Fiserv Small Business Index Shows Sales Momentum Heading into Holiday Season

November 3, 2026

Index rises to 146 as sales increase +2.3% year over year and +0.3% month over month

MILWAUKEE, Nov. 03, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Fiserv, Inc. (NASDAQ: FISV), a leading global provider of payments and financial services technology, today published the Fiserv Small Business Index for October 2026, showing encouraging momentum for small businesses as the holiday season gets underway. Sales rose +2.3% year over year, the strongest year-over-year gain since July 2025, and +0.3% month over month.

The Index reached 146 as higher spending per transaction and improving traffic trends supported sales momentum. Average spending per transaction rose +3.5% year over year. Foot traffic declined -1.2%, its 12th consecutive year-over-year decline but the smallest since February 2026. It rose +0.5% month over month.

“Small businesses are entering the holiday season with encouraging momentum on both spending and customer activity,” said Prasanna Dhore, chief data officer, Fiserv. “October’s monthly sales gains come from more purchases, not larger tickets. Sustaining that momentum as holiday shopping accelerates will be the next signal to watch.”

Key Takeaways

Restaurants steadied but continue to lag

Food services and drinking places sales slipped -0.5% year over year but rose +0.2% month over month, driven by +0.8% monthly growth at limited-service restaurants. Transactions fell -2.7% year over year, an improvement from September's -3.9% decline, while average tickets rose +2.2%. Limited-service restaurants remained down -2.2% year over year as transactions fell -4.0%. Full-service restaurants edged up +0.5%, and drinking places rose +3.7%.

Gas station sales climbed and grocery stalled

Gasoline station sales moved up +23.2% year over year, their fastest growth pace in 2026, driven by a +22.3% rise in average tickets. By contrast, grocery sales were flat (0.0% year over year). Transactions grew +1.0% year over year, but average tickets fell -1.1%.

Retail kept its traffic gains, but many big-ticket categories lagged

Total retail sales rose +1.9% year over year on +2.2% transaction growth, while average tickets slipped -0.3%. The biggest contributions to this growth came from gas stations (+23.2%), sporting goods, hobby, music and bookstores (+4.3%) and motor vehicle and parts dealers (+3.0%). Furniture, home furnishings, electronics and appliances sales fell -2.5% year over year.

Essential spending expanded as services regained footing

Essentials grew +2.7% year over year, widening their lead over discretionary spending (+2.0%). Professional services sales grew +4.6%, led by tax preparation services (+18.6%). Services (+2.3% year-over-year growth) edged past goods (+2.2% growth). Services foot traffic fell -2.4%, still an improvement from September, while average tickets rose +4.8%. Goods growth came from foot traffic: transactions rose +2.1% while average tickets were essentially flat (+0.2%).

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

About the Fiserv Small Business Index®

Published in the first week of each month, the Fiserv Small Business Index is based on aggregated consumer spending activity across the U.S. small business economy. Unlike surveys or sentiment data, the Index uses point-of-sale data from card, cash and check transactions made in stores and online at approximately 2 million U.S. small businesses, including hundreds of thousands that use the Clover point-of-sale and business management platform.

Benchmarked to 2019, the Fiserv Small Business Index measures consumer spending and includes a transaction index that tracks customer traffic. A simple interface lets users view data by region, state and business type using North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) categories. With detailed industry classifications, the Index covers 56 standardized level-6 national industries across 26 subsectors and 13 sectors, helping users track sales trends and understand the forces shaping the U.S. small business economy.

About Fiserv

Fiserv, Inc. (NASDAQ: FISV), a Fortune 500 company, is a global leader uniting commerce and finance. The company powers sustained growth and innovation at scale for financial institutions and businesses worldwide across payments, account processing, digital banking, merchant acquiring, network services, e-commerce, and Clover®, the all-in-one business management platform. Fiserv is a member of the S&P 500® Index and one of FORTUNE® America's Most Innovative Companies. Visit fiserv.com and follow on social media for more information and the latest company news.

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