

“building **excellence**
in materials supply”

Plumbing & Heating Merchant Index



Quarter 3 2021

(Published 23 November 2021)

A Builders Merchant Building Index Publication

Building the Industry & Building Brands from Knowledge



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Introduction:

Plumbing & Heating Merchant Index



This Plumbing & Heating Merchant Index (PHMI) report contains data from GfK's ground-breaking Plumbing & Heating Merchants Panel, which analyses data from over 80% of Plumbing & Heating merchants' sales throughout Great Britain, accounting for about £3bn. There is no overlap or double counting between PHMI and Builders Merchant Building Index (BMBI).

GfK's Plumbing & Heating Point of Sale Tracking Data is a gold standard in reliable market trends. Unlike data from sources based on relatively small samples or estimates, or sales from suppliers to the supply chain, this up-to-date data is based on actual sales from specialist plumbing & heating merchants. It is, in effect, the market.

PHMI trend data is indexed on the 12 months of 2019. Currently, data is available by total monthly value sales and the series tracks what is happening in the plumbing and heating market month by month. This trend series gives the industry access to far more accurate insights than has been available. MRA Research produces the Plumbing & Heating Merchant Index, a brand of the BMF, to provide reliable data, and a platform and voice for this important industry and for leading plumbing and heating brands to communicate to the wider market.

PHMI Experts

Plumbing & Heating brands who are interested in becoming PHMI Experts, speaking for their markets and building their brands, should contact Ralph Sutcliffe: Ralph@mra-research.co.uk or Toby Aiken: toby.aiken@mra-research.co.uk

More data available

This PHMI report provides valuable top-level indices but there's considerably more data available. GfK insights go much deeper and can quantify market values and drill down into contributing categories, tracing product group performance, to focus on aspects that are critical to you.

GfK can produce like-for-like market comparability tailored to the requirements of an individual business. Merchants or suppliers who are interested in acquiring data or getting involved should contact Emile van der Ryst at emile.van-der-ryst@gfk.com.

Strong third quarter driven by buoyant July and August

September

September 2021 plumbing and heating value sales, with data from over 80% of Plumbing & Heating merchants' sales, were up 1.7% on September 2020. (See [page 11](#)). Compared with 2 years ago, total sales were up 4.6%, with one more trading day this year. Like-for-like sales, which take trading day differences into account, were 0.2% lower ([page 12](#)).

Sales in September were 12.7% higher than in August, with one more trading day this month ([page 14](#)). Like-for-like sales were 7.5% higher than in August.

Quarter 3:

Sales in the third quarter were up 7.3% compared with July to September last year, with one less trading day this year. ([page 8](#)). Most of this growth was driven by strong year-on-year sales in July (+12.8%) and August (+8.3%), whereas September grew more slowly (1.7%). Like-for-like sales were 9.0% higher. Compared with two years ago, total sales were up 1.7% in the third quarter, with one less trading day this year. Like-for-like sales increased by 3.2%.

Other periods:

In the nine months to September 2021, total revenue was 25.3% higher than in Covid-affected January-September 2020, with two less trading days this year ([page 16](#)). Like-for-like sales were up 26.6%. Total sales in January to September 2021 were 3.1% higher than the same nine months in 2019, with one less trading day this year ([page 17](#)). Average sales a day were 3.6% higher.

The rolling 12 months October 2020 to September 2021 were 17.6% ahead of October 2019 to September 2020 ([page 18](#)), with one less trading day in the most recent period. Like-for-like sales increased by 18.1%

PHMI index:

The PHMI Index, which contrasts sales with the base period of January to December 2019, was 104.8 for September, which included one more trading day – see the table on [page 6](#) and the chart on [page 10](#). The table on [page 6](#) and chart on [page 7](#) show the PHMI Index for Quarter 3 2021 was slightly lower at 99.1, with two less trading days.

Sales in the third quarter were up 7.3% compared with July to September last year. Most of this growth was driven by strong year-on-year sales in July (+12.8%) and August (+8.3%). September grew more slowly (1.7%).

Indices: Monthly and quarterly

October 2020 to September 2021

(Indexed on January to December 2019)

| Oct 20 | Nov 20 | Dec 20 | Three months |
|--------|--------|--------|--------------|
| 115.2 | 111.1 | 83.9 | 103.4 |
| | | | |
| Jan 21 | Feb 21 | Mar 21 | Three months |
| 99.4 | 102.4 | 118.2 | 106.6 |
| | | | |
| Apr 21 | May 21 | Jun 21 | Three months |
| 101.8 | 97.4 | 99.2 | 99.5 |
| | | | |
| Jul 21 | Aug 21 | Sep 21 | Three months |
| 99.6 | 93.0 | 104.8 | 99.1 |

Indices are a measure that express sales values relative to a fixed base, enabling rapid performance comparisons to be made. The Plumbing & Heating Merchant Index uses total sales in 2019 to create monthly and quarterly base periods. These represent average performance.

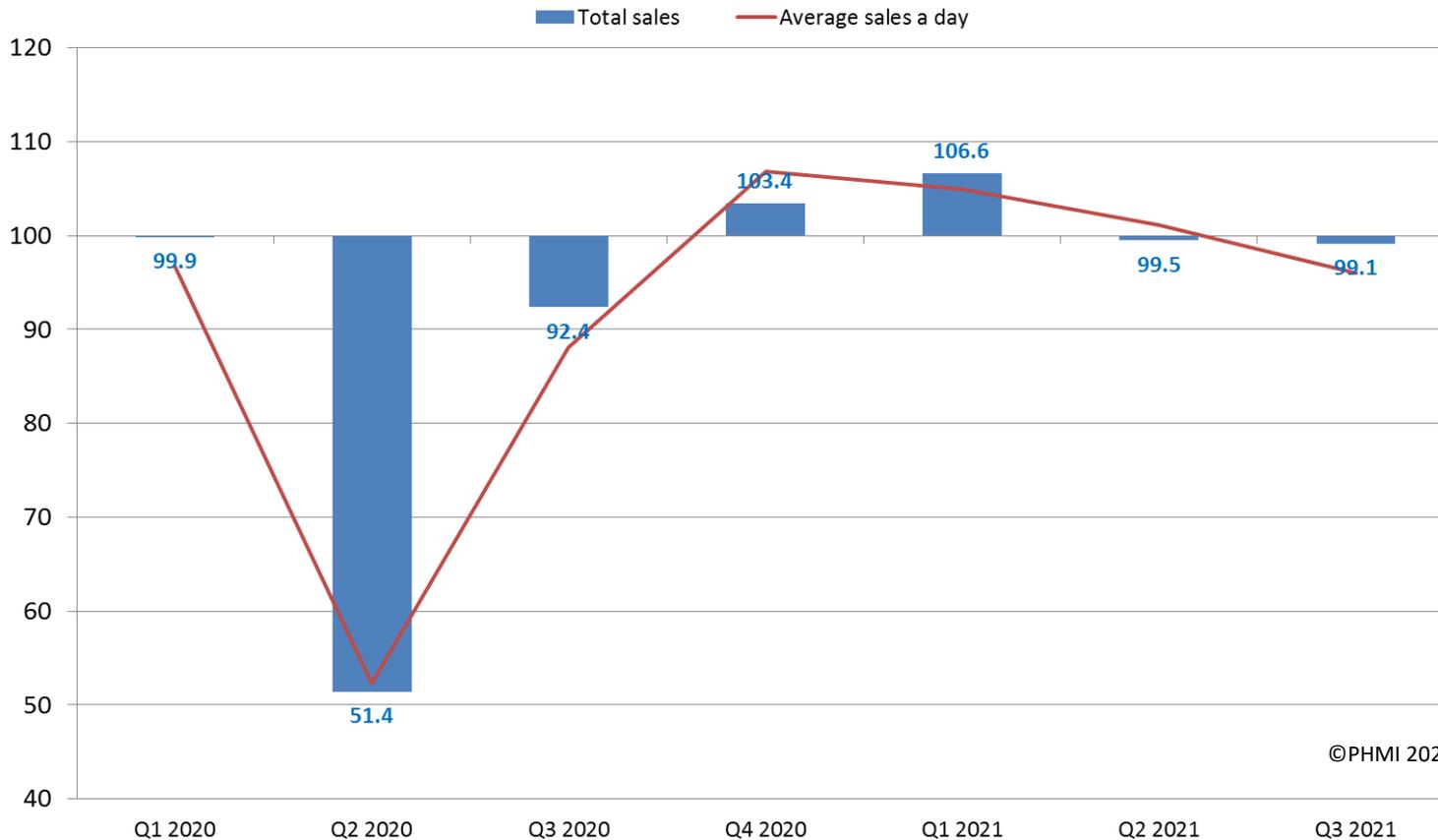
The figures above express how the periods compare with the 2019 base:

