Aeropostale, Inc.	\$385.5	\$412.6	7.0%	1.9%			
American Eagle Outfitters	\$696.3	\$744.4	6.9%	2.0%			
AnnTaylor Stores Corporation	\$566.3	\$600.9	6.1%	-0.4%	\$39.3	\$40.8	3.8%
Bon Ton Stores, Inc.	\$804.1	\$780.8	-2.9%	-3.0%			
Buckle, Inc.	\$143.1	\$167.6	17.1%	14.3%	\$17.7	\$22.2	25.7%
Cache, Inc.	\$59.9	\$60.6	1.1%	4.0%	\$0.7	\$0.2	-76.7%
Carter's, Inc.	\$392.0	\$410.9	4.8%		\$35.0	\$34.6	-1.0%
Cato Corporation	\$187.7	\$181.9	-3.1%	-5.0%			
Charming Shoppes, Inc.	\$695.3	\$669.4	-3.7%	-8.0%	\$19.4	(\$3.6)	N/A
Children's Place	\$550.4	\$587.4	6.7%	1.0%		\$11.8	
Citi Trends, Inc.	\$87.1	\$99.5	14.2%	1.9%			
Dillard's, Inc.	\$1,759.3	\$1,674.2	-4.8%	-6.0%	\$13.6	(\$11.3)	N/A
Eddie Bauer Holdings	\$211.3	\$211.0	-0.2%	3.4%	(\$197.6)	(\$16.4)	91.7%
GAP	\$3,851.0	\$3,854.0	0.1%	-5.0%	\$189.0	\$238.0	25.9%
Gottschalks	\$148.8	\$137.4	-7.7%	-5.1%			N/A
Gymboree Corporation	\$212.7	\$250.7	17.9%	8.0%	\$17.4	\$26.9	54.4%
Hot Topic, Inc.	\$196.7	\$188.5	-4.2%	-2.6%	\$7.1	\$6.7	5.6%
J.C. Penney Company	\$4,781.0	\$4,729.0	-1.1%		\$287.0	\$261.0	-9.1%
JoS. A. Bank Clothiers	\$119.5	\$131.3	9.9%	3.1%			
Kohl's Corporation	\$3,650.5	\$3,825.2	4.8%	-2.6%	\$224.5	\$194.0	-13.6%
Limited Brands	\$2,115.0	\$1,923.1	-9.1%	-3.0%	\$23.5	\$12.1	-48.4%
Macy's, Inc.	\$5,886.0	\$5,906.0	0.3%	-0.8%	(\$3.0)	\$33.0	N/A
New York & Company, Inc.	\$270.9	\$287.0	5.9%	-4.8%	\$9.6	(\$16.0)	-267.1%
Nordstrom, Inc.	\$1,872.1	\$1,970.4	5.3%	2.2%	\$135.7	\$165.7	22.1%
Pacific Sunwear of California, Inc.	\$375.4	\$373.1	-0.6%	5.0%	\$9.0	(\$20.0)	N/A
Retail Ventures, Inc.	\$787.6	\$787.8	0.0%	-7.3%			
Ross Stores, Inc.	\$1,362.0	\$1,468.3	7.8%	1.0%	\$43.9	\$48.7	10.8%
Saks Incorporated	\$697.0	\$796.1	14.2%	11.4%	\$6.2	\$21.6	249.5%
Stage Stores, Inc.	\$353.3	\$355.1	0.5%	-1.0%	\$2.8	\$2.4	-12.6%
Stein Mart, Inc.	\$339.2	\$333.4	-1.7%	-6.3%			
Talbots, Inc.	\$569.0	\$556.0	-2.3%	-7.9%			
TJX Companies	\$4,472.9	\$4,737.5	5.9%	3.0%	\$230.6	\$249.5	8.2%
True Religion Apparel, Inc.	\$43.2	\$48.7	12.7%			\$8.9	
Tween Brands, Inc.	\$230.5	\$260.9	13.2%	4.0%	\$19.0	\$13.0	-31.6%
Urban Outfitters, Inc.	\$308.4	\$379.3	23.0%	8.0%	\$34.5	\$45.4	31.5%
Wet Seal, Inc.	\$143.3	\$150.3	4.9%	-3.4%			
Wilson's The Leather Expert	\$64.5	\$57.8	-10.3%	-13.3%	(\$14.1)	(\$18.5)	-31.8%
<b>Mass Merchants</b>							
Big Lots, Inc.	\$1,031.0	\$1,014.0	-1.6%	-0.5%			35.5%
BJ's Wholesale Club, Inc.	\$2,012.1	\$2,172.4	8.0%	3.4%	\$18.3	\$22.7	23.7%
Canadian Tire	C\$2,023.3	C\$2,053.4	1.5%	-2.7%	C\$95.4	C\$105.7	10.8%
Cost U Less, Inc.	\$54.6	\$57.9	6.0%	5.7%			
Dollar Tree Stores, Inc.	\$910.4	\$997.8	9.6%	1.9%			
Duckwall-ALCO Stores, Inc.	\$108.8	\$114.3	5.1%	2.2%			
Fred's, Inc.	\$407.9	\$419.9	2.9%	1.1%			
Overstock.com	\$156.9	\$161.9	3.2%		(\$24.5)	(\$4.7)	80.8%
Sears Canada Inc.	C\$1,408.8	C\$1,367.6	-2.9%	-3.6%	C\$37.8	C\$105.2	278.3%
Target Corporation	\$13,570.0	\$14,835.0	9.3%	3.7%	\$506.0	\$483.0	-4.5%
Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.	\$84,467.0	\$91,949.0	8.9%	1.5%	\$2,647.0	\$2,857.0	7.9%
<b>Home Centers</b>							
Builders FirstSource, Inc.	\$569.9	\$413.9	-27.4%		\$17.3	(\$11.5)	N/A
Building Materials Holding Corporation	\$817.8	\$618.3	-24.4%		\$35.3	\$4.2	-88.2%
Calloway's Nursery, Inc.	\$6.9	\$7.1	1.6%	4.4%	(\$1.4)	(\$0.8)	42.8%
Fastenal Company	\$470.1	\$533.8	13.5%		\$54.1	\$62.1	14.9%
Five Star Products, Inc.	\$27.7	\$32.9	19.1%		\$0.0	\$0.3	953.3%
Griffin Land & Nurseries	\$17.7	\$12.1	-31.4%		\$2.6	\$2.3	-12.2%
Home Depot, Inc.	\$19,648.0	\$18,961.0	-3.5%	-6.2%	\$1,490.0	\$1,091.0	-26.8%
Huttig Building Products	\$294.2	\$233.0	-20.8%		(\$9.1)	(\$0.1)	98.9%
Interline Brands, Inc.	\$314.2	\$330.2	5.1%		\$14.2	\$16.0	12.4%
Lowe's Companies	\$11,211.0	\$11,565.0	3.2%	-4.3%	\$716.0	\$643.0	-10.2%
Sherwin-Williams Company	\$2,116.7	\$2,197.0	3.8%	-0.6%	\$179.1	\$200.3	11.9%
Tractor Supply Company	\$559.2	\$629.2	12.5%	1.9%	\$18.1	\$17.5	-3.3%
United Rentals, Inc.	\$983.0	\$997.0	1.4%		\$95.0	\$112.0	17.9%
Wesco International	\$1,343.1	\$1,545.6	15.1%		\$59.4	\$70.0	17.8%
W. W. Grainger	\$1,519.5	\$1,658.6	9.2%		\$104.5	\$109.2	4.5%

