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FOR IMMEDIATE ISSUE

RECESSION HITS TAKE AWAY AND DINING MARKET Brisbanites stay home and cook, driving grocery market up

BRISBANE. 12 May 2009 — The Brisbane take away and dining out market is suffering as Brisbanites stay home and cook, according to recent research by the local branch of global information and insight group TNS.

Spending on take-away food and eating out over the past six months is down, with one in two Brisbane residents having spent less or put spending on hold in these areas over the past six months.

While spend on take-away food and eating out is down, spend on groceries in Brisbane is up, with one in five spending more on groceries over the last six months than they have in the past.

According to TNS senior research consultant, John Shearer, the study conducted with Brisbane residents in February revealed that groceries are the exception to the trend of reduced consumer spending.

“Not surprisingly, the research has shown that people have changed their spending habits, with a greater trend towards a reduction or maintenance in spending rather than an increase in spending,” Shearer said.

“Groceries are the exception for two reasons – people are forgoing take away and eating out, electing to cook and eat at home in a bid to save dollars, and there have been increases in the cost of many grocery items.”

The top areas that consumers have targeted to trim expenses also include entertainment out of the home, holidays, and household and major purchases.

“While these more expensive areas are top of the list in terms of where people would reign in expenditure, what we are seeing is a clear division, with some comfortable to maintain or even increase spending on these items, ” according to Shearer.

The table below illustrates this point.

Change in spending	Entertainment out of home	Holidays	Major purchases (e.g. house, car)	Household purchases (e.g. furniture, TV)
Spent less or put spending on hold	44%	42%	32%	47%
Spent more or haven't changed	51%	43%	42%	43%
Not applicable	5%	15%	26%	10%

Q: Listed below are some things that people can spend their money on. For each one, can you indicate the extent that you have changed how much you spent on them over the last six months?

N.B.: Responses for entertainment out of home, holidays, household and major purchases shown, not full list of items asked in study.

“We are definitely seeing two tribes when it comes to consumer confidence – most of those who are being more cautious have mortgages or other large financial commitments, while those who are less cautious tend to be full time workers who are not tied down.

“However, both tribes appear to be cutting back on the take away and dining out, in favour of increased grocery spend, with these trends noticeable across the board.”

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