- If turnover was exactly the same, the Index would be 100.
- Values over 100 indicate higher turnover in that period. For example, September's index of 104.8 means turnover was 4.8% above the base period.
- Values below 100 indicate lower turnover in that period. August's Index of 93.0 means turnover was 7.0% lower than the base period.

Quarterly: Index

Adjusted and unadjusted for trading days*

Indices: Q1 2020 to Q3 2021



Value figures
shown for Total
sales

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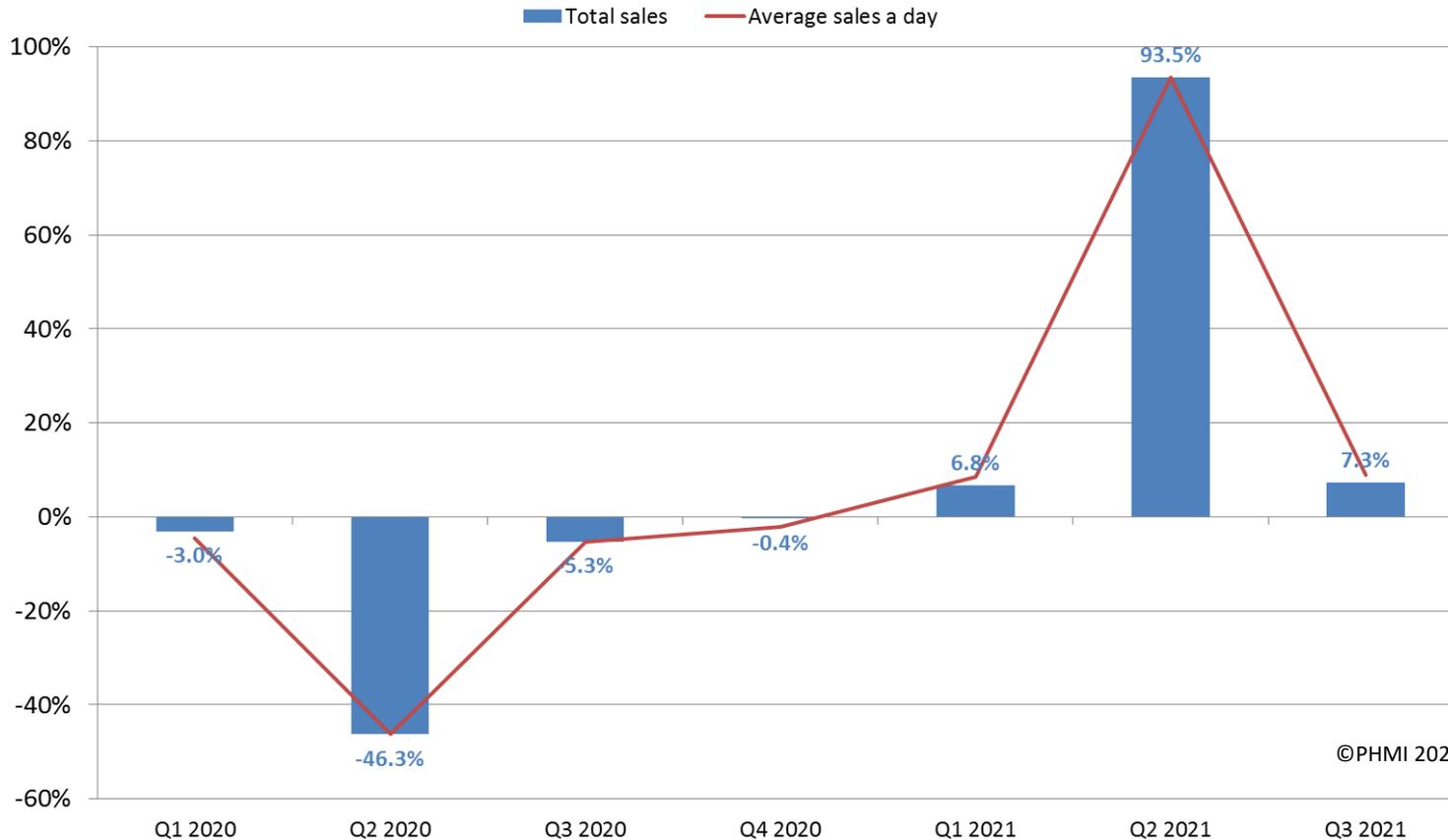
 Source: GfK's
Plumbing & Heating
Point of Sale Tracking
Data, Jan 2019 to Sep 2021

*Some merchants temporarily closed branches between March and May 2020 and this will have affected trading day comparisons.

