

## COMMITTING TO BETTER STANDARDS – Building and Preserving Quality in Market Research Practice



A timely call to arms was issued at MRSS's Breakfast Meeting on 22 August, 2006 from Dr Terry Beed regarding research standards.

Dr Beed has impeccable credentials to make a case for higher standards as he has held senior positions in the academic world (former Head of the Discipline of Marketing in the Faculty of Economics and Business at the University of Sydney), as a practising researcher (having set up ANOP in Australia) and as a "quality guru" at the Centre for Survey Quality Assurance.

He is no stranger to the research industry in Asia and Singapore so we were indeed fortunate to receive an update on quality initiatives in Australia. MRSS heard about the first steps taken by MRS Australia and AMRO in establishing the IQCA, the discussions with Standards Australia and the eventual launch in 2004 of AS 4752. This is the "gold standard" which research organizations that meet the quality criteria on all aspects of the research process and pass the audit can proudly hang on their door.

The usual questions were asked – how much does it cost and how long does it take? The predictable answer was "it depends!" The larger the company the longer it takes. Karen Stanton of Colmar Brunton recalled that it took a considerable amount of executive time to prepare for AS 4752 but Terry is of the firm belief that being certified is good for our industry and makes long term business sense for those companies that invest the necessary resources in quality assurance and get the "chop".

MRSS is starting the long journey along the bumpy road to quality standards. Like Australia, we have started an Interviewer Certification Scheme and we now have our own Professional Standards Committee which has an Arbitration Service and Best Practice Guidelines. Details on these initiatives are on our website.

Dr Beed has also generously offered to assist MRSS in developing a Singapore or Asian version of the Market and Social Research Standard. We look forward to having Terry Beed visit MRSS again shortly and thank him most sincerely for stopping by and inspiring us over breakfast.

## **Kadence Continues Asian Growth Plans with New Office in India**

India - The Kadence International Business Research Group has further strengthened their presence globally with the announcement of a new office in Delhi, India.

Headed by Mr. Aman Makkar, Kadence India will offer Clients traditional survey based research through face-to-face interviewing, but will be at the forefront of developing more advanced data collection techniques including CATI, CAPI and online research, still relatively new to this market.

Kadence entered Asia in 2004 through establishing their regional hub in Singapore. As one of the fastest growing research companies in Asia, with experience of research in 15 Asian markets, India represents their second office in the Asia region. However this is part of a strategic growth plan that will see further offices opening in 2007 and beyond.

Kadence India will undertake both qualitative and quantitative surveys. Resources include over 200 interviewers to cover major urban centres and rural areas in most States. Kadence India will cover audiences ranging from nationally representative populations to C-level executives.



Aman has worked in the market Research industry for over 23 years, and has experience in researching almost all the major industries sectors throughout India. After 18 years with IMRB, Aman moved to Research Pacific, where he was involved in operations and business development. A pioneer of market research in India, his was instrumental in setting industry standards through the creation of consumer and business panels, and setting up some of the first TV ratings and car clinics in India.

## **Kadence Asia Pacific Strengthens Team with New Research Director**

Singapore - Kadence Asia Pacific is pleased to announce the addition of Mr. Jean-Pierre Depasse as Research Director based in Singapore. Jean-Pierre, who spent his research career in Europe and recently in Hong Kong, has more than 20 years experience having worked for ACNielsen and IPSOS. He will be heading the Research Department of Kadence and handling key accounts.



Jean-Pierre commented, "What attracted me to Kadence was how they manage to combine the capabilities of the international research houses, such regional coverage in both qualitative and quantitative, but with the dynamism of an independent. I am very much looking forward to contributing."

Although Jean-Pierre's experience in Asia is in business-to-business research, he has also worked for clients in FMCG, audio-video, household appliances, and sportswear. to the development of the business in Asia."

He has specialised in brand tracking, customer satisfaction research, multivariate analysis, pricing, and conjoint studies.

