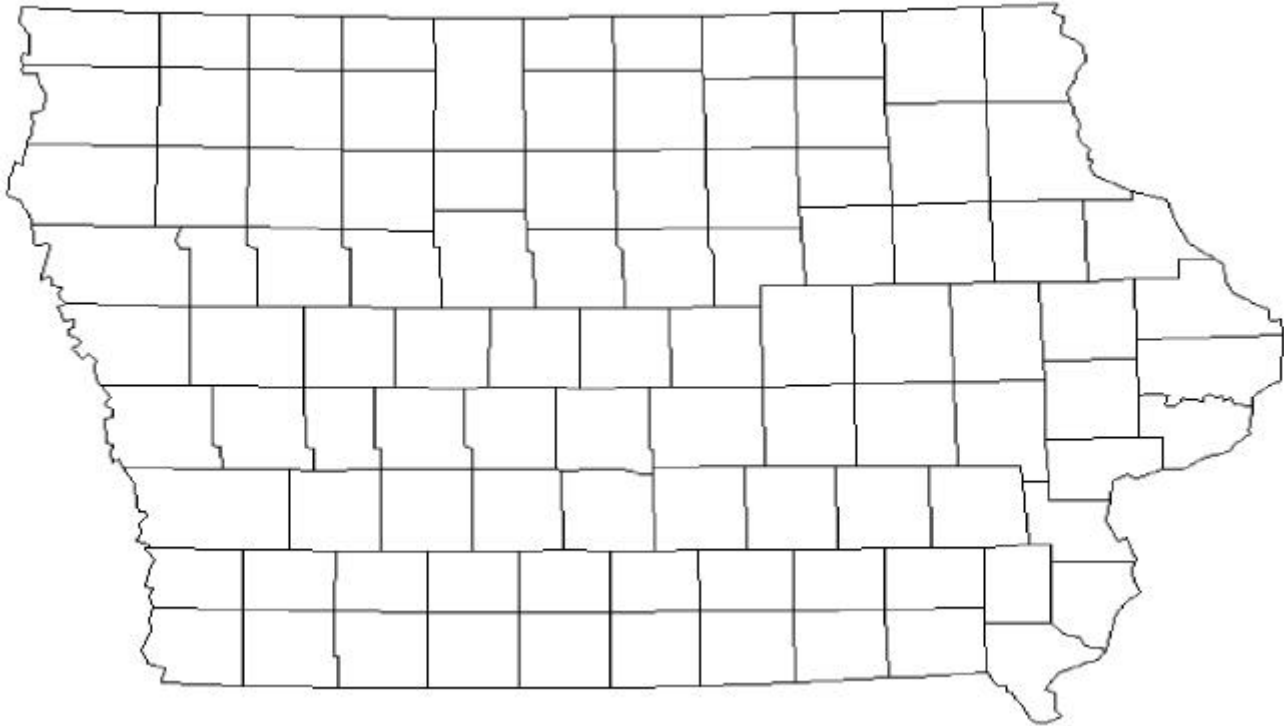


Average Number of Business Per Iowa Town 1998-1999



Prepared by:

**Dr. Kenneth E. Stone
&
Georgeanne M. Artz**

**IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
University Extension**

Ames, Iowa

...and justice for all

The Iowa Cooperative Extension Service's programs and policies are consistent with pertinent federal and state laws and regulations on nondiscrimination regarding race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age and disability.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Stan Johnson, director, Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames, Iowa.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF BUSINESSES PER TOWN 1998-1999

The following information shows the average number of businesses per town for various size towns. This is based on actual business locations in Iowa and gives a good idea of how many businesses a town can support. Keep in mind, however, that no information is available on the actual size of these businesses.

How the Numbers Were Derived: Computer tapes of sales tax permits were acquired from the Iowa Department of Revenue and Finance. Computer programs were written to compile the number of businesses for each town. Businesses were sorted according to town size. The average number of businesses for a range of town populations was derived by dividing the number of firms in that group by the number of towns in the group.

What the Numbers Mean: Since these are the average number of firms for actual locations, they are quite useful in determining the number of businesses a town can support. Numbers above one are self-explanatory. For example, towns with populations between 500 and 1,000 have, on average, 2.29 used merchandise stores. Numbers below one are interpreted slightly differently. For example, 95 percent of towns with populations less than 500 have used merchandise stores.

