



## Green purchasing appears to be accelerating

By Michael Keating

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Green purchasing budgets will continue to increase, and the current political administration in the U.S. will positively affect green spending, according to a recent survey by Ottawa-based TerraChoice Environmental Marketing.

The third annual "EcoMarkets Summary Report" polled 580 professional purchasers in the U.S. and Canada between April and July 2009. About 37 percent of the respondents work for government departments or agencies. Collectively, the respondents are responsible for spending \$24 billion a year while their organizations spend more than \$68 billion annually.

"There is a conventional wisdom that green concerns go away in tighter economic times," says Scott McDougall, president and CEO of TerraChoice. "This year's EcoMarkets study — a sample of companies that spend over \$68 billion annually — proves this false. In fact, greener purchasing continues to accelerate."

Highlights from the EcoMarkets 2009 findings include:

- More than half of all purchasers (56 percent) have done more green purchasing in the last 12 months (during the recession) than ever before.
- A sizable majority of purchasers (83 percent) predict increased green purchasing in the next two years. A majority of professional purchasers (51 percent) who work for organizations that don't currently have a green purchasing policy still plan to do more green purchasing in the next two years.
- Even among those purchasers that believe the North American economy has been in either recession or depression, 84 percent predict increases in green spending.
- More than three-quarters of purchasers (76 percent) believe that the Obama administration is having a positive impact on greener purchasing in North America.
- Respondents — no matter whether their budgets increased or decreased — boosted their green purchasing activity over the past 12 months.
- In the U.S., Energy Star, Green Seal and EcoLogo are the three most recognized eco-labels with recognition rates of 88, 61 and 59 percent, respectively. In Canada, the three most recognized eco-labels are Energy Star, EnerGuide, and EcoLogo, recognized by 81, 76 and 62 percent of purchasers, respectively.

- Universities and purchasing organizations are the most trusted sources for information on the environmental impact of products.

The goal of the EcoMarkets study is to inform clients, partners and the public about the attitudes and practices of North American buyers toward environmentally preferable purchasing in both business-to-business and business-to-government transactions. The survey was conducted in partnership with the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, the Purchasing Management Association of Canada, and the BuySmart Network (formerly the Sustainability Purchasing Network).

For a copy of the EcoMarkets 2009 Summary Report, go to [www.terrachoice.com/home/services/research](http://www.terrachoice.com/home/services/research).