

MAFSI Reps Report Lower Sales for Q1/08; First Decline Since Q3/03 Sales Forecast for Q2/08 is -0.5%

verall sales for Q1/08 contracted by -1.2%, the first decrease since third quarter of 2003, and a continuation of a downward trend which began in the first quarter of 2006. MAFSI reps had forecasted a gain of 1.3% and widely missed this mark.

This decline was experienced in all regions of the U.S. and ranged from -1.1% in the South, -1.4% in the Midwest, -1.7% in the Northeast, and -2.2% in the West. Canada eked out a gain of +0.6%.

By product category, hardest hit was equipment at 1.5%, followed by supplies at -0.5%. Furnishings came in at -0.4% while tabletop managed a slim gain of 0.5%.

Manufacturers implemented significant price increases in 2007 and 2008, driven by higher material, fuel, transportation and health insurance costs. Higher prices, coupled with lower sales, translates to a sharper decline in unit sales.

Other market influencers include the slower expansion of some major chain accounts, sluggish B&I sales (particularly in the financial services and manufacturing sectors) and a softening in public spending as state and local budgets are tightened in response to housing woes.

Hot areas continue to be casinos, stadiums, healthcare, hotels and corrections. The replacement/renovation market is active as Energy Star driven rebates add focus to the replacement of less efficient equipment. The "greening" of the foodservice industry is red hot.

The MBB measures sales changes in the U.S. and Canada. Some manufacturers have reported gains in export sales as the weakened dollar makes U.S. goods more attractive in the global marketplace. The MAFSI Business Barometer points to continued negative growth in $\Omega 2/08$ of -0.5%.

businessbarometer

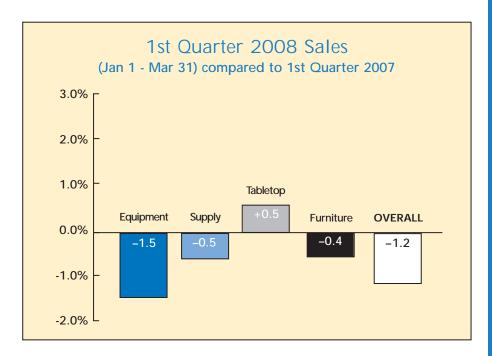
MAFSI Business Confidence Index for 2nd Quarter 2008

(Apr 1 - June 30) compared to 2nd Quarter 2007

ALL REGIONS -0.5%

MAFSI Business Confidence Index for 2008 Compared to 2007

+2.1%



Projected 2nd Quarter 2008 Sales (Apr 1 - June 30) compared to 2nd Quarter 2007

NORTHEAST -0.7%

south -0.9% $\begin{array}{c} \text{MIDWEST} \\ -0.9\% \end{array}$

west -1.5%

canada +1.8%

Projected 2008 Overall Sales Forecast (Compared to Overall Sales for 2007)

NORTHEAST +2.5%

 $\begin{array}{c} \text{south} \\ +1.3\% \end{array}$

 $\begin{array}{c} \text{MIDWEST} \\ +3.2\% \end{array}$

 $^{\text{WEST}}_{+2.4\%}$

canada +3.1%