How to Use the Numbers: These numbers can be used as a good guide to determine need or opportunity for additional businesses, especially for smaller towns. For example, if a town with a population of 4,000 had only one general automotive repair shop, there is a good probability that it could support at least one or more since there is an average of 5.48 per town in this population group.

Officials in several towns in Iowa have constructed tables that list the number of businesses by category for their particular locale, then compared the results to the average in this table. The results are used as a tool in recruiting and developing new businesses. Several banks have used this information as a basis for making decisions on loans.

Additional Notes:

1. "NEC" is an abbreviation for Not Elsewhere Classified.
2. These business counts are based on the number of active permits and may not match other business counts that are based on the number of retail sales tax returns filed.
3. Not all business classifications are listed here.
4. The business classes are sorted by frequency (population group 5,001 to 10,000) on pages 2-4 and are sorted alphabetically on pages 5-7.

Frequency Listing

Description	Town Population Groups							
	Less Than 500	500 to 1,000	1,001 to 2,500	2,501 to 5,000	5,001 To 10,000	10,001 to 25,000	25,001 to 50,000	50,000 +
Hobby & Toy	2.37	5.05	9.17	18.58	28.47	58.06	80.44	229.50
Restaurants, Taverns & Bars	1.77	3.60	6.55	14.02	24.74	53.31	98.89	280.88
Beauty & Barber Shops	1.37	3.55	6.60	12.84	21.84	37.69	73.78	185.50
Miscellaneous Retailers	1.13	2.44	4.86	10.44	18.76	39.63	71.78	206.13
Used Merchandise Stores	0.95	2.29	4.29	7.62	14.45	29.06	42.67	110.50
All Other Miscellaneous Repair	1.48	2.86	4.93	8.58	13.61	21.13	24.89	69.00
Sporting Goods	0.62	1.32	2.72	6.16	9.39	17.56	28.44	60.00
General Contractors	0.62	1.35	2.87	5.00	8.79	12.38	18.22	49.38
General Automotive Repair	0.90	1.71	2.83	5.48	8.13	15.75	17.78	58.75
All Other General Merchandise Stores	0.45	1.17	2.13	4.82	6.87	12.38	17.00	52.75
Plumbing, Heating, Air	0.44	1.03	2.17	3.70	6.55	9.31	13.11	36.00
Direct Sellers	0.54	1.04	2.03	3.94	6.45	11.88	23.44	58.38
Automotive Parts and Accessories	0.32	0.75	1.85	3.46	6.37	12.06	15.67	54.63
Parking (All Other Personal services)	0.27	0.72	1.49	3.44	6.16	13.56	22.89	70.88
Lawn Garden Tree Shrub Services	0.38	0.91	1.87	3.96	6.08	11.25	19.67	56.00
Clothing and Clothing Accessories stores	0.16	0.40	1.26	3.26	5.76	14.44	26.67	73.25
Services, NEC	0.22	0.47	1.05	2.90	5.24	11.06	22.89	66.00
Household Appliance Stores	0.18	0.35	1.22	2.80	5.21	9.88	15.11	47.25
Cleaning & Building Maintenance	0.18	0.44	0.86	2.10	5.08	10.94	18.11	69.25
Stationary, Gift, Novelty	0.24	0.73	1.45	2.58	5.00	11.38	20.56	51.75
Commercial/Machines & Equipment, Wholesale	0.14	0.42	0.96	2.74	4.79	13.94	29.78	74.00
Hotels & All Other Lodging Places	0.12	0.47	1.08	2.42	4.61	8.75	11.78	24.13
Electrical Contractors	0.36	0.75	1.46	2.56	4.55	5.38	6.78	21.13
Photographic Studios	0.16	0.40	0.99	2.04	4.47	8.19	14.11	43.75
Top & Body Repair	0.41	0.81	1.58	3.00	4.34	7.38	8.11	27.75
New and Used Car Dealers	0.18	0.45	1.13	3.04	4.26	6.81	10.22	32.50
Gas Stations/Convenience Stores with Gas	0.46	0.93	1.61	2.62	4.11	7.06	9.67	29.00
Specialized Groceries	0.16	0.35	0.99	1.72	3.63	8.00	15.78	37.63
Electronic & Precision Equip Repair & Maintenance	0.21	0.46	0.97	2.16	3.61	6.81	9.44	28.00
Other Auto	0.30	0.62	0.97	2.00	3.42	6.88	8.78	33.75
Grocery Stores and Convenience Stores	0.25	0.65	1.12	2.10	3.26	5.81	8.11	25.75
Carpentry & Floor Contractors	0.24	0.56	1.04	1.84	3.21	4.63	7.89	19.13
Painting and Wall Covering Contractors	0.15	0.44	0.71	1.76	3.21	6.25	9.33	26.63
Book and Stationary Stores	0.12	0.30	0.57	1.46	3.18	6.69	14.33	36.88
Truck, General Freight Local and Long Distance	0.22	0.53	1.08	2.10	3.16	6.56	8.44	19.00
Hardware/Plumbing/Heating Equip. & Supplies, Wholesale	0.22	0.43	0.91	1.94	3.16	6.00	7.56	27.25
Home Centers (Building Materials)	0.20	0.47	1.15	1.88	2.84	5.56	6.78	20.75