Quarterly: Year on Year

Sales indices, adjusted and unadjusted for trading days*

Quarter: year on year



Value figures shown for Total sales

©PHMI 2021

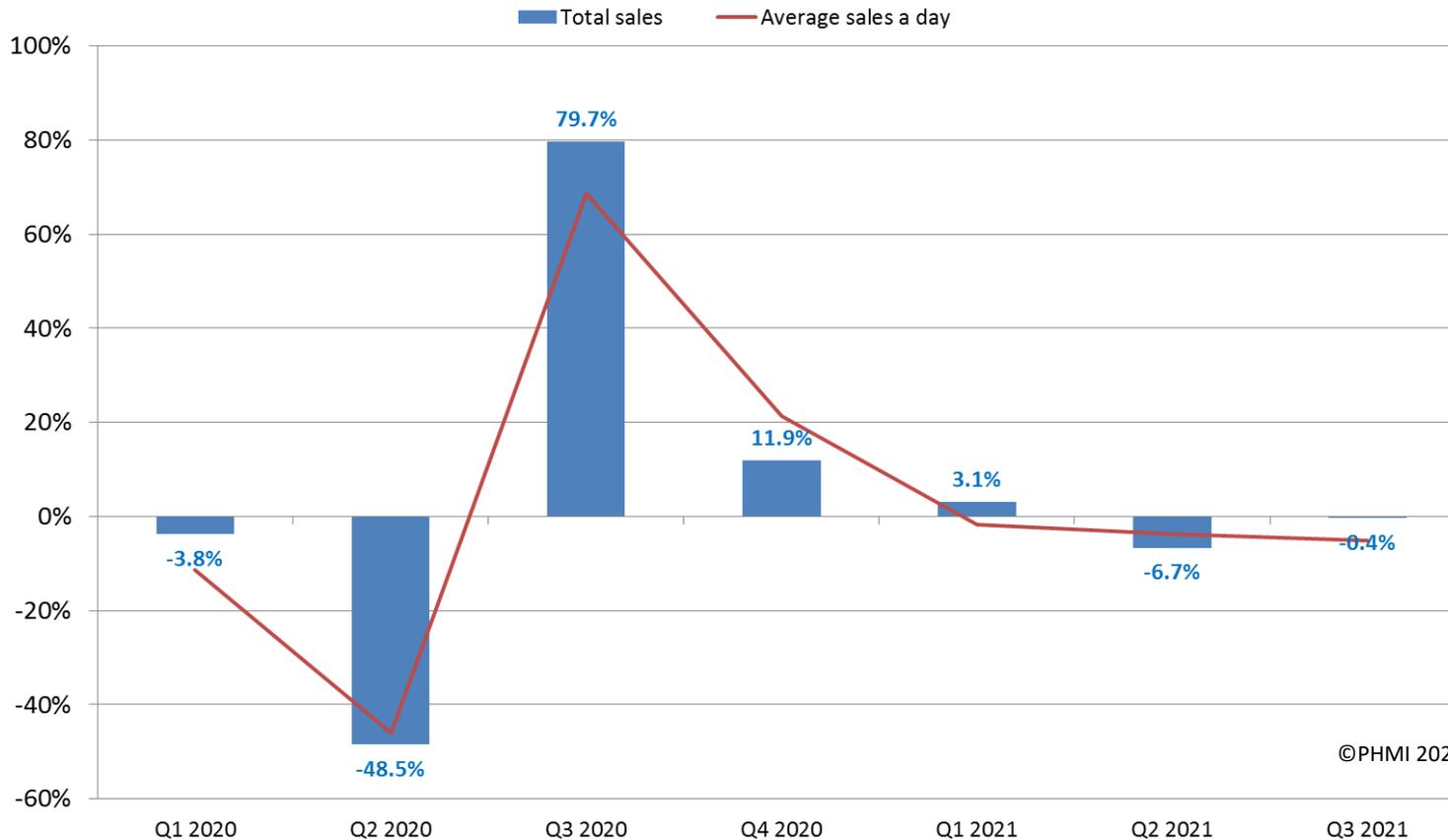
 Source: GfK's Plumbing & Heating Point of Sale Tracking Data, Jan 2019 to Sep 2021

*Some merchants temporarily closed branches between March and May 2020 and this will have affected trading day comparisons.

Quarterly: Quarter v previous quarter

Sales indices, adjusted and unadjusted
for trading days*

Quarter v previous quarter



Value figures
shown for Total
sales

©PHMI 2021

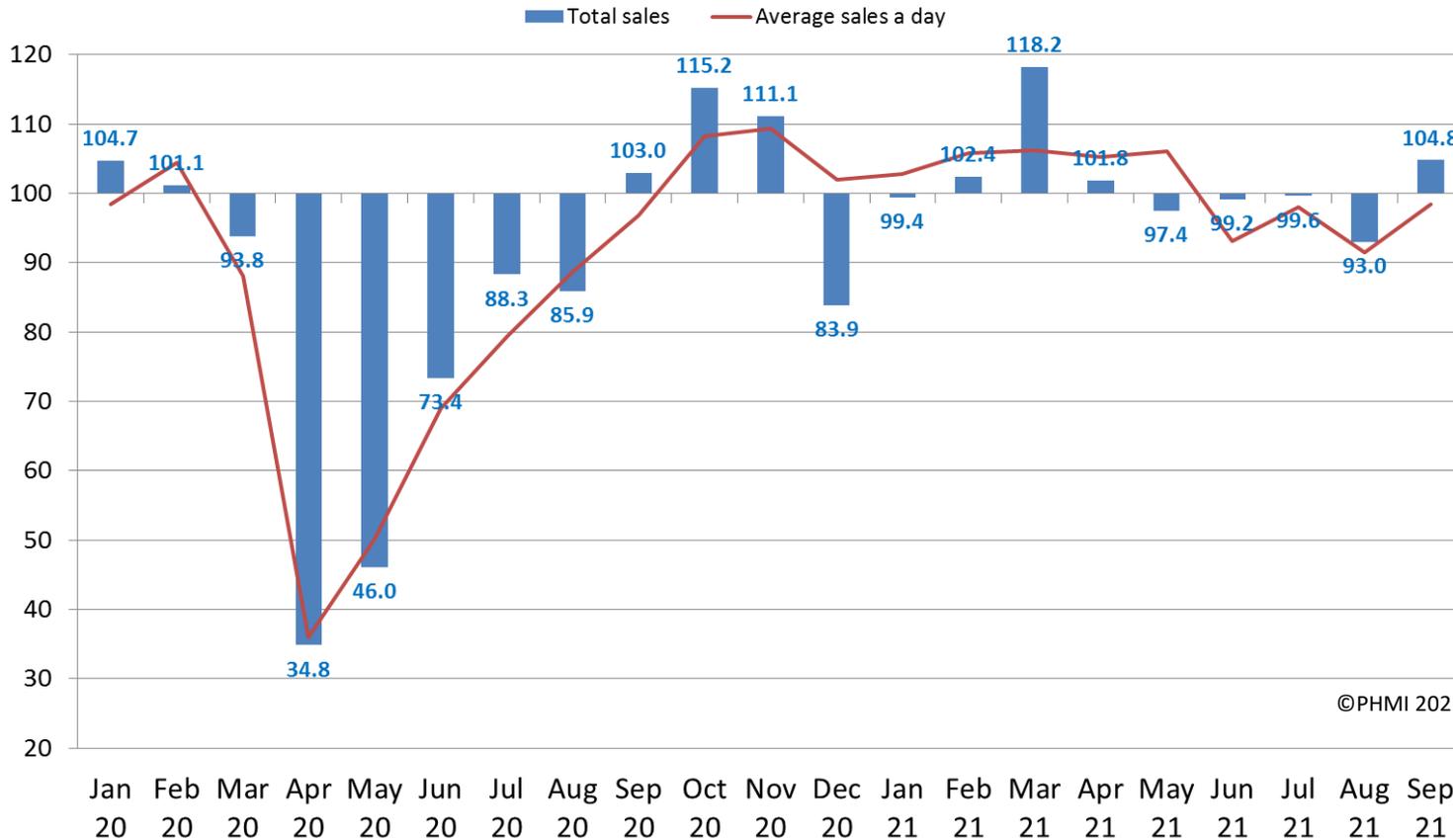
 Source: GfK's
Plumbing & Heating
Point of Sale Tracking
Data, Jan 2019 to Sep 2021

*Some merchants temporarily closed branches between March and May 2020 and this will have affected trading day comparisons.

