

Online retail sales register double-digit growth in November

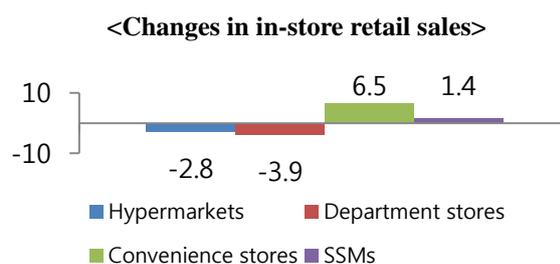
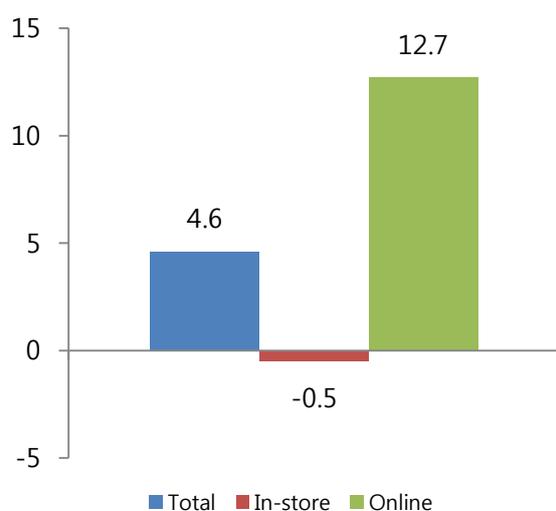
The Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy announced on December 31 that Korea's online retail sales in November registered a double-digit growth rate of 12.7 percent compared to a year earlier. With offline retail sales declining 0.5 percent, the overall retail sales saw an improvement of 4.6 percent.

Despite growth in convenience stores and super supermarkets (SSMs), brick-and-mortar stores experienced a decrease in sales because hypermarkets slowed down.

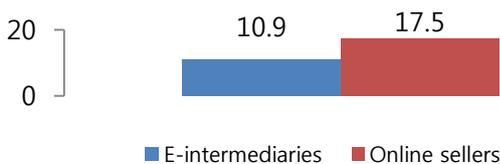
The growth rates of the online sales maintained at double-digit figures due to Korean retailers' emphasis on sales promotion activities. This was a response to similar activities carried out by their counterparts in other countries such as the U.S. and China.

<Changes in retail sales for November>

Unit: %



<Changes in online retail sales>



The Ministry releases monthly retail sales figures based on surveys of 26 major retailers. Half of them are brick-and-mortar retailers: three department store chains, three hypermarket chains, three convenience store chains, and four SSM operators. The other half are online retailers: nine major online sellers and four online shopping intermediaries.

For offline retailers, the sales at the convenience stores chains and the SSM operators expanded while those at the hypermarkets and the department store chains contracted.

Sales at the convenience store chains grew 6.5 percent mostly due to the increased number of stores and greater demand for food. Sales per store, however, inched down 1.8 percent.

The SSM operators saw a sales growth of 1.4 percent on the back of increased food sales. In particular, instant food and frozen meals grew more popular.

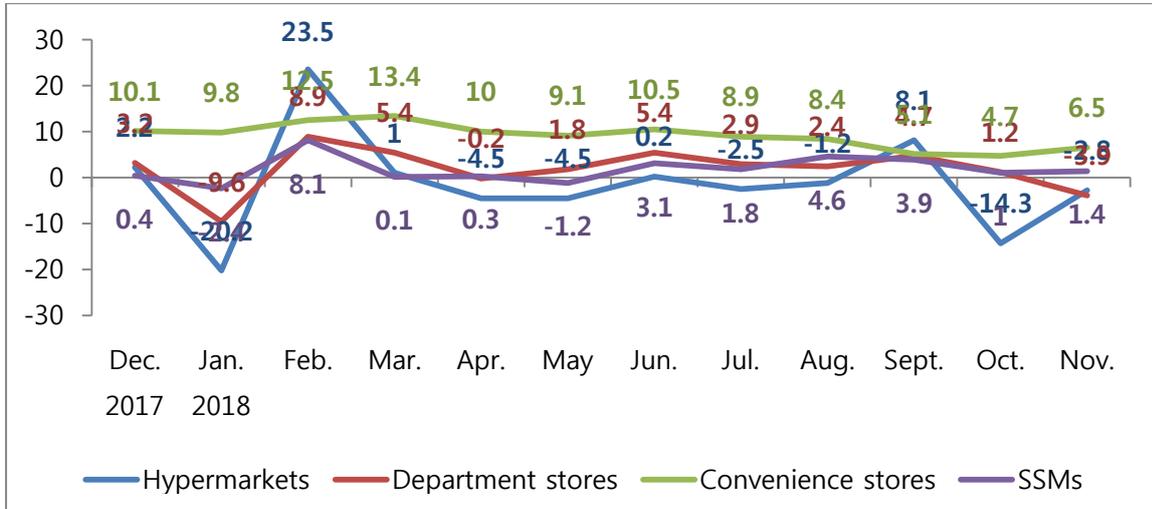
Sales at the hypermarket chains, on the other hand, went down 2.8 percent because of decreased non-food sales, which were affected by expanding online stores and specialty stores.

