

## **Consumer Confidence Gets A Convention Bounce**

The "convention bounce" isn't limited to politics: Consumer confidence this week posted its largest one-week gain since January, boosted almost entirely by rosier economic views among Republicans. The advance propelled confidence to its highest level since March.

Buoyed by the good vibes leading up to their convention, Republicans' positive ratings of the buying climate jumped eight points, the economy four points and personal finances three points. The composite ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index gained nine points among Republicans; it was flat among Democrats and independents.

It's not unusual for positive reinforcement – like that provided by the convention – to improved a group's overall outlook. It's a variation on the old adage: When you look good, you feel good.

Interviews for this week's survey were completed Sunday, a day before the start of the Republican National Convention. The bounce often begins just in advance of a convention; indeed, an ABC News/Washington Post poll completed Saturday found George W. Bush advancing to an 11-point lead over Al Gore.

	Net change from 7/23 to 7/30		
	Republicans	Democrats	Independents
Overall index	+9	+1	0
Positive ratings:			
Buying Climate	+8	-2	+1
Personal Finances	+3	-1	-1
National Economy	+4	+4	+1

**HIGH** - Overall ratings are now within five points of their record highs. Seventy-five percent of Americans say the economy is in good shape, 66 percent rate their personal finances positively and 54 percent call it a good time to buy things. Ratings of the buying climate have improved in the last month as gasoline prices moderated; they are now at their highest level since January.

	Today	----- Since 12/85 -----		
Positive ratings:		Highest	Lowest	Average
National Economy	75%	80	7	40
Personal Finances	66	70	42	57
Buying Climate	54	57	20	38

INDEX - The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on these ratings, stands at +30 on its scale of +100 to -100, up four points from last week. The 14-year-old index reached an all-time high of +38 in January, then dipped to +23 in June, apparently in response to rising gasoline prices.

	ABC/Money	Index
Today	+30	
Jan. 16, 2000	+38	Record high
2000 average	+29	
1999 average	+28	Best full year
1992 average	-44	Worst full year
Feb. 9, 1992	-50	Record low
Average since 12/85	-10	

Call the ABC News Polling Unit, ext. 2621, for a chart tracking the index over time.

GROUPS - As usual, confidence is higher among better-off Americans: The index is +62 in higher-income households compared to -19 in the lowest, +46 among college graduates but +8 among high-school dropouts, +33 among whites but +3 among blacks and +33 among men compared to +27 among women.

Here's a closer look at the three components of the ABC/Money index:

NATIONAL ECONOMY- The poll asks: Would you describe the state of the nation's economy these days as excellent, good, not so good or poor? Seventy-five percent say excellent or good, up four points from last week. The record, 80 percent, was set on Jan. 16, 2000. The worst rating was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	75%	15	60	25	18	7
Avg. since 12/85	40	4	36	60	40	20

PERSONAL FINANCES - The poll asks: Would you describe the state of your own personal finances these days as excellent, good, not so good or poor? Sixty-six percent say excellent or good, unchanged from last week. The record, 70 percent, was set Aug. 30, 1998 and last matched in January. The worst was 42 percent on March 14, 1993.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	66%	6	60	34	25	9
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	52	43	31	13

BUYING CLIMATE - The poll asks: Considering the cost of things today and your own personal finances, would you say now is an excellent time, a good time, a not-so-good time or a poor time to buy the things you want and need? Fifty-four percent say excellent or good, up two points from last week. The record, 57 percent, was set Jan. 16, 2000. The worst rating, 20 percent, was set in fall 1990.

Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. net	Not good	Poor
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This week	54%	4	50	46	31	15
Avg. since 12/85	38	3	35	62	41	21

**METHODOLOGY** - The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index represents a rolling average based on telephone interviews with about 1,000 adults nationwide each month. This week's results are based on 1,018 interviews in the week ending July 30 and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. Fieldwork by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

The ABC/Money index is derived as follows: The negative response to each index question is subtracted from the positive response to that question. The three resulting numbers are then added and divided by three. The index can range from +100 (everyone positive on all three measures) to -100 (all negative on all three measures). The survey began in December 1985.

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ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet, at:  
<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/PollVault/PollVault.html>

07/30/00	This Week	Last Week	4 Wks Ago	3 Mo. Ago	1 Yr. Ago	12 Mo High	12 Mo Low	12 Mo Avg
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Group	-----							
GENERAL POPULATION:								
Overall Index	30	26	25	27	30	38	22	28
State of Economy	50	42	40	46	50	60	38	47
Personal Finances	32	32	36	32	34	40	28	34
Buying Climate	8	4	-2	4	6	14	-6	3
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OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	33	32	35	34	38	45	30	36
Women	27	20	14	21	22	30	11	20
Age:								
18 - 34	26	26	31	21	33	37	16	25
35 - 44	32	26	20	27	29	37	13	27
45 - 54	36	32	35	42	23	45	11	30
55 - 64	25	28	15	25	31	48	13	29
65 +	28	17	12	28	33	45	12	28
Income:								
Under \$15K	-19	-18	-30	-23	-24	-12	-36	-24
\$15K To \$24.9K	9	1	-8	3	6	26	-11	2
\$25K To \$39.9K	26	19	12	24	25	33	8	22
\$40K To \$49.9K	19	24	41	29	50	60	19	39
Over \$50K	62	58	56	59	57	68	53	60
Region:								
Northeast	37	35	22	35	33	48	17	32
Midwest	35	31	22	36	27	40	17	29
South	22	18	19	20	30	31	14	23
West	31	27	36	21	31	43	13	28
Race:								

White	33	30	27	32	37	43	25	32
Black	3	-7	4	-3	-4	25	-15	0
Politics:								
Republican	42	33	31	38	41	55	31	41
Democrat	25	24	17	30	28	38	7	27
Independent	28	28	31	20	26	32	13	22
Education:								
< High School	8	1	-12	-8	-6	9	-27	-10
High Sch. Grad.	16	12	15	18	27	32	8	18
College +	46	43	41	45	43	53	38	46
Home:								
Own	37	33	31	35	36	44	28	35
Rent	9	4	7	6	15	22	-3	8
Marital Status:								
Single	26	25	20	28	27	36	8	24
Married	38	33	30	32	35	44	27	34
Sep/Wid/Div	2	-3	7	10	16	17	-9	6
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	37	33	31	34	36	44	28	35
Part-Time	31	32	23	28	24	38	7	24
Not Employed	19	14	15	18	21	28	8	18

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