Monthly: Index

Adjusted and unadjusted for trading days*

Indices: January 2020 to September 2021



Value figures shown for Total sales

©PHMI 2021

 Source: GfK's Plumbing & Heating Point of Sale Tracking Data, Jan 2019 to Sep 2021

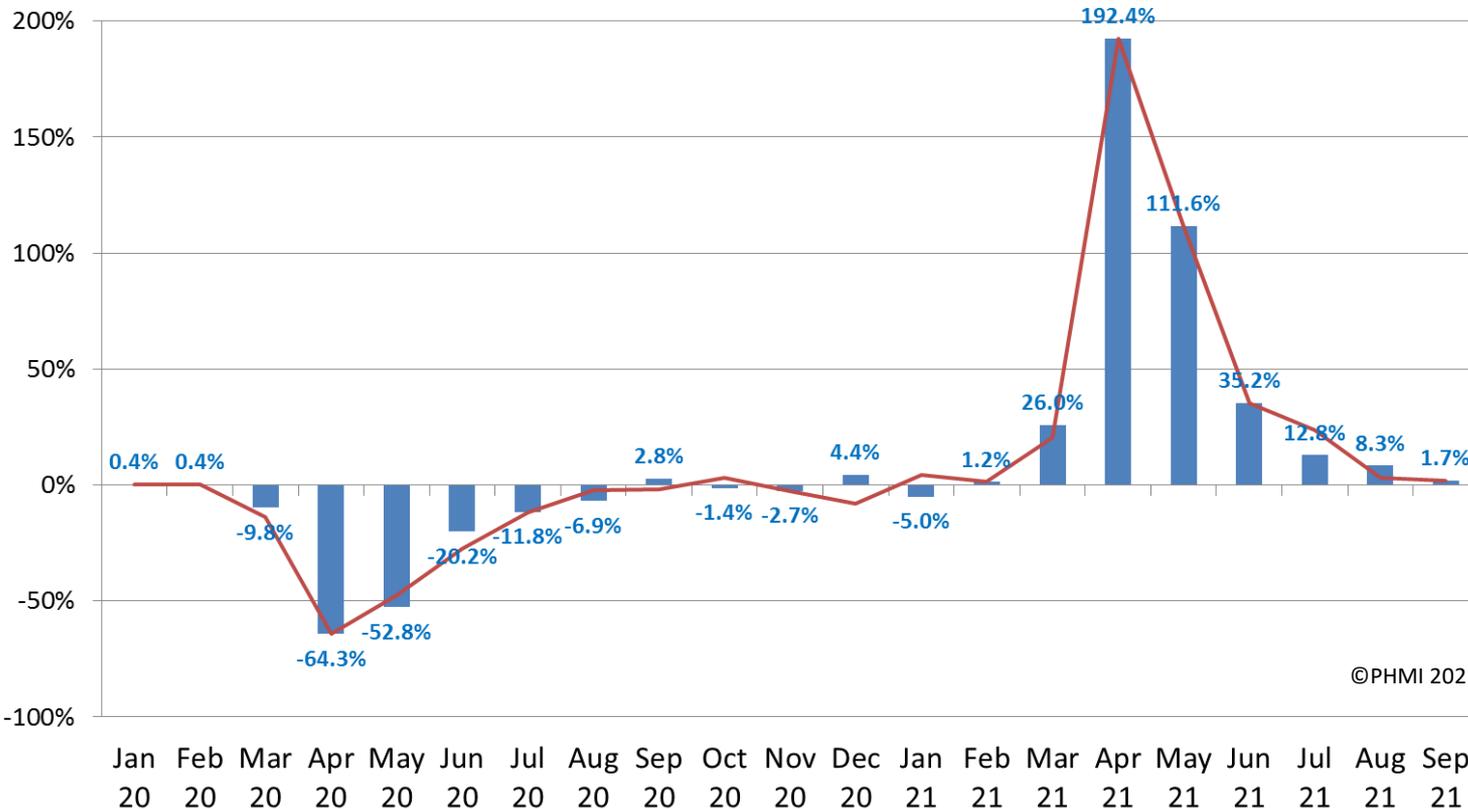
*Some merchants temporarily closed branches between March and May 2020 and this will have affected trading day comparisons.

Monthly: Year on year

Sales indices, adjusted and unadjusted for trading days*

Month: year on year

■ Total sales — Average sales a day



Value figures shown for Total sales

©PHMI 2021

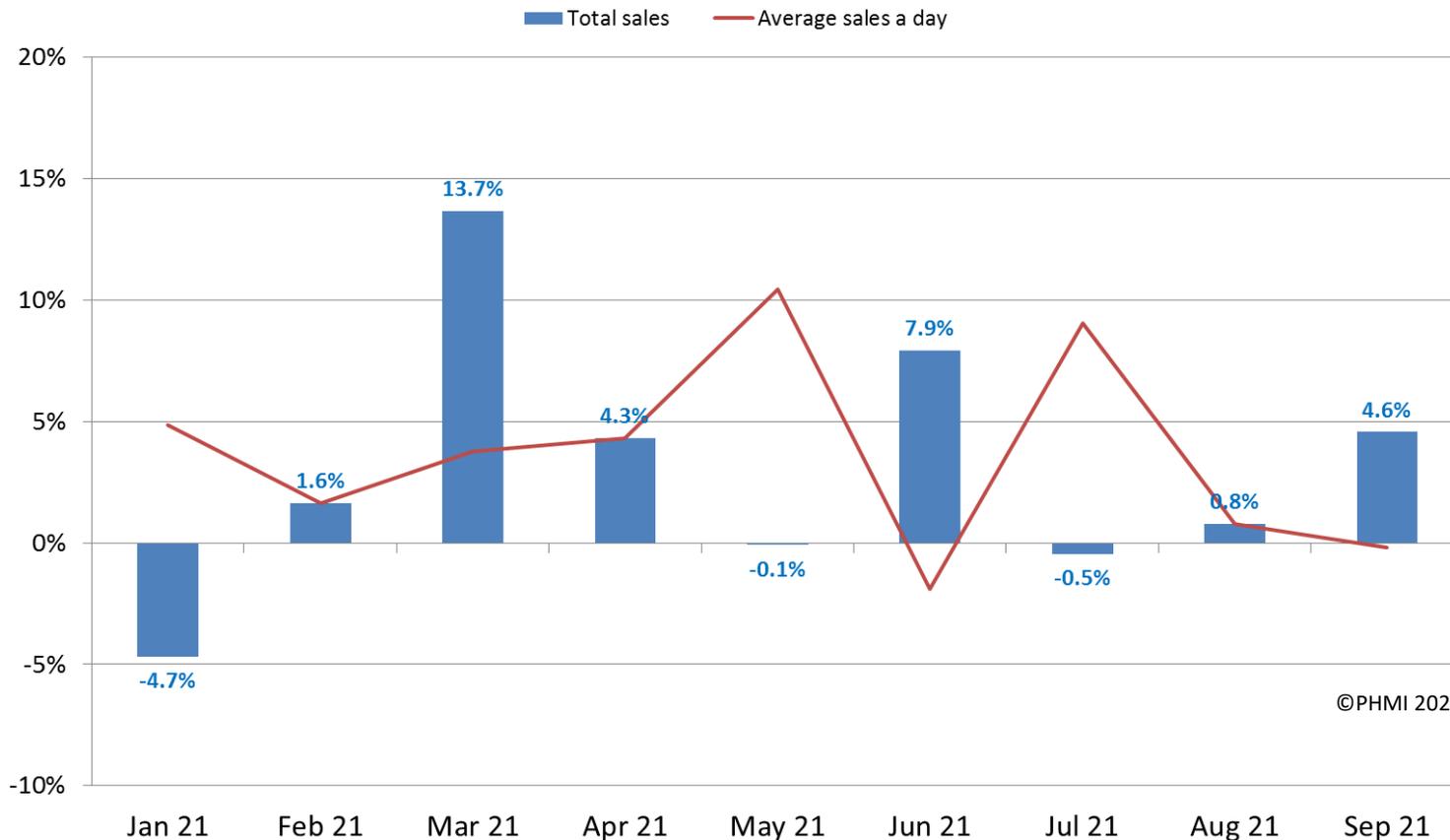
 Source: GfK's Plumbing & Heating Point of Sale Tracking Data, Jan 2019 to Sep 2021

*Some merchants temporarily closed branches between March and May 2020 and this will have affected trading day comparisons.

