



*behavior research center's*

# ***Rocky Mountain Poll***

NEWS RELEASE [RMP 2011-IV-04]

Contact: Earl de Berge or  
Research Director

## **CONSUMER CONFIDENCE IN ARIZONA SHOWING SIGNS OF LIFE** **CAN ARIZONA BUCK THE NATIONAL TREND?**

Phoenix, Arizona, November 01, 2011. After slumping in April of this year, Arizona consumer's confidence in the economy edged upward in July and did so again in October. While the confidence levels are by no means yet in the "robust" category, the readings are encouraging and headed in the opposite direction from what was reported on the national mood by the Conference Board last week.

Additionally, planned consumer buying of major consumer durable goods is improved in all categories and the proportion of households in which planned purchasing is reported rose to 50 percent from 44 percent in July.

Statewide, the Consumer Confidence Index registers 57.5 compared to 54.0 in July and 51.9 in April. The Index rose in every region of the state and now stands at 63.5 in Maricopa county, 48.7 in Pima and 45.9 in the rural regions of Arizona. Nationally, according to the Conference Board, the Index registered only 39.8 – the lowest reading in a year.

The upward tick in consumer confidence is potentially a good sign that year-end purchasing during the holiday season may improve over 2011. In addition, an earlier analysis of the Behavior Research Center (see RM Poll number 2011-IV-2 at [www.brcpolls.com](http://www.brcpolls.com)) found that one-third of households in Arizona have reached the point where they can no longer defer purchases of some major consumer durable goods such as cars, home appliances, furniture and home repair. This in turn appears to be reflected in another section of this Consumer Confidence Study where we find that the proportion of heads of household planning to make major consumer goods durable purchases rose to 50 percent from 44 percent in July. Particularly promising is planned purchasing of electronic home equipment (up 6.7 points), new automobiles and trucks (up 5.7 points) and kitchen appliances (up 4.3 points).

The Consumer Confidence Index has improved principally because of improved views about the job market. For example, when consumers appraise the current job market, the proportion who say "Jobs are plentiful" rose to nine percent from six percent – a modest improvement to be sure, but simultaneously, the proportion who declare that "Jobs are hard to get" shrank to 56 percent from 63 percent.

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Of particular interest in this October study is the range of improved consumer attitudes about the current economic climate. The Index on that measure rose to 32.8 from 26.4 in July and is the highest reading since 2008. The current situation Index has been as low as 19.9 in September of 2009.

Commenting on the recent findings, Dr. Dennis Hoffman of L. William Seidman Research Center at the W. P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University noted that “The latest figures from the Behavior Research Center’s poll reveal an Arizona consumer who slowly but steadily believes the economy is improving, and as attitudes improve so does the pace of spending. It is noteworthy that consumer attitudes and spending patterns in the state have been quite resilient to the significant gyrations on Wall Street, very dismal national consumer confidence numbers and the rumors of a double dip recession that have swirled through the national media over the past several months. Baring unforeseen shocks, the stage is set for a solid holiday shopping season.” (Dr. Hoffman may be contacted at 480 965-5362.) Earl de Berge, Study Director at the Behavior Research Center added, “Yes, and if the steady drumbeat of negative economic news can become more moderated over the coming six months, it seems reasonable to us that consumers will have even more reason to pull out of their funk and spend more confidently and assertively.”

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**EDITOR’S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona (2011-IV-04), is based on 700 interviews with adult heads of household statewide, conducted between October 13 and 24, 2011. Interviewing was conducted in English or Spanish by professional interviewers of the Behavior Research Center on both land lines and cell phones. Where necessary, figures for age, sex, race and political party were weighted to bring them into line with their actual proportion in the population. In a sample of this size, one can say with a 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 3.8 percent of what they would have been had the entire adult population been surveyed. The Rocky Mountain Poll is conducted by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and is an independent and non-partisan research program sponsored by the Center.**

This statement conforms to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls  
ENCLOSED: Statistical tables

