

## Real Friends and Family over twenty times more influential than Social Media Friends

That is just one of the findings from the yearlong study into what influences people’s choice of brand or retailer when making a buying decision.

The British Consumer Index constantly monitors a wide range of ‘Influences to Purchase’ as part of its continuous tracking of the population. The latest publication of the data (Q1 2013) shows that more people are influenced by their family and friends than anything else closely followed by good experience in the past.

Looking at the population as a whole influences fall into three broad categories in terms of the number of people who are affected by them in their decision making.

Ranking of number of people whose choice of product, brand, shop or website when considering making a purchase is influenced by:

Advice from Friends and Family
Past Experience of Brand or Retailer
In Store Sales Discounts
Offers or Vouchers through the Door
Price Comparison Websites
Seen on TV
Email Offers Vouchers
On Line Customer Reviews
Magazine Newspaper Reviews
Internet Offers (e.g. vouchers.co.uk, groupon.co.uk)
Sales Person Advice
On Pack Promotions
Professional Advisor
Newspaper Offers or Vouchers
Offers by Post
Leaflets while Shopping
Recommendations on Social Networks (Facebook, Twitter etc)
Competitions
Brands on Facebook Twitter etc
Mobile Phone Offers while Shopping
Celebrity Endorsement
Prize Draws

Key;

	High (over 40%)		Medium		Low (10% or less)
---	-----------------	---	--------	--	-------------------

The ranking throws up some interesting points:

- Word of mouth and brand experience are still by far the most important influences. The implication being that organisations that get their quality, value and customer service right are more likely to succeed.
- Offers and discounts are far more important than endorsements, competitions and 'buzz'.
- Leaflets through the door are far more influential than those handed out while shopping.
- Mobile is still very much in it's infancy
- On and offline reviews both matter.
- TV is still important
- 'Real World' friends and family carry a lot more weight than 'virtual' friends.

Commenting on the figures Steve Abbott, Director; The British Consumer Index said; "These figures throw up some interesting dilemmas for marketers. The consumer landscape is, as we all know, changing rapidly to a more digital environment. The problem is that many in the marketing industry are far more advanced in their engagement with the digital world than the population in general. This data provides a 'reality check' which can help bring a better balance to the weighting of marketing spend."

Notes:

The British Consumer Index is a continuous tracking study of the population. These figures are based on a population representative sample of 13,107 face to face in home interviews (aged 15+).

The British Consumer Index also covers communication channel preference, likelihood to purchase and financial optimism set against other factors such as Internet access and use and 11 segmentation models from; Acorn, Cameo, Censation, Mosaic, Personix, P<sup>2</sup> and OAC.

The full data for this report is available for purchase as an Excel Pivot table from

<http://www.bcindex.co.uk/#/influences/4573198918>

For more details contact:

Steve Abbott

T; 0203 286 1981

E; [stevea@thebps.co.uk](mailto:stevea@thebps.co.uk)

Skype; steveathebps