Frequency Listing

Description	Town Population Groups							
	Less Than 500	500 to 1,000	1,001 to 2,500	2,501 to 5,000	5,001 To 10,000	10,001 to 25,000	25,001 to 50,000	50,000 +
Printing & Related Support Activities	0.08	0.37	1.10	1.74	2.84	6.31	14.33	39.75
Home Furnishings Stores	0.08	0.23	0.57	1.30	2.84	4.94	11.22	25.38
Furniture Stores	0.08	0.23	0.61	1.40	2.79	6.31	7.11	25.00
Florists	0.14	0.41	1.17	1.72	2.68	4.81	7.33	21.63
Recreational and All Other Motorized Vehicles	0.10	0.22	0.43	1.22	2.47	3.88	5.11	11.00
Coin Operated Laundry	0.12	0.36	0.72	1.30	2.42	5.44	6.56	27.88
Beauty & Health (Drug)	0.02	0.15	0.79	1.60	2.39	4.19	5.78	19.38
Lawn & Garden	0.23	0.34	0.87	1.34	2.34	3.81	5.56	12.75
Communications (Telephone, Radio, Television)	0.35	0.68	0.94	1.46	2.32	5.19	9.44	24.00
Car Washes	0.12	0.37	0.87	1.72	2.32	3.63	5.78	16.38
Upholstery & Furniture Repair	0.20	0.46	0.74	1.62	2.29	4.81	6.89	20.38
Jewelry	0.08	0.13	0.38	1.14	2.26	5.56	9.44	33.25
Advertising & Related Services	0.06	0.17	0.31	1.00	2.21	3.00	11.11	32.13
Veterinary Services	0.06	0.28	0.69	1.28	1.89	2.38	3.11	10.25
Vending Machine Operators	0.09	0.16	0.36	1.04	1.87	3.56	9.11	21.38
Computer Related Services	0.09	0.19	0.32	0.94	1.79	6.25	15.11	31.00
Hardware Stores	0.17	0.41	0.90	1.34	1.63	2.13	2.33	8.88
Funeral Service & Crematories	0.07	0.35	0.82	1.20	1.63	2.75	3.22	7.38
Sewing & Needlework	0.11	0.24	0.62	1.06	1.61	3.94	7.33	13.88
Lumber & Other Construction Materials, Wholesale	0.07	0.17	0.50	0.94	1.42	1.50	3.00	9.00
Carpet and Upholstery Cleaning	0.03	0.10	0.29	0.48	1.39	2.56	3.89	13.25
Excavating & Grading Contractors	0.11	0.22	0.52	0.76	1.26	1.25	1.67	3.25
Motor Vehicle Parts and Supplies, Wholesale	0.03	0.12	0.22	0.54	1.18	2.19	1.67	9.88
Music Stores	0.02	0.06	0.17	0.54	1.13	4.19	7.56	20.75
Department Stores	0.01	0.01	0.08	0.40	1.05	2.56	4.33	11.75
Variety Stores	0.02	0.06	0.24	0.80	0.95	0.69	2.22	5.25
Shoes	0.01	0.01	0.13	0.42	0.89	2.44	5.89	13.88
Bowling Alleys	0.01	0.05	0.34	0.70	0.84	1.00	1.22	3.13
Roofing, Siding, and Sheet Metal Contractors	0.03	0.09	0.16	0.44	0.79	1.88	3.22	7.88
Dry Cleaning & Laundry Services	0.02	0.05	0.16	0.46	0.79	1.56	4.22	10.63
Concrete Contractors	0.02	0.12	0.29	0.44	0.76	1.44	1.22	2.38
Paint and Glass Stores	0.02	0.03	0.10	0.30	0.74	2.00	3.00	7.50
Electronic Shopping and Mail Order Houses	0.05	0.09	0.22	0.68	0.66	1.88	4.67	13.13
Management, Scientific & Technical Consulting Svcs	0.02	0.06	0.17	0.38	0.63	2.00	5.00	12.38
Liquor Stores	0.01	0.05	0.14	0.42	0.58	0.75	1.00	2.25
Liquefied Petroleum	0.05	0.10	0.13	0.36	0.45	0.56	0.44	1.25
Masonry, Drywall, Insulation, & Tile	0.03	0.05	0.08	0.16	0.39	0.81	1.78	2.38