## TNS OPENS A WINDOW ON THE FUTURE WITH FUTUREVIEW™ ACQUISITION

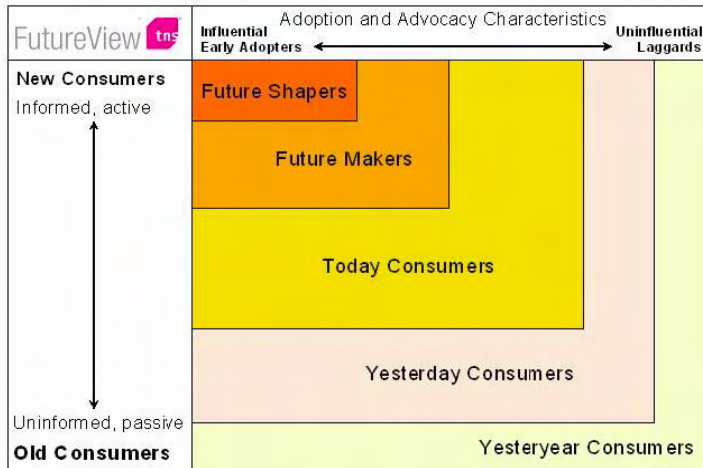


***New tool targets influential consumers to provide future insights***

**Hong Kong, 20 July 2006** -To meet growing demand for predictive market research, TNS has invested in the acquisition of intellectual property that will increase the effectiveness of its Segmentation and Positioning Area of Expertise.

The new tool – FutureView, measures and classifies consumers according to how ‘future influential’ they are. A significant improvement on the classic early adoption model, FutureView segmentation goes much further by questioning the extent to which consumers demonstrate elements of new consumerism such as social responsibility and self-expression.

FutureView will ultimately become inherent within TNS respondent or customer databases such as TNS’ 6<sup>th</sup> dimension online managed access panels. In the case of stand alone or bespoke studies, FutureView’s use will be individually tailored to meet the projects particular objectives. The new tool will enable TNS to elicit responses from influential individuals, providing clients with insights to shape new product and service developments of the future.



TNS Chief Executive David Lowden said: “This acquisition is a significant and progressive step forward, reflecting our ongoing commitment to delivering greater insights to our clients. As part of the due diligence process, TNS closely observed how multinational companies apply FutureView to successfully map out future consumer trends. From the results we have seen, I am confident that FutureView will add immediate value to our clients.”

FutureView was developed in Australia and New Zealand by Malcolm Law who, as part of the acquisition, will join TNS’ Segmentation and Positioning Area of Expertise where he will support the introduction of the methodology working under TNS Global Head, Par Kaelleskog.

## TNS SECURES MAJOR CONTRACT WITH CATHAY PACIFIC AIRWAYS

**Hong Kong, 31st August 2006.** Leading market information specialist, TNS has been awarded a multi-country contract by Cathay Pacific Airways to monitor and evaluate its brand health in key markets across America, Europe and Asia Pacific. Spanning ten markets in total, the research programme will

see TNS undertake fieldwork using its 6<sup>th</sup> dimension online research approach to assess customer commitment to the Cathay Pacific brand and identify areas for improvement.

Commenting on the contract win Rosie Hawkins, Regional Director – Brand & Advertising Research, said, “TNS has an experienced international research team skilled at managing global, brand tracking studies and providing critical insight and business intelligence to its clients. We look forward to working with Cathay Pacific on this important project and delivering strategic insight to the business.”

Currently celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Cathay Pacific Airways was recently named ‘2006 Airline of the Year’ by global travel organisation, OAG.



**Global consumer confidence sustained; though consumers remain cautious about spending:**

**Singaporeans are upbeat about the near future and local job prospects**

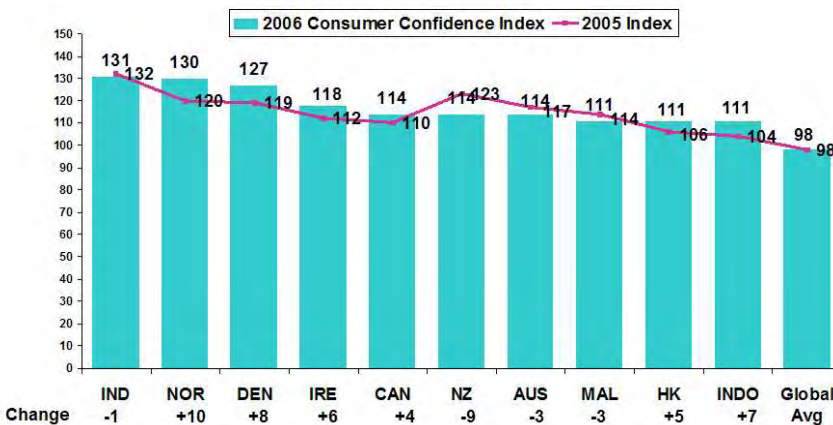
**Singapore, September 4, 2006** – Global consumer confidence remains at 2005 levels, with Indians leading the world on the 2006 ACNielsen Global Consumer Confidence Index followed by the Norwegians and Danes. Singapore ranks 11<sup>th</sup> globally.

