

This Week's Top Stories in Retail

January 16, 2009

Survey: Consumer Spending Stabilizing

Rockville, Md. (January 15, 2009) Consumer spending may finally be stabilizing, even though the overall outlook on the economy remains negative, according to a new consumer survey released Thursday by ChangeWave.

Foot Traffic Falls 15.0% for Holiday Shopping Season

Chicago (January 15, 2009) ShopperTrak's retail traffic index reported that total U.S. foot traffic for the 2008 holiday shopping season (November through December) fell a significant 15.0% as compared to the same period in 2007, while the company's retail sales estimate reported a dramatic 4.4% retail sales decline for the season.

Golfsmith Holiday Sales Drop 13.7%

Austin, Texas (January 15, 2009) Golfsmith International Holdings reported sales of roughly \$68 million during the 14-week period that ended Jan. 3, down 13.7% from the comparable period last year.

Family Dollar Elects New Board Member

Matthews, N.C. (January 15, 2009) Family Dollar Stores announced that Pamela L. Davies was elected to its board of directors at its annual meeting of stockholders held on Thursday.

Carphone Warehouse Revenue Up 13%

London (January 15, 2009) Carphone Warehouse Group PLC warned Thursday that challenging times lay ahead even as it reported a 13% increase in retail revenues to one billion pounds (\$1.5 billion) in the last three months of December.

Saks to Cut Corporate Work Force

New York City (January 15, 2009) Saks Inc. said on Thursday that it plans to reduce 1,100 corporate support and store positions, about 9% of total work force, as part of its effort to weather the deteriorating economic environment. The majority of job cuts will take effect by Jan. 30.

Forever 21 to Replace Virgin Megastore in Times Square

New York City (January 15, 2009) Forever 21 plans to open its largest location to date, a 91,000-sq.-ft. flagship in Manhattan's Times Square. The store will be housed in the space currently occupied by Virgin Megastore.

American Eagle Adds Creative Director Post

Pittsburgh (January 15, 2009) American Eagle Outfitters announced Thursday that Roger Markfield, former chief merchandising officer/co-CEO of AEO and current member of the AEO board of directors has been appointed to a newly created full time role as vice chairman, executive creative director of American Eagle Outfitters, Inc.

Starbucks Launches Community Initiative

Seattle (January 15, 2009) Starbucks Corp. said Wednesday it is asking its customers to donate five hours of time to their communities as part of an initiative timed to coincide with President-elect Barack Obama's inauguration.

Tiffany: 2008 Holiday "Most Challenging" Since Going Public

New York City (January 15, 2009) Tiffany & Co. on Wednesday said the 2008 holiday season was the most challenging since it went public 21 years ago and lowered its 2008 profit forecast as

a result.

Barnes & Noble Cuts 100 Corporate Jobs

New York City (January 15, 2009) Barnes & Noble Inc. said Wednesday that it has eliminated nearly 100 positions in its corporate headquarters as the bookseller attempts to reduce overhead costs due to the sharp downturn in retail sales.

Target Names Steinhafel as Chairman of Board

Minneapolis (January 15, 2009) Target Corp. said Thursday it named president and chief executive Gregg Steinhafel to the added role of chairman, effective Feb. 1, succeeding Bob Ulrich, who is retiring later this month.

Survey: Consumers are Bargain-Driven

Charleston, S.C. (January 14, 2009) Retailers will face a major challenge as a survey released Wednesday by America's Research Group/UBS found that consumers are reluctant to buy anything more than the essentials, saying that they are feeling pressured by debt and credit card bills.

NRF: Holiday Sales Down 2.8% in 2008

New York City (January 14, 2009) A December report released Wednesday by the National Retail Federation showed that retail industry sales for the month (which exclude automobiles, gas stations, and restaurants) declined 2.2% unadjusted over last year and decreased 1.4% seasonally adjusted from November.

Apple's Jobs Takes Medical Leave

Cupertino, Calif. (January 14, 2009) Apple Inc.'s CEO Steve Jobs said Wednesday he is taking a medical leave of absence until the end of June.

Duane Reade Settles Litigation

New York City (January 14, 2009) Duane Reade said Wednesday that it has reached a \$3.5 million litigation settlement that will result in a \$3.5 million one-time, pre-tax charge for the fourth quarter.

J.C. Penney Closing California Call Center

Plano, Texas (January 14, 2009) J.C. Penney Co. said Wednesday it plans to close a call center in Carmichael, Calif. as more shoppers use the Internet to place orders.

Walgreen CEO Search on Track

Deerfield, Ill. (January 14, 2009) Walgreen Co. said Wednesday that it could choose its full-time CEO by early February.

