

Sticking to a healthy lifestyle

Wellness industry faces challenge

In recent years, consumer health awareness has undoubtedly increased around the world. "We have seen a growing focus on health issues in the media and an increase of investment in health initiatives. This has significant repercussions for the health and wellness industry, creating new opportunities and driving innovation," says Dr Amelia Richards, Ask Afrika's Client Service Director. There is increasing pressure for companies in terms of delivering new healthy and nutritional options for consumers. However, the main challenge for companies working within this industry is to motivate consumers to act on the call to - action needed to develop and sustain healthy lifestyles.

The Target Group Index (TGI) 2012 survey, the largest single source consumer brand and - lifestyle survey in South Africa, sheds light on South African health and fitness trends coupled with consumption figures of healthy products and brands. TGI is part of the Ask Afrika Group. The 2012 results focused on seven product sectors and 37 categories in total. Some of the categories included bottled mineral water, nutritional drinks, soya milk, slimming clubs and sport clothing, among others.

The fieldwork among 15 000 adults (16 years and older) takes place between February and November each year, and represents 18 million consumers. This symbiotic relationship creates opportunities for syndicated and customised market research compatibility and harmonisation.

"Many New Year resolutions and promises around health and fitness are made since many South Africans aim to become fit and healthy, quite rightly so since 60% of South African stated that they are overweight. Despite the majority (62%) of South Africans agreeing that it is important to stay in good physical shape, 42% of South Africans blame their busy lifestyles for not taking care of themselves," says Richards.



"Only a third (30%) of consumers commit to exercise, and almost 1 in every 5, South Africans (17%) admitted to smoking cigarettes in the past 12 months. In terms of preventative health care, South Africans are well-informed with 62% reading up on new developments around nutrition, health and wellness, however the call to action is lacking, since only 40% continue to have regular check-ups even though they are not ill."

TGI can also be applied to segment the local market into health zones or groups. When a long-term view is taken the "go-for-it-guys" group has seen an increase from 16% to 18% from 2010 to 2012. This group comprises active young men that stay healthy through sport and exercise, since physical appearance is important to them.

Unfortunately this healthy outlook on life is not maintained once men get older. At the age of 35+, they move into the sports, beer and barbecue group that does not eat well and are not concerned about looking young. The carefree group has also seen an increase from 33% to 37% of South Africans. "They are mainly young females between the ages of 15 to 24, who like to treat themselves with food that isn't supposed to be good for you. When these females grow older they move into the indulger category who do little sport and spend lots of time in front of the television," Richards warns. "In summary South Africans are well-read around the topic of health and fitness, however acting on knowledge or the proverbial call to action, is not there yet. It has implications on a personal wellness level since TGI also shows that only 54% of South Africans are happy with their current lifestyles, another 43% get caught up in problems and get stressed out easily (47%). Investment in a fit and healthy lifestyle will translate into children adopting healthy lifestyles from an early stage, and adults coping better with stress of modern day living" she concludes.

Tips to get yourself motivated

Vera Chimes, a yoga, pilates and fitness instructor gives the following tips for staying motivated.

» Start small and be realistic; don't expect to be an Olympic athlete in one month if you have never before exercised in your life. Also work with a plan. Having smaller steps to reach your goal, makes things a lot easier. Work with a buddy, it is easier to stay motivated and commit if you know somebody is waiting for you at the gym or on a street corner.

» I believe it takes 4 weeks for you to start seeing a difference, 8 weeks for friends and family and 12 weeks for the rest of the world, so don' give up if nobody notices your flatter stomach. Also it depends on how frequently you train and the type of activity you are doing. If your only exercise is going for a leisurely stroll with the dog, it will definitely take longer to see results.

» Spend time with people that make you happy and feel good about yourself. Don't compare yourself to other people, you cause yourself a lot of anxiety by comparing your

behind-the-scenes with other people's highlight reel. And it is important to accept your body for what it is.

» "No money for a gym" isn't a valid reason to be a couch potato. Keep it simple, things like push-ups, lunges, squats, sit-ups are in any fitness programme for a reason. We all have a road leading to our house, so just put those sneakers on and hit the road.

The most used brands

Ask Afrika, South Africa's largest independent market research company, recently conducted the Health and Fitness Index, where it assessed South Africa's usage of health and fitness brands and the most used brands among South Africans.

The category winners were as follows:

Artificial sweetener:	Hullets
Cold breakfast:	Kellogs Corn Flakes
Hot breakfast:	Jungle Oats
Deodorants, woman:	Shield
Deodorants, men:	Shield
Bottled water:	Aquella
Flavoured water:	BonAqua
Nutritional drinks:	Ensure
Stimulant drinks:	Red Bull
Supplement drinks:	Fast Fuel
Female soap bars:	Protex
Male soap bars:	Protex
Mix/cordial:	Halls
Ready to drink fruit and vegetable juices:	Fruitree
Hot Milk drinks:	Milo
Ready to drink ice teas:	Lipton
Fizzy soft drinks:	Appletizer
Soya milk:	Good Hope Soya Milk
Gym brand:	Virgin Active
Medical aids:	Bonitas
Pharmacy:	Clicks
Shower gels, women:	Avon
Shower Gels, men:	Dettol

Slimming Clubs: Weigh less
Skin firming creams and lotions: Nivea
Sport clothing: Adidas
Sport shoe shop: Edgars
Sport and nutrition bars: Power Bar
Vitamins: Cal-C Vita
Toothpaste: Aquafresh Herbal
Bread brands: Albany
Suntan lotions, women: Avon
Suntan lotions, men: Nivea
Reduced / low-oil / low fat salad dressing / mayonnaise: Crosse and Blackwell Trim original
Natural cheese: Clover
Yogurt: Danone Nutriday
Honey: Goldcrest

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For more information please contact:

John Badenhorst at Stone Soup

john@stonesoup.co.za

(011) 447 7241

