

November 18, 2009



Recession-Weary Affluent Americans Hesitant to Invest Despite Improving Market

- Nearly Half of Ultra-Wealthy Expect to Wait At Least One Year for Economic Lift, PNC Survey Finds -

PHILADELPHIA, Nov. 18 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- The recession has left a large number of America's wealthy cautious about re-investing in the stock market and skeptical about a strong economic recovery, according to a survey by PNC Wealth Management, a member of The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: PNC).

Although more than half (51 percent), up from just 25 percent a year ago, are optimistic for the prospects of the stock market over the next six months, only 6 percent characterize themselves as enthusiastic about investing, while half (49 percent) describe themselves as either more tentative or outright reluctant to invest, according to the sixth annual *Wealth and Values Investors' Outlook*.

The survey also revealed that only one in five (20 percent) believe the economy is showing signs of improvement, with 40 percent projecting that progress is at least one year away.

Also, many affluent Americans have changed their investment behavior, as one third (34 percent) say they are more conservative now, while 59 percent describe themselves as balanced or "moderate risk" investors.

"There is no doubt that the last year has taken its toll on wealthy investors," said Thomas P. Melcher, executive vice president and managing director of Hawthorn, the division of PNC Wealth Management that serves clients with \$20 million or more in investable assets.

"Unfortunately it often takes a severe crisis and a significant loss of capital for investors to discover their true risk tolerance."

He added, "The survey results validate the value of an integrated wealth management model -- one that combines estate, financial and tax planning with investment management. Integrated wealth management enables investors to define their needs rather than their wants, which typically results in a less risky portfolio than one that focuses on wants."

Recession Impact Significant

The survey of 1,046 wealthy Americans, all of whom have at least \$500,000 in investable assets, also revealed the recession has had a negative effect on their investments, but the impact varies by how much money they have.

Nearly seven in 10 (68 percent) of those with \$500,000 to \$1 million have seen a negative effect, compared to five out of 10 (48 percent) of those with \$5 million or more in investable

assets.

The Wealth and Values Survey by PNC, which is among the nation's top 20 wealth management firms, also revealed insights about the following issues:

Views differ between the overall affluent group and the ultra wealthy, defined in this survey as those with more than \$5 million in investable assets.

Stock market forecast: The ultra wealthy are somewhat less optimistic about the performance of the stock market the next 6 months, with 41 percent very or somewhat optimistic compared to 51 percent among all wealthy.

Anemic returns: While 68 percent of those with \$500,000 to \$1 million in assets said the recession has caused a negative effect on their investments, just 48 percent of those with \$5 million or more believe that to be the case.

It's the economy: The ultra wealthy are more pessimistic about economic recovery: 52 percent (compared to 40 percent of the total affluent sample) do not expect to see economic improvements until well into 2010.

The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (www.pnc.com) is one of the nation's largest diversified financial services organizations providing retail and business banking; residential mortgage banking; specialized services for corporations and government entities, including corporate banking, real estate finance and asset-based lending; wealth management; asset management and global fund services.

Survey Methodology

The *Wealth and Values Survey* was commissioned by PNC to identify attitudes about wealth among high-net-worth individuals, how it affects their lives and their needs in managing wealth. The survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Interactive in September 2009 among a nationwide cross section of 1,046 adults (age 18 or over) with annual incomes of \$150,000 or above (if employed), at least \$500,000 of investable assets (unless retired) or at least \$1 million of investable assets (if retired). Findings are significant at the 95 percent confidence level with a margin of error of +/- 3.0 percent.

The survey was designed and managed by HNW, Inc. (www.hnw.com), a leading provider of wealth marketing software and solutions to financial services companies and intermediaries seeking to capture and serve the high net worth market. The survey was supported by Artemis Strategy Group (www.ArtemisSG.com), a communications strategy research firm specializing in brand positioning and policy issues.

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