STATISTICAL DATA

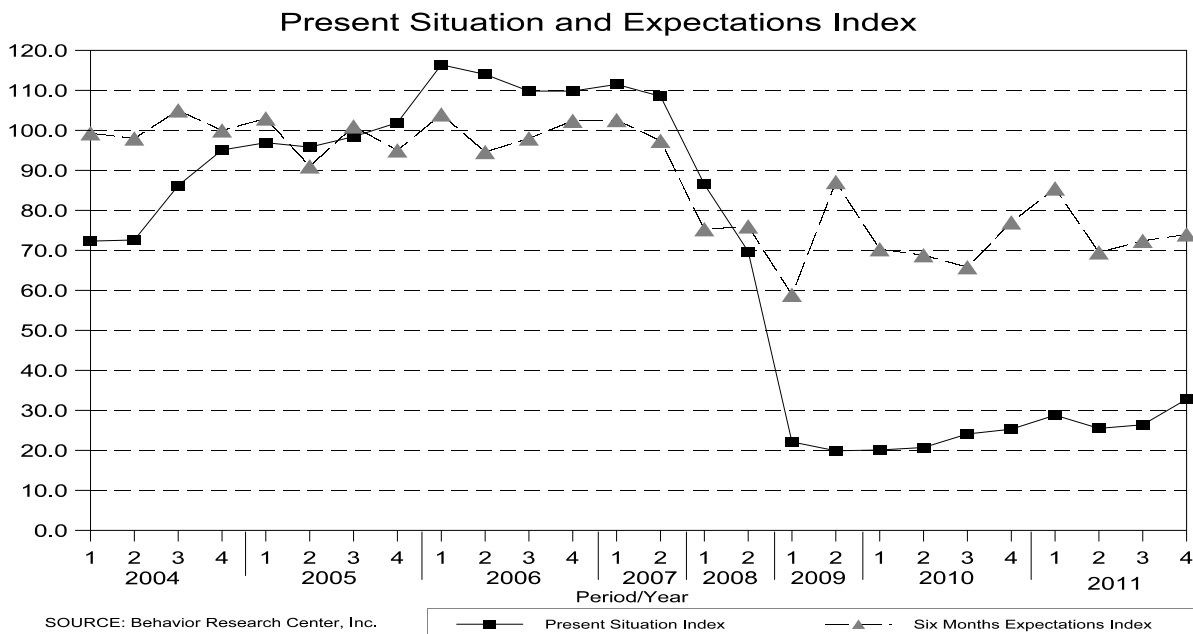
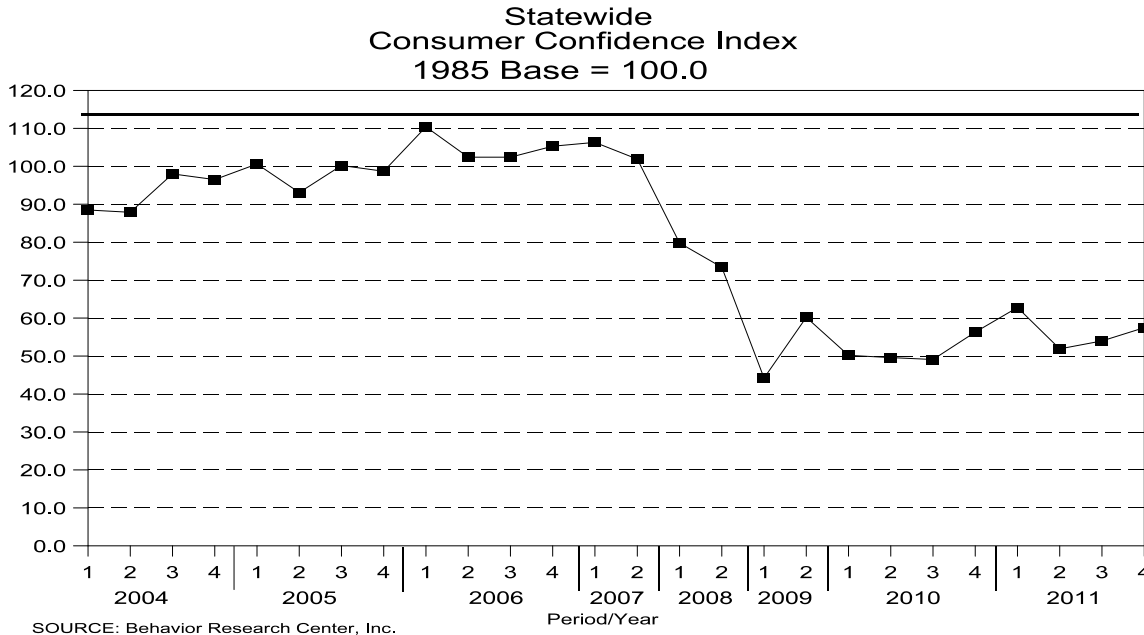
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|                                      | 2011 |      |      |      | 2010 |      |      |      | 2009 |      |
|--------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|                                      | Oct  | Jul  | Apr  | Jan  | Oct  | Jul  | Apr  | Jan  | Sept | Jan  |
| <u>Consumer Confidence Index</u>     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Statewide                            | 57.5 | 54.0 | 51.9 | 62.8 | 56.3 | 49.1 | 49.6 | 50.2 | 60.2 | 44.2 |
| Maricopa                             | 63.5 | 60.9 | 56.4 | 63.5 | 55.7 | 52.8 | 56.0 | 52.2 | 58.0 | 44.1 |
| Pima                                 | 48.7 | 40.3 | 50.3 | 74.0 | 54.1 | 41.6 | 42.6 | 48.6 | 66.9 | 48.7 |
| Rural                                | 45.9 | 44.7 | 41.8 | 54.6 | 59.1 | 43.5 | 38.3 | 46.7 | 60.7 | 39.9 |
| <u>Index Detail (Statewide):</u>     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Present Situation Index              | 32.8 | 26.4 | 25.5 | 28.8 | 25.3 | 24.1 | 20.7 | 20.0 | 19.9 | 22.1 |
| Expectation Index<br>(Next 6 Months) | 74.0 | 72.4 | 69.5 | 85.5 | 77.0 | 65.8 | 68.8 | 70.3 | 87.1 | 58.9 |

