

## MAFSI Reports Slow Growth for 3rd Quarter 2007. Forecast Is for More of the Same for 4th Quarter.

ales for the 3rd Quarter of 2007 grew by 2.9%, which was less than the 3.6% forecasted. At 2.3%, 2.8%, and 2.9% respectively, for the first, second, and third quarters of 2007, sales continue to grow at a modest pace in contrast to the yearly forecast of 4.5% for all of 2007. This is the twelfth consecutive quarter where some positive growth was measured.

Canada continued to lead the way in the third quarter at an increase of 5.1%, as their currency achieved parity with the US Dollar. The U.S. market was pretty uniform with Northeast at

3.1%, South at 3.0%, Midwest at 2.7%, and West at 1.8%.

Sales by category were steady as well with Equipment at 3.1%, Furnishings at 2.9%, Tabletop at 2.3%, and Supplies at 2.0%.

The fourth quarter forecast is for more of the same, specifically 3.0% overall.

This all adds up to negative real growth as prices have been driven up by material and energy cost pressures.

At the end of the fourth quarter, MAFSI will publish its overall forecast for 2008.

## businessbarometer

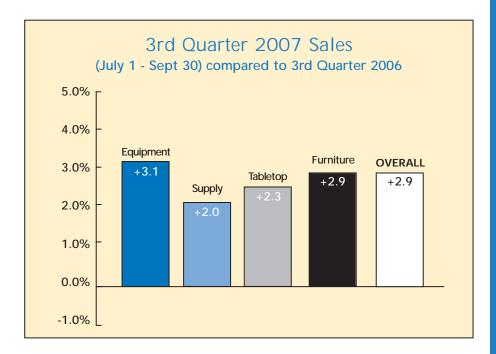
MAFSI Business Confidence Index for 4th Quarter 2007

(Oct 1 - Dec 31) compared to 4th Quarter 2006

+3.0%

MAFSI Business Confidence Index for 2007 Compared to 2006

+4.5%



Projected 4th Quarter 2007 Sales (Oct 1 - Dec 31) compared to 4th Quarter 2006

NORTHEAST 4 0/

south +3.3%

 $\begin{array}{c} \text{MIDWEST} \\ +3.8\% \end{array}$ 

west +2.8% canada +2.2%

Projected 2007 Overall Sales Forecast (Compared to Overall Sales for 2007)

NORTHEAST +5.1%

south +5.5%  $\begin{array}{c} \text{MIDWEST} \\ +3.9\% \end{array}$ 

west +3.5% CANADA +4.9%

## Regions Represented Total Respondents 126

**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