Frequency Listing

Description	Town Population Groups							
	Less Than 500	500 to 1,000	1,001 to 2,500	2,501 to 5,000	5,001 To 10,000	10,001 to 25,000	25,001 to 50,000	50,000 +
Footwear & Leather Repair	0.02	0.00	0.07	0.10	0.37	0.88	1.22	2.25
Watch, Clock, Jewelry Repair	0.01	0.01	0.04	0.06	0.34	1.25	1.33	2.38
Tire Retreading	0.02	0.04	0.11	0.12	0.32	0.94	0.78	2.88
RV Parks & Recreational Camps	0.01	0.10	0.08	0.26	0.24	0.19	0.11	0.50
Mobile Homes Dealers	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.08	0.21	0.81	0.78	1.88
Luggage and Other Leather Goods	0.04	0.03	0.10	0.16	0.18	0.50	0.44	3.88
Fuel Oil Dealers	0.03	0.06	0.07	0.18	0.18	0.06	0.33	1.00
Fuel & Ice Dealers	0.01	0.06	0.09	0.12	0.16	0.25	0.33	1.13
News Dealers	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.13	0.06	0.22	0.25
Camera & Photographic Stores	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.04	0.11	0.75	0.89	2.63
Furniture & Home Furnishings, Wholesale	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.05	0.38	0.33	2.00
Cigar Stores	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.06	0.05	0.31	0.56	3.50