December DIY Fared Better Than Expected

Chicago (January 14, 2009) One sector that showed a less-than-expected decline in December was the home-improvement category, as data released Wednesday showed December sales at home-improvement retailers fell 5.5%, a dramatic improvement from the month before.

Supervalu Launches Store Closures

Eden Prairie, Minn. (January 14, 2009) Supervalu Inc. said Wednesday that it has begun the previously announced closure of about 50 of its stores nationwide.

Walgreens Unveils New Wellness Program

Deerfield, Ill. (January 14, 2009) Walgreen Co. announced Wednesday it has launched its Complete Care and Well-Being program aimed at employers.

Tiffany Same-Store Sales Drop 24%

New York City (January 14, 2009) Proving that the luxury sector isn't immune to the economic downturn, Tiffany & Co. reported Wednesday that its same-store sales for the holiday season slid 24%.

Gottschalks Bankrupts, Goody's to Liquidate

Fresno, Calif. (January 14, 2009) Gottschalks announced on Wednesday that it has filed a voluntary petition for reorganization relief under Chapter 11 of the United States Bankruptcy Code.

Office Depot First Retailer to Receive LEED Gold

Boca Raton, Fla. (January 14, 2009) Office Depot announced Wednesday that its sustainable retail store prototype has received a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Gold Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Fresh & Easy to Add 200 Jobs

El Segundo, Calif. (January 14, 2009) Fresh & Easy Neighborhood Market said Wednesday it will create 200 jobs over the next two months as the company continues to expand in Southern California, Arizona and Nevada.

Harris Teeter to Open at Tysons Corner

McLean, Va. (January 13, 2009) Harris Teeter is opening Jan. 14 at the Lofts at Park Crest, an apartment community in the heart of Tysons Corner in McLean, Va.

Gap, Pantone Launch Temp Store

San Francisco (January 13, 2009) Gap and Pantone have partnered in the launch of a temporary store devoted to T-shirts in midtown Manhattan.

Department Stores Give Away Cosmetics to Settle Lawsuit

New York City (January 13, 2009) Several department store retailers are faced with giving away free cosmetics in order to settle legal claims.

Neiman Marcus Cuts 375 Jobs

Dallas (January 13, 2009) Neiman Marcus Group said Tuesday that it is cutting about 375 jobs, equating to almost 3% of its work force.

Major Investor Joins Trans World Board

Albany, N.Y. (January 13, 2009) Trans World Entertainment Corp. has appointed Bryant Riley to the board of directors, the company said Tuesday.

Genesco Warns of Same-Store Sales Declines

Nashville, Tenn. (January 13, 2009) Shoe and hat seller Genesco Inc. said Tuesday that 4Q same-store sales are likely to come in at the lower end of its prior forecast for a decline of 1% to 4%.

New York Kmart Closing

Albany, N.Y. (January 13, 2009) A Kmart store in Glenmont, N.Y., will close after company officials chose not to renew its lease. Nearly 100 employees are affected.

Borders Group Names Chairman

Ann Arbor, Mich. (January 13, 2009) Borders Group announced Tuesday that it has appointed Mick McGuire, 32, non-executive chairman of the company's board of directors, effective Tuesday.

Rite Aid Fined \$5 Million Over Meth Violations

Washington, D.C. (January 13, 2009) After a federal probe into control of methamphetamine ingredients, the Department of Justice has fined Rite Aid Corp. and subsidiaries in eight states \$5 million in penalties.

New York & Co. Closing Stores, Cutting Jobs

New York City (January 13, 2009) New York & Co. said Monday it plans to close 10 to 15 stores in 2009 and cut more than 300 management and corporate positions as part of a multi-year cost-cutting program.

Chain Store Sales Fall 2.3% Last Week

New York City (January 13, 2009) For the week ended Jan. 10, chain store sales fell 2.3% according to the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC)-Goldman Sachs chain store index.

Ikea to Open Store in Carolinas

Charlotte, N.C. (January 12, 2009) Ikea announced Monday it will open its first Carolinas store - in Charlotte, N.C. - in six weeks.

Gander Mountain Names Execs

St. Paul, Minn. (January 12, 2009) Gander Mountain Co. announced Monday it has named Michael Owens executive VP and COO, and Steven Uline senior VP, marketing.

Stein Mart Reducing Work Force

Jacksonville, Fla. (January 12, 2009) Stein Mart Inc. said Friday it is laying off more than 200 employees in an attempt to reduce expense as sales continue to fall.

ShopperTrak: Q1 Foot Traffic Will Decline 16.4%

Chicago (January 12, 2009) ShopperTrak reported Monday it is predicting, according to its Retail Traffic Index (SRTI), that total U.S. foot traffic will decline a significant 16.4% in the first quarter, while the company's National Retail Sales Estimate (NRSE) is forecasting a sharp 4.0% retail sales drop for the same period.

