

## **A Sunny August For Consumer Confidence**

It was a sunny August for consumer confidence – a tie for the second-best month on record in the 14-year-old ABC News/Money magazine poll.

Seventy-six percent of Americans say the economy's in good shape, up six points since early July and four points from its record high. Sixty-nine percent rate their own finances positively, one point from its high. And 53 percent call it a good time to buy things.

Confidence was its best on record in January, then lost ground before its August resurgence. The past month ties March 1999 for the second-best on record since this weekly poll began in December 1985.

Positive ratings:	Today	----- Since 12/85 ----		
		Highest	Lowest	Average
National Economy	76%	80	7	40
Personal Finances	69	70	42	57
Buying Climate	53	57	20	38

INDEX – The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index, based on these ratings, stands at +32 on its scale of +100 to -100, down one point from last week. The index has averaged +32 in August, five points above its average over the four preceding months. January's mark of +34 stands as the all-time high.

ABC/Money Consumer Comfort Index – Year 2000							
January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August
+34	+30	+29	+27	+27	+26	+27	+32

The index has averaged +29 this year, a point above its record 1999 average. Its lifetime average, depressed by recession in the early 1990s, is only -10.

ABC/Money Index	
Today	+32
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 +63 in higher-income households compared to -18 in the lowest, +47 among college graduates but +1 among high-school dropouts, +37 among whites but +3 among blacks and +43 among men but +22 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-six percent say excellent or good, down one point 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	76%	13	63	24	17	7
Avg. since 12/85	40	4	37	60	39	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-nine percent say excellent or good, the same as 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	69%	7	62	31	23	8
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-three percent say excellent or good, down one point 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
This week	53%	5	48	47	32	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 1,054 interviews in the week ending Aug. 27 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>

08/27/00	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								
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GENERAL POPULATION:								
Overall Index	32	33	30	27	27	38	22	28
State of Economy	52	54	50	52	42	60	38	47
Personal Finances	38	38	32	32	34	40	28	34
Buying Climate	6	8	8	-2	4	14	-6	3
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OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	43	44	33	32	36	45	30	36
Women	22	24	27	21	18	30	11	20
Age:								
18 - 34	36	36	26	29	26	37	16	25
35 - 44	17	21	32	22	28	37	13	26
45 - 54	33	35	36	29	23	45	11	31
55 - 64	39	29	25	29	22	48	13	29
65 +	39	43	28	19	32	45	12	28
Income:								
Under \$15K	-18	-27	-19	-23	-18	-12	-36	-24
\$15K To \$24.9K	-9	-4	9	7	-7	26	-11	2
\$25K To \$39.9K	26	32	26	30	21	33	8	23
\$40K To \$49.9K	33	33	19	34	39	60	19	38
Over \$50K	63	65	62	56	63	68	53	60
Region:								
Northeast	32	34	37	38	28	48	17	33
Midwest	37	39	35	28	27	40	17	30
South	28	28	22	17	26	31	14	22
West	35	35	31	28	25	43	13	29
Race:								
White	37	38	33	34	29	43	25	32
Black	3	7	3	-11	11	25	-15	1
Politics:								
Republican	38	42	42	39	39	55	31	42
Democrat	30	27	25	29	23	38	7	27
Independent	31	34	28	20	23	35	13	22
Education:								
< High School	1	-6	8	-13	-16	13	-24	-8
High Sch. Grad.	24	29	16	18	16	32	8	18
College +	47	49	46	45	49	53	38	46
Home:								
Own	39	42	37	35	31	44	28	35
Rent	14	11	9	5	14	22	-3	8
Marital Status:								
Single	42	39	26	19	35	42	8	24
Married	33	36	38	36	32	44	27	34

Sep/Wid/Div	16	13	2	2	-1	17	-9	6
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	34	37	37	35	35	44	28	35
Part-Time	40	37	31	28	14	40	11	26
Not Employed	27	26	19	14	20	28	8	18

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