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Customer Satisfaction Recedes Slightly Due to Downturn for Durable Products

ANN ARBOR, Mich. (August 27, 2013) – Weakened customer satisfaction for durable products reins in growth for overall U.S. customer satisfaction, according to a report released today by the [American Customer Satisfaction Index](#) (ACSI). The national ACSI benchmark drops a razor-thin 0.1% to 76.5 on a 100-point scale in the second quarter of 2013, halting the long climb in aggregate customer satisfaction that began in 2010.

Customers are less satisfied than they were a year ago with durable products such as autos or major household appliances, which prompts a slight deterioration in national customer satisfaction. At the sector level, durable products lapse 1.2% to an ACSI benchmark of 82.0, down from 83.0 in 2012.

“The positive effect of high customer satisfaction on household demand was tempered by weak consumer discretionary income growth leading into the second quarter,” says Claes Fornell, ACSI founder and Chairman. “The outlook on spending, however, has improved and retail sales have been fairly strong. Shrinking household debt has lessened the burden of consumer debt service. Although aggregate customer satisfaction stopped growing, it remains quite high and the outlook for spending to pick up in the second half of the year seems reasonably strong.”

In addition to the quarterly update of overall U.S. customer satisfaction, the ACSI report includes annual results for the automobile and light vehicle industry, including new scores for a multitude of foreign and domestic nameplates. Next month, the ACSI will release a separate report on customer satisfaction with major appliances, personal computers, and televisions & video players/recorders, rounding out coverage of durable products for 2013.

The Quarterly Update on U.S. Overall Satisfaction and 2013 Auto Industry 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 analyzing customer 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 on 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 GDP 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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