Alphabetical Listing

Description	Town Population Groups							
	Less Than 500	500 to 1,000	1,001 to 2,500	2,501 to 5,000	5,001 To 10,000	10,001 to 25,000	25,001 to 50,000	50,000 +
Advertising & Related Services	0.06	0.17	0.31	1.00	2.21	3.00	11.11	32.13
All Other General Merchandise Stores	0.45	1.17	2.13	4.82	6.87	12.38	17.00	52.75
All Other Miscellaneous Repair	1.48	2.86	4.93	8.58	13.61	21.13	24.89	69.00
Automotive Parts and Accessories	0.32	0.75	1.85	3.46	6.37	12.06	15.67	54.63
Beauty & Barber Shops	1.37	3.55	6.60	12.84	21.84	37.69	73.78	185.50
Beauty & Health (Drug)	0.02	0.15	0.79	1.60	2.39	4.19	5.78	19.38
Book and Stationary Stores	0.12	0.30	0.57	1.46	3.18	6.69	14.33	36.88
Bowling Alleys	0.01	0.05	0.34	0.70	0.84	1.00	1.22	3.13
Camera & Photographic Stores	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.04	0.11	0.75	0.89	2.63
Car Washes	0.12	0.37	0.87	1.72	2.32	3.63	5.78	16.38
Carpentry & Floor Contractors	0.24	0.56	1.04	1.84	3.21	4.63	7.89	19.13
Carpet and Upholstery Cleaning	0.03	0.10	0.29	0.48	1.39	2.56	3.89	13.25
Cigar Stores	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.06	0.05	0.31	0.56	3.50
Cleaning & Building Maintenance	0.18	0.44	0.86	2.10	5.08	10.94	18.11	69.25
Clothing and Clothing Accessories stores	0.16	0.40	1.26	3.26	5.76	14.44	26.67	73.25
Coin Operated Laundry	0.12	0.36	0.72	1.30	2.42	5.44	6.56	27.88
Commercial/Machines & Equipment, Wholesale	0.14	0.42	0.96	2.74	4.79	13.94	29.78	74.00
Communications (Telephone, Radio, Television)	0.35	0.68	0.94	1.46	2.32	5.19	9.44	24.00
Computer Related Services	0.09	0.19	0.32	0.94	1.79	6.25	15.11	31.00
Concrete Contractors	0.02	0.12	0.29	0.44	0.76	1.44	1.22	2.38
Department Stores	0.01	0.01	0.08	0.40	1.05	2.56	4.33	11.75
Direct Sellers	0.54	1.04	2.03	3.94	6.45	11.88	23.44	58.38
Dry Cleaning & Laundry Services	0.02	0.05	0.16	0.46	0.79	1.56	4.22	10.63
Electrical Contractors	0.36	0.75	1.46	2.56	4.55	5.38	6.78	21.13
Electronic & Precision Equip Repair & Maintenance	0.21	0.46	0.97	2.16	3.61	6.81	9.44	28.00
Electronic Shopping and Mail Order Houses	0.05	0.09	0.22	0.68	0.66	1.88	4.67	13.13
Excavating & Grading Contractors	0.11	0.22	0.52	0.76	1.26	1.25	1.67	3.25
Florists	0.14	0.41	1.17	1.72	2.68	4.81	7.33	21.63
Footwear & Leather Repair	0.02	0.00	0.07	0.10	0.37	0.88	1.22	2.25
Fuel & Ice Dealers	0.01	0.06	0.09	0.12	0.16	0.25	0.33	1.13
Fuel Oil Dealers	0.03	0.06	0.07	0.18	0.18	0.06	0.33	1.00
Funeral Service & Crematories	0.07	0.35	0.82	1.20	1.63	2.75	3.22	7.38
Furniture & Home Furnishings, Wholesale	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.05	0.38	0.33	2.00
Furniture Stores	0.08	0.23	0.61	1.40	2.79	6.31	7.11	25.00
Gas Stations/Convenience Stores with Gas	0.46	0.93	1.61	2.62	4.11	7.06	9.67	29.00
General Automotive Repair	0.90	1.71	2.83	5.48	8.13	15.75	17.78	58.75
General Contractors	0.62	1.35	2.87	5.00	8.79	12.38	18.22	49.38
Grocery Stores and Convenience Stores	0.25	0.65	1.12	2.10	3.26	5.81	8.11	25.75

