

TO: Distribution
FROM: Michael Marx
DATE: April 1, 2010

Background

This represents the latest monthly summary and analysis of the major indices of consumer confidence, both current and future.

Please feel free to share this information with your issuer and merchant clients.

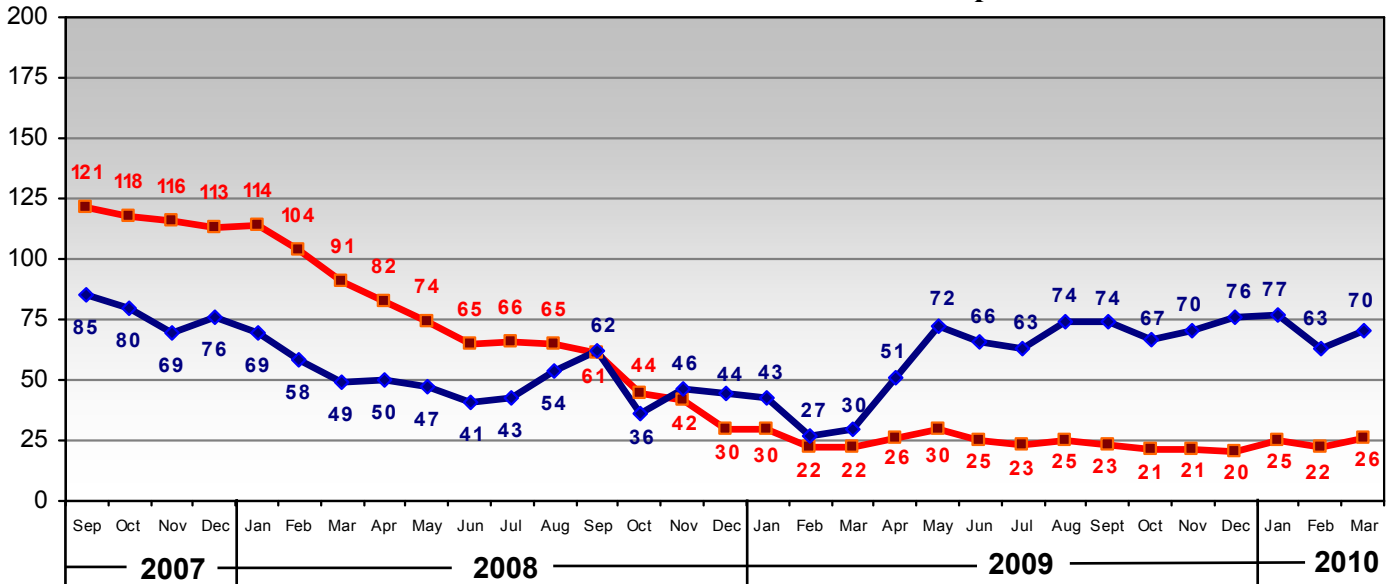
Summary

- Consumer confidence rebounded in March and reverted to the past nine month trend.
- Business conditions confidence also improved in March.
- The economic situation has impacted stress levels of women to a greater degree than it has men.

Findings

Consumer confidence rebounded in March regaining the losses from February. Present situation confidence rose four points and future expectations confidence rose seven points. The past nine month trend has been resolutely flat with only modest month-to-month changes. This nine month pattern is unprecedented in its lack of movement when looking at the past 20 years. Consumers appear undecided as to their confidence, mired in present situation pessimism and future expectations guarded optimism.

