

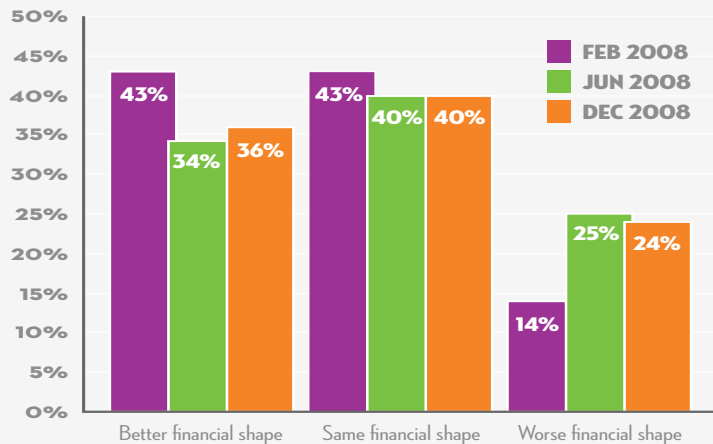
# Shoppers & The Economy: Still Optimistic?

The impact of the US recession continues to negatively impact the US retail market. We see the headlines every day.

Yet somewhat surprisingly, when we asked shoppers what they thought their own personal financial status would be 12 months from now, a full 36% of them told us they felt they would be in better financial shape. Only 24% thought they would be in worse shape.

These figures are consistent with the thoughts of shoppers when we asked the same question in June 08.

## IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY WILL BE IN:



Some interesting differences in shopper outlook and behaviors emerged in other areas, however.

In our December survey, more shoppers than in the past (62%) said they would save a hypothetical 'bonus pay check', rather than spend it. This is the highest level of our three waves of research throughout 2008.

A subtle shift in what is driving overall shopping influencers was also noted in December. Gas prices

and overall product prices, while still important, dropped in significance, while employment and the perception of the US stock market rose as a shopping influencer.

## WHAT SHOPPERS WOULD DO WITH AN EXTRA PAYCHECK:

|                    | Feb 08 | Jun 08 | Dec 08 |
|--------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Save It            | 52%    | 59%    | 62%    |
| Invest It          | 13%    | 13%    | 11%    |
| Spend It           | 26%    | 20%    | 24%    |
| Don't Know / Other | 9%     | 8%     | 3%     |

