

NWT retail sales reach \$700 million

Nunavut sales climb upward to \$339 million

Profit margin for retailers over 30 per cent

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NWT/Nunavut

The dollar value of retail trade went up in the Northwest Territories in 2010.

Total retail sales in 2010 increased to \$700 million, up from \$693 million in 2009 but down from \$706 million in 2008.

In January 2011, retail trade totalled \$58.8 million, up by 3.8 per cent from the same month a year before.

As of 2008, the most recent data available from Statistics Canada, retail operators in the territory experienced an average 30.7 per cent profit margin, down from 31.3 per cent in 2007.

New car dealers, who sold \$140 million worth of goods, had a gross profit margin of 22.9 per cent.

Department stores and other general merchandise stores sold \$96 million worth of goods and had a gross profit margin of 32.9 per cent.

Fuel sales in the territory rose to 38.1 million litres in 2009, the most recent data available. That's an increase from 2008 sales of 37.3 million litres.

There are 2,205 people aged 15 and over working in the retail sector in the NWT, according to the most recent census.

Nunavut retail sales

Nunavut retail sales continued their upward climb in 2010, reaching \$339 million, a 4.6 per cent increase from 2009 retail sales. In January 2011, retail trade totalled \$30 million, up 10.8 per cent from the same month a year before.

As of 2008, the most recent data available from Statistics Canada, retail operators in the territory experienced an average 34 per cent profit margin, up from 31.3 per cent in 2007.

No information is available on the individual profit margins for any specific sectors, but according to Statistics Canada, supermarkets and pharmacies sold \$33.7 million and \$4.8 million worth of goods in 2008, respectively.

Fuel sales in the territory rose to 23 million litres in 2010, the most recent data available. That's an increase from 2009 sales of 17.7 million litres.

There are 1,405 people aged 15 and over working in the retail sector in the NWT, according to the most recent census.

Grocery retailers remain

key players in the sector. In Yellowknife, two store brands dominated: Extra Foods, under the Loblaw banner, and Yellowknife Direct Charge Co-op, a member of Arctic Co-operatives Ltd. (ACL).

Across the NWT and Nunavut, ACL has 31 outlets employing more than 800 people and serving 19,000 people. The stores provide a variety of services, including retail facilities, hotels, cable operations, construction, outfitting, arts and crafts production and property rentals.

In 2009, \$7.6 million was returned to members through the Member Co-op Patronage Refund, down from \$8.1 mil-

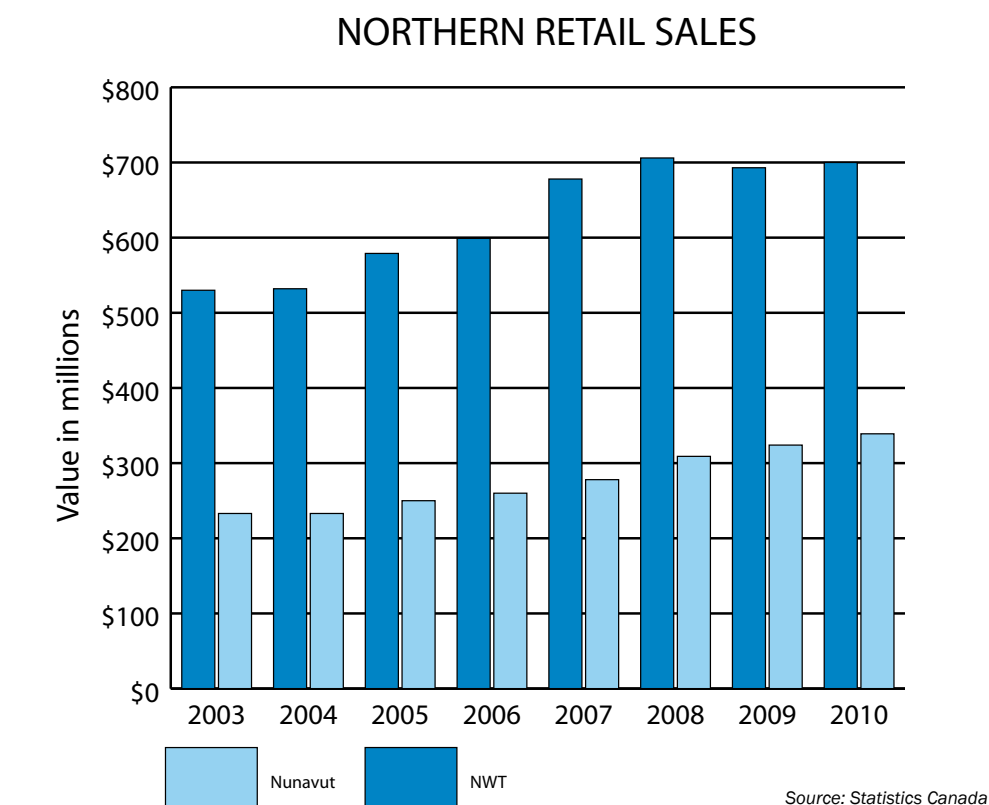
lion the previous year.

Combined revenues for ACL-affiliated stores in 2009 totalled \$177.2 million, compared to \$164 million in 2008.

The North West Company is also a big player in the North's retail sector, with 20 stores across the NWT and 28 stores in Nunavut. The company sells everything from groceries to big ticket items like furniture and appliances.

For the year ending January 31, 2010, the company made net sales earnings of \$133.2 million, compared to \$122 million the previous year.

According to the com-



NWT retails sales increased to \$700 million in 2010 from \$693 million the previous year.

pany's 2009 annual report, the stores in Alaska and Northern Canada represent approximately 90 per cent of its profitability, "though we expect this percentage to diminish

over the next five years as we add more stores in new markets and grow our wholesale businesses."

Two big retailers added Northern outlets to their port-

folio in the past year.

Two small Tim Hortons locations opened in Iqaluit, while The Brick had its grand opening in Yellowknife in March.



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