

**For Immediate use - Press Release – August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

## **Mind The Gap: Businesses in South Africa adjust to cope with COVID-19 safety measures for customers**

As businesses across South Africa are adapting to meet customer expectations in relation to safety measures, it has been seen that failure to do so negatively impacts customer feelings of safety, potentially impacting footfall and hitting profits. This is the overarching finding of a recent survey carried out by MSPA Europe/Africa during July as lockdown measures continue to ease across the country.

The survey evaluated the experiences members of the general public when visiting 66 locations ranging from shops, supermarkets, car dealers, fast food and dining establishments. Based on the principles of COVID transmission prevention, findings were split out into performance on sanitisation, signage, staff and customer social distancing and PPE. Respondents were asked about their resultant feeling of safety and likelihood to return to the places they visited.

The findings show some gaps in compliance to known guidelines with a potential health impact and a potential impact on consumer confidence and advocacy levels.

Despite good use of signage and sanitisation, **20% of staff and also 20% of customers failed to adhere to social distancing guidelines**. There is a low **(3%) chance of not finding hand sanitisers** available, and staff were found **without PPE in only 3% of locations** – lack of sanitisation availability the most impact on how safe customer feel.

Likely to Recommend was also influenced most by sanitisation and staff with PPE, both of which scored well in our sample.



Stefaan Vandroogenbroeck, President of MSPA Europe/Africa commented: “All these measures are directly within in the control of businesses and efforts must be increased to ensure customers feel safe in their locations. This can only be achieved by training those in the frontline and regularly monitoring every location. Safety is the number one customer priority for the foreseeable future, and companies that ignore these warnings will struggle to weather this storm”.

For more information about the survey, visit our website at [www.mspa-ea.org](http://www.mspa-ea.org)

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The MSPA is the representative Trade Association for companies participating in the Mystery Shopping industry. The Association operates on a regional basis and has over 500 member companies worldwide. Member companies unite as a common body for the purpose of strengthening the Mystery Shopping industry through combined efforts and actions. Mystery Shopping is used by organisations all over the world to monitor business performance at the point of customer contact, improve areas of weakness and recognise areas of strength.

The survey above operated from 7 to 21 July 2020, achieved representative samples in 12 markets and over 7,000 evaluations. Plans are underway to repeat the survey later in 2020.

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