

Online Shoppers in Asia/Pacific Shopping More Despite Economic Climate: MasterCard Survey

Hong Kong Remains Conservative Towards Online Shopping

Hong Kong, 7 May, 2009 - The latest survey on online shopping habits by MasterCard Worldwide revealed that online shoppers shopped more frequently and spent more money shopping online in 4Q 2008 than in the prior year. Today, the company published its latest Insights Report, *Economic Crisis and Preference for Online Shopping in Asia/Pacific, Middle East and Africa* which showed that online shoppers across this region spent an average of US\$667 online in 4Q 2008 versus US\$633 during the same quarter in 2007, and made an average of 3.3 purchases, up from 3.1 in 2007.

Not only have they shopped more despite the economic climate, with the exception of Korea and Hong Kong, all other markets surveyed showed an increased intention for future online shopping compared to a year ago.

In Hong Kong, only 45% of respondents used the internet for the purpose of online shopping. While all other markets witnessed an increase in the frequency of online shopping year-on-year, Hong Kong remained unchanged. Hong Kong online shoppers made an average of two purchases in 4Q 2008, the same as last year. Average spending on online shopping decreased slightly to US\$543 in 4Q 2008 from US\$603 in 4Q 2007. Overall satisfaction with online shopping also witnessed a decline; 63% of respondents in 4Q 2008 stated that they were either “extremely satisfied” or “quite satisfied” compared to 73% in 4Q 2007. The most frequently bought items amongst Hong Kong online shoppers included movie/concert tickets (34%), toys and gifts (33%) and books and arts (31%). Toys and gifts (31%) and ladies clothing and accessories (28%) were the most impulsively bought items.

This is the second survey on online shopping habits conducted by MasterCard. It covered 5037 respondents across 10 markets: Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, UAE and South Africa with the latter two being new markets included in 2008. The inaugural survey was conducted in December 2007. *The survey and the accompanying Insights Report do not represent MasterCard financial performance.*

Books and arts (with 38% of online shoppers choosing this) emerged as the most frequently bought items online, closely followed by home appliances and electronic products (37%) and CDs/DVDs/VCDs (36%).

The majority of the online shopping conducted in the region was planned, with 83% of online shoppers admitting that they tend to plan their shopping in advance and conduct research on their planned purchases. Most online shoppers either bought items impulsively “hardly ever” (36%) or “just a couple of times” (38%). The top reason for impulsive buying was the discounted prices (67%) that online channels afford.

“Online shopping is growing in popularity despite the current economic climate, as consumers realize the convenience and ease of shopping online. As businesses look to grow their online retail presence, they need to be aware of the preferences and concerns that drive online shoppers. The findings of MasterCard’s latest Insights Report, *Economic Crisis and Preference for Online Shopping in Asia/Pacific, Middle East and Africa* offer valuable insights into the online consumption patterns of these consumers,” said Georgette Tan, vice president, Communications, Asia/Pacific, Middle East and Africa, MasterCard Worldwide.

About MasterCard Worldwide

MasterCard Worldwide advances global commerce by providing a critical economic link among financial institutions, businesses, cardholders and merchants worldwide. As a franchisor, processor and advisor, MasterCard develops and markets payment solutions, processes approximately 21 billion transactions each year, and provides industry-leading analysis and consulting services to financial-institution customers and merchants. Powered by the MasterCard Worldwide Network and through its family of brands, including MasterCard®, Maestro® and Cirrus®, MasterCard serves consumers and businesses in more than 210 countries and territories. For more information go to www.mastercard.com.

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