

# Consumers ditch brand loyalty, the need to impress in favour of value for money, functionality

Instead of gaining insight into consumer sentiment via door-to-door visits, lengthy paper surveys and tedious questionnaires, thanks to the digital era, it's now as simple as analysing what consumers are searching for online.



"In recent years, people have been spending a significant portion of their budgets on mobile phones and connectivity, especially given the initial aura around brands such as Blackberry and Apple, coupled with the fixation on social media networks such as Facebook," says Ryan Marx, CEO of [CompareGuru](#), a site which draws on independent research to help consumers choose between products in the mobile, broadband, banking and insurance spheres. "Now, consumers across the board are ditching brand loyalty and the need to impress, in favour of value for money and functionality."

"South Africans are clearly looking to avoid getting locked into lengthy mobile and broadband contracts, for example," adds Marx. "Search terms speak volumes about what people now seek from their service providers, so they are certainly worth paying close attention to."

With regards to mobile, the most popular search terms on the CompareGuru site are 'cell phone deals', 'phone', 'mobile', 'cell phones' and 'compare cell phones'. When it comes to broadband, users plug in the terms 'internet', 'ADSL', 'broadband', 'ISP', 'dsl' and 'broadband speed test'. Interestingly, some of the things people search for when landing on the CompareGuru site include 'Telkom freeme', 'Uncapped LTE', 'Smartphones under R1,500', 'Vodacom deals / specials', 'Blackberry dtek50 South Africa' and 'Telkom contract phones'. Notably, the CompareGuru site appears on page one when consumers search for 'compare cellphone deals' on Google.

While this move towards value for money is immediately apparent in the online searches around mobile and broadband, the theme carries over to banking and insurance products as well.

Apart from the search terms themselves, the growing popularity of online comparative tools such as CompareGuru point to an increasingly savvy and skeptical consumer. Site traffic to CompareGuru increased by 60% in just one month of going live. Over the past two months, the site has attracted over 600,000 visits, including over 10,000 people per day.

"Service providers and big name brands can no longer rely on their marketing allure and brand legacies to win a portion of spend," notes Marx. "In today's environment, products and services need to focus on functionality and value for money. Without these two core elements, consumers will happily move on to the next option."