



January Deep Freeze Impacts Small Business Foot Traffic, New Fiserv Data Shows

February 3, 2026

Fiserv Small Business Index declined 1 point to 143; year-over-year sales grew +0.7%

MILWAUKEE, Feb. 03, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [Fiserv, Inc.](#) (NASDAQ: FISV), a leading global provider of payments and financial services technology, has published the [Fiserv Small Business Index](#) for January 2026, indicating that seasonal shifts by consumers and harsh winter storms cooled small business sales to start the year.

The seasonally adjusted Index declined 1 point to 143. Year-over-year sales grew (+0.7%), but month-over-month sales slipped (-0.5%).

With winter storms impacting much of the country in late January, consumer foot traffic saw its sharpest year-over-year decline (-2.0%) since mid-2022; foot traffic also dropped (-0.8%) month over month.

"In January, small businesses faced headwinds as consumers rebalanced their spending following a busy holiday season, and winter weather kept many at home during the latter half of the month," said Prasanna Dhore, Chief Data Officer, Fiserv. "As a result, restaurants, hotels and several retail categories saw the sharp slowdowns in sales, while select service-based businesses posted strong sales gains to start the year."

Key Takeaways

Discretionary spending softened while essentials remained stable

Discretionary sales fell year over year (-0.4%) and month over month (-0.7%), driven by foot traffic declines (-2.4% year over year; -1.1% month over month). Essential sales remained strong year over year (+2.2%) but were flat month over month.

Professional and Administrative Services saw pockets of strength

Administrative and Support Services grew (+1.1%) month over month, helped by growth in storm-related service categories. Tax Preparation Services also recorded strong seasonal acceleration, growing (+9.3%) year over year and (+5.6%) month over month. Broadly, Professional Services sales were strong, rising (+5.1%) compared to January 2025.

Retail held steady, with core categories driving modest growth

Small business retail sales were essentially flat year over year and month over month. Retail foot traffic rose, suggesting consumers remain active but have become increasingly selective. Core retail (which includes grocery, clothing and furniture) delivered the most gains (+1.5%) year over year, while non-core retail (gas, motor parts and building materials) declined (-2.7%) year over year.

Restaurant sales declined as foot traffic fell off sharply

Restaurant sales fell (-1.8%) year over year, driven by significant foot traffic declines (-3.6%) compared to 2025. Limited-service restaurants posted the largest sales declines, dropping (-3.4%) year over year alongside steep traffic losses (-5.0%). Average ticket sizes rose (+1.6%) year over year, offering only a partial offset. Full-service dining also softened, though less severely.

Winter Storm Impact

For more information on the impact of Winter Storm Fern on regions and business types across the U.S., [Fiserv published this special report in late January](#).

To access the full Fiserv Small Business Index, visit fiserv.com/FiservSmallBusinessIndex.

About the Fiserv Small Business Index®

The Fiserv Small Business Index is published during the first week of every month and differentiated by its direct aggregation of consumer spending activity within the U.S. small business ecosystem. Rather than relying on survey or sentiment data, the Fiserv Small Business Index is derived from point-of-sale transaction data, including card, cash, and check transactions in-store and online across approximately 2 million U.S. small businesses, including hundreds of thousands leveraging the Clover point-of-sale and business management platform.

Benchmarked to 2019, the Fiserv Small Business Index provides a numeric value measuring consumer spending, with an accompanying transaction index measuring customer traffic. Through a simple interface, users can access data by region, state, and/or across business types categorized by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Featuring the most detailed classification available, the Fiserv Small Business Index provides visibility into 56 standardized level-6 national industries across 26 subsectors and 13 sectors, allowing users to track sales trends with precision and understand the diverse dynamics

shaping the U.S. small business economy.

About Fiserv

Fiserv, Inc. (NASDAQ: FISV), a Fortune 500 company, moves more than money. As a global leader in payments and financial technology, the company helps clients achieve best-in-class results through a commitment to innovation and excellence in areas including account processing and digital banking solutions; card issuer processing and network services; payments; e-commerce; merchant acquiring and processing; and Clover[®], the world's smartest point-of-sale system and business management platform. Fiserv is a member of the S&P 500[®] Index and one of TIME Magazine's Most Influential Companies[™]. Visit [fiserv.com](https://www.fiserv.com) and [follow on social media](#) for more information and the latest company news.

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