Consumer Confidence—Present Situation and Expectations



Index—1985=100

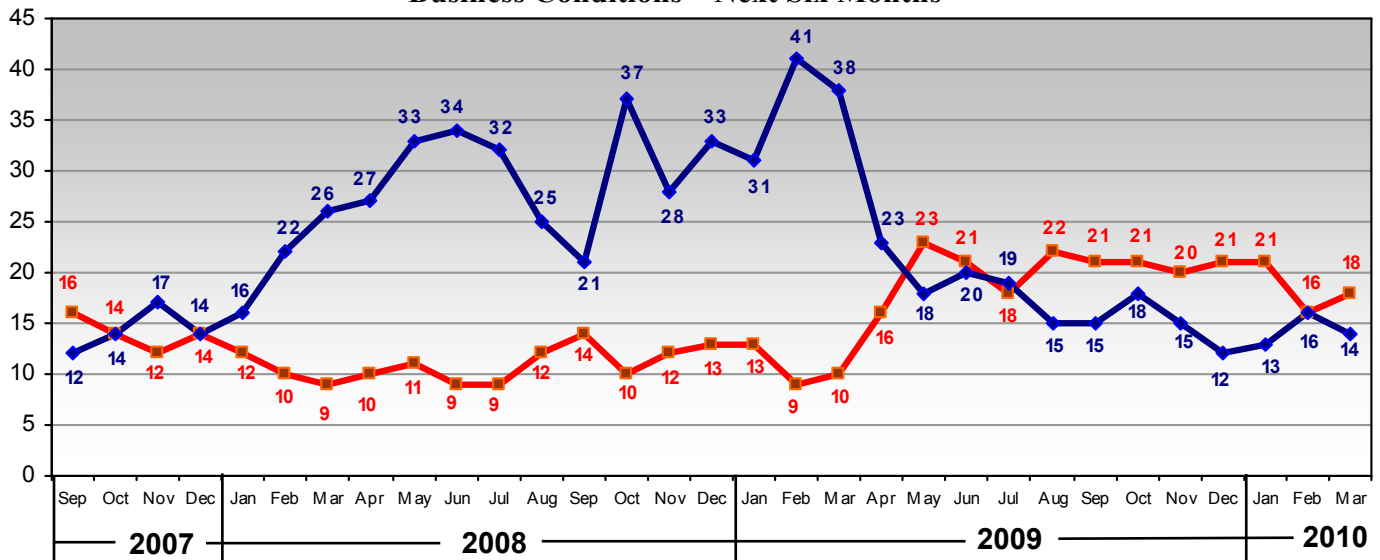
■ Present Situation

◆ Expectations

Source: Conference Board—Consumer Confidence Survey

Business conditions confidence rose somewhat in March and the net confidence reverted to positive territory. Those who felt conditions would improve rose two points, and the percentage who felt conditions would worsen fell two points. This places the net position at +4, remaining below the past nine-month average.

Business Conditions—Next Six Months



■ Business Conditions - Better

◆ Business Conditions - Worse

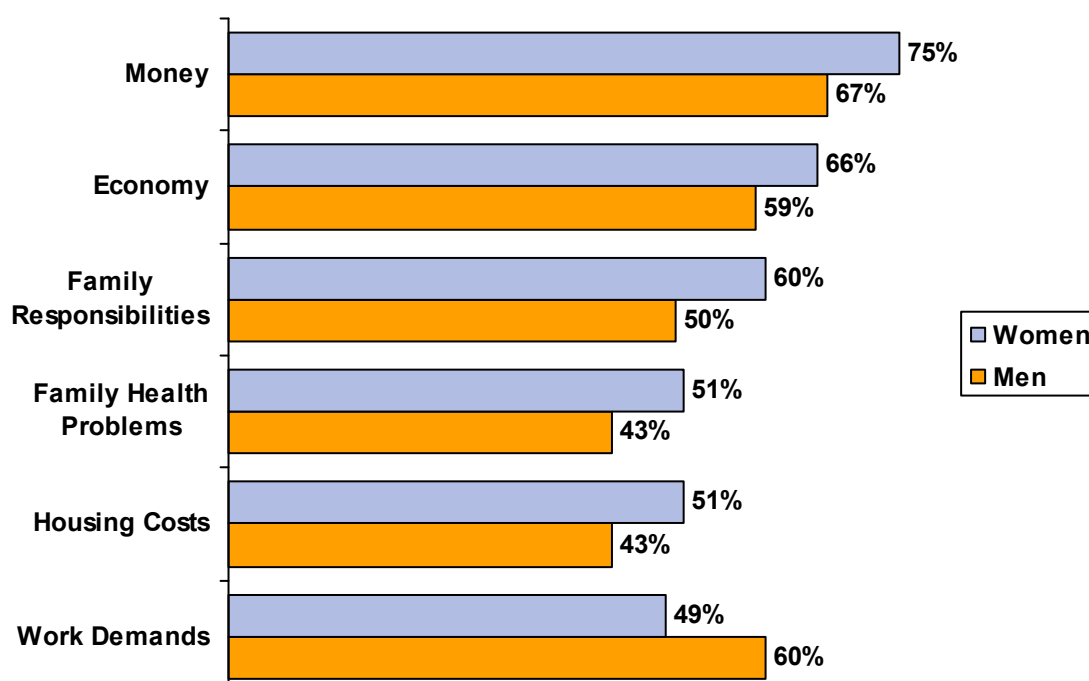
Source: Conference Board—Consumer Confidence Survey

As the economic situation continues to weigh on consumers, the issue of its stress impacts continue to be an issue for Americans. In this environment women are more likely than men to indicate that they are highly stressed (27% versus 19%).

Over half of American consumers claim to have suffered physical distress as a result of their stress, topped by sleeplessness, irritability or anger, fatigue, lack of energy, and headaches.

As seen below, women indicated higher levels of stress for all specific areas except for work. Irrespective of gender, money and the economy are resulting in stress for a significant majority of consumers.

Sources of Stress, Women vs. Men



Source: American Psychological Association, "Stress In America" August 2009, reported November 2009

Financial institutions, which handle the consumer business that involves a major stress driver (money), have both the challenge and opportunity to solidify relationships with customers with the appropriate communications and messaging, especially with women.