

March 4, 2010

# Canadians upbeat on financial future as Consumer Confidence rises

The latest Harris/Decima-Investor's Group Measure of Consumer Confidence reveals:

- In Canada, consumer confidence rose and remains ahead of a similar measure in the United States. Canadian consumer confidence increased from 85.5 in November to 89.0 today. In the US, the measure stands at 73.6, an increase from the 67.4 recorded in November.

## Harris/Decima-Investors Group Consumer Confidence Index



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- Canadians remain three times more likely to see good times financially for themselves a year from now than bad. 31% of respondents anticipate they'll be better off financially a year from now than they are now, while 9% say they'll be worse off. This split has remained almost unchanged for 3 waves now, dating back to August 2009.

- 30% of Canadians see good times ahead in the next year for the economy overall, while 13% see bad times. This represents a slight increase from November, when 25% saw good economic times ahead for Canada.
- A majority (60%) believe there will be good times financially for the Canadian economy in the next 5 years, while 28% believe there will be unemployment and recession over this period.
- A majority (50%) remain of the view that now is a good time to make a major purchase. 31% believe it is a bad time to make such a purchase. These numbers are almost identical to splits recorded in August and November.
- In terms of how people perceive the last year, 17% indicated they were better off financially compared to a year ago, while 19% feel they are worse off. This represents a significant decrease from 27% who said they were worse off in November, compared to the previous year.

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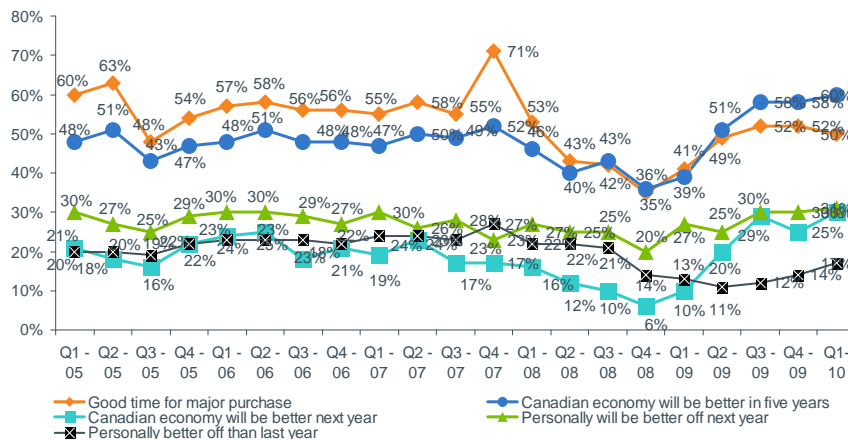
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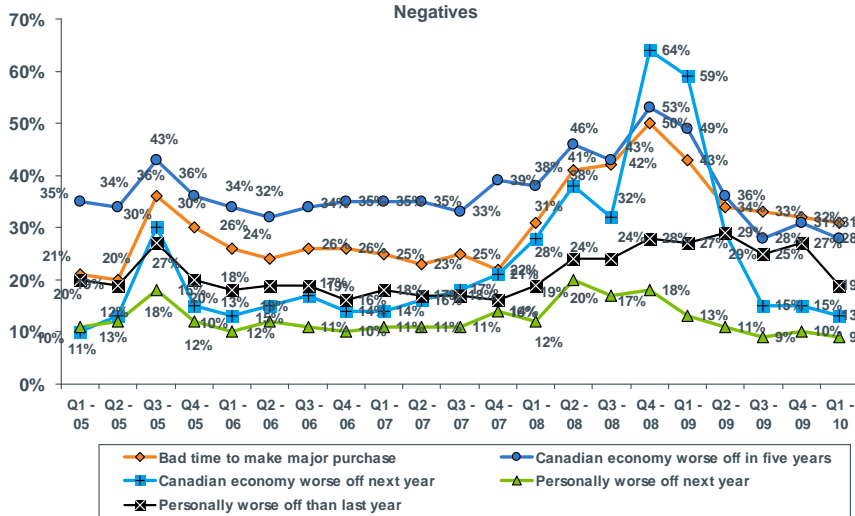
**Positive Sentiment**

**Five Component Factors of Consumer Confidence**  
 Positives



**Negative Sentiment**

**Five Component Factors of Consumer Confidence**



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According to Senior Vice-President Doug Anderson “With three quarters of similar consumer confidence results, we’re back up to the relatively high levels that we consistently recorded throughout 2006 and 2007. The US is continuing an upward trend, but still lags well behind Canada and still not what it was before the economic crisis. Before the economic crisis, Canadians were more likely to say it was a good time to make a major purchase than to say the Canadian economy would be better next year and beyond. While we see higher-than-normal measures of agreement that the economy is growing, people are still not quite sure where they are on making a major purchase – despite record low interest rates and optimism for the future. Optimism is returning, as is consumer confidence, but the crisis may have instilled a little more caution around spending. The results on making a major purchase beg a question: how will this sentiment change if or when interest rates increase?”

“Canadians’ positive attitude towards the near and medium term financial future is very encouraging,” said Jack Courtney, Assistant Vice-President of Advanced Financial Planning at Investors Group. “Increased confidence in their financial

future will help Canadians focus on ensuring they are well prepared with a comprehensive personal financial plan.”

These data were gathered through teleVox, the company’s national telephone omnibus survey for two weeks from February 18 to February 28, 2010 for just over 2,000 completes. A sample of the same size has a margin of error of 2.2%, 19 times out of 20.

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