



## CONTACTS

Colleen Madden, **Director of Public Relations**  
Office: **312-422-5074**  
Mobile: **314-807-1568**  
[colleenmadden@challengergray.com](mailto:colleenmadden@challengergray.com)

Blake Palder, **Public Relations Associate**  
Office: **312-422-5156**  
[blakepalder@challengergray.com](mailto:blakepalder@challengergray.com)

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# **December Down Nearly 90 Percent, Lowest On Record** **RETAIL HIRING UP 4 PERCENT FOR THE** **SEASON**

**CHICAGO, January 11, 2018** – Retail employment dropped 88 percent from November’s total of 462,700 to 53,900 in December, the lowest December total on record, according to an analysis of non-seasonally adjusted Bureau of Labor Statistics data by global outplacement and executive coaching firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.

November job gains were revised higher to 462,700 from 451,600, 29 percent higher than November 2016, when 359,000 jobs were added. December’s total is 59 percent lower than the 132,200 jobs added in December 2016.

Despite the plunge in December employment gains, retailers added a total of 668,400 jobs in the last three months of the year, a 4.3 percent increase from the 641,000 retail jobs added in the fourth quarter of 2016.

These are the highest gains since 2015, when a total of 708,800 jobs were added.

“As retailers find the balance between online and in-store experiences for consumers, the restructuring in this industry will likely include more job cuts and slow hiring,” said John Challenger, Chief Executive Officer of Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.

Walmart is implementing a “Scan & Go” system at 100 of its stores, eliminating the need to interact with cashiers. Similarly, Kroger announced they would introduce a “Scan, Bag, Go” app at 400 of their stores, allowing customers using the app to scan the barcodes on their items and pay

Challenger’s ongoing tracking of store closures found over 9,000 brick-and-mortar locations were closed in 2017. Meanwhile, retailers announced plans to cut 76,084 jobs last year, according to Challenger.

“However, new jobs will be created as retail embraces advances in tech. While these devices might eliminate cashiers, more individuals will need to work the floor to aid customers as they shop,” said Challenger.

“As retailers dip into other upcoming tech, such as virtual and augmented reality, additional workers may be needed. Retailers are also turning some of their locations into warehouses, creating delivery and processing jobs for their workforce,” said Challenger.

While December’s seasonal retail job growth was the lowest on record, holiday sales boomed in 2017. CBS News reported retail sales hit \$598 billion, up \$33 billion from 2016. Both Target and Kohl’s posted strong sales gains in stores, and online sales reportedly grew an estimated 24 percent.

“The strong 2017 sales figures will likely give way to more job opportunities in retail in the coming years. Those with a background in customer service as well as a strong ability to use new technologies will likely benefit from this pivot,” said Challenger.

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January 11, 2018

	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL	% Change
<b>2005</b>	122,300	392,700	196,600	<b>711,600</b>	<b>0.20%</b>
<b>2006</b>	150,600	427,300	169,000	<b>746,900</b>	<b>5.00%</b>
<b>2007</b>	87,900	465,400	167,600	<b>720,900</b>	<b>-3.50%</b>
<b>2008</b>	38,600	213,600	72,700	<b>324,900</b>	<b>-54.90%</b>
<b>2009</b>	45,100	317,100	133,600	<b>495,800</b>	<b>52.60%</b>
<b>2010</b>	149,800	339,200	158,600	<b>647,600</b>	<b>30.60%</b>
<b>2011</b>	134,200	390,600	154,500	<b>679,300</b>	<b>4.90%</b>
<b>2012</b>	138,700	485,400	99,600	<b>723,700</b>	<b>6.50%</b>
<b>2013</b>	159,600	443,100	184,100	<b>786,800</b>	<b>8.70%</b>
<b>2014</b>	182,800	412,200	154,100	<b>749,100</b>	<b>-4.80%</b>
<b>2015</b>	183,300	399,300	125,700	<b>708,800</b>	<b>-5.38%</b>
<b>2016</b>	149,400	359,400	132,200	<b>641,000</b>	<b>-9.57%</b>
<b>2017</b>	146,400	462,700	59,300	<b>668,400</b>	<b>4.27%</b>
<b>AVERAGE*</b>	<b>129,900</b>	<b>392,923</b>	<b>139,046</b>	<b>661,908</b>	

*\*Since 2005*

*Source: Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc. © with data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics*



<b>Company</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
Amazon	50,000	70,000	80,000	100,000	120,000	120,000
Target	88,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	77,500	100,000
UPS	55,000	55,000	95,000	95,000	95,000	95,000
Macy's	80,000	83,000	86,000	85,000	83,000	87,000
FedEx (Transportation)	20,000	20,000	50,000	55,000	50,000	50,000
JCPenney	40,000	35,000	35,000	30,000	40,000	40,000
Michaels						15,000
Kroger						14,000
Nordstrom				11,800	11,400	13,650
Toys"R"Us	45,000	45,000	45,000	40,000		12,500
Burlington Stores						12,000
The Bon-Ton Stores					13,500	10,000
1-800-Flowers						8,000
McDonald's						3,179
Williams-Sonoma						2,000
Fanatics						2,000
Plow & Hearth						400
Opryland					300	400
Kohl's	52,700	53,000	76,970	79,160	69,000	
Walmart	50,000	55,000	60,000	60,000		
GameStop	17,000	17,000	25,000	28,000		
Sports Authority	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,500		
Best Buy	14,000	N/A	N/A			
Meijer	12,000	9,000	10,000			
Radial					20,000	23,000
Party City					35,000	
Gap			63,000			
Versant Supply Chain					2,000	
L Brands					4,000	
Hickory Farms (Food)	5,225	6,000				
<b>Total</b>	<b>528,925</b>	<b>518,000</b>	<b>695,970</b>	<b>657,460</b>	<b>620,700</b>	<b>608,129</b>

Source: Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc. ©