*Appraisal of Present Situation:  
Percent Holding Attitude*

|                             | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 | 2003 | 2002 |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| <u>Business Conditions:</u> |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Good                        | 21%  | 21%  | 24%  | 22%  | 21%  | 19%  | 17%  | 20%  | 14%  | 16%  |
| Normal                      | 39   | 32   | 37   | 35   | 31   | 34   | 38   | 30   | 35   | 31   |
| Bad                         | 37   | 43   | 35   | 38   | 43   | 43   | 41   | 46   | 48   | 47   |
| Not sure                    | 3    | 4    | 4    | 5    | 5    | 4    | 4    | 4    | 3    | 6    |
| <u>Employment:</u>          |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Jobs plentiful              | 9%   | 6%   | 2%   | 5%   | 5%   | 5%   | 3%   | 2%   | 5%   | 6%   |
| Not so many                 | 28   | 25   | 31   | 31   | 26   | 26   | 30   | 24   | 32   | 26   |
| Jobs hard to get            | 56   | 63   | 59   | 55   | 62   | 63   | 60   | 68   | 57   | 60   |
| Not sure                    | 7    | 6    | 8    | 9    | 7    | 6    | 7    | 6    | 6    | 8    |

*Expectations For Six Month Hence:  
Percent Holding Attitude*

|                             | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 | 2003 | 2002 |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| <u>Business Conditions:</u> |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Better                      | 28%  | 25%  | 29%  | 32%  | 27%  | 25%  | 29%  | 28%  | 44%  | 24%  |
| Same                        | 47   | 47   | 49   | 48   | 44   | 48   | 43   | 48   | 34   | 37   |
| Worse                       | 20   | 20   | 18   | 16   | 17   | 22   | 21   | 20   | 17   | 29   |
| Not sure                    | 5    | 8    | 4    | 4    | 12   | 5    | 7    | 4    | 5    | 10   |
| <u>Employment:</u>          |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| More jobs                   | 24%  | 23%  | 25%  | 29%  | 25%  | 22%  | 25%  | 23%  | 33%  | 21%  |
| Same                        | 40   | 39   | 39   | 47   | 42   | 43   | 38   | 41   | 38   | 30   |
| Fewer jobs                  | 29   | 31   | 29   | 18   | 22   | 29   | 30   | 28   | 24   | 40   |
| Not sure                    | 7    | 7    | 7    | 6    | 11   | 6    | 7    | 8    | 5    | 9    |
| <u>Family Income:</u>       |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Higher                      | 22%  | 21%  | 12%  | 19%  | 16%  | 15%  | 17%  | 20%  | 24%  | 18%  |
| Same                        | 63   | 67   | 73   | 67   | 69   | 70   | 65   | 65   | 62   | 67   |
| Lower                       | 11   | 10   | 13   | 11   | 11   | 13   | 15   | 14   | 12   | 14   |
| Not sure                    | 4    | 2    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 2    | 3    | 1    | 2    | 1    |

