

Home improvement's solid foundation holds

Article

Last week, **lumber prices fell** as much as 4%, moving closer to pre-pandemic numbers, per Business Insider. This could be a sign of easing inflation, but it could also bring about a housing market slowdown.

While we wait to see how the market shakes out, let's take a look at where home improvement sits after a solid second quarter:

- **Home Depot did well**, with **sales** totaling \$43.8 billion, up 6.5% over last year. The company's **digital sales** increased 12% and the Home Depot app set a record number of downloads,

traffic, and sales. Business is accelerating now that the summer is coming to an end, said Tim Decker, president and CEO.

- **Lowe's had a slightly less successful quarter;** total sales hit \$27.5 billion, down just slightly year over year. On the subject of inflation, president and CEO Marvin Ellison said that instead of trading down to cut costs, many customers were spending more to get the latest technology.

What's selling? Both Home Depot and Lowe's reported strong sales in building materials, plumbing, millwork, paint, and hardware categories.

But an early (and short) spring had negative impacts on seasonal sales of items like outdoor grills, patio furniture, lawn mowers, and fertilizer.

Pro vs DIY: There are two groups that shop home improvement—individuals making improvements on their own property (DIY), and home improvement professionals (pro).

- Lowe's second quarter DIY sales were down due to the short spring season, but its pro comp sales saw double-digit growth for the ninth quarter in row, with a penetration of over 23% in the US. Home Depot's pro and DIY sales growth were both positive, with pro outpacing DIY, as it did in the first quarter.
- **Both companies continue to invest in their professional customers.** Home Depot launched a new B2B website in May to create a more seamless shopping experience, while Lowe's MVP Pro Rewards program has outperformed the company's expectations.

This was originally featured in in the Retail By the Numbers newsletter. For more retail insights, statistics, and trends, [subscribe here](#).