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CONSUMER SENTIMENT REMAINS STRONG: SURVEY

Canadians Have Mild Reaction to Stock Market Turmoil

TORONTO, August 29, 2007 – TNS Canadian Facts' *Consumer Confidence Index* for August shows that consumers were only modestly affected by the recent turmoil in the stock market attributed to the loans crisis in the United States.

"While consumers are clearly not immune from the bad stock market news, the ups and downs of the stock market often do not have an immediate consequence on the day-to-day finances of the average person," 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 118.2, which is down 2.2 points from July (but still higher than the June reading, 117.5). The July figure represents the highest measured index value in the three years that TNS has been conducting the study.

The *Expectations Index*, which measures consumers' estimation of the economy, household income and employment in six months, also declined over the past month from 101.9 to 100.9.

The *Buy Index*, which gauges the degree to which people think the current period is a good time to make major purchases, dropped the most significantly. The index now sits at 91.6 (95.3 in July). Although the Buy Index has fluctuated widely over the past year, it has tended to be the most sensitive to broad economic news.

“Unless there are further spill-over effects, consumer confidence should continue to drive economic activity,” added Jenkins.

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 August 20 and 23. 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.

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