



## Cool Temperatures Chill July Outdoor Sales

*Select equipment, outerwear and footwear show gains*

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Retail sales for all core outdoor stores combined (chain, internet, specialty)\* declined 4% compared to last July, moving from \$371M to \$358M, according to the most recent edition of the *Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) Outdoor Topline Report*, produced for OIA by the Leisure Trends Group. Select equipment, outerwear and several footwear categories grew this July. Year-to-date sales totaled \$2.6B, down 4% from the same period a year ago.

The positive trend in close-to-home outdoor recreation and camping continued and many camping, backpacking and hiking products saw healthy sales in July. Serving to help sales was another National Park Service "fee-free" weekend this month. According to the National Park Service, 4.5 million more people visited national parks in the first half of 2009 than they did in the same period in 2008.\*\* Equipment sales may have been even larger but across much of the nation, this July was one of the coolest in decades.\*\*\* Those chilly temperatures, however, helped drive increases for insulated and shell tops and even sweaters this month.

### **Outdoor Specialty**

Specialty stores lost 5% in total dollar sales compared to July 2008. Key outdoor recreation and camping categories, however, continued to show strength. In dollars, backpacking tents jumped 14%, mid-temp (11-25°) synthetic mummy bags grew 3%, dehydrated meals picked up 13% and hiking boots, on an 11% bump to units, gained 13% in dollars. Cool temperatures across the nation pushed insulated top sales up 17% in both units and dollars. Shell tops, with \$5M in sales, gained 3% in units and 6% in dollars. Up a solid 27% in units and 31% in dollars, multisport shoes gained even more traction this July.

### **Outdoor Chain**

In chain stores, total sales were down 4% for the month of July but growth in key equipment and accessory categories point to increased outdoor recreation and camping. Backpacking tent dollars increased 10%, energy food surged 42%, dehydrated meals grew 8%, cookware 7% and miscellaneous camp accessories 9%. Further evidence more people hit the trails this month; hiking boot dollars gained 13%, trail runners jumped 14% and multisport shoes grew 11%.

### **Outdoor Internet**

Total online dollar sales were flat this July with the 10% bump to average retail price offsetting the 10% unit decline. Again, the upside to the economic downturn is an increase in many camping and hiking categories. In dollars, backpacking tents increased 9%, sleeping bags shot up 18% and mid-sized packs (2500-4000ci) jumped 17%. People shopped online for their accessories; sport racks, mattresses, cookware, first aid kits, tent and bag accessories all saw solid unit and dollar gains this month. Total dollars generated by outerwear increased 13% with the individual categories of insulated tops growing 11% and shell tops 16%.

### **Paddlesports**

July's frigid temperatures drove outerwear sales but it also kept people on shore and out of the paddle stores. Core paddlesports stores (specialty, chain, internet) brought in \$48M in July and \$239M year-to-date, down 7% for both periods. Year-to-date, all boat sales were down 13% in units and 11% in dollars.

\*OIA Outdoor Topline Report Outdoor and Paddle channels include: outdoor and paddle specialty, national outdoor chains, regional sporting goods chains and outdoor (and paddle) internet specialty merchants.

\*\* Source: [National Parks Traveler](#) on August 3, 2009

\*\*\* Sourced from Associated Press, August 17, 2009

*To access the OIA outdoor retail sales Topline data, read the complete monthly executive summary and to review trends by industry channel and category, OIA members can log in at [outdoorindustry.org](http://outdoorindustry.org) or call 303.444.3353 for assistance.*