Consumer Confidence Higher In Warmer Countries, Regardless Of Current Economic Situation

Contributed by Synovate
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As the economy continues to stabilise, at least to some extent, in much of the world, are consumers' feelings following suit? According to Synovate's Consumer Mood Index, part of its ongoing Global Trends study, there are still vast differences in the way that those surveyed view their own and their country's financial future.

Interestingly, those surveyed in countries with warmer climates, including those in Latin America as well as Spain, show much more optimism towards the future than colder climates - despite their and their country's actual economic situation.

Synovate's analysis covered 11,000 people across 14 countries: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Serbia, Spain, UK and USA. The topics covered included:

People's perceptions of the current economic situation and how they expect it to evolve in the future

Perceptions of the housing and automobile markets in the current economy

Financial products used
Not surprisingly, consumers' perceptions more or less reflect their markets' current economic situation. However, what is revealing is the optimism versus conservatism that different countries' respondents display when thinking about the future, regardless of their actual economic prospects.

Commented Peter Huijboom, CEO for Synovate Geographies:
"This reminds me of the quote 'The happiest person is not the one that has the most but the one who needs the least.' These markets' excitement towards what might happen next makes them more receptive towards both aspirational and emotional approaches with products and communications."

About the Survey
The Synovate Consumer Mood Index data was taken from Synovate's Global Trends survey, an international research study that monitors and measures consumers' values and attitudes on a variety of topics and their impact on trends and other emerging insights.

The Synovate Consumer Mood Index asks respondents a series of questions about their own and their country's economic prospects, including the economy in general, their personal economic situation and the job market in their country.

The index is calculated by subtracting the negative answers from the positive ones, adding 100 to leverage the results and then calculating the average of all topics to obtain a single score that represents the current situation and the future situation.

For example, current situation perception = average (economy in general net + 100, personal economic situation net + 100 and job market net + 100). The mood index is the average between those two situation indicators.

This study was conducted from July to September 2010 with people aged 16 to 65 years old. The following countries fielded the survey using CATI (computer assisted telephone interviewing): Argentina (600 people), Brazil (800), Chile (600), Colombia (600), Mexico (1000), Serbia (600), and Spain (600 - also used online).

The remaining countries conducted the survey online: Canada (600), Germany (1000), Italy (800), Japan (1000), Netherlands (800), Spain (also used CATI), UK (800) and USA (1200). Synovate set quotas in all markets to maximize representativeness of the sample interviewed.

Synovate Consumer Mood Index Survey questions:
Do you think that the current economic situation in (COUNTRY) is better, about the same or worse than 6 months ago?

How about your personal economic situation? Do you think it is better, about the same or worse than 6 months ago?

Do you consider the job market in (COUNTRY) now to be better or worse than 6 months ago?

Thinking about the next six months, do you think that in 6 months the economic situation in the country will be better, about the same or worse than it is today?

Thinking about the situation of your personal economy, do you think that in 6 months it will be better, about the same or worse than it is today?

Do you think that in the next 6 months the job market in (COUNTRY) will be better, about the same, or worse than the current one?

Generally speaking, do you think now is a good time or a bad time to buy a house?

What about selling a house â€" generally speaking, do you think now is a good time or a bad time to sell a house?

Speaking now of the automobile market â€" do you think the next 12 months or so will be a good time or a bad time to buy a vehicle?

About Synovate
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