Monthly: 2021 v 2019

Sales indices, adjusted and unadjusted
for trading days

Month: compared with 2019



Value figures
shown for Total
sales

©PHMI 2021

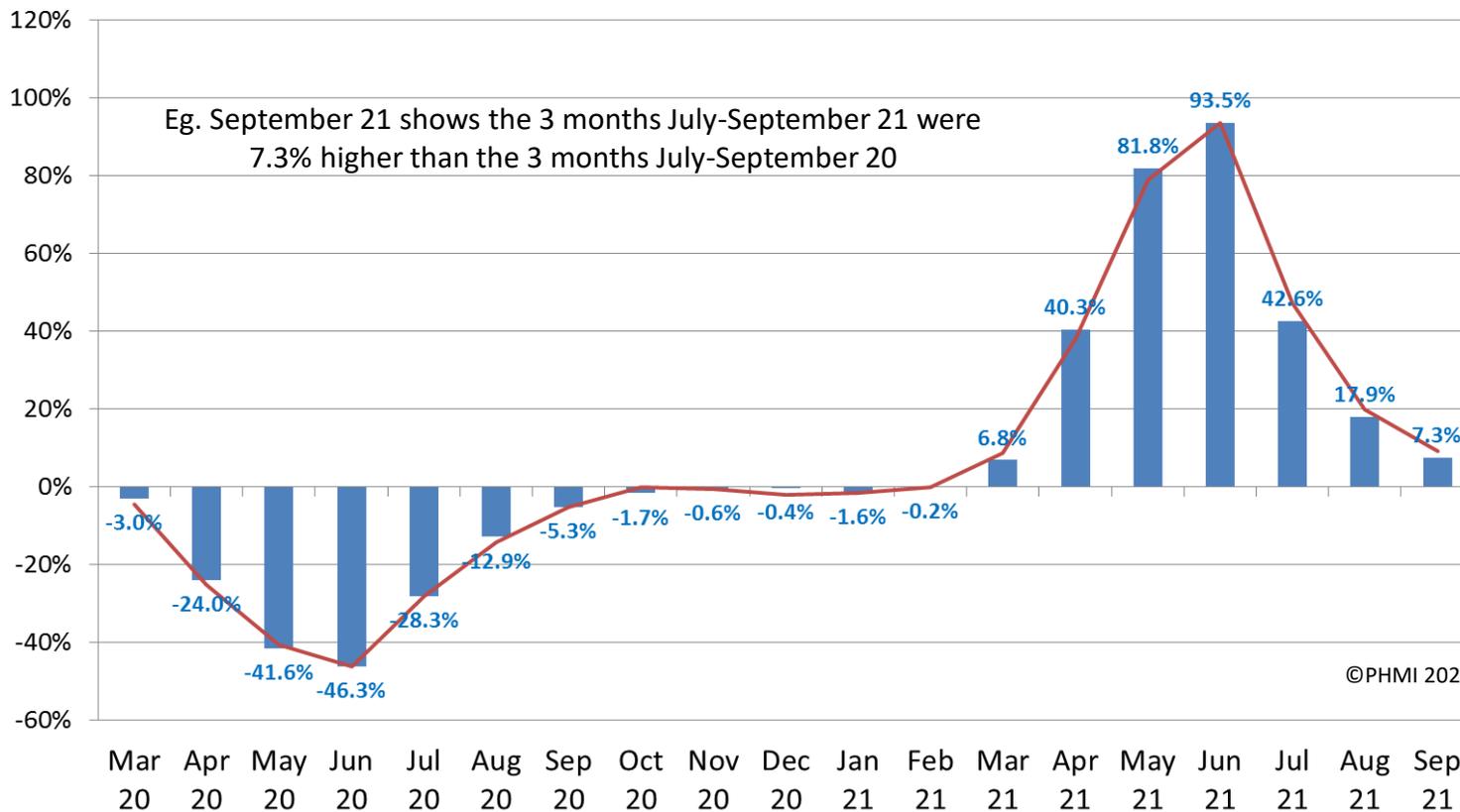
 Source: GfK's
Plumbing & Heating
Point of Sale Tracking
Data, Jan 2019 to Sep 2021

Rolling 3-months: Year on year

Sales indices, adjusted and unadjusted for trading days*

Rolling 3 months: year on year

■ Total sales — Average sales a day



Value figures shown for Total sales

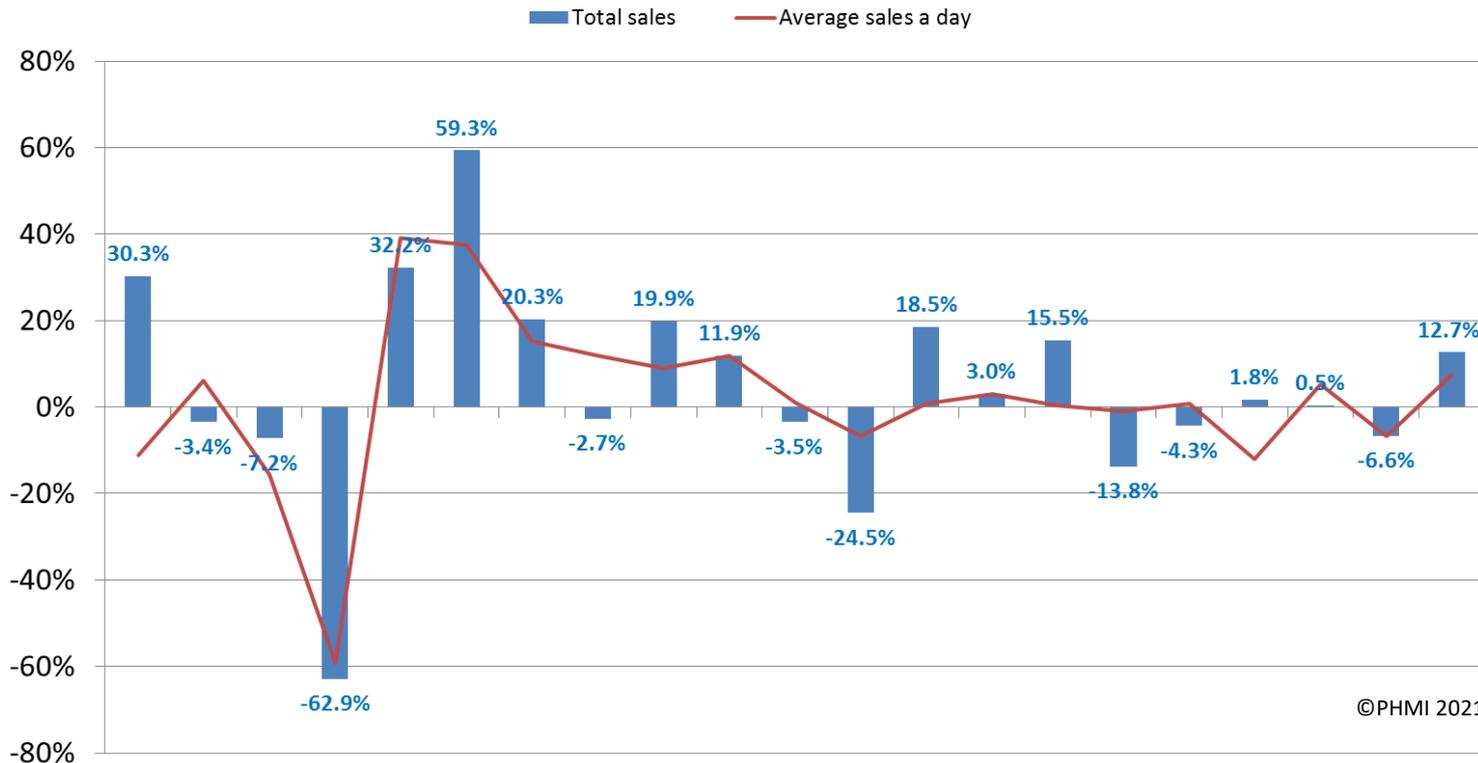
*Some merchants temporarily closed branches between March and May 2020 and this will have affected trading day comparisons.