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## Third Quarter Earnings

\$ in Millions	Sales			3rd Qtr Comps	Net Income		
	2006	2007	Change		2006	2007	Change
<b>Sports &amp; Footwear</b>							
Bakers Footwear Group, Inc	\$46.6	\$40.3	-13.5%	-16.6%			
Big 5 Sporting Goods Corp.	\$223.3	\$231.3	3.6%	0.1%	\$7.8	\$8.4	7.1%
Big Dog Holdings, Inc.	\$54.1	\$56.6	4.5%	1.2%	\$0.5	(\$0.1)	N/A
Broder Bros., Co.	\$249.2	\$246.4	-1.1%		(\$2.5)	(\$11.6)	-364.0%
Cabela's	\$490.5	\$546.8	11.5%	4.6%	\$15.0	\$13.2	-11.8%
Dick's Sporting Goods, Inc.	\$708.3	\$838.8	18.4%	-2.5%	\$7.8	\$12.2	56.9%
DSW Inc.	\$332.2	\$367.4	10.6%	-3.0%			
Foot Locker	\$1,430.0	\$1,356.0	-5.2%	-5.0%	\$65.0	(\$33.0)	N/A
Golfsmith International Holdings, Inc.	\$94.0	\$106.5	13.4%	-0.2%	\$3.4	\$4.0	17.8%
GSI Commerce	\$118.5	\$137.3	15.9%		(\$6.2)	(\$6.1)	2.1%
Hibbett Sporting Goods, Inc.	\$129.7	\$129.6	0.0%	-6.6%	\$9.9	\$7.8	-21.3%
Shoe Carnival, Inc.	\$189.1	\$173.9	-8.0%	-5.0%	\$8.4	\$4.2	-50.0%
Skechers USA, Inc.	\$331.1	\$395.0	19.3%		\$22.2	\$24.7	11.5%
West Marine, Inc.	\$195.6	\$187.5	-4.1%	0.3%	\$2.9	\$5.3	80.6%
WinMark Corporation	\$7.2	\$8.0	9.8%		\$0.8	\$1.2	41.5%
<b>Specialty</b>							
A.C. Moore Arts & Crafts	\$128.9	\$122.6	-4.9%		(\$2.6)	(\$0.4)	84.6%
Advance Auto Parts, Inc.	\$1,099.5	\$1,158.0	5.3%	1.1%	\$58.9	\$59.0	0.2%
Barnes & Noble, Inc.	\$1,112.0	\$1,175.5	5.7%	2.6%	(\$2.8)	\$4.4	N/A
Brookstone, Inc.	\$87.8	\$91.3	4.0%	4.2%	(\$10.3)	(\$10.2)	0.9%
Finlay Enterprises, Inc.	\$136.4	\$141.9	4.0%	1.6%			
Haverty Furniture	\$222.9	\$200.7	-10.0%	-11.6%	\$4.1	\$0.6	-84.5%
Jo-Ann Stores, Inc.	\$461.9	\$480.2	4.0%	2.4%			
Kirkland's, Inc.	\$95.8	\$88.6	-7.5%	-12.1%			
Leon's Furniture Limited	C\$157.1	C\$165.8	5.5%	1.5%	C\$14.9	C\$16.2	8.7%
Linens N Things	\$658.2	\$666.8	1.3%	-1.4%	(\$27.4)	(\$79.9)	-192.0%
O'Reilly Automotive, Inc.	\$597.1	\$661.8	10.8%	4.3%	\$47.9	\$53.1	10.9%
PetSmart, Inc.	\$1,034.8	\$1,115.9	7.8%	1.4%	\$31.7	\$29.5	-7.2%
Pet Valu	\$37.5	\$41.5	10.9%		\$2.1	\$3.1	47.7%
Williams-Sonoma, Inc.	\$852.8	\$895.1	5.0%	1.1%	\$29.1	\$27.1	-7.1%
<b>Consumer Electronics</b>							
