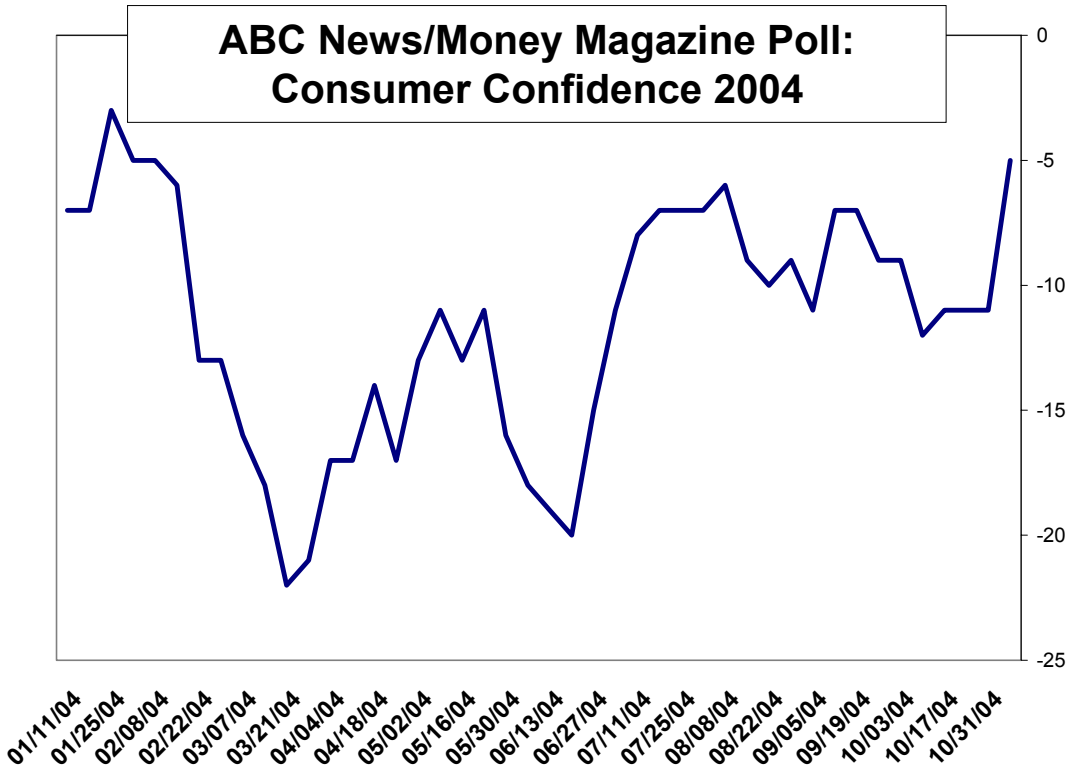
ABC NEWS/MONEY MAGAZINE CONSUMER INDEX – 10/31/04
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Consumer Confidence Soars Heading into Election Day

Consumer confidence has spiked to its best level in nine months – an apparent political effect in a politically charged week.

In a highly unusual upturn, the ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort index jumped six points this week to -5 on its scale of +100 to -100. The index has jumped six points or more in a single week only six times in 984 weekly polls since December 1985.



The increase came chiefly among Democrats – a seven-point boost from -43 last week to -36 this week. While consumer confidence still is very low among Democrats, the change likely reflects their hopes about the outcome of the presidential election: Surveys have had the race at a dead heat, and most Democrats think John Kerry will win.

Even more Republicans think George W. Bush will win, but consumer confidence among Republicans has been much higher all year, and is little changed this week. The index did rise among independents, up four points to -16.

There is a precedent for this kind of election-inspired bump in consumer confidence: In the week before the 1996 election, with polls showing Bill Clinton comfortably headed for re-election, the ABC/Money index jumped seven points among Democrats.

It's particularly fitting this year, a year in which economic views have been driven more strongly than usual by political allegiance. There's good reason for that: In some years, like 1992, there was broad agreement that the economy was in bad shape. In other years, like 1996, there was broad agreement that it was on the upswing. This year there's more room for debate, which opens the door to partisanship.

