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CONFIDENCE FALTERS SLIGHTLY AS TURMOIL CONTINUES: SURVEY

Market concerns about long term impact of credit issue spilling over

TORONTO, September 13, 2007 – TNS Canadian Facts' *Consumer Confidence Index* for September shows that consumers revised their assessment of the economy downward for the second consecutive month.

“Although still overwhelmingly positive about the economy, consumers have picked up on market concerns and revised their own assessments,” 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 116.1. This represents a two-month decline of 4.3 points (2.1 from August to September and 2.2 points from July to August). In July, though, the index had reached its highest level in the three years that TNS has been conducting the study, suggesting that consumers are still positive about their situation.

A two-month decline is also evident in the *Expectations Index*, which measures consumers' estimation of the economy, household income and employment in six months. The September index value is 99.5 compared to 101.9 in July and 100.9 in August.

The *Buy Index*, which gauges the degree to which people think the current period is a good time to make major purchases, is also lower. The index now sits at 91.3 (91.6 in August and 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.

“Clearly recent events have taken the shine off the overwhelmingly positive outlook Canadians have about the economy,” 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 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.

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We are the world’s foremost provider of custom research and analysis, combining in-depth industry sector understanding with world-class expertise in the areas of Retail and Shopper Insights, Stakeholder Management, New Product Development, and Brand and Communications. We are a major supplier of consumer panel, media intelligence and internet, TV and radio audience measurement services.

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