According to ACNielsen, the 2006 ACNielsen Global Consumer Confidence Index of 98 is at par with the November 2005 Index.

India tops the world for the third time in a row since the Index was established in early 2005, with an index of 131. Scandinavians made their way into the top rankings as the world’s second and third most optimistic markets with Norway and Denmark hitting 130 and 127 respectively. (Table 1)

**Table 1**

**India tops the world for the third round in a row since 2005 while Norway and Denmark recorded greatest increase in the index score in 2006**



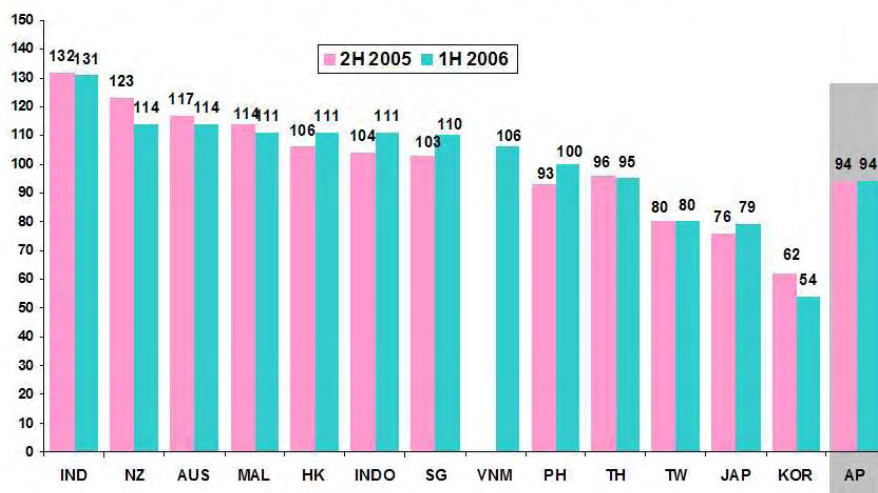
Base: All respondents

“Back home, Singaporeans registered an increased level of optimism in this latest survey compared to the previous period and a year ago. The Singapore Consumer Confidence Index climbed 7 points to reach a high of 110—surpassing the regional average of 94,” observed Mr Ashok Charan, Managing Director of ACNielsen Research Singapore. “It represents a year on year improvement from May 2005 where Singapore’s Consumer Confidence Index was 99.”

Asia Pacific continues to house the most optimistic consumers of all with six of the Global Top 10 markets surveyed situated in the region. Compared to the previous period, moreover, Hong Kong (111), Indonesia (111), Singapore (110), and the Philippines (100) showed strengthened optimism. In turn, New Zealand and Korea had the most marked dip in confidence although New Zealand consumer sentiments remain well above the regional average. Koreans continued to post the lowest consumer confidence in the region (54). (Table 2)

Table 2

### Consumer Confidence Index



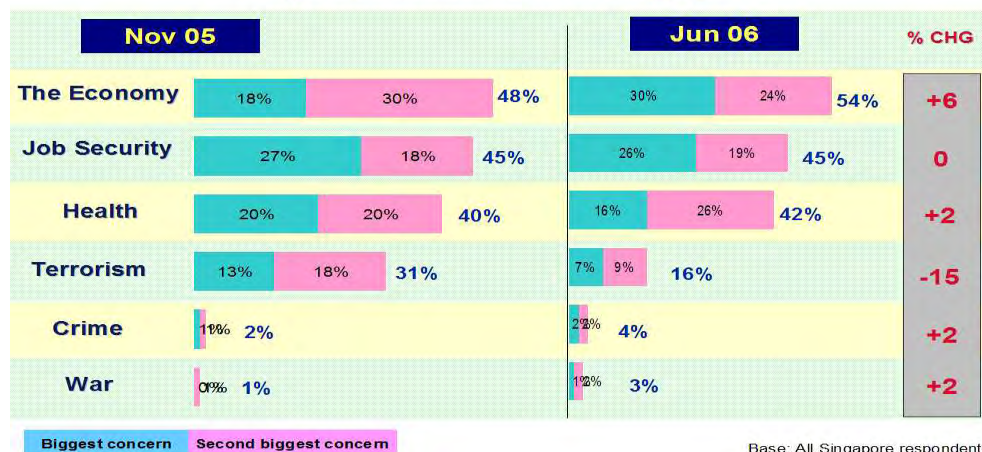
Base: All respondents Note: Vietnam is only included in 1H 2006 survey

### Major concerns

Despite a sustained level of confidence, consumers continue to cite the Economy (47%), Health (37%), and Job Security (31%) as their major concerns for the next six months. The Economy ranked highly in Asia Pacific and drew greater attention in North America. Europeans rank foremost in terms of concern for Health.

