



Encore Capital Group Launches Consumer Credit Research Institute

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Research Effort Focused on Understanding Low- and Middle-Income Consumers

SAN DIEGO, Dec. 5, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- Encore Capital Group (NASDAQ: ECPG) today announced the launch of the Consumer Credit Research Institute (CCRI). The CCRI is a research organization dedicated to better understanding financially distressed consumers' decisions, choices, and activities in order to promote financial literacy, create new knowledge about this growing segment of the population, and develop innovative ways to support household financial recovery.

"The CCRI will take a scientific approach to understanding the ways in which consumers get into financial trouble, and may point to consistently better ways to break the chronic debt cycles that can lead to ongoing financial distress," said Christopher Trepel, Ph.D., Managing Director of the CCRI and Encore's Chief Scientific Officer. "We are excited about this industry-leading effort to differentiate and describe an important, and often neglected, consumer segment. By working with top universities, non-profit organizations, and governmental agencies, we hope to advance thinking in the areas of public policy, financial education, and business operations."

The recent financial crisis highlights the need for new research and investment focused on these issues. While consumer spending is the single largest driver of the U.S. economy, traditional approaches to financial education have generally failed to prevent aggregate consumer indebtedness. As a result, effective financial literacy programs are of critical importance to individuals, households, communities, and the overall economy. At the same time, consumer decision-making is often poorly understood and, in the absence of high-quality research, policy makers are often forced to rely on anecdotes.

This latest investment in cutting-edge consumer research is a natural extension of the sophisticated analytic strategy and broad investments in data and behavioral science made by Encore and its subsidiaries. As the country's largest publicly traded consumer debt buyer (by revenue), Encore's relationship to low- and middle-income Americans provides a unique perspective on household consumption and saving behavior.

"By better understanding this emerging and growing consumer segment, we expect to significantly enhance Encore's deep expertise in financial recovery," said Brandon Black, Encore's Chief Executive Officer. "The CCRI's research program will strengthen our connection with consumers, and improve our ability to help them both achieve their financial goals and stay on the path toward long-term financial health."

For more information on the CCRI and its research, please visit the CCRI's website at www.encoreccri.org.

About Encore Capital Group, Inc.

Encore Capital Group is a leader in consumer debt buying and recovery. We purchase portfolios of defaulted consumer receivables from major banks, credit unions, and utility providers and partner with individuals as they repay their obligations and work toward financial recovery. Our success and future growth are driven by our sophisticated and widespread use of analytics, our broad investments in data and behavioral science, the significant cost advantages provided by both our operations in India and our enterprise-wide, account-level cost database, and our demonstrated commitment to conduct business ethically and in ways that support our consumers' financial recovery.

Headquartered in San Diego, we are a publicly traded NASDAQ Global Select company (ticker symbol: ECPG) and a component stock of the Russell 2000, the S&P SmallCap 600, and the Wilshire 4500. More information about Encore can be found at www.encorecapital.com.

For media inquiries, please contact:

George Durham
Encore Capital Group, george.durham@encorecapital.com
(858) 309-9491

Mary McCeney
MSLGROUP, for Encore Capital Group, mary.mcceney@mslgroup.com
(212) 468-4053

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