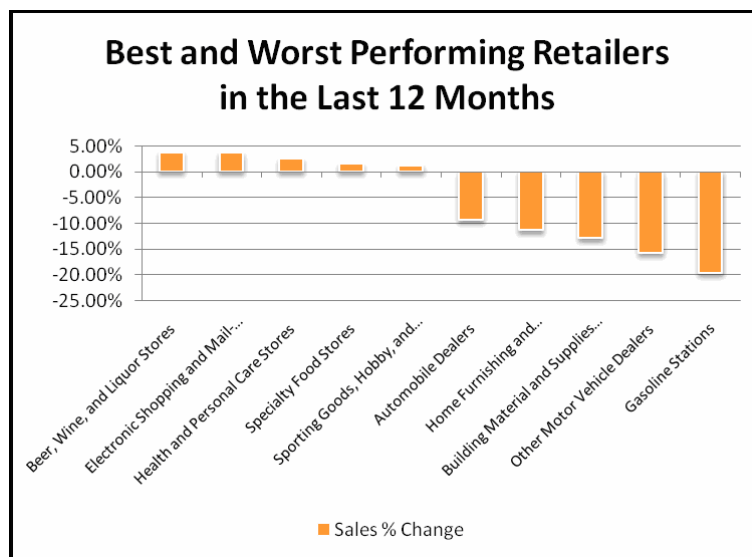


# THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

## Beer sales up; gas sales down

By Jan Norman, Small Business Columnist, September 6, 2010

Small retailers that sell beer and wine have had the highest sales increase in the past year, while gas stations have had the biggest declines, according to Sageworks Inc., a financial analyst, based on data from thousands of financial professionals.



Source: Sageworks Inc.

Consumers continue to spend money on alcoholic beverages, electronics and medicine but they're watching their pennies when it comes to auto-related spending including gasoline, Sageworks says. Home improvements fared poorly as well.

The 20% drop in gasoline station sales and 15% decline in other motor vehicle dealers sales are probably a combination of lower fuel prices, compared with a year ago, and high unemployment (9.6% nationally, 12.3% in Orange County) that reduced consumers' travel costs.