

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONSUMER CONFIDENCE IN CANADIAN ECONOMY RESILIENT: SURVEY

Perceptions remain positive as students head back to school

TORONTO, September 13, 2006 – Canadians enter the fall season with surprisingly positive assessments of the economy, as the slump in consumer confidence recorded last month does not appear to be a continuing trend.

“Despite various economic information that would suggest caution about the strength of the economy, public perceptions have remained upbeat, driven by continued favourable assessments of the job market,” said Richard Jenkins, vice-president of TNS Canadian Facts and director of the marketing research firm’s monthly *Consumer Confidence Index* tracking study.

The *Present Situation Index*, which captures evaluations of the overall state of the economy and the employment situation, now stands at 114.8, a slight drop from 115.6 in August and 117.9 in July. Consumers remain positive about the underlying strength of current economic conditions in Canada.

The *Expectations Index*, which measures consumers’ estimation of the economy, household income and employment six months from now, dropped significantly in August (to 99.5 from 104.5 in July) but did not decline further in September (99.9).

“Expectations about the future dropped in August in the wake of the turmoil in the Middle East and while they did not improve in the past month, they also did not deteriorate further,” added Jenkins.

The *Buy Index*, which gauges the degree to which people think the current period is a good time to make major purchases, rose in September in marked contrast to the two-year trend. In August the Index fell to 91.7, the lowest level recorded in two years, but September saw confidence in the climate for making purchases improve to 96.7.

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 September 4 and 7. The survey results are considered accurate to 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

TNS is a market information group:

- The world's largest provider of custom research and analysis
- A leader in political and social polling
- A major supplier of consumer panel, media intelligence and TV and radio audience measurement services.

TNS operates across a global network in over 70 countries, allowing us to provide internationally consistent, up-to-the-minute and high quality information and analysis.

The group's employees deliver innovative thinking and excellent service to local and multi-national clients worldwide. In the custom business, they combine in-depth sector knowledge with expertise in the areas of new product development, positioning and segmentation research, brand and advertising research and stakeholder management.

TNS' strategic goal is to be recognized as the global leader in delivering value added information and insights that help our clients to make more effective decisions.

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