Table 3

### Major Concerns in Singapore



Led by Thailand (77%), Malaysia (71%), and Indonesia (70%), eight of the 10 markets expressing the greatest concern for the Economy originated from Asia Pacific. In Singapore, the Economy (54%), Job Security (45%), and Health (42%) continue to be the top three concerns amongst locals. With the anxiety over Health and Terrorism receding over the last six months, Singaporeans are now more focused on the Economy. (Table 3)

“Fundamentals such as the economy and employment will remain as top concerns among locals even in good times. Singaporeans’ optimistic sentiment is set to continue, in light of the positive economic growth in the first half and favorable outlook reported by the government for the year,” commented Mr Charan.

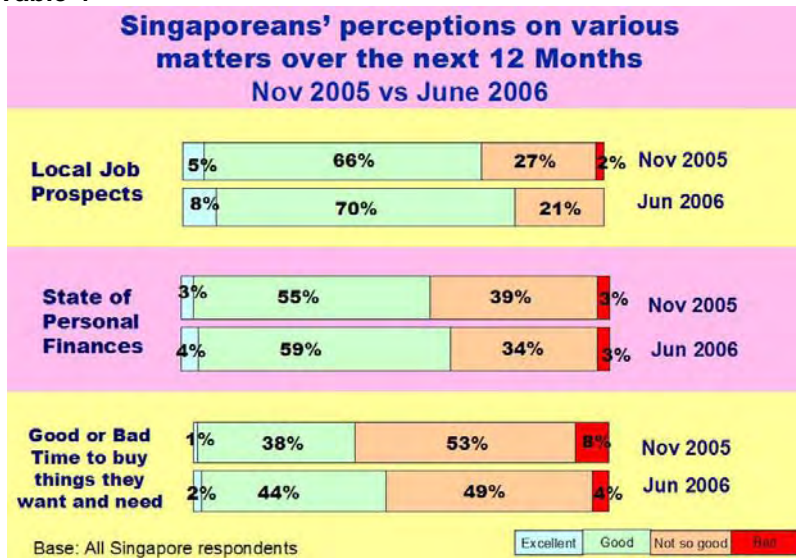
## Perceptions on job prospects, personal finances, and intention to spend

Reflecting the mildly positive mood in the region as a whole, majority of the Asia Pacific markets have favorable expectations on job prospects and on consumers' financial outlook over the next 12 months. Nonetheless, the region's consumers continue to adopt a cautious stance on spending at the present time.

"It is only in India, where optimism has been strong over three consecutive periods, that consumers voice clearer confidence about spending," said Mr Charan. "The rest of the region's consumers may be waiting for more sustained positive signals from the economy before showing greater willingness to spend."

In Singapore, locals have registered greater optimism in the recent survey on all aspects—job prospects (+7%), personal finances (+6%), and intention to spend (+7%), compared to six months ago.

Table 4



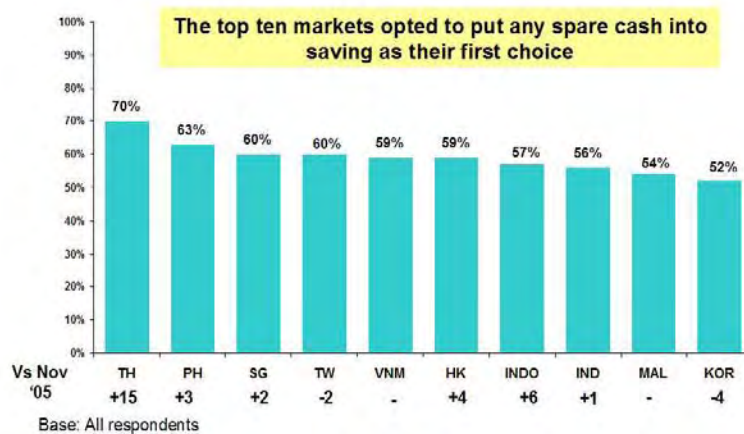
It's worth mentioning that Asian markets of Singapore, Hong Kong and Indonesia are among the most optimistic consumers during this round of the survey.