Aaron Rents, Inc.	\$317.7	\$359.4	13.1%	4.0%	\$17.4	\$15.9	-8.4%
Amazon.com, Inc.	\$2,307.0	\$3,262.0	41.4%		\$19.0	\$80.0	321.1%
BMTC Group Inc.	C\$216.7	C\$223.4	3.1%		C\$16.7	C\$16.0	-4.2%
Conn's, Inc.	\$139.6	\$155.7	11.5%	6.8%			
GameStop Corp.	\$1,011.6	\$1,611.2	59.3%	46.3%	\$13.6	\$52.0	282.9%
IAC/InterActiveCorp	\$1,411.7	\$1,515.8	7.4%		\$74.9	\$71.8	-4.2%
Ingram Micro Inc.	\$7,510.3	\$8,607.9	14.6%		\$58.5	\$72.4	23.7%
Office Depot, Inc.	\$3,857.1	\$3,935.4	2.0%	-5.0%	\$129.1	\$117.5	-9.0%
OfficeMax Incorporated	\$2,244.4	\$2,315.2	3.2%	0.8%	\$31.4	\$49.9	59.1%
PC Connection, Inc.	\$415.2	\$456.5	9.9%		\$4.4	\$7.7	75.1%
PC Mall, Inc.	\$242.2	\$287.7	18.8%		\$1.9	\$3.0	56.1%
RadioShack Corporation	\$1,059.5	\$960.3	-9.4%	-8.6%	(\$16.3)	\$46.3	N/A
Rent-A-Center, Inc.	\$587.2	\$709.7	20.9%	-1.8%	\$25.2	\$25.3	0.1%
Sharper Image	\$55.2	\$46.0	-16.7%	-15.0%			
Systemax Inc.	\$575.0	\$687.3	19.5%		\$12.5	\$17.6	41.7%
Trans World Entertainment Corporation	\$297.7	\$260.6	-12.5%	-4.0%	(\$11.4)	(\$14.3)	-25.4%
ValueVision Media, Inc.	\$184.9	\$184.8	0.0%		(\$3.1)	(\$5.7)	-83.2%
Zones, Inc.	\$137.9	\$163.0	18.2%		\$2.1	\$2.6	25.5%
<b>Food</b>							
Arden Group	\$118.1	\$119.4	1.1%	1.1%	\$5.8	\$8.9	53.7%
Loblaw Companies Limited	C\$901.0	\$9,137.0	1.4%	1.6%	C\$203.0	C\$117.0	-42.4%
Nash Finch Company	\$1,427.0	\$1,367.1	-4.2%		(\$4.6)	\$15.4	N/A
Publix Super Markets	\$5,286.7	\$5,630.3	6.5%	4.5%	\$252.9	\$249.1	-1.5%
Weis Markets, Inc.	\$557.2	\$565.0	1.4%	1.8%	\$11.6	\$10.8	-6.5%
<b>Drug</b>							
CVS Caremark Corporation	\$11,208.8	\$20,495.2	82.8%	5.0%	\$284.2	\$689.5	142.6%
Drugstore.com, Inc.	\$100.6	\$107.3	6.6%		(\$2.6)	(\$2.4)	8.4%
Express Scripts, Inc.	\$4,330.2	\$4,519.0	4.4%		\$114.7	\$142.9	24.6%
Longs Drug Stores	\$1,198.9	\$1,238.2	3.3%	1.4%	\$12.7	\$19.4	52.7%
Omnicare, Inc.	\$1,593.9	\$1,537.0	-3.6%		\$52.2	\$42.6	-18.4%
PharMerica Corporation	\$169.1	\$377.5	123.2%		\$4.6	(\$27.0)	N/A
Shoppers Drug Mart	C\$2,329.1	C\$2,542.7	9.2%	5.3%	C\$123.9	C\$142.6	15.1%
Tenet Healthcare Corp.	\$2,058.0	\$2,212.0	7.5%		(\$89.0)	(\$59.0)	33.7%

