

Media Release

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AMP Capital Shopping Centres

Survey shows omni-channel shopper now embedded within Australian retail landscape

- **New Australian *Shopping Intent Report* from AMP Capital Shopping Centres reveals shoppers are basing purchasing decisions on a seamless combination of online and traditional mediums**
- **In-depth study of spending habits across 19 categories finds that consumers are demanding the ability to shop both online and in a physical store**

A new survey released by AMP Capital Shopping Centres today reveals that Australian consumers are demanding complete integration of on and offline media when researching and making purchases.

The latest edition of the *Shopping Intent Report*, now in its fourth year, tracks spending habits across 19 categories, based on in-depth interviews with more than 1,000 Australian shoppers.

Traditional still trumps online in influencing purchasing decisions

The latest report reveals purchasing decisions in Australia today are subject to a highly sophisticated process, with shoppers consulting an average of four information sources - across online and traditional media - before making a purchase.

The medium with the highest level of influence on shopper purchases remains the colour catalogue, which is preferred by more than one third (37 per cent) of respondents. This is apparent even among younger shoppers, with 28 per cent of 18-24 year olds and 30 per cent of 25-34 year olds nominating the catalogue as their first preference.

Colour catalogues are closely followed by television (34 per cent) and letter box drops (30 per cent), showing these long-established marketing techniques remain persuasive.

But consumer behaviour is certainly changing; the report underscores the growing importance of online research to shoppers in the product selection process.

According to the report, the top digital influencers on purchases include:

- Search engines (24 per cent)
- Retailer websites (19 per cent)
- Email alerts e.g. Daily Deals, Spreets, Cudo (17 per cent)
- Professional product review websites e.g. Choice (17 per cent)
- Manufacturers' websites (16 per cent)

Author and retail specialist Michael Bergdahl agrees that capturing the omni-channel shopper is crucial.

“Shoppers are roaming the aisles of retail stores, while simultaneously checking competitor prices on their smart phones; it’s critical for retailers to create a shopping experience that converts those shoppers into on the spot buyers,” Mr Bergdahl said.

Social media promises to be the next frontier for retailers tapping into new generations of shoppers. While only 8 per cent of consumers surveyed said Facebook affected their purchasing decisions, this rose to a quarter of the ‘next generation’ of shoppers (18-24 year olds).

According to Directional Insights Managing Director Peter Kelly - a leading retail research firm commissioned to undertake the research on behalf of AMP Capital Shopping Centres - the latest report shows consumers are expecting a complete integrated experience.

“To really engage with the omni-channel shopper, retailers must create superior customer experience and exhibit consistent brand values across all touchpoints. It’s a demanding environment fuelled by consumers who seek the best - whether service, price, product or experience,” Mr Kelly said.

“It’s also clear that retailers need to ensure their social media presence is robust enough to capture the next generation, while also maintaining investment in traditional media.”

Shoppers insist on options at the checkouts

The report suggests that after shoppers have made their decision, they are demanding a seamless on and offline experience when actually making their purchase.

When asked whether shoppers preferred to buy from a physical store, online or using a combination of the two, there was an increase across every category with respondents saying they wanted to be able to purchase using a mix. The number of people wishing to purchase only from online stores remained stable, while those opting to only visit physical stores declined.

AMP Capital Shopping Centre Head of Marketing Belinda Daly said: “While we’ve been observing the rise of the omni-channel shopper for some time, this latest report really confirms the trend.”

“For a retailer to be successful today, it’s essential to invest in the magic of the bricks and mortar experience, while also replicating this experience in the online world.

“Australian retail has been slow to adapt to the new omni-channel consumer, but we are increasingly seeing big-hitters such as Myer, David Jones, Big W, Target and Coles invest in e-commerce. The message is clear - shoppers want a seamless experience and it’s our responsibility as landlords and retailers to provide it,” she concluded.

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Note: Michael Bergdahl is a professional international business speaker, author and retail specialist. Mr Bergdahl worked in Bentonville, Arkansas for Wal-Mart, as the Director of People for the headquarters office, where he worked directly with Wal-Mart’s founder Sam Walton. He will be visiting Australia on 15th May as a guest of AMP Capital Shopping Centres, and will be available for interview about his experience and the future of retail.