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Media Alert

RETAILERS PUMMELED BY COVID-19; 114,327 ANNOUNCED JOB CUTS THROUGH APRIL, MOST IN THE SECTOR ON RECORD

CHICAGO, May 20, 2020 - Yesterday, Retailer Pier 1 Imports announced it would close all remaining 540 stores and try to find a buyer for its online business. It follows bankruptcy announcements from JC Penney, J. Crew, and Neiman Marcus.

"Retail has been undergoing technological updates, shifting consumer behavior and low foot traffic over the last three years that has led to mass closures of brick-and-mortar establishments and job cuts," said Andrew Challenger, SVP of global outplacement and executive coaching firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc.

"The current COVID crisis is exacerbating Retail woes. Companies that did not have a robust online offering are being hit particularly hard," he added.

In fact, according to an analysis from Business Insider, 9,300 stores closed in 2019, breaking the record of 8,000 store closures in 2018. According to Coresight Research, another 15,000 stores could close in 2020.

Meanwhile, Retailers have announced 114,327 job cuts through April in 2020, not only the highest January-April total, but also the highest annual total on record. It shatters the previous high of 100,518 cuts announced by Retailers in all of 2003.

"While the Entertainment/Leisure sector leads all job cut announcements this year, Retailers come in second and have led job cut announcements in all industries since 2017," said Challenger.

Retailers have already announced 47% more job cuts than in all of 2019 when 77,475 were announced. In 2018, Retailers announced 98,563 job cuts, then the highest annual total since 2009 when 98,807 Retail job cuts were announced.

Announced Retail Job Cuts

United States												
	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
JAN.	10,444	22,327	15,378	22,491	22,246	6,699	11,394	6,676	12,426	5,755	16,737	53,968
FEB.	8,096	18,874	6,106	11,889	1,096	9,163	3,848	2,279	2,090	8,360	1,534	18,759
MARCH	11,285	4,860	35,042	4,084	8,490	6,640	2,989	16,445	2,175	1,653	2,097	3,821
APRIL	84,502	2,015	7,844	11,669	5,145	3,594	6,993	5,897	2,365	2,900	899	2,927
MAY		2,167	4,946	5,777	1,287	1,187	472	1,386	1,927	2,944	608	2,657
JUNE		3,005	3,750	4,217	3,831	17,947	1,167	217	2,807	1,415	4,306	3,566
JULY		1,919	2,697	3,862	1,523	2,532	2,183	1,794	4,135	11,245	812	2,654
AUGUST		2,059	3,715	3,607	1,025	9,601	1,063	873	862	5,901	3,812	890
SEPT.		8,132	5,907	3,461	7,296	2,467	1,965	927	1,519	1,616	441	6,180
OCT.		6,127	7,350	1,543	1,180	5,153	6,874	538	1,013	4,264	1,923	1,643
NOV.		3,201	3,769	2,065	4,850	626	2,640	9,998	1,527	2,285	645	913
DEC.		2,789	2,059	1,419	1,355	249	2,195	2,269	22	2,608	4,937	829
TOTAL	114,327	77,475	98,563	76,084	59,324	65,858	43,783	49,299	32,868	50,946	38,751	98,807
Jan.-												
Apr.	114,327	48,076	64,370	50,133	36,977	26,096	25,224	31,297	19,056	18,668	21,267	79,475

Announced Retail Job Cuts

Annual Totals

2008	81,621
2007	51,036
2006	53,419
2005	84,954
2004	62,357
2003	100,518
2002	98,661
2001	96,741
2000	44,831

Source: Challenger, Gray & Christmas, Inc. ©