

Seasonal sales

The bad weather this summer has affected sales in some business areas. Has your company been affected?

1 When was the last time you bought one of the products in the box below? Compare your answers with a partner.

a car	clothes	beauty products	a book
a TV	a music CD	a mobile phone	furniture

2 Scan the sales report and underline any names of products and companies you can find in one minute.

Quarterly sales report

[US] US retail sales fell in August. Sales of cars, clothes and furniture all declined, partly because poor weather kept the shoppers at home. However, sales of electronic goods, books, music and health & beauty products all rose.

[UK] High Street retailer *Next* has reported strong sales figures for the first half of the year. Total sales at the end of July increased by nearly 16%. Rivals in the clothes business have blamed the weather for falling sales over the summer.

[Europe] The cold and wet weather in Northern Europe has affected a number of companies. *Unilever* reports slow

sales of ice cream and cold drinks. Sales of *Coca-Cola* were also down. Long term, the company is worried that many customers are becoming more health-conscious and buying rival products such as mineral water and fruit juices.

[Asia] Sales of mobile phones in China, the world's largest mobile market, are expected to rise in September after a slow summer. Over 30 domestic companies want to take market share from global manufacturers such as *Nokia* and *Motorola*. *Sony* is optimistic about sales of its own mobile products, but says the cost of developing flat screen televisions is high. It does not expect the home electronics business to recover this Christmas.

3 Read the report again. What are the sales trends in each part of the world?

4 Do the following words usually go *before* or *after* the word 'sales'? Put them in the correct table.

rising	falling	report	improving	figures
department	declining	team	forecast	increasing

<i>rising</i>	SALES

SALES	<i>forecast</i>

5 Work in small groups. Use the following graph to show the seasonal sales trends in your own company / business industry. Write a short sales report for this year and present it to the rest of the group.