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Rating Of  
Current General  
Business Conditions

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|            | Maricopa | Pima     | Rural    |
|------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Good       | 23%      | 20%      | 18%      |
| Normal     | 39       | 37       | 40       |
| Bad        | 35       | 39       | 40       |
| Don't know | <u>3</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>2</u> |
|            | 100%     | 100%     | 100%     |

Rating Of  
Current Job  
Availability

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|             | Maricopa | Pima      | Rural    |
|-------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Plenty      | 12%      | 2%        | 4%       |
| Not so many | 29       | 25        | 29       |
| Hard to get | 55       | 61        | 58       |
| Don't know  | <u>4</u> | <u>12</u> | <u>9</u> |
|             | 100%     | 100%      | 100%     |

Rating Of  
General Business  
Conditions  
Six Months Hence

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|                | Maricopa | Pima     | Rural    |
|----------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Better         | 30%      | 23%      | 25%      |
| About the same | 46       | 53       | 46       |
| Worse          | 18       | 19       | 26       |
| Don't know     | <u>6</u> | <u>5</u> | <u>3</u> |
|                | 100%     | 100%     | 100%     |

Rating Of  
Job Availability  
Six Months Hence

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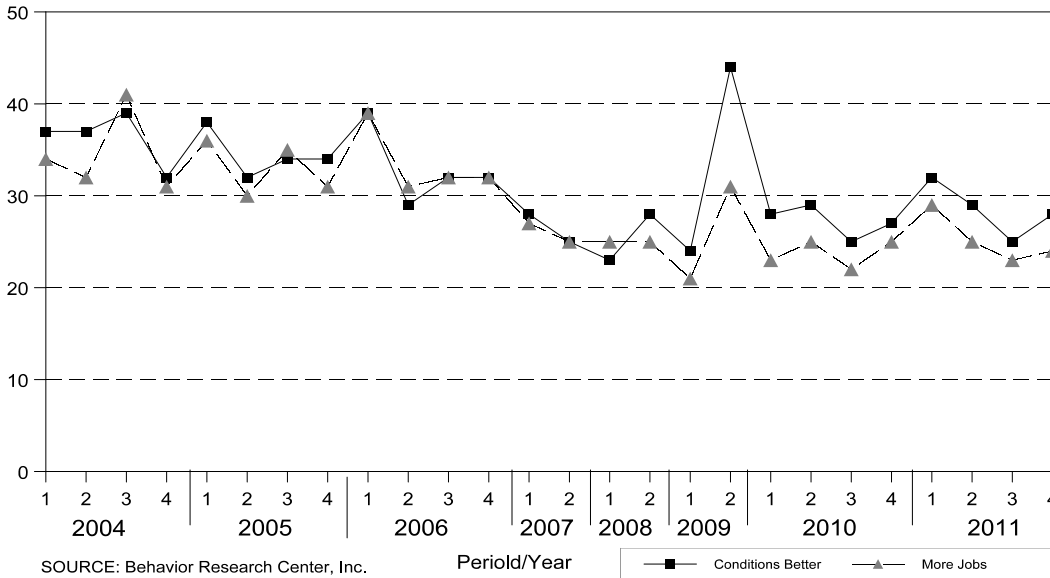
|                | Maricopa | Pima     | Rural    |
|----------------|----------|----------|----------|
| More           | 30%      | 14%      | 18%      |
| About the same | 37       | 49       | 42       |
| Fewer          | 27       | 33       | 31       |
| Don't know     | <u>6</u> | <u>4</u> | <u>9</u> |
|                | 100%     | 100%     | 100%     |

