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News Release

Canadians less trusting in economic downturn

New survey shows substantial decline in societal trust

Calgary, AB - With stock markets in decline, lay offs at historical highs and consumer spending severely curtailed, consumer confidence is at historical lows. But this does not tell the full story of where the public's mind is at in this economic downturn. What happens to one of the pillars of relationships and transactions - trust?

Trust infuses every aspect of our day-to-day lives – from how we deal with friends and family, our business relationships, where we shop to even how we invest. A recent poll, conducted by ZINC Research and its partners Dufferin Research and The Corpen Group, shows that only one-third of Canadians feel that most people can be trusted - a substantial decline from summer 2008.

“Consumer confidence does not always provide an accurate picture of what’s going on in the public’s mind,” says Brian F. Singh, Managing Director of ZINC Research. “With the sudden change in prosperity, Canadians have been hit hard and the majority are now more cautious in their dealings with others.”

Using an internationally recognized line of inquiry, tracking indicates that societal trust dropped from 48% in July 2008 to 32% in February 2009. Across Canada, societal trust is highest in British Columbia (36%) and Ontario (35%), and lowest in Alberta (24%).

“These are challenging times and the public expects this recession to last for some time,” said Singh. “While consumer confidence may improve as the economy rebounds, trust is earned. Governments and corporations need to understand this, and demonstrate transparency in their undertakings and commitment to the public and their consumers.”

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“Canadians & Trust” is a poll conducted by ZINC Research Inc. and its partners, online research specialists Dufferin Research and The Corpen Group. This poll is part of an ongoing study to look at alternative measures to gauge Canadians confidence in the economy and the strength of their relationships with governments and corporations.

This survey was conducted between February 18 to 21, via an online poll of 1,200 Canadians (adults, 18 years+). The sample is census representative by region, gender and age. Based on global tracking, approximately 70% of Canadians have access to the Internet, and this methodology is considered representative of the Canadian population.

For further information about these survey results or the methodology, please contact either:

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