



January 2010

Up, down, or sideways: Where is the economy going in 2010?

For our year-end poll, we asked our readers to play economist and forecast what 2010 will look like. As with economists, the answers were all over the lot, with the only consensus being that a boom is pretty unlikely.

- **5%** There will be strong growth - could be a boom by next Christmas
- **39%** No boom, but it will be an OK year
- **32%** Not good - pretty much flat with maybe a bit of weak growth
- **24%** The second dip of the recession is coming

The largest single group of our respondents was cautiously optimistic – 39% think the year will be ‘OK’. But overall, the forecasts were downbeat – a slight majority felt that there will be weak growth at best, and perhaps we’ll see the dreaded double-dip recession. Let’s hope these forecasts are no more accurate than the economists have been lately.

Are the measurements generated by your analytics systems aligned with your program goals?

We discussed analytics and goals, and wondered if our readers’ analytics packages are aligned to measure the things they have set as goals for their programs: “Are the measurements generated by your analytics systems aligned with your program goals?” It appears not, in most cases:

- **36%** We measure well
- **14%** We can measure well toward some goals, but not all
- **29%** We have inadequate or non-existent analytics
- **21%** We have difficulty with defining goals

The largest number said they are doing well, but most are not. I think it’s interesting that 21% indicate that the problem isn’t with the analytics – the problem is setting goals.

Does your company have the tools you need to collaborate with your retailers on pricing and promotion optimization?

In last week’s TPMA Outlook, we discussed how the continuation of tight inventory policies among retailers points up the need for collaboration by suppliers on pricing and promotion optimization, and asked: “Does your company have the tools you need to collaborate with your retailers on pricing and promotion optimization?” The results were a surprise:

- **16%** Yes - we have a good toolset
- **47%** We have some of the tools needed, but not all
- **37%** We lack the proper tools

I guess I sometimes get so close to an issue that I think we’re a lot farther along than we are, but that only 16% say they have all the tools and 37% say they don’t is a bit shocking.