



## MAFSI BUSINESS BAROMETER REPORTS OVERALL SALES INCREASE OF 3.4% FOR Q2/06 Predictions for Third Quarter 2006 and Year 2006 Remain Optimistic

The second quarter 2006 MAFSI Business Barometer has just been released and reveals the following:

Business continues to grow at an improved rate of 3.4% for Q2/06 versus 2.7% in Q1/06. This low rate of growth is less than the '06 forecast of 5.4%. The industry's year-to-date rate of price increase as measured by price changes provided by AutoQuotes is 3.1%.

The combination of these two statistics, MAFSI growth, and AutoQuotes inflation translate to zero percent or slightly negative real growth for the first half of 2006.

Second quarter growth ranged by territory from a low of 1.4% in the Midwest to 3.4% in Canada, 3.6% in the South, 3.9% in the West and 4.7% in the Northeast.

Overall sales for equipment, supplies, tabletop and furnishings all moved upward in the 3-4% range.

MAFSI members remain positive in spite of the impact of higher fuel prices and interest rates and Mideast tensions with a third quarter forecast of 4.2%.

MAFSI releases the Business Barometer on a quarterly basis. Third quarter results will be released the first week in November.

## businessbarometer

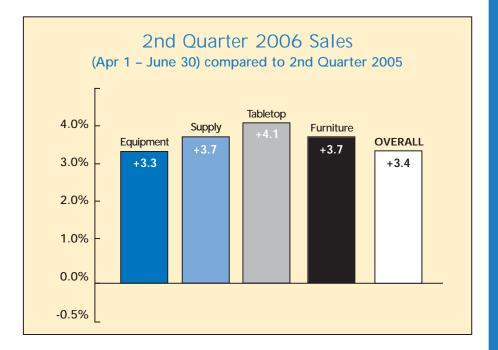
MAFSI Business Confidence Index for 3rd Quarter 2006

(July 1 – Sept 30) compared to 3rd Quarter 2005

 $\begin{array}{c} \text{ALL REGIONS} \\ +4.2\% \end{array}$ 

MAFSI Business Confidence Index for 2006 Compared to 2005

+5.4%



Projected 3rd Quarter 2006 Sales (June 1 – Sept 30) compared to 3rd Quarter 2005

NORTHEAST +5.3%

 $\begin{array}{c} \text{south} \\ +3.4\% \end{array}$ 

 $\begin{array}{c} \text{MIDWEST} \\ +3.1\% \end{array}$ 

 $^{\text{WEST}}_{+4.8\%}$ 

canada +3.4%

Projected 2006 Overall Sales Forecast (Compared to Overall Sales for 2005)

NORTHEAST +5.8%

south +5.2%  $^{\text{MIDWEST}}_{+4.4\%}$ 

west +6.3% canada +5.1%

## Regions Represented Total Respondents 121

**NORTHEAST** — ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT, DE, NJ, NY, PA, DC, MD, VA

SOUTH — NC, SC, GA, FL, AL, TN, MS, AR, LA, OK, TX

MIDWEST — KY, W.PA, WV, ND, SD, NE, KS, MN, IA, MO, WI, IL, IN, MI, OH

WEST — WA, OR, ID, MT, WY, CO, NM, UT, AZ, NV, CA, AK, HI

CANADA — Includes all of Canada

