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Customer Satisfaction Edges Up Due to Improvements in Information Sector

ANN ARBOR, Mich. (May 21, 2013) – The national customer satisfaction benchmark shows modest improvement for the first quarter of 2013, continuing to chart an upward course that began in 2011, according to a report released today by the [American Customer Satisfaction Index](#) (ACSI). Aggregate customer satisfaction is up 0.4% to 76.6 on a 0 to 100 scale, pushed by gains across the Information sector, along with energy utilities and health care (reported by the ACSI in April).

“Weak consumer demand is what’s keeping economic recovery from taking hold,” says Claes Fornell, ACSI founder and Chairman. “Because repeat purchases are a big part of total consumer spending, customer satisfaction is essential for spurring consumer demand. Although ACSI has been on the rise for nearly two years, there is another force putting downward pressure on demand: weak cash flow to U.S. households. Corporations sit on cash, households don’t. Unless wages and employment begin to move in the same direction as customer satisfaction, it is difficult to see a great deal of economic growth in the near future.”

In addition to the quarterly national ACSI score, the ACSI’s May report covers six industries: cellular telephones, computer software, fixed-line and wireless telephone service, subscription television service, and the newly added Internet service providers. Customer satisfaction gains dominate the Information sector, with four industries improving 2.7% to 5.7% compared with a year ago. The majority of companies (64%) post higher customer satisfaction benchmarks in 2013.

The ACSI’s May 2013 report introduces an array of new measures that encompass key elements of the customer experience specific to individual industries. For each industry, the ACSI measures 8 to 10 customer experience benchmarks, including call center and website satisfaction, service reliability, and factors such as HD picture quality for subscription TV service or battery life for cell phones.

The full report is available for free download at www.theACSI.org. Follow the ACSI on Twitter at @theACSI and Like us on Facebook.

About ACSI

The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) is a national economic indicator of customer evaluations of the quality of products and services available to household consumers in the United States. The ACSI uses data from interviews with roughly 70,000

customers annually as inputs to an econometric model for measuring satisfaction with more than 230 companies in 43 industries and 10 economic sectors, as well as over 100 services, programs, and websites of federal government agencies.

ACSI results are released on a monthly basis, with all measures reported using a scale of 0 to 100. ACSI data have proven to be strongly related to a number of essential indicators of micro and macroeconomic performance. For example, firms with higher levels of customer satisfaction tend to have higher earnings and stock returns relative to competitors. Stock portfolios based on companies that show strong performance in ACSI deliver excess returns in up markets as well as down markets. And, at the macro level, customer satisfaction has been shown to be predictive of both consumer spending and gross domestic product growth.

The Index was founded at the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business and is produced by ACSI LLC. The ACSI can be found on the Web at www.theacsi.org.

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