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# Retail sector pushes higher in three-quarters of cities

The Business Journals by **G. Scott Thomas**

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[G. Scott Thomas](#)

[Email](#)

The retail sector, which languished for much of the past four years, is showing new signs of life.

Nearly three-quarters of the nation's 100 major metropolitan areas added retail jobs last year, according to an On Numbers analysis of annual data from the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) (BLS).

Seventy-four markets enjoyed upswings in retail employment, while 24 suffered declines. The other two were unchanged.

New York City and Providence were the nation's big gainers. The New York area added 11,300 retail jobs between 2010 and 2011, the largest one-year increase in raw terms. Providence led on the percentage side with a jump of 4.47 percent.

Other markets with strong upward movement in retail employment include Houston (up 6,700 jobs in a year), Dallas-Fort Worth (up 5,400), Seattle (up 4,500) and Salt Lake City (up 3.90 percent).

On Numbers used preliminary BLS data to estimate 2011 retail employment levels for all 100 markets. Those estimates were then compared against the official

averages for 2010. The results can be seen in the database below.

Not every part of the nation is prospering. Retail sectors continue to struggle in California, Virginia and parts of the Northeast.

San Francisco-Oakland lost 3,600 retail jobs between 2010 and 2011, the biggest drop in any major market. Next are Virginia Beach-Norfolk (down 2,800) and Richmond (down 2,600).

The biggest percentage decline occurred in Albany, which lost 4.11 percent of its retail jobs in a year.

## METRO RETAIL EMPLOYMENT (2010-2011)

Metro area	Retail jobs (2010 annual average)	Retail jobs (estimated 2011 annual average)	1-year raw change	Rank	1-year percent change	Rank ▲
Providence	62,600	65,400	2,800	5	4.47%	1
Salt Lake City	66,700	69,300	2,600	8	3.90%	2
Oklahoma City	59,800	62,000	2,200	13	3.68%	3
El Paso, Texas	33,600	34,800	1,200	23	3.57%	4
Birmingham	56,700	58,700	2,000	17	3.53%	5
Lakeland, Fla.	24,000	24,800	800	36	3.33%	6
Austin	81,800	84,500	2,700	6	3.30%	7
Jackson, Miss.	27,500	28,400	900	31	3.27%	8
Charleston, S.C.	34,300	35,400	1,100	26	3.21%	9
New Haven, Conn.	28,300	29,200	900	31	3.18%	10

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