

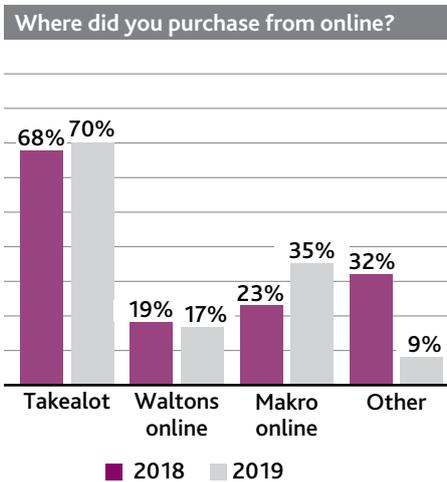


# Back to School shopping – volatile changes year on year

Where consumers bought their Back-to School supplies this year versus last year may well be a cause for concern for many store operators.

That's one of the outcomes of a Field Agent survey conducted this January and overlaid against similar research done in 2018. While Pick n Pay is still ahead of the pack in terms of stores shopped, its lead has shrunk significantly. In fact all the stores but Waltons named in the survey lost share of the respondents' shopping for this event with Spar taking the biggest percentage knock.

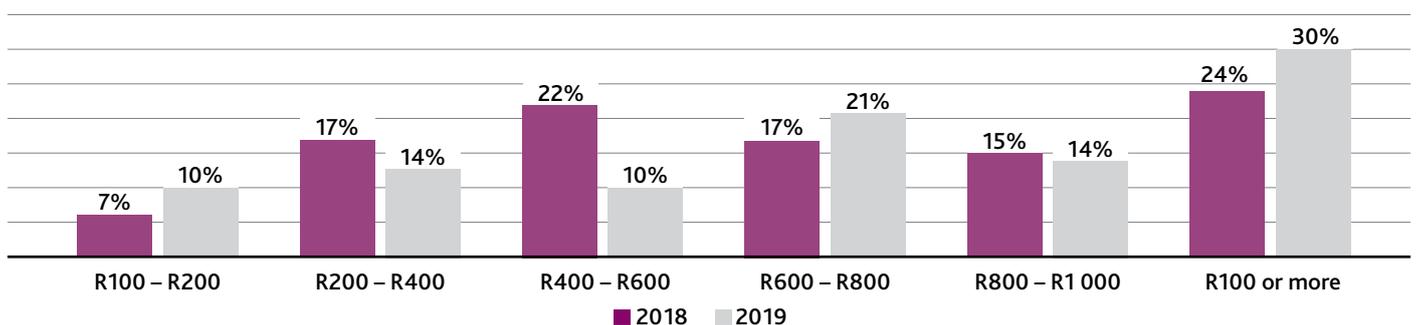
While it's not clear whether this result



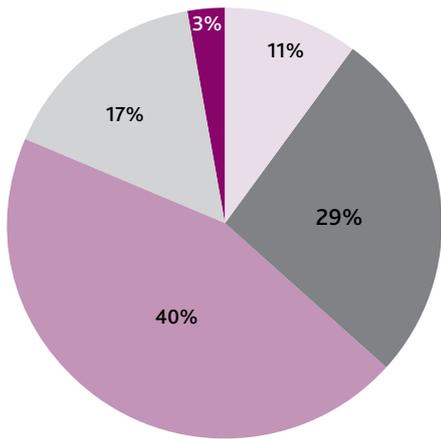
reflects shoppers concentrating their Back to School shopping across fewer outlets, it is interesting to note that some 40% of shoppers participated in pre-shopping purchases, either through the school or a third party. At the same time the online players share of shopping looks relatively stable but many respondents expressed interest in shopping in-store rather than online.

Price remains the key reason for choosing one store over another (77%). This was followed by quality with numbers of respondents commenting on products not lasting then convenience and availability. On the question

**How much money did you spend?**



When did you plan to do your shopping?



- 1-2 weeks before school starts
- 1 month before school starts
- The week school starts
- At least 2 months before school starts
- After school started

of availability some 35% of respondents complained that lots of items were out-of-stock but this is an improvement over 2018 when 52% complained.

Small ranges in some outlets was another complaint.

The importance of Back-to-School shopping to consumers is reflected in the fact that 40% planned for it a month or longer before schools started. A number also reflected that they should start the shopping earlier in order to budget better for it.

Shopping for the event is stressful at best. Slow checkouts can crown the experience with a real negative in the customers mind that will affect their willingness to return to the store.

“ The online players share of shopping looks relatively stable but many respondents expressed interest in shopping in-store rather than online. ”



About Field Agent

Crowdsourcing via smartphones gives Field Agent an unbiased, real-time understanding of consumer shopping habits and frustrations. This assists retailers and marketers to focus on relevant operational issues and reinforce customer loyalty and shopper satisfaction. Feedback is collected through photos, videos, audio, timers, barcode scanners, and a general survey platform, capturing consumer insights instantaneously.

Through this Field Agent is changing the way the world collects business information. It now trends at 22 000 agents in SA. For more details, email: [client@fieldagentsa.com](mailto:client@fieldagentsa.com).



TEACHING MOMENT

Some of the suggestions from respondents to make the event a better experience included:

- Make more stock available – more choice
- Staff should replenish the shelves immediately.
- All the Back-to-School items should be merchandised in one place
- All the tills should be open during the event.

Where did you go to buy your supplies?