Rating Of  
Family Income  
Six Months Hence

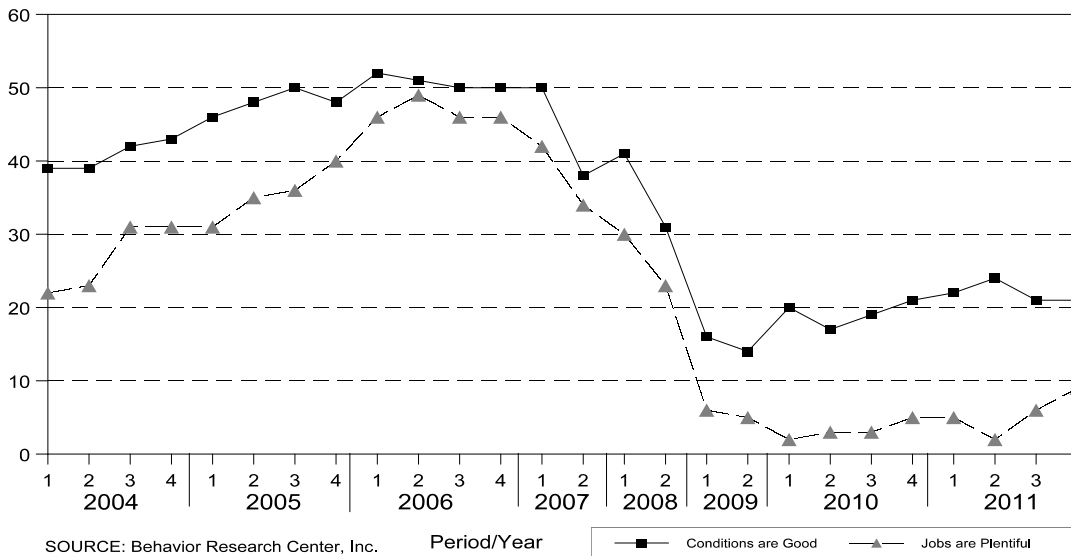
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|                | Maricopa | Pima     | Rural    |
|----------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Higher         | 26%      | 24%      | 11%      |
| About the same | 58       | 66       | 72       |
| Lower          | 13       | 9        | 10       |
| Don't know     | <u>3</u> | <u>1</u> | <u>7</u> |
|                | 100%     | 100%     | 100%     |

% with Positive Attitudes on Future Business Conditions and Job Market



% with Positive Attitudes on Current Business Conditions and Job Market



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*“During the next six months, will you definitely, probably or probably not be making purchases of any of the following items?”*

|                                                                     | % DEFINITELY OR PROBABLY<br>PLANNING PURCHASE |       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                                                                     | 2011                                          |       |       |       | 2010  |
|                                                                     | OCT                                           | JUL   | APR   | JAN   | OCT   |
| New electronic entertainment or computer equipment over 500 dollars | 28.3%                                         | 21.6% | 21.7% | 21.3% | 19.4% |
| New household furniture                                             | 19.8                                          | 16.4  | 18.7  | 17.5  | 16.9  |
| A new automobile or truck                                           | 17.4                                          | 11.7  | 8.8   | 12.5  | 11.8  |
| Major remodeling or repairing of any part of your house             | 17.0                                          | 16.2  | 13.3  | 13.2  | 17.3  |
| Major kitchen appliances of any kind                                | 13.4                                          | 9.1   | 10.7  | 9.7   | 14.2  |

|                                                                     | DEFINITELY | PROBABLY | TOTAL |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------|-------|
| New electronic entertainment or computer equipment over 500 dollars | 12.2%      | 16.1%    | 28.3% |
| New household furniture                                             | 9.0        | 10.8     | 19.8  |
| A new automobile or truck                                           | 6.0        | 11.4     | 17.4  |
| Major remodeling or repairing of any part of your house             | 7.8        | 9.2      | 17.0  |
| Major kitchen appliances of any kind                                | 5.8        | 7.6      | 13.4  |

|              | PLANNED PURCHASING SUMMARY OCT 2011 |          |          |            | JULY 2011 | APRIL 2011 |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|----------|----------|------------|-----------|------------|
|              | OCT TOTAL                           | UNDER 35 | 35 TO 54 | 55 OR OVER |           |            |
| Definitely   | 23%                                 | 30%      | 25%      | 15%        | 20%       | 17%        |
| Probably     | 27                                  | 33       | 24       | 25         | 24        | 26         |
| Any Purchase | 50                                  | 63       | 49       | 40         | 44        | 43         |