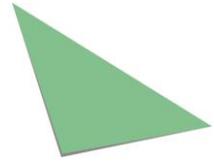


TWO SIDES PRESS RELEASE



Responsible organisations should not remove the right from consumers to choose whether they receive paper or digital communications. Latest study reveals.

There is a worrying trend from organisations who increasingly want to move their customer communications online, particularly bills and statements. Typically, this decision is made for cost reasons but too often, misleading claims are used that it is better for the environment. Commonly referred to as Greenwashing.

A study, conducted by the not-for-profit organisation Two Sides and independent research company Toluna, aims to understand changing consumer perceptions towards print and paper. The study found that consumers overwhelmingly want the right to choose how they receive their communications (digitally or printed) from organisations. 86% of South African Consumers want this choice.

The right to choose.

Defaulting people online without a choice to save cost, will impact those most vulnerable and at risk in our communities. Many South Africans have never or are not able to use the internet. Often, it is the most vulnerable members of society that depend on traditional, postal, transactional mail. The move to an online only society risks leaving older people, the disabled, rural dwellers and those on low incomes disconnected.

Alongside the right to choose, consumers are also demanding that they are not penalised for selecting paper communication. Close to 60% of consumers agree that they should not be charged more for choosing a paper bill or statement. Furthermore, organisations must be careful when forcing their customers online. 77% want the choice to be available to switch back to paper if moved to digital only communication platforms.

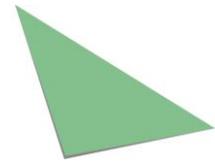
Digital communication isn't always preferred.

In a society where everything happens online, organisations are in danger of thinking that digital is always the preferred option. However, this isn't always the case. 73% of South African consumers are increasingly concerned that their personal information held electronically is at risk of being hacked, stolen, lost or damaged.

Furthermore, even if a consumer is moved to digital bills and statements, it rarely stays "paperless". 66% of consumers regularly print out hard copies at home or office if they want a hard copy.

It cannot be denied that digital is having an impact on how we communicate but the growing dependence on digital brings its own challenges. The survey reveals that getting away from digital devices is more important than ever. 53% of SA consumers are concerned about how digital devices may be damaging their health and just over 53% agree they spend too much time on their devices.

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Which is best; Print or Digital?

Print and digital are often compared in a bid to decide which is best. However, the debate shouldn't centre around "print vs. digital", as both channels are important and complement each other. Ultimately, consumers must be given the right to decide how they would like to receive communications; ensuring that consumer choice is maintained and those unwilling or unable to access digital information are not disadvantaged.

The Impact of Greenwashing

Organisations should steer clear from claiming that digital communications are better for the environment than paper communications. This marketing practice is known as "greenwashing", where broad statements of the environmental benefit of switching to digital communications from paper are not substantiated by competent and reliable scientific evidence.

"Statements such as "Go Green, Go Paperless" are not just misleading but hugely damaging to an industry that employs thousands of people in South Africa.

The research shows that half of consumers are not fooled by an organisation that wants them to switch from paper to digital communication based on environmental grounds. 49% of South African consumers know that this is down to cost saving.

Two Sides continues to actively challenge major organisations found to be misleading consumers by using environmental claims about the use of paper.

To find out more about the Two Sides campaign, and how you can become a supporter visit:

<https://www.twosides.info/become-a-member/>

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Notes to editors

About the Two Sides Trend Tracker Survey

In January 2021, a global study of 8,800 consumers was commissioned by Two Sides and conducted online by independent research company, Toluna. Nationally representative surveys were undertaken in Brazil (1,000), the US (1,000) and 10 countries in Europe, including Austria (500), Belgium (600), Denmark (500), Finland (350), France (1,000), Germany (1,000), Italy (1,000), Norway (350), Sweden (500) and the UK (1,000). The survey will be conducted every two years to explore and understand consumer preferences, perceptions and attitudes towards print, paper and paper packaging. The South African research was conducted in 2019 and 500 consumers were polled.

About Two Sides

Two Sides is a not-for-profit global initiative promoting the unique sustainable and attractive attributes of print, paper and paper packaging. Two Sides' members span the entire print, paper and packaging value chain, including forestry, pulp, paper, packaging, inks and chemicals, finishing, publishing, printing, envelopes and postal operators.

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To get the environmental facts about the paper industry, go to www.twosides.info/myths-and-facts

To find out more about Two Sides, go to www.twosides.info