

Longer trading hours demanded, report finds

More than 80% of consumers in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa want longer trading hours at malls, the Broll Shopper Segmentation Report 2016 Volume 1 has found.



Elaine Wilson

The report, launched today at the 2016 South African Council of Shopping Centres Research Conference sponsored by the Broll Property Group, demonstrates a comparison of how consumers shop in Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa.

“Shopping is seen as a family outing by many consumers who want to shop, eat, be entertained as well as socialise at shopping centres,” said Elaine Wilson, group divisional director for research of the Broll Property Group.

South Africans love malls in general and they believe shopping is rewarding. Regionally, the Western Cape has the highest proportion of weekly mall visits, according to the report. Shop variety and convenience, free Wi-Fi for male shoppers, product variety and kids’ entertainment for young families are factors that draw shoppers into malls in South Africa.

SA wants 13 hours a day

Of the survey respondents, 83% in South Africa said trading hours are inadequate, pointing out that ideal trading hours would be from 7am to 8pm, 92% of Kenyans felt the hours were not enough and would ideally like malls to trade from 6am to midnight while Nigeria had the highest percentage (93%) of respondents who would like to see malls trade from 7am to 10pm.

“Extended trading hours provide greater convenience and flexibility for many consumers who are often stuck in traffic driving to and from work in major metropolitan cities in these countries. They also give these consumers the opportunity to shop after work during the week,” said Wilson.

The survey findings show that extended trading hours are very important, whether retailers and landlords are ready for this remains to be seen. Overall, shoppers want as much choice as possible when it comes to the shopping times as well as choice of products in store from the shopping centres they visit.

Of those surveyed, 47% of respondents in South Africa visit malls between one and five times a week, 26% in Kenya and Nigeria, respectively.

Cash is king

Cash is the most preferred payment method in all three countries with 73% of shoppers in Kenya using cash, 53% in Nigeria and in South Africa 32% of shoppers pay cash, 13% use credit cards and 31% use debit/cheque cards. Nigeria has the highest percentage of credit card payments: 19% compared to Kenya's 8% with 9% of Kenyans using debit/cheque cards compared to 13% in Nigeria.

The importance of online shopping is at different levels with Nigerian consumers showing the highest affinity for online purchases: 64% of those surveyed in Nigeria found online shopping to be advantageous and 83% use the shopping app regularly as they find this useful for specials and product searches.

However, 58% in Nigeria still prefer traditional shopping, 78% believe they will shop more online in future. In South Africa, 67% of those surveyed still prefer bricks and mortar with 46% saying they will shop more online in future compared to 63% in Kenya who prefer physical stores and another 63% who will shop more online in future.

“Consumers in all markets struggle to make the move to online shopping due to the fact that the platform doesn't provide the same shopping experience from physical stores,” said Wilson.

Online caution

Safer purchases, such as buying airline and bus tickets, have a high penetration in all markets with purchases such as home décor items and flowers showing a very slow uptake.

While Nigerians buy online more often, South Africans are still cautious when shopping online due to factors such as delivery speed, costs, poor return procedures and, in some cases, fear of online fraud.

Those who buy online say they browse more online to compare prices, but for the most part, they like to see the products before buying and in the case of expensive products, it makes sense to see what one is buying before making the purchase, she added.