	ABC/Money index		
	This week	Last week	Change
Democrats	-36	-43	+7
Republicans	+35	+33	+2
Independents	-16	-20	+4

With this week's change the index is its highest since Feb. 1. More important, at -5 it's now above its long-term average since December 1985, -9. Using University of Michigan consumer confidence data (which goes back further, to 1952), no incumbent running for re-election since 1956 has lost when consumer confidence during his re-election year was above its long-term average.

At the same time, the ABC/Money index is markedly lower now than its peak just after Bush took office, a robust +20.

INDEX – The ABC/Money index is based on Americans' ratings of the economy, their personal finances and the buying climate. All three ratings are better this week than last, and are now at or above their long-term averages.

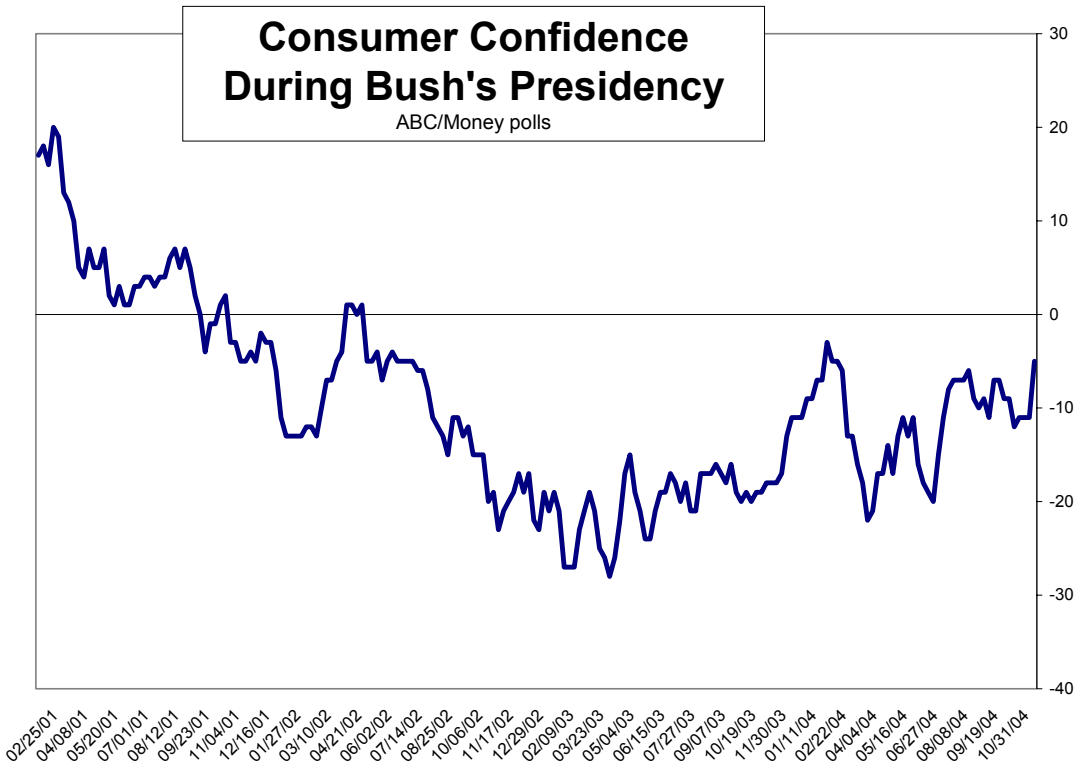
Forty-two percent say the economy's in good shape, up from 39 percent last week; the long-term average is 40 percent. About as many, 43 percent, call it a good time to buy things, compared with 41 percent last week and an average of 39 percent. And 57 percent say their own finances are OK, up four points in the last week to match its average.

	ABC News/Money magazine poll			
Positive ratings of:	This week	Last week	2004 avg.	18-yr. avg.
National economy	42%	39	37	40
Buying climate	43	41	39	39
Personal finances	57	53	57	57
Consumer Comfort Index	-5	-11	-11	-9

TREND –At -5, the index is just below its peak this year, -3 in mid-January, and far better than its worst of this year, -22 in mid-March.