 Source: GfK's Plumbing & Heating Point of Sale Tracking Data, Jan 2019 to Sep 2021

Monthly: Month v previous month

Sales indices, adjusted and unadjusted for trading days*

Month v previous month



Value figures shown for Total sales

©PHMI 2021

Jan 20 Feb 20 Mar 20 Apr 20 May 20 Jun 20 Jul 20 Aug 20 Sep 20 Oct 20 Nov 20 Dec 20 Jan 21 Feb 21 Mar 21 Apr 21 May 21 Jun 21 Jul 21 Aug 21 Sep 21

 Source: GfK's Plumbing & Heating Point of Sale Tracking Data, Jan 2019 to Sep 2021

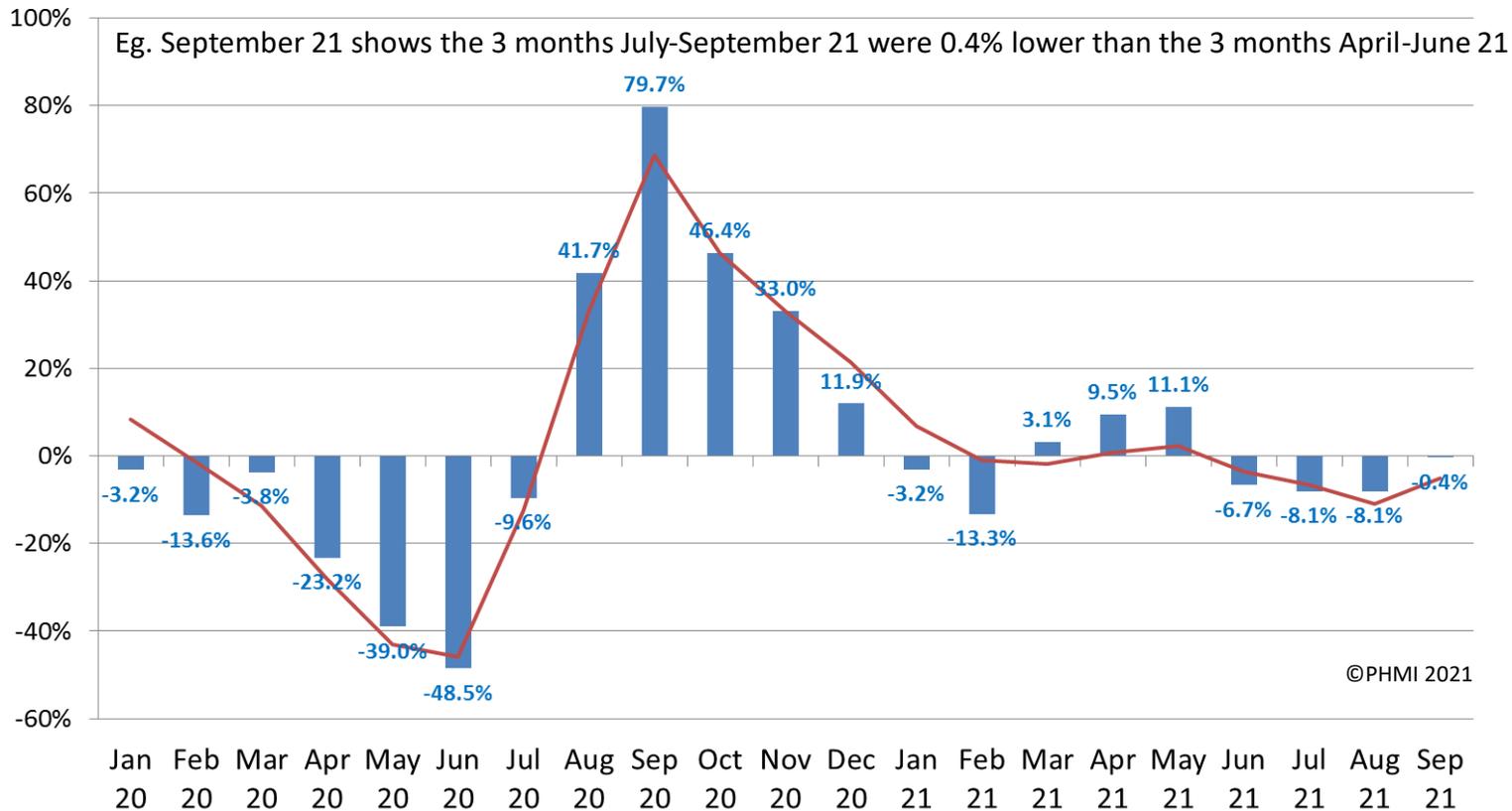
*Some merchants temporarily closed branches between March and May 2020 and this will have affected trading day comparisons.

Rolling 3-months: v previous 3 months

Sales indices, adjusted and unadjusted for trading days*

Rolling 3 months v previous 3 months

■ Total sales — Average sales a day



Value figures shown for Total sales

*Some merchants temporarily closed branches between March and May 2020 and this will have affected trading day comparisons.

 Source: GfK's Plumbing & Heating Point of Sale Tracking Data, Jan 2019 to Sep 2021

