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CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REMAINS FLAT: SURVEY

Canadians Continue To Send Mixed Messages About Their Intentions

TORONTO, February 12, 2010 – The latest results from TNS Canadian Facts' *Consumer Confidence Index* suggest that Canadians are continuing to send mixed messages when it comes to the Canadian economy. They are feeling better about the current economic situation but are still concerned about the future. Overall, the index edged back up to 97.6 from last month's 96.7 and is on par with where it stood in December.

"The confidence numbers remain quite flat. It's good to see Canadians feeling a bit better about the here-and-now. But until they start feeling good about today *and* tomorrow, I wouldn't count on seeing significant consumer spending," said Dr. Michael Antecol, vice-president of TNS Canadian Facts and director of the marketing research firm's monthly tracking study.

When it comes to *today*, the *Present Situation Index*, which captures evaluations of the overall state of the current economic and employment situations, rose almost three points from 82.7 to 85.6 – putting the index almost back to where it stood in September 2009. Likewise the *Buy Index*, which gauges the degree to which people think the current period is a good time to make major purchases, bounced up after last month's fall. It rose 1.7 points from 100.4 to 102.1.

However, when it comes to *tomorrow*, the *Expectations Index*, which measures consumers' estimation of the economy, household income and employment in the next six months, gave up 2.7 points to close at 109.1 from last month's new high of 111.8.

“The stars need to align for Canadians. The uncertainty in the indices, the fact that they are bouncing up and down, suggests Canadians remain conflicted. Until they can objectively look at their financial situations and feel good about where they are now and where they are heading going forward, we are unlikely to see a sustained, consumer-driven economic turnaround,” added Dr. Antecol.

Consumer Confidence Index tracks Canadians' attitudes about the economy each month and is part of a global study conducted by TNS in 18 countries. Three indices are produced each month to show how confidence in the economy is changing: *Present Situation Index*; an *Expectations Index*; and a *Buy Index*. The Canadian fieldwork is conducted using the firm's national bi-weekly telephone omnibus service, TNS Express Telephone. A total of 1,015 nationally representative Canadian adults were interviewed between February 1 and 4, 2010. For a survey sample this size, the margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

TNS Canadian Facts (www.tns-cf.com) is one of Canada's most prestigious full-service marketing, opinion and social research organizations.

About TNS

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