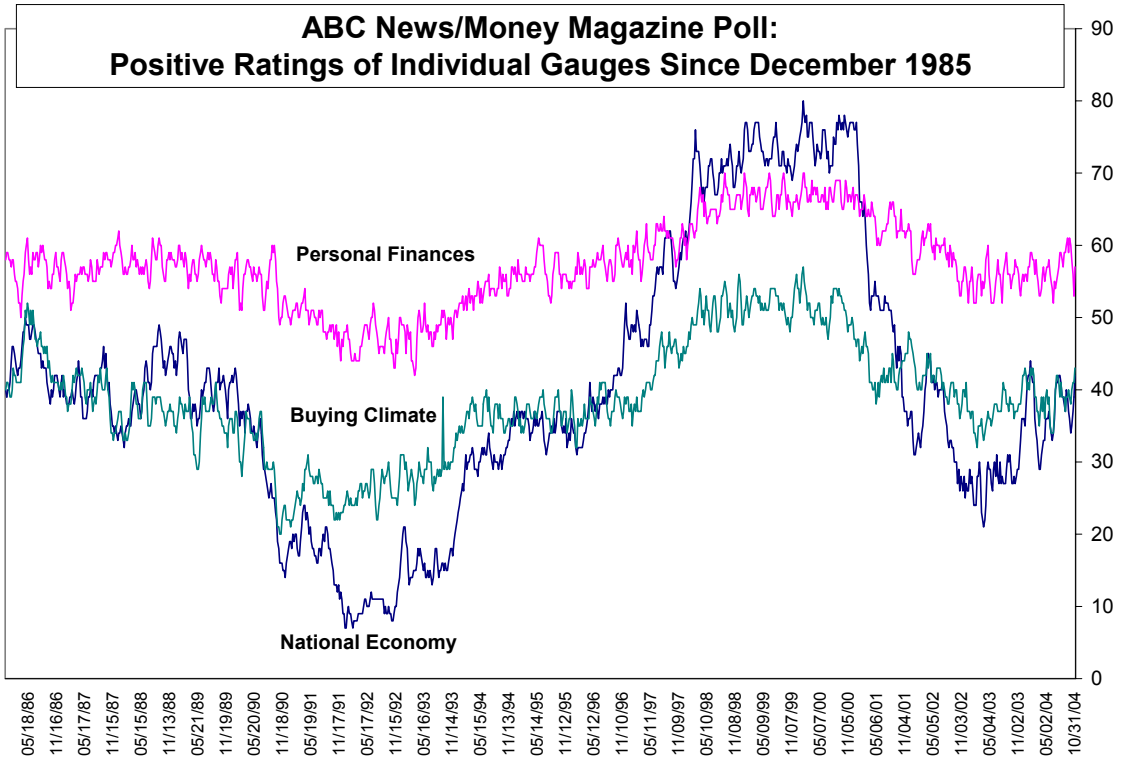
The ABC/Money index has averaged -10, near its overall average, since Bush took office in January 2001, ranging as noted from +20 in February 2001 to -28 in advance of the Iraq war in March 2003.

Across its 18 years the index has ranged from a high of +38 in January 2000 to a low of -50 in February 1992. Its worst annual average was -44 in 1992. Last year it averaged -19, much worse than its best yearly average, +29 in 2000. The 2004 average so far is -11.



	ABC/Money Index	
Today	-5	
Last week	-11	
2004 low	-22	March 14
2004 high	-3	January 18
2004 average	-11	To date
2003 average	-19	
2002 average	-11	
2001 average	+4	
2000 average	+29	Best full year
1992 average	-44	Worst full year
Jan. 16, 2000	+38	Record high
Feb. 9, 1992	-50	Record low
Average since 12/85	-9	

GROUPS – As usual, confidence is stronger among better-off Americans. The index is +48 among high-income people while -47 among those with the lowest incomes, +3 among college graduates while -39 among high-school dropouts, +1 among whites but -39 among blacks, and +6 among men but -16 among women.



Here's a closer look at the three components of the ABC/Money index:

NATIONAL ECONOMY – Forty-two percent of Americans rate the U.S. economy as excellent or good; it was 39 percent last week. The highest was 80 percent on Jan. 16, 2000. The lowest was seven percent in late 1991 and early 1992.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	42	2	40	58	34	24
Avg. since 12/85	40	3	37	60	40	20

PERSONAL FINANCES – Fifty-seven percent say their own finances are excellent or good; it was 53 percent last week. The best was 70 percent on Aug. 30, 1998, matched in January 2000. The worst was 42 percent on March 14, 1993.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. NET	Not good	Poor
This week	57	7	50	43	27	16
Avg. since 12/85	57	5	52	43	30	13

BUYING CLIMATE – Forty-three percent say it's an excellent or good time to buy things; it was 41 percent last week. The best was 57 percent on Jan. 16, 2000. The worst was 20 percent in fall 1990.

