

Who influences consumer purchase behaviour?

Ask Afrika has the answers ...

By Maria Petousis, Ask Afrika's TGI Director

On a global level consumers living in developed countries such as Germany and the UK prefer to stick to brands that they have tried and tested. In the UK and Germany there is a need for more 'low key' brands that attract loyal consumers, as they don't necessarily believe well-known brands are better. In countries like South Africa, consumers are described as brand butterflies implying a lack of brand loyalty. Only 25% of us prefer to stick to a brand.

These research results were taken from TGI's recent *Global Consumer Perspectives 2013* release, the "*Global Consumer Power Shift*" which examines global trends in consumerism, Maria Petousis, TGI Director for Ask Afrika provides further insight into what guides consumers on their path to purchase.

With regards to information sources sought out to inform purchase decisions, the Internet is the most widely acclaimed information source across the globe with mobile phone access being key to access brand information. However in South Africa with Internet access growing from a small base, it is important, for marketers, to determine what other factors influence purchase decisions.

South African's are 'informed tax payers' with 66% of consumers agreeing with the statement that it is important to be well informed about things, followed by 48% doing extensive research before purchases. This does not mean that we perceive celebrity endorsements to be an important factor when we purchase brands. Only 17% of South Africans are very interested to listen to celebrity interviews on radio.

Although a third (33%) respects traditional customs and beliefs, only 22% perceive traditional chiefs as important enough to consult with decisions. A minor 19% perceive money to be the best measure of success and only 15% of South Africans perceive politicians to be trustworthy. Although 50% of local consumers ask people's advice before buying new things, it isn't celebrities, only 23% of South Africans feel reassured to use products recommended by and expert.



The implication for brand owners? Against the back drop of tragic public figures like Oscar Pistorius and Julius Malema, South African consumers are reluctant to be convinced to purchase products recommended by experts.

We are coined as 'brand butterflies' that implies that we will experiment freely with brands and as 'informed taxpayers', we do extensive research about the price, advantages and disadvantages of products prior to purchases. In summary, word of mouth (and not celebrity endorsements) remains a very powerful marketing platform in South Africa since 50% of local consumers will ask other consumer's advice before buying new things.

Ask Afrika's knowledge of brands is extensive and as *TGI* partners they are the leaders in brand expertise in South Africa, *TGI* research is the perfect vehicle for brand positioning and this will be explored further with *TGI's* annual *Icon Brand* winners, which are to be announced at an awards ceremony in Johannesburg on 19 July 2013.

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About Ask Afrika:

Over a period of almost two decades, Ask Afrika has grown to be the largest independent South African market research company. The company focuses on local relevance, benchmarked against the global context. Apart from its large South African footprint, Ask Africa also operates in a dozen African continental territories. Their exclusive product suite includes the Orange Index, Trust Barometer, Radio Moods, TGI Icon Brand and TGI (the Target Group Index).

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