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Productivity trends in two retail trade industries, 1987-95

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The Bureau of Labor Statistics recently added miscellaneous general merchandise stores—which includes warehouse clubs and catalog and mail-order houses—to its productivity measurement program. During 1987–95, productivity, as measured by output per hour, increased 6.5 percent per year in miscellaneous general merchandise stores, and 2.7 percent per year in catalog and mail-order houses. Output also increased in both industries, rising 6.0 percent per year and 8.6 percent per year, respectively. Total employment in miscellaneous general merchandise stores fell at an average annual rate of 1.0 percent. Total employment in catalog and mail-order houses increased 5.2 percent per year.

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