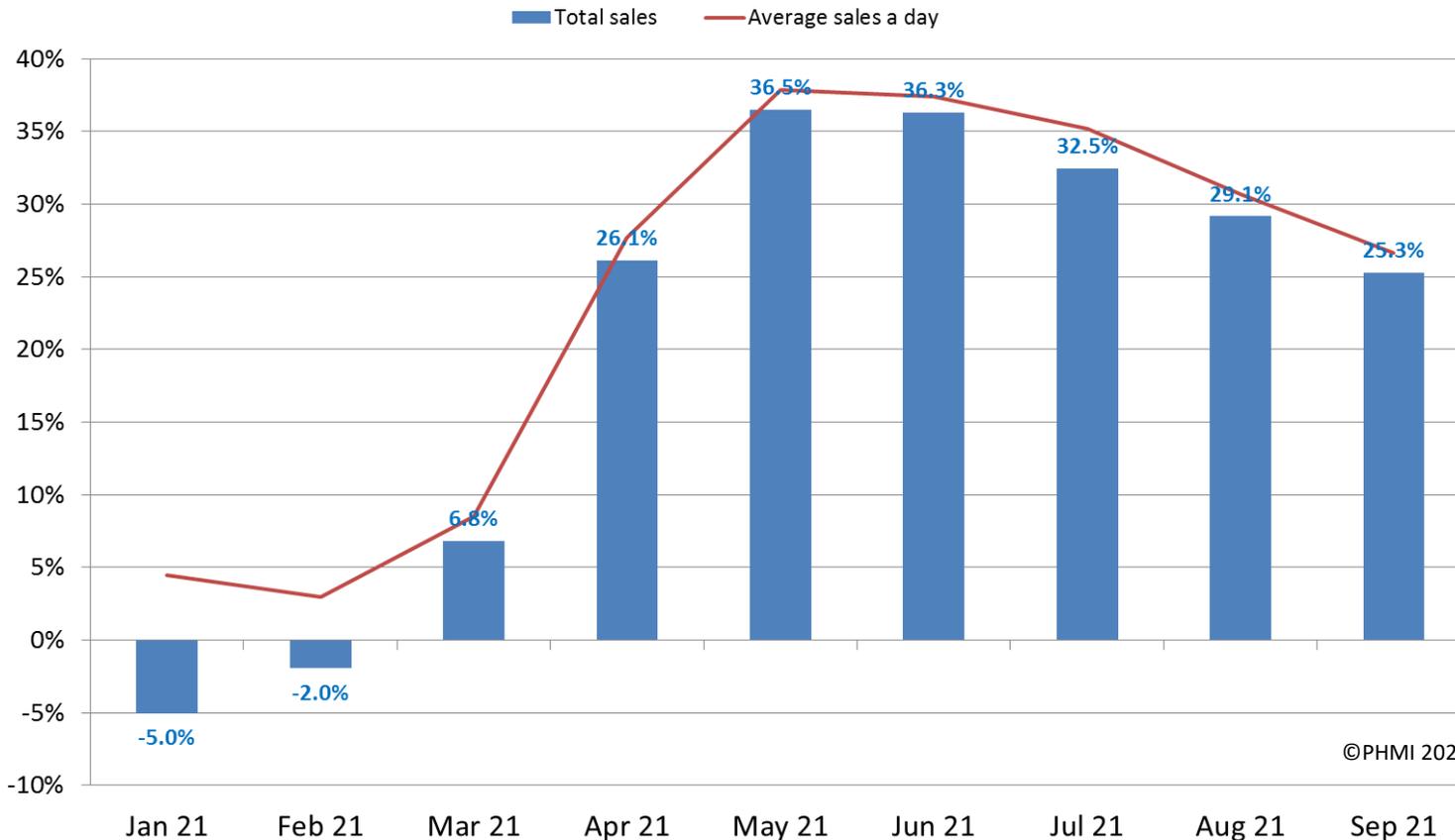
Year To Date: Year on year

Last 9 months sales indices, adjusted and unadjusted for trading days*

Plumbing & Heating Merchant Index



Cumulative year to date: Jan 21 to Sep 21 v last year



Value figures shown for Total sales

©PHMI 2021

Source: GfK's Plumbing & Heating Point of Sale Tracking Data, Jan 2019 to Sep 2021

*Some merchants temporarily closed branches between March and May 2020 and this will have affected trading day comparisons.