## Asia Pacific has the most savers in the world

Continuing the trend from previous surveys, the world's top savers are still to be found in Asia Pacific. A majority of 54 percent of Asia Pacific consumers will put their spare cash into savings, compared to 37 percent of North Americans and 29 percent of Europeans. Asian markets occupy every position in the "Top Ten Global Savers" list, with Thailand (70%) topping the global ranking with the highest percentage of savers and a significant 15 percentage points increase compared to six months ago.

Table 5

### How to Utilise Spare Cash After Covering Essential Living Expenses - Top 10 Putting into savings



“Economic and cultural factors influence Asians’ penchant to save for a rainy day with levels higher than other part of the world. With more than a third of consumers in Asia Pacific concerned about job security, putting spare cash into savings is certainly the safest financial option for consumers who are insecure about their jobs,” said Mr Charan.

And how do consumers worldwide use their spare cash after covering essential living expenses? Holidays/Vacations topped the list (34%), followed by Out of Home Entertainment (33%), Paying off debts/credit card bills/loans (32%), and Clothes shopping (31%).

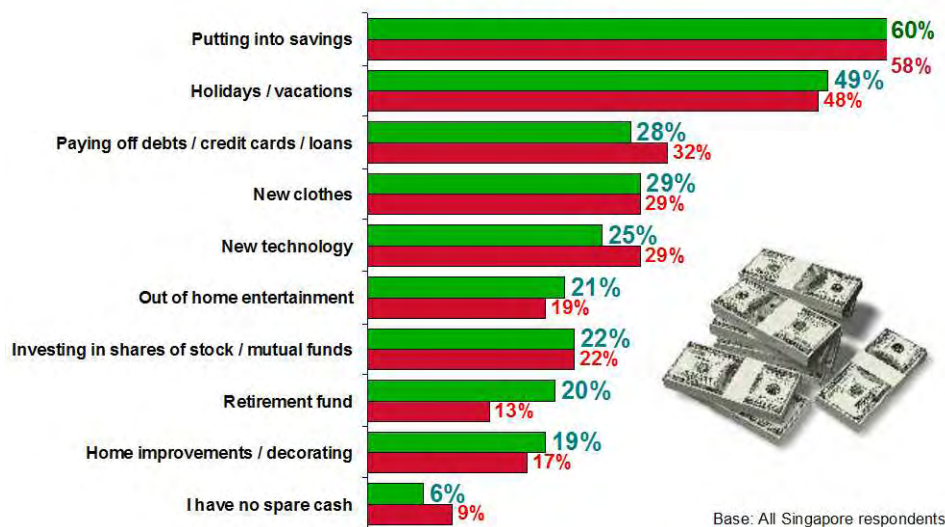
While Asia Pacific consumers have consistently preferred Holidays/Vacations (37%) as the way to indulge themselves, priorities for other spending options have changed over time. Consumers are now spending more on Out of Home Entertainment (30%) and Clothes shopping (28%) over New Technology (24%) gadgets.

Amongst Singaporeans, the key priorities continue to be saving their spare cash (60%), followed by spending on Holidays/Vacations (49%). Next on the list are Clothes shopping (29%), Paying off debts/credit card bills/loans (28%), and spending on New Technology gadgets (25%). (Table 6) The ACNielsen Online Consumer Confidence and Opinion Survey is the largest half-yearly survey of its kind aiming at gauging current confidence levels, spending habits/intentions and current major concerns of consumers across the globe. The ACNielsen Consumer Confidence Index is developed based on consumer’s confidence in the job market, status of their personal finance and their readiness to spend. The latest survey, conducted in late May/early June, polled about 21,780 internet users in 40 markets from Europe, Asia Pacific, North America to the Baltics.

**Table 6**

### How Singaporeans intend to spend their spare cash

June 06 vs Nov 05



**Markets Covered:**

Australia (Aus), Austria (AT), Belgium (Bel), Canada (Can), Denmark (Den), Finland (Fin), France (Fra), Germany (Ger), Greece (Gre), Hong Kong (HK), India (Ind), Indonesia (Indo), Ireland (Ire), Italy (Ita), Japan (Jpn), Korea (Kor), Malaysia (Mal), Netherlands (NL), New Zealand (NZ), Norway (Nor), Philippines (PH), Poland (Pol), Portugal (Por), Russia (Rus), Singapore (SG), South Africa (SA), Spain (Spa), Sweden (Swe), Switzerland (Swi), Taiwan (TW), Thailand (TH), Turkey (TR), United Kingdom (UK), United States (US), Czechoslovakia (Cze), Hungary (Hun), Vietnam (Vnm) and the Baltics (Bal) which covers Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.