Staples Selling Senior Notes, Paying Down Debt

Framingham, Mass. (January 12, 2009) Staples Inc. said Monday it will sell debt to reduce its outstanding commercial paper loans, its 2008 credit agreement and its revolving credit facility.

FTC Asks for Halt to Whole Foods/Wild Oats Combo

Portland, Ore. (January 12, 2009) On Monday it was announced that the Federal Trade Commission is asking a federal judge to halt the integration of Wild Oats and Whole Foods Market.

Wal-Mart CEO Sees No Quick Turnaround

New York City (January 12, 2009) Lee Scott, chief executive of Wal-Mart Stores Inc., said Monday he expects the U.S. economy to remain "extraordinarily challenging" for retailers during the first half of the year, and that he hopes the second half will be better.

Survey: Shopper Behavior Responding to Economy

New York City (January 12, 2009) Plenty of headlines will be generated from the "Big Show" - the National Retail Federation's 98th Annual Convention and Expo at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center in New York City, Jan. 12 to Jan. 14.

Saks Opens Saudi Arabia Store

New York City (January 12, 2009) Saks Inc. announced Monday the opening of Saks Fifth Avenue in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

Tuesday Morning Sales Miss Expectations

Dallas (January 12, 2009) Tuesday Morning Corp. said Friday that sales in the fiscal second quarter fell 11.7% and it forecast earnings below Wall Street expectations.

Save Mart Names President

Modesto, Calif. (January 9, 2009) Save Mart Supermarkets announced that it has promoted its COO to serve as president of the company.

Mattress Giant Names VP

Dallas (January 9, 2009) Mattress Giant Corp. announced that Armando Murillo has joined the company as VP, merchandising.

Survey: Consumer Spending Index Improves in Dec.

New York City (January 9, 2009) The Deloitte Research Leading Index of Consumer Spending improved in December, primarily due to a sharp decline in energy prices that in turn is giving a boost to real wages.

Office Depot Expands to Middle East

Delray Beach, Fla. (January 9, 2009) Office Depot is expanding its reach throughout the Middle East.

Circuit City in Talks With Two 'Interested Parties'

Richmond, Va. (January 9, 2009) Circuit City Stores Inc. said Friday it is in talks with two parties that could buy the company or provide additional financing for it to stay in business.

Searle in Chapter 11

New York City (January 9, 2009) Tom Jones Inc. and Searle Blatt & Co., parent companies of upscale coat marketer Searle, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection earlier this week, according to Craine's New York Business.

Build-A-Bear Lays Off 27 at HQ

(January 9, 2009) Build-A-Bear Workshop eliminated 27 jobs at its St. Louis headquarters on Thursday.

Cost Plus to Close 26 Stores, Cut Jobs

Oakland, Calif. (January 9, 2009) Cost Plus Inc. announced plans to close 26 stores and cut jobs on Friday in an effort to save about \$21 million a year, after the specialty home retailer reported weak holiday sales.

CVS Caremark Issues Disappointing Forecast

New York City (January 9, 2009) CVS Caremark Corp. on Friday forecast a smaller 2009 profit than Wall Street expected, pointing to uncertainty in the U.S. economy.

Haverty Furniture Sales Fall in 4Q

Atlanta (January 9, 2009) Haverty Furniture Cos. said Thursday its fourth-quarter sales fell 21.3% on weak demand.

Signet Group's Sales Fall

London (January 9, 2009) Signet Jewelers Ltd., the parent of Kay Jewelers and Jared chains,

said Thursday its same-store sales declined 15.2% for the quarter ending Jan. 3.

Raley's Joins EPA's GreenChill Partnership

West Sacramento, Calif. (January 9, 2009) Raley's Family of Fine Stores has joined the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's GreenChill Advanced Refrigeration Partnership and voluntarily committed to reducing refrigerant emissions to help fight climate change and protect the Earth's ozone layer.

Barnes & Noble Names Online President

New York City (January 9, 2009) Barnes & Noble Thursday announced that it has named William J. Lynch Jr. as president of its online business, www.barnesandnoble.com, effective Feb. 2.

Ron Burkle Buys 7% Stake in Whole Foods

(January 9, 2009) Los Angeles billionaire and supermarket mogul Ron Burkle on Thursday disclosed in a regulatory filing that he had purchased a 7% stake in Whole Foods Market.

Best Buy December Same-Store Sales Slip 6.5%

Richfield, Minn. (January 9, 2009) Best Buy Co. Friday said its December same-store sales declined 6.5% after a drop in store traffic.