The department store chains had a 3.9 percent drop in sales. Especially, the sales of kids/sports categories contracted because of the fall in demand for outdoor clothing. The weather last month was warmer compared to November 2017.

Sales per store of the hypermarkets and the department stores slid 2.8 percent and 3.9 percent, respectively. Meanwhile, those of the other two brick-and-mortar stores improved: the convenience stores by 1.8 percent and the SSMs by 0.4 percent.

<Changes in in-store retail sales by store type>

Unit: % year-on-year change

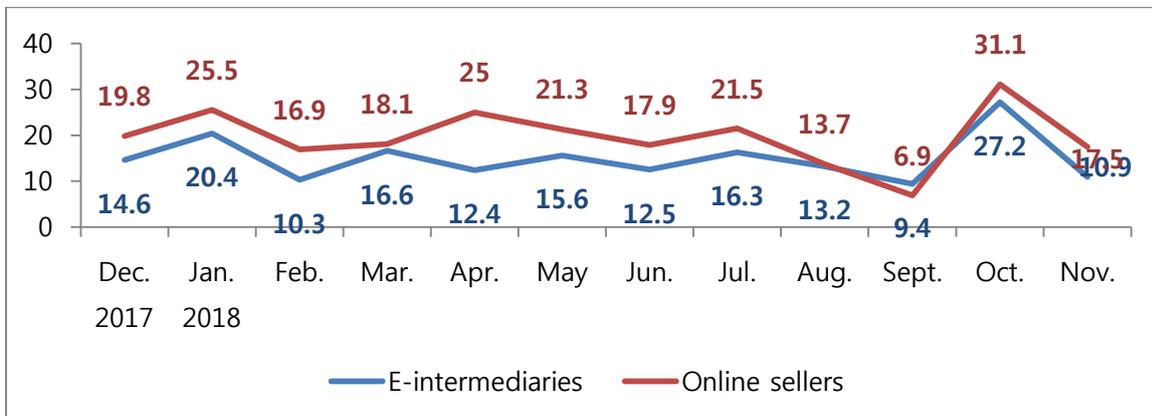


For online retailers, sales at the nine online sellers (Emart Mall, Shinsegae Mall, AK Mall, Galleria Mall, Lotte.com, Lotte Mart Mall, WeMakePrice, TicketMonster, and the online platform of Homeplus) grew 17.5 percent. This is largely attributable to greater demand for food and service products. The food sales, which take up 21.2 percent of the total sales, improved 22.0 percent; the sales of service products, which accounted for 14.0 percent, jumped 57.4 percent.

Sales at the four online shopping intermediaries (eBay Korea, 11Street, Interpark, and Coupang) increased 10.9 percent in sales due to various sales promotion efforts.

<Changes in online retail sales by store type>

Unit: % year-on-year change



Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy (MOTIE)

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By product, the sales of all seven major categories increased except for fashion/accessories and kids/sports. Among them, the services category posted the greatest sales growth of 13.1 percent, followed by the home appliances/culture category that increased 10.8 percent in sales. The sales of global brands, food, and household goods expanded 10.0 percent, 8.3 percent, and 4.2 percent, respectively. On the other hand, fashion/accessories experienced a sales decrease of 8.2 percent, and kids/sports saw that of 1.6 percent.

<Changes in retail sales in 2017 and 2018>

Unit: % year-on-year change

	2017		2018										
	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
Total	94	81	07	140	94	63	67	81	78	65	69	67	46
In-store	54	42	-92	15.1	54	10	12	48	23	29	60	-3.6	-05
Online	16.7	16.0	21.6	12.1	17.0	15.9	17.2	14.0	17.8	13.3	8.6	28.3	12.7