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## Earnings Release Dates

Apparel/Department Stores		Sporting Goods & Footwear	
Citi Trends, Inc.	26-Nov	Brown Shoe Company, Inc.	28-Nov
American Eagle Outfitters	27-Nov	lululemon athletica inc.	29-Nov
Talbots, Inc.	27-Nov	Collective Brands, Inc.	4-Dec
Aeropostale, Inc.	28-Nov		
Coldwater Creek	28-Nov	Specialty	
Men's Wearhouse	28-Nov	Finlay Enterprises, Inc.	27-Nov
Bon-Ton Stores	29-Nov	Jo-Ann Stores, Inc.	28-Nov
		Pep Boys-Manny, Moe & Jack	28-Nov
Casual Male Retail Group, Inc.	29-Nov	Cost Plus, Inc.	29-Nov
Cato Corporation	29-Nov	Michaels Stores Inc.	29-Nov
dELiA*s, Inc.	29-Nov	Kirklands, Inc.	30-Nov
J.Crew Group, Inc.	29-Nov	Mass Merchants	
Stein Mart Inc.	29-Nov	Dollar Tree Stores, Inc.	28-Nov
Stein Mart, Inc.	29-Nov	Fred's Inc.	29-Nov
Wet Seal	29-Nov	Big Lots, Inc.	30-Nov
Zumiez Inc.	29-Nov		
Consumer Electronics			
Staples, Inc.	27-Nov		
Tech Data	27-Nov		
Conn's, Inc.	29-Nov		

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### Global Credit Services 6th Annual Symposium Sanibel Harbour Resort, Fort Myers, Florida April 1st-4th, 2008



Global Credit Services is pleased to announce that it will be hosting its 6th Annual Credit Symposium from April 1st - 4th, 2008 at the Sanibel Harbour Resort in Fort Meyers, Florida. Don't miss the opportunity to meet credit, financial, and legal professionals alike to exchange information and ideas regarding risk management.

Based upon the availability of annual-year information, clients and attendees have asked that we hold our symposium in the 2nd quarter of 2008 in

order to provide more detailed information and discussion regarding retailers and other companies that we monitor. We are happy to comply with those requests.

Likewise, this time of year gives us and our esteemed group of Panelists and Speakers a chance to offer a "year in review" perspective and to better comment on economic and credit related trends for the upcoming fiscal 2008.

And like every year, we will be offering Sponsors and Exhibitors unique networking opportunities to reach their target audience in both a professional and personal format. Detailed sponsorship information regarding this event will be available soon.

To learn more about last year's successful 5th Annual Credit Symposium, please click into the Symposium Info tab on the Global Credit Services website below, or contact Amelia Labriola at 212.308.6060 ext104.

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