Alphabetical Listing

Description	Town Population Groups							
	Less Than 500	500 to 1,000	1,001 to 2,500	2,501 to 5,000	5,001 To 10,000	10,001 to 25,000	25,001 to 50,000	50,000 +
Hardware Stores	0.17	0.41	0.90	1.34	1.63	2.13	2.33	8.88
Hardware/Plumbing/Heating Equip. & Supplies, Wholesale	0.22	0.43	0.91	1.94	3.16	6.00	7.56	27.25
Hobby & Toy	2.37	5.05	9.17	18.58	28.47	58.06	80.44	229.50
Home Centers (Building Materials)	0.20	0.47	1.15	1.88	2.84	5.56	6.78	20.75
Home Furnishings Stores	0.08	0.23	0.57	1.30	2.84	4.94	11.22	25.38
Hotels & All Other Lodging Places	0.12	0.47	1.08	2.42	4.61	8.75	11.78	24.13
Household Appliance Stores	0.18	0.35	1.22	2.80	5.21	9.88	15.11	47.25
Jewelry	0.08	0.13	0.38	1.14	2.26	5.56	9.44	33.25
Lawn & Garden	0.23	0.34	0.87	1.34	2.34	3.81	5.56	12.75
Lawn Garden Tree Shrub Services	0.38	0.91	1.87	3.96	6.08	11.25	19.67	56.00
Liquefied Petroleum	0.05	0.10	0.13	0.36	0.45	0.56	0.44	1.25
Liquor Stores	0.01	0.05	0.14	0.42	0.58	0.75	1.00	2.25
Luggage and Other Leather Goods	0.04	0.03	0.10	0.16	0.18	0.50	0.44	3.88
Lumber & Other Construction Materials, Wholesale	0.07	0.17	0.50	0.94	1.42	1.50	3.00	9.00
Management, Scientific & Technical Consulting Svcs	0.02	0.06	0.17	0.38	0.63	2.00	5.00	12.38
Masonry, Drywall, Insulation, & Tile	0.03	0.05	0.08	0.16	0.39	0.81	1.78	2.38
Miscellaneous Retailers	1.13	2.44	4.86	10.44	18.76	39.63	71.78	206.13
Mobile Homes Dealers	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.08	0.21	0.81	0.78	1.88
Motor Vehicle Parts and Supplies, Wholesale	0.03	0.12	0.22	0.54	1.18	2.19	1.67	9.88
Music Stores	0.02	0.06	0.17	0.54	1.13	4.19	7.56	20.75
New and Used Car Dealers	0.18	0.45	1.13	3.04	4.26	6.81	10.22	32.50
News Dealers	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.13	0.06	0.22	0.25
Other Auto	0.30	0.62	0.97	2.00	3.42	6.88	8.78	33.75
Paint and Glass Stores	0.02	0.03	0.10	0.30	0.74	2.00	3.00	7.50
Painting and Wall Covering Contractors	0.15	0.44	0.71	1.76	3.21	6.25	9.33	26.63
Parking (All Other Personal services)	0.27	0.72	1.49	3.44	6.16	13.56	22.89	70.88
Photographic Studios	0.16	0.40	0.99	2.04	4.47	8.19	14.11	43.75
Plumbing, Heating, Air	0.44	1.03	2.17	3.70	6.55	9.31	13.11	36.00
Printing & Related Support Activities	0.08	0.37	1.10	1.74	2.84	6.31	14.33	39.75
Recreational and All Other Motorized Vehicles	0.10	0.22	0.43	1.22	2.47	3.88	5.11	11.00
Restaurants, Taverns & Bars	1.77	3.60	6.55	14.02	24.74	53.31	98.89	280.88
Roofing, Siding, and Sheet Metal Contractors	0.03	0.09	0.16	0.44	0.79	1.88	3.22	7.88
RV Parks & Recreational Camps	0.01	0.10	0.08	0.26	0.24	0.19	0.11	0.50
Services, NEC	0.22	0.47	1.05	2.90	5.24	11.06	22.89	66.00
Sewing & Needlework	0.11	0.24	0.62	1.06	1.61	3.94	7.33	13.88
Shoes	0.01	0.01	0.13	0.42	0.89	2.44	5.89	13.88
Specialized Groceries	0.16	0.35	0.99	1.72	3.63	8.00	15.78	37.63
Sporting Goods	0.62	1.32	2.72	6.16	9.39	17.56	28.44	60.00

Alphabetical Listing

Description	Town Population Groups							
	Less Than 500	500 to 1,000	1,001 to 2,500	2,501 to 5,000	5,001 To 10,000	10,001 to 25,000	25,001 to 50,000	50,000 +
Stationary, Gift, Novelty	0.24	0.73	1.45	2.58	5.00	11.38	20.56	51.75
Tire Retreading	0.02	0.04	0.11	0.12	0.32	0.94	0.78	2.88
Top & Body Repair	0.41	0.81	1.58	3.00	4.34	7.38	8.11	27.75
Truck, General Freight Local and Long Distance	0.22	0.53	1.08	2.10	3.16	6.56	8.44	19.00
Upholstery & Furniture Repair	0.20	0.46	0.74	1.62	2.29	4.81	6.89	20.38
Used Merchandise Stores	0.95	2.29	4.29	7.62	14.45	29.06	42.67	110.50
Variety Stores	0.02	0.06	0.24	0.80	0.95	0.69	2.22	5.25
Vending Machine Operators	0.09	0.16	0.36	1.04	1.87	3.56	9.11	21.38
Veterinary Services	0.06	0.28	0.69	1.28	1.89	2.38	3.11	10.25
Watch, Clock, Jewelry Repair	0.01	0.01	0.04	0.06	0.34	1.25	1.33	2.38