



The Nielsen Company
770 Broadway
New York, NY 10003
www.nielsen.com

News Release

Contact:

Gary Holmes
646.654.8975

GLOBAL CONSUMER DECLINES APPARENTLY BOTTOMING OUT, SAYS NIELSEN GLOBAL ECONOMIC SCORECARD

Consumer Confidence Weak but Optimism Exists

New York, NY, April 22, 2009 – Global declines in consumer activity appear to be moderating or bottoming out, according to this month’s Nielsen Economic Current scorecard of consumer behavior, a regular report from The Nielsen Company. The report found that out of 11 major GDP countries, only one country – Germany – changed positions on the Nielsen scorecard, showing an uptick in consumer behavior during the month of February.

“Consumers worldwide appear to be in a holding pattern and we see evidence that consumer spending might be positioned to turn around,” said James Russo, Vice President Global Consumer Insights for The Nielsen Company. “There is no doubt that conditions remain tough for global consumers, with continuing widespread areas of weakness, but levels of decline seem to be moderating.”

The scorecard summarizes detailed findings from the Nielsen Economic Current (NEC), which taps into key consumer trend data from Nielsen’s consumer practice as well as a set of economic data including employment and inflation to create a concise indicator of consumer behavior. Nielsen created the NEC as a regularly updated tool to aid its global clients in their business planning.

For additional country-by-country details on consumer behavior, download this month’s Nielsen Economic Current (NEC) scorecard here: <http://blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire/consumer/economic-current-0409>.

Nielsen also found in its biannual Global Consumer Confidence Index that consumer confidence was weakest in the major Western economies, with fewer than a quarter of consumers in the U.K., Canada, U.S., Spain, France Italy and Germany believing their countries will be out of a recession in the next twelve months. By contrast, 56% of consumers in India believe their country will be out of a recession a year from now and only 35% of consumers in China believe their country is even in a recession.

Nielsen’s scorecard ranks national economic performance on a scale of one to five, with one representing very strong growth (over 5%). According to this scorecard, India and China continue to be the only countries that scored a one in February 2009, while Canada and Russia scored twos (growth between 1% and 4%). The United States continues to score a four.

Additional findings from the current release show:

- Consumers in most countries are spending more per shopping trip, yet cutting back on discretionary spending.



- The areas where discretionary spending are most affected include, cutting back on out-of-home entertainment, spending less on new clothes and switching to cheaper grocery brands.
- There are noticeable shifts in consumer spending to value channels such as discount stores that provide high-volume, low-profit offers. This is even happening in the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China),
- Consumers are purchasing more store brands, especially in Spain, Germany and Canada.

Jonathan Banks, Business Insight Director for The Nielsen Company in Europe, added, "There are a lot of similarities among consumer spending globally. No matter the border, consumers are reigning in their spending. This month's Nielsen Economic Current shows much of consumers' spending continues to revolve around essential food items and consumable items, not on discretionary spending. In this volatile market, retailers and manufacturers need to know how to maximize their public exposure and how to understand the needs of consumers at a granular level in order to survive."

Nielsen Economic Current Scorecard			
Country	Trend	January, 2009	February, 2009
Brazil	→	3	3
Canada	→	2	2
China	→	1	1
France	→	3	3
Germany	↑	4	3
India	→	1	1
Italy	→	3	3
Russia	→	2	2
Spain	→	5	5
United Kingdom	→	3	3
United States	→	4	4

1=Very Strong Growth >= +5%; 2 = Growth between +1 and +4%;
 3 =Neutral Between -1 and +1%; 4 =Negative between -1 and -4%;
 5 = Very Negative <= -4%

Launched at the end of 2008, the Nielsen Economic Current provides a quick assessment of which top GDP countries are growing or declining. Further drill down data reflects country-specific information on eight key factors including:

- Nielsen's Market Index – Value
- Nielsen's Market Index – Volume
- Move to store brands
- Shift to value channels
- Retailers' use of promotions
- Frequency of Consumer shopping trips
- Consumer spending per trip, and
- Nielsen's Global Consumer Confidence surveys.

About The Nielsen Company

The Nielsen Company is a global information and media company with leading market positions in marketing and consumer information, television and other media measurement, online intelligence, mobile measurement, trade shows and business publications (Billboard, The Hollywood Reporter,



Adweek). The privately held company is active in approximately 100 countries, with headquarters in New York, USA. For more information, please visit, www.nielsen.com.