Foot traffic: shopping for men’s sports shoes

Basketball legend Michael Jordan once said “It’s not about the shoes; it’s about what you do in them” – which is a bit rich, coming from a man with his own line of sporting footwear. Truth is, whether you’re an Olympian or a back-street jogger, Messi in the making or a weekend golfer, the right pair of shoes counts for a lot. And the latest findings from Roy Morgan Research reveal that nearly 800,000 Aussies 14+ buy men’s sporting shoes in any given four weeks, spending an average of $108 each.

Last year, 791,000 Australians bought men’s sporting shoes in any given four-week period (up from 728,000 in 2014). Seventy percent of purchases are made by men, and somewhat surprisingly, 30% are made by women.

For the second consecutive year, Rebel Sport is the most popular store for buying men’s sporting footwear. The 2015 winner of the Roy Morgan Customer Satisfaction Award for Sports Store of the Year accounts for 9.2% of all shoppers (some 73,000 people) who buy men’s sporting shoes in an average four weeks.

Top 10 retailers for men’s sporting footwear: customer volume

Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), January–December 2015 (n=448).

In second place is Rivers (8.1%/64,000 shoppers), while The Athlete’s Foot (winner of the Shoe Store category in last year’s Roy Morgan Research Customer Satisfaction Awards) is the third-
most popular store for buying men’s sporting footwear, attracting 6.3%/50,000 of total shoppers.

Five of the remaining seven stores in the Top 10 are specialist sports retailers, with discount department stores Big W and Kmart also making an appearance.

Customer numbers vs average amount spent

If we consider the average amount spent per customer on men’s sports shoes at these retailers, a different picture emerges.

With an average customer spend of $177, The Athlete’s Foot leads the field in terms of dollars spent per person. Foot Locker may rank eighth in terms of shopper numbers, but it shoots up to second place for the average amount ($146) its customers spend on men’s sporting footwear.

Top 10 retailers for men’s sporting footwear: average customer spend

Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), January–December 2015 (n=462).

Customers at Nike Stores spend the third-highest amount ($140), while those shopping at Rebel Sport come in fourth ($133). Budget sneakers are the go at Kmart, where thrifty customers spend an average of $30.

Andrew Price, General Manager – Consumer Products, Roy Morgan Research, says:

“Purchase incidence of men’s sporting shoes – commonly referred to as sneakers or trainers – has been relatively stable in Australia for some time, increasing incrementally year to year. Since 2009, Rebel Sport and The Athlete’s Foot have battled it out as the
country’s most popular men’s sport-shoe retailer, with the former currently attracting a higher number of shoppers and the latter leading for highest average customer spend.

“Both of these stores are regular winners in the Roy Morgan Customer Satisfaction Awards, and this commitment to their customers would certainly contribute to their success in this field.

“Sporting footwear must strike a balance between specific performance requirements (which vary depending on the sport) and the demands of fashion-conscious customers who want to look stylish even when exercising. Brands serious about understanding what factors drive their target market’s purchasing decisions would benefit from the holistic, in-depth insights that only Roy Morgan Research Single Source data can provide.”

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research’s consumer products data, please contact:

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Related research findings

View our range of Sports Store Customer profiles, including the Rebel Sport Customer profile, and our Shoe Store Customer profiles, including the Athlete’s Foot Customer profile.

Compiled with data from Roy Morgan’s Single Source survey (the largest of its kind in the world, with 50,000 respondents p.a), these ready-made profiles provide a broad understanding of the target audience, in terms of demographics, attitudes, activities and media usage in Australia.

About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years’ experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

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