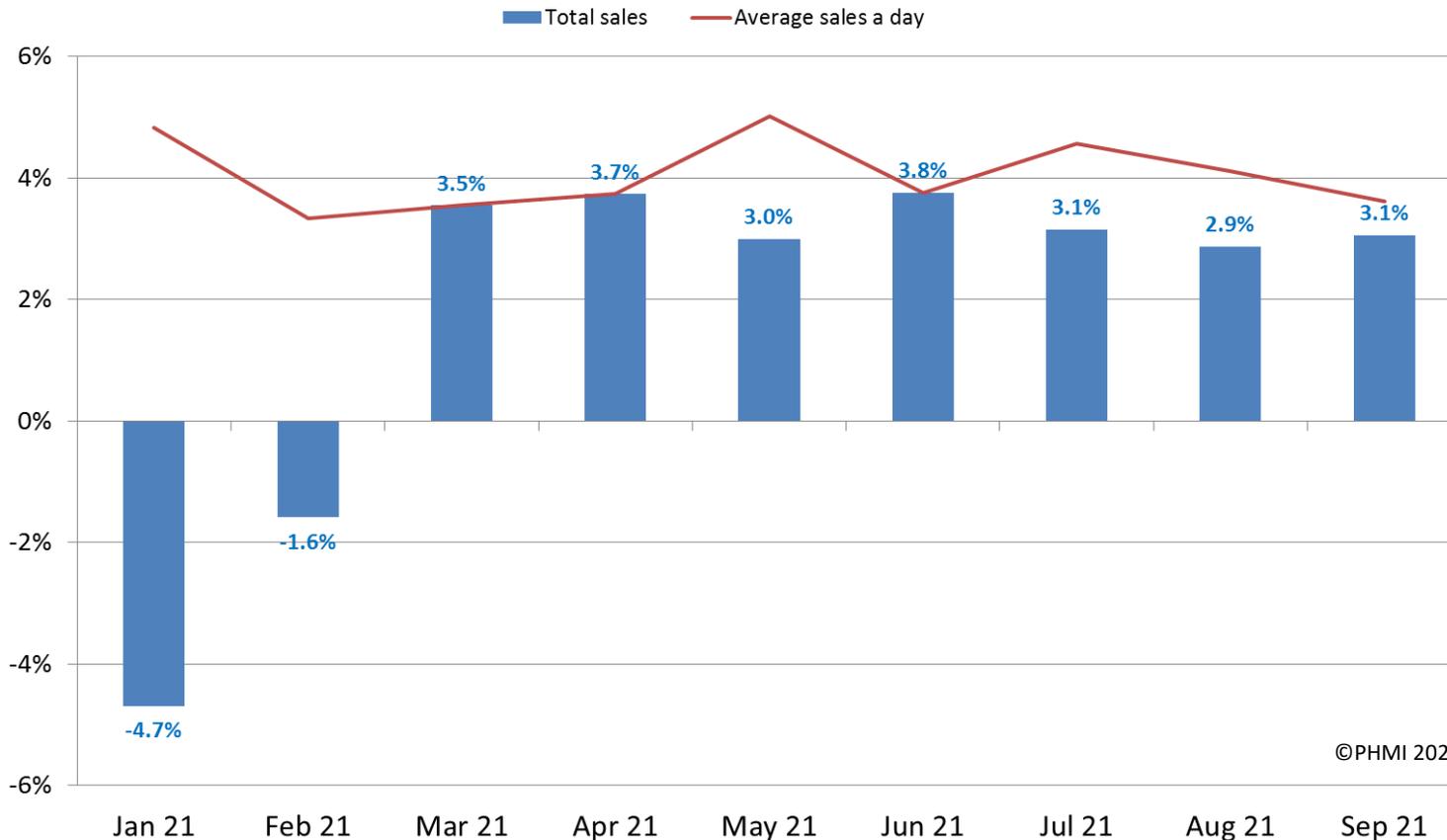
Year To Date: 2021 v 2019

Last 9 months sales indices, adjusted and unadjusted for trading days

Plumbing & Heating Merchant Index



Cumulative year to date: 2-year comparison



Value figures shown for Total sales

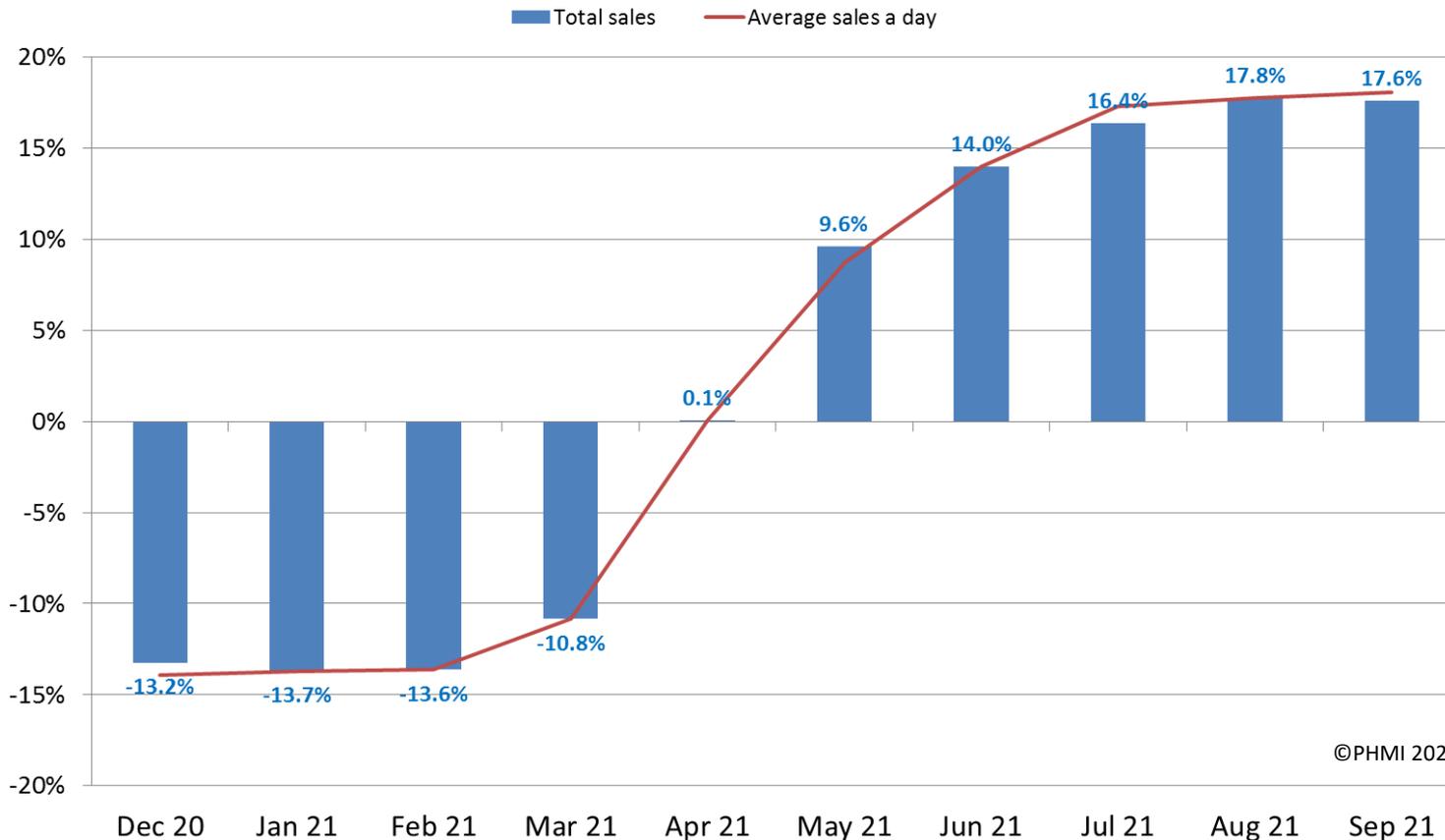
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GfK Source: GfK's Plumbing & Heating Point of Sale Tracking Data, Jan 2019 to Sep 2021

Last 12 months: Year on year

Sales indices, adjusted and unadjusted
for trading days*

Rolling 12 months v previous 12 months



Value figures
shown for Total
sales

©PHMI 2021

 Source: GfK's
Plumbing & Heating
Point of Sale Tracking
Data, Jan 2019 to Sep 2021

*Some merchants temporarily closed branches between March and May 2020 and this will have affected trading day comparisons.

PHMI Trading Days

Monthly

Index: 20.8

| 2020 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|-----|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Jan | Feb | Mar* | Apr* | May* | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 22 | 20 | 22 | 20 | 19 | 22 | 23 | 20 | 22 | 22 | 21 | 17 |
| 2021 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 20 | 20 | 23 | 20 | 19 | 22 | 21 | 21 | 22 | | | |

Quarterly

Index: 62.3

| 2020 | | | |
|------|----|----|----|
| Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 64 | 61 | 65 | 60 |
| 2021 | | | |
| Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| 63 | 61 | 64 | |

Half Year

| 2020 | |
|------|-----|
| H1 | H2 |
| 125 | 125 |
| 2021 | |
| H1 | H2 |
| 124 | |

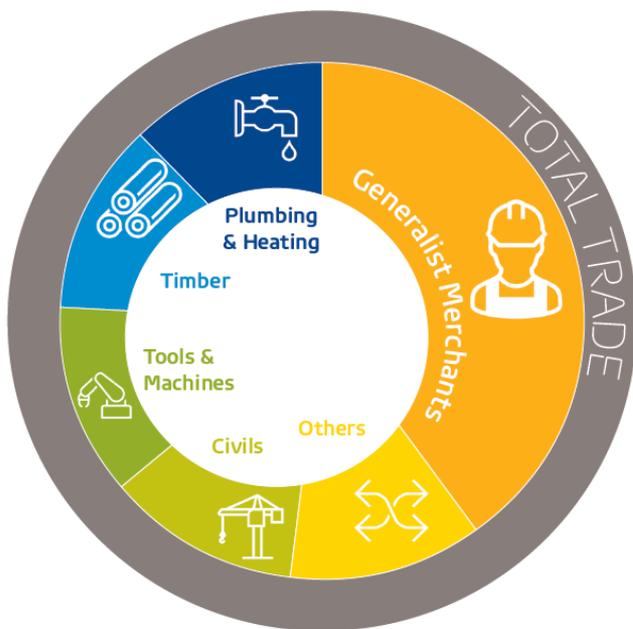
Full Year

| 2020 |
|------|
| 250 |
| 2021 |
| |

*Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, some merchants temporarily closed branches in the period March to May 2020, hence their trading days may have differed from the standard numbers shown above.

Plumbing & Heating channel definition and merchants

Plumbing & Heating Merchant Index



Plumbing Specialists

Plumbing & Hardware Specialists are small outlets handling nails, hardware products, pipes, ironware, paint, faucets, sanitary products, bathroom accessories, ceramic tiles and heating equipment such as boilers, radiators & heating controls.

Their main turnover is generated with product groups such as installation, paint & plumbing/hardware product groups (e.g. nails, saws, scissors, keys).

Plumbing Merchants

Large outlets handling nails, hardware products, pipes, ironware, paint, faucets, sanitary products, bathroom accessories & kitchen, bathroom furniture, bath tubs and heating equipment such as boilers, radiators & heating controls. Compared with Plumbing Specialists they are bigger & generate a higher turnover.

Their main turnover is generated with bath/kitchen faucets, sanitary & complementary products, bathroom accessories, tiles and bath tubs and bathroom furniture.

Turnover is generated with professional end users (B2B) as well as private end users (B2C).

Merchant partners include:



Plumbing Trade Supplies



Contacting PHMI

PHMI Experts

Plumbing & Heating brands who are interested in becoming PHMI Experts and speaking for their markets and building their brands should contact Toby Aitken or Ralph Sutcliffe:



Toby Aitken

Account Director

toby@mra-marketing.com

+44(0) 1453 521621



Ralph Sutcliffe

Business Development
Director

ralph@mra-marketing.com

+44 (0) 1453 521621

More data available

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Emile van der Ryst

Senior Client Insight Manager -
Trade

Emile.van-der-ryst@gfk.com

+44 (0) 20 7890 9615

Contact us

For further information



Neil Frackiewicz

Head of Retail UK

Neil.frackiewicz@gfk.com

+44 (0) 20 7890 9123



Emile van der Ryst

Senior Client Insight Manager - Trade

Emile.van-der-ryst@gfk.com

+44 (0) 20 7890 9615



Sarup Ubhi

Industry analyst / economist

sarup.ubhi@bmf.org.uk

+44 (0) 24 7685 4994



Toby Aiken

Account Director

toby@mra-marketing.com

+44(0) 7989 557643



Ralph Sutcliffe

Business Development Director

ralph@mra-marketing.com

+44 (0) 1453 521621