

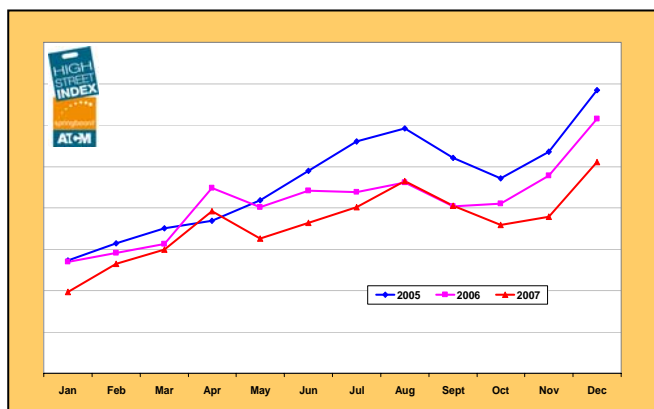
ATCM-Springboard High Street Index

December 2007 Commentary



So it seems that the pundits were right – according to the British Retail Consortium it was the worst December for retail sales since 2004 with a year on year increase of just 0.3%, and a three month trend rate of growth of just 0.8%. Even Marks & Spencer which has had a huge change of fortune this year couldn't buck the national trend and reported a fall in like-for-like sales of 2.2% in the last quarter of 2007, and a decline of 3.2% for clothing and homewares.

This poor performance of the retail sector was certainly reflected in the level of footfall in the UK's high streets during December – an annual decline nationally of 8.6% for the month was virtually double that of December 2006. Following on from an annual decline of a similar magnitude in November, the three month trend rate of growth declined sharply to -7.7% from just -1.0% in the previous quarter.



The implication of this for the year as a whole is that footfall in the UK's high streets has declined even further from 2006 - by 4.6% in 2007 following on from a decline of 4.4% in 2006.

Year on Year change

Saturday before Christmas	+ 3.7%
Christmas Eve	+ 30.3%
Boxing Day	+ 4.4%
27 December	+ 1.0%

Despite the poor Christmas trading period there appeared to be a surge in activity late on with year on year increases on the Saturday before Christmas and on Christmas Eve. And the prospect of even further bargains at the official start of the sales led to year on year increases in footfall on both Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

All Towns and Cities

Annual Change:	
Dec 06 to Dec 07	-8.6%
Nov 06 to Nov 07	-9.8%
Oct 06 to Oct 07	-5.0%

Month on month change:	
Nov to Dec 07	14.1%
Nov to Dec 06	14.0%
Oct to Nov 07	2.7%
Oct to Nov 06	6.1%

Regional Cities

Annual Change:	
Dec 06 to Dec 07	-9.1%
Nov 06 to Nov 07	-11.1%
Oct 06 to Oct 07	-6.3%

Month on month change:	
Nov to Dec 07	13.0%
Nov to Dec 06	11.5%
Oct to Nov 07	3.0%
Oct to Nov 06	8.5%