

New consumer, new attitude



By [Dave Nemeth](#)

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Following this current recession, will see the emergence of the 'new consumer', who has a new set of standards and ethics, particularly when it comes to spending those hard earned Rands.

Splashing *great specials* on broadsheets and dailies and publishing *limited period only* offers in more upmarket magazines, may not be the carrot to getting the customer into your stores. Great deals are available on the net and they are bombarded by these SMS and mails daily and, with the popularity of the smartphone and tablet, messages are invading more than ever.

Consumers can just go online for a great deal, where comparisons can be made and orders placed. Why would they get into their cars, fight the traffic, pay tolls and battle for parking, just to come to your store, be further frustrated by less than mediocre service and possibly be told you are out of stock of this highly desired advertised product?

This may be slightly exaggerated, but this 'new consumer' will be more focused on quality than price and they realize they don't have to rush out right now, to get a so-called great deal, which still has a musty Guangzhou smell to it and probably won't last eight months. They would rather wait a while and save to buy the more expensive, more desired product that will have a lifespan and probably a myriad of genuine ecological benefits attached to it.

Please notice the term "genuine", used in conjunction with ecological; as soon as the eco trend hit, so did "greenwashing" (term used to describe companies that advertise products being "green", purely as a sales gimmick).

The more discerning customer will also have an affinity for local products. This is an international phenomenon, with the English suddenly producing their own fabrics again and the Italians re-opening or restarting their furniture factories - realizing that looking after one's own economy and being more self-sufficient, limits the risk of future international meltdown.

Not only will there be a shift towards product, but also towards the space in which these retailers sell these items - these spaces are going to have to become highly desirable. From clothing to furniture to electronics, these stores need to create excitement and drama, a regurgitation of a photographic pack shot, is just not going to cut it nor are gaudy red and white dangling boards advertising the current "best buy".

This shopping experience needs to satisfy all senses - sight, sound and smell and the consumer will expect to be informed and educated by sales staff who suitably fit the profile of the product they are trying to sell. It still amazes me how companies can employ an inexperienced 20-something to sell an aspirational 20k sofa or top of the range sound system, when the correct profile is the experienced 50 something that has most likely been out of work for the past five years.

This is a time of immense opportunity, but just as technology is moving at the speed of sound, those that start implementing changes to their business models the quickest, will certainly be the ones still in the game in the next ten years.

ABOUT DAVE NEMETH

A leading blue chip international company recently identified Dave as one of the top creative influencers in the country. Dave Nemeth is a qualified designer who has held a variety of senior as well as executive positions with some of the countries leading retail groups, spanning a career of twenty years. Email Dave at daven@worldonline.co.za, follow @davenemeth on Twitter and connect on Facebook.

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