

Consumer News & Views

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Consumer Confidence Increases to Record High in October. The Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index® increased in October continuing its upward trend for most of 2018. The Index now stands at 137.9 (1985=100), up from 135.3 in September. The monthly Consumer Confidence Survey® is a key indicator for the nation's economic health and describes what consumers buy and watch.

Thomas Hinton of the American Consumer Council noted that “Consumers continue to be positive about the economy due to strong employment growth and the potential for continued wage increases.” Hinton added, “Given the tight labor market and the high demand for seasonal workers we anticipate the economic picture to continue to be strong and that consumers will spend record amounts for the 2018 holiday season from Halloween to New Year's Day.”



The Conference Board revealed that consumers' optimism about the short-term future increased further in October. The percentage of consumers expecting business conditions will improve over the next six months increased from 25.8 percent to 26.3 percent, while those expecting business conditions will worsen declined, from 8.3 percent to 7.4 percent.

ACC Financial Education Video Focuses on Time Share Do's and Don'ts.

The American Consumer Council announced its latest video in ACC's Consumer Financial Education Series. The new video focuses on Time Share ownership and the do's and don't of owning a time share property. It's entitled, “*What Consumers Should Know about Time Shares Before Buying.*”

The United States has over 9.5 million timeshare owners, and nearly 85% of them say that they are unsatisfied with their ownership. Because of this startling figure, ACC's latest video addresses some of the key don's and don'ts when considering timeshare ownership.

To view the video, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2OX0hnFq8k>

ACC's financial education video series also addresses major issues such as Identity Theft, Child Care, Caring for Aging Parents and financial Challenges When Starting a Family. The new videos are available on ACC's website at: www.americanconsumercouncil.org.

Other new videos in ACC's Financial Education series include:

[Hacker Protection](#)



[Teen Rich - How to Get Started Building Wealth](#)



[Steps to Hiring Reliable Child Care](#)



[Money Challenges When Starting Your Family](#)



ACC Continues 2018 Chapter Expansion and Realignment.

In the first quarter of 2018, the American Consumer Council's membership and Board of Directors approved the realignment and expansion of ACC's state and local chapters realignment. The new plan redefined chapter territories by counties in several states including New York, California, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Arkansas, Alabama, Kentucky, Tennessee and Texas.

New chapters were authorized in Florida, Wyoming, Washington, and Virginia. As of October 1, 2018, ACC operated 70 state and local consumer councils with a total membership over 238,645 in all 50 states.

The membership also approved several minor bylaws changes including an addition to the Membership eligibility clause that allows for non-natural persons to become members of ACC and its chapters. While ACC has always allowed businesses and organizations (non-natural persons) to be members, several state and local consumer councils did not have this clause as part of their bylaws. Now, all chapters reflect the ACC bylaws policies and direction.



The Southern California Consumer Council recently opened its new offices in Irvine, CA

ACC's Friend of the Consumer Award Recognizes Outstanding Businesses.

Is your business consumer-friendly? Does your business deserve greater recognition for its service to consumers? If so, you should apply for the American Consumer Council's Friend of the Consumer Award. Now is the time to apply!

Throughout the year, ACC presents its "Friend of the Consumer" Awards. This prestigious award recognizes manufacturers, retailers, and other businesses that produce or sell products in the United States that meet or exceed federally-mandated standards and are touted by consumers as "consumer friendly."

Each year, ACC awards numerous "Friend of the Consumer" Awards to deserving companies and organizations because they have "demonstrated a commitment to American consumers by providing a specific product or service that fosters consumer confidence and market acceptance."



To apply for the "Friend of the Consumer" Award, complete the online application and return it to ACC with the application fee. Applicants will be notified within 5 days of receipt of their application. Thereafter, a panel of independent judges will review your application and make a formal recommendation within 20 days of receipt of your award application.

For more information, visit: <http://www.americanconsumercouncil.org/awards.asp>

Green CSM Certification Accepting Applications for 2018 Cycle:

If your company or organization would like to increase its credibility with consumers, you should consider applying for the **Green CSM Certification**. Applications for the 2018 cycle are now being accepted through December 31, 2018.

It's a proven fact that consumers want to do business with companies that are eco-friendly and practice Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The process is straight-forward and all applicants are recognized by ACC and the Green USA Institute.

All applicants complete the criteria and submit their responses to ACC's Green Consumer Council for review, assessment and feedback. Program details and the **Green CSM Certification** criteria can be viewed at ACC's website located at: <http://americanconsumercouncil.org/greenc.asp>