	Pos. NET	Excel.	Good	Neg. net	Not good	Poor
This week	43	4	39	57	37	20
Avg. since 12/85	39	3	36	61	41	20

METHODOLOGY - The ABC News/Money magazine Consumer Comfort Index represents a rolling average based on telephone interviews with a random sample of about 1,000 adults nationwide each month. This week's results are based on 1,000 interviews in the four weeks ending Oct. 31, 2004, and have an error margin of plus or minus three percentage points. Field work by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

The ABC/Money index is derived by subtracting the negative response to each index question from the positive response to that question. The three resulting numbers are then added and divided by three. The index can range from +100 (everyone positive on all three measures) to -100 (all negative on all three measures). The survey began in December 1985.

Analysis by Dalia Sussman.

ABC News polls can be found online at http://abcnews.com/pollvault.html.

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934 or Lisa Finkel, (212) 456-6190.

10/31/04	This Week	Last Week	4 Wks Ago	3 Mo. Ago	1 Yr. Ago	12 Mo High	12 Mo Low	12 Mo Avg
Group								
GENERAL POPULATION:								
Overall Index	-5	-11	-12	-6	-18	-3	-22	-12
State of Economy	-16	-22	-32	-18	-42	-12	-42	-27
Personal Finances	14	6	20	18	12	22	4	13
Buying Climate	-14	-18	-24	-18	-24	-14	-32	-22
OVERALL INDEX BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS								
Sex:								
Men	6	0	-2	5	-7	14	-15	-3
Women	-16	-22	-20	-16	-26	-10	-28	-19
Age:								
18 - 34	-14	-21	-11	-8	-21	3	-23	-11
35 - 44	-1	-7	-14	11	-8	11	-29	-10
45 - 54	10	5	-11	-11	-19	10	-24	-11
55 - 64	-7	-15	-14	-10	-15	3	-34	-14
65+	-13	-15	-7	-15	-23	2	-33	-14
Income:								
Under $15K	-47	-42	-45	-51	-53	-40	-68	-54
$15K To $24.9K	-40	-45	-37	-35	-45	-21	-61	-37
$25K To $39.9K	-22	-30	-27	-16	-19	-2	-44	-22
$40K To $49.9K	1	3	-20	12	-11	27	-29	-7
Over $50K	34	25	11	27	8	34	7	18
$50K To $74.9K	26	10	-2	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
$75K To $99.9K	29	28	19	33	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Over $100K	48	49	24	33	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Region:								
Northeast	-8	-10	-10	-19	-14	-5	-27	-16
Midwest	-11	-14	-10	7	-9	7	-29	-13
South	-8	-12	-12	-11	-23	-1	-24	-11
West	5	-9	-13	2	-19	9	-21	-8
Race:								
White	1	-5	-9	3	-13	3	-19	-6
Black	-39	-43	-28	-58	-50	-28	-59	-41
Politics:								
Republican	35	33	37	39	13	47	10	33
Democrat	-36	-43	-40	-39	-36	-28	-47	-38
Independent	-16	-20	-22	-5	-23	-2	-40	-19
Education:								
< High School	-39	-42	-40	-55	-34	-26	-60	-41
High Sch. Grad.	-2	-6	-17	-13	-22	-2	-32	-18
College +	3	-4	2	14	-8	14	-10	2
Home:								
Own	3	-4	-6	4	-6	7	-16	-4
Rent	-29	-30	-29	-29	-39	-19	-46	-31
Marital Status:								
Single	-27	-29	-12	-17	-32	-8	-32	-20
Married	15	7	-5	8	-3	15	-15	1
Sep/Wid/Div	-29	-30	-31	-30	-35	-21	-46	-34
Employ. Status:								
Full-Time	8	5	1	10	-6	12	-16	-1
Part-Time	-8	-17	-20	-15	-23	5	-34	-15
Not Employed	-22	-29	-23	-24	-29	-16	-36	-24