

## The shopping habits of more than 100,000 Canadians are revealed with BrandSpark's annual Canadian Shopper Study



**January 14, 2014 (Toronto, ON)** – The BrandSpark Canadian Shopper Study is Canada's most comprehensive source of insights about Canadians' shopping habits for everyday food and beverage, health and beauty, household and kids products that Canadians regularly purchase. Now in its eleventh year, the study surveys Canadians about their everyday purchasing decisions and their attitudes towards such topics as food and nutrition, health, media habits, the economy, the environment, and new technology. More than 100,000 Canadian shoppers participated in the 2014 study.

The study results are also used to compile winners for the eleventh annual Best New Product Awards (BNPAs) – Canada's largest and most credible consumer-packaged goods (CPG) awards program. This year Canadians voted 88 products as winners in the Food & Beverage, Health & Beauty, and Household categories. Winning products were 100% consumer voted by the more than 90,000 Canadians who voted.

For a complete list of winning products, please visit [www.BestNewProducts.ca](http://www.BestNewProducts.ca).

“With more than a decade of research and data about Canadian shopping habits to draw from, plus BrandSpark's companion Shopper Studies around the globe – including the United States, Mexico, China, Brazil, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Turkey, Russia, Taiwan, and Japan – the annual Study provides a wealth of insight into shoppers in Canada, across North America and around the world,” said Robert Levy, President and CEO of BrandSpark International and Founder of the Best New Product Awards. “We can see how Canadians might be similar or different from those other shoppers.”

### **Canadian Shopper Trends from The 2014 Study Include:**

#### **Economic Outlook: 33% are less loyal to companies now than before the latest recession**

The global economic crisis, while arguably in the past, is still fresh in the minds of many Canadians and continues to have an impact on their purchasing decisions. Thirty-three per cent say that their life was negatively impacted by the recent economic downturn and 20% feel that their family is better off financially now than six months earlier, while 22% believe that they are worse off. Though 28% expect their financial situation to improve in the next six months, 55% of Canadians do not expect their financial situation to change, and 11% expect it to be worse. In this climate, perception of value will remain key to product success, with 81% of Canadians saying that they are always looking for ways to reduce spending on everyday items, and 79% saying that they often postpone making purchases until they spot a good deal.

#### **New Product Interest: 77% like trying new products**

Canadians are interested in trying new and innovative products and many are open to the idea of paying a premium for quality innovation. Roughly 67% of Canadians say that they would be willing to pay more for a new product if it was better than the current selection of similar products. This notion is supported by the belief in the value of research and development (R&D) in product innovation: approximately 60% of Canadian shoppers believe that R&D is “constantly leading to better products.”

#### **Shopping Habits: 88% report that they always or sometimes use written shopping lists**

Shopping lists are a routine for most Canadians and were used on 60% of CPG shopping trips. However, even with the list in hand, shoppers reported that they forgot to pick up something they needed 11% of the time, and they purchased items they did not plan to buy on 49% of trips.

#### **Value: 92% feel proud when they get great value for their money**

Getting value for money continues to be a major area of focus for Canadians, leading them to look for lower-priced private label products. In fact, 55% of Canadians believe that private label products are just as good as brand name products while 45% consider store brands to be of better value. Despite this, Canadians still see value in established brands and 76% prefer to buy brand name products when they're on sale as opposed to purchasing a private label equivalent.

#### **Environment: Consumers appreciate environmental benefits, but few, 40%, will pay more for environmentally friendly products**

Eighty per cent of Canadians believe that their choices each day can have a positive effect on the environment, and they are willing to take small steps like purchasing reusable shopping bags to reduce plastic waste. Yet, only 40% say they are willing to pay more for products that are environmentally friendly. Part of this stems from skepticism

over environmental claims: 66% feel that many “green” or “eco-” labels are misleading.

**Baby/Kids Products: Parents of young children are looking for convenience and health guarantees, and are drawn to organics more than the average shopper**

When considering baby products, parents want products that will be healthy and safe, and they look to brands they know and trust. Busy parents also want convenience, with 70% wanting new baby products that are easy to prepare or use, and 60% looking for them to save them time. Parents of the youngest children also continue to lead the way with organics, with 49% agreeing that organic products are healthier among 38% of shoppers overall, and 35% are willing to pay more for organics, compared to 26% overall. Even with the desire for organic products 47% of parents with children aged three years and under are still confused about what “organic” exactly guarantees.

**Food and Health: 76% of Canadians are actively making changes in their lifestyle to be healthier**

Canadians want to live healthier and recognize the importance of diet in improving overall health. In fact, 88% of Canadians are convinced that there is a lot they can do with food and nutrition to prevent illness. The Study reports that 56% of Canadians are trying to improve their food consumption habits by paying attention to the daily intake values shown on product packaging. However, there is still a gap between shopper knowledge of healthy eating practices and follow-through; more than 44% of Canadians know Canada Food Guide’s recommended daily intake of nutrients but less than 40% actually follow these recommendations.

**Mobile Shopping Habits: 54% of Canadians have used their smartphone to make a purchase decision**

Fifty per cent of Canadians own a smartphone and many are using them to make purchase decisions. Smartphone owners only report using their device for a shopping related purpose on 7% of CPG shopping trips; however, overall 54% report having used their smartphone in this way at some point. Among these shoppers, 17% reported looking up product information, while 31% compared prices online before purchasing and 13% searched for product reviews and consumer testimonials on the spot. Overall, 12% of Canadian CPG shoppers said that they have made a different purchase decision in the past because of information accessed on their smartphone while in-store.

**Purchase Influencers: 95% of Canadians check grocery store flyers every month**

Flyers remain crucial to influencing the purchasing behavior of CPG shoppers, with 95% of Canadian shoppers reporting that they check grocery store flyers every month at the least. Readership remains high for mass merchandise retailers and drug stores at 85% and 79% respectively. While shoppers display a clear preference towards the print flyer format, digital/online flyers are still a significant part of the promotional landscape with 57% of Canadians checking them each month. When asked about their most recent shopping trip 49% of Canadians said that they checked print flyers and 23% said that they looked at online flyers prior to the trip.

**About the 2014 BrandSpark Canadian Shopper Study**

The 2014 BrandSpark Canadian Shopper Study sample was weighted to conform to the PMB national profile of principal grocery shoppers. Companion studies are conducted in the United States, Mexico, China, Brazil, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Turkey, Russia, Taiwan, and Japan.

**About BrandSpark International**

BrandSpark International is a leading brand, marketing and product innovation research company. Its comprehensive and innovative research approach gets at the heart of how consumers think, why they act the way they do, and what clients need to do about it. With expertise in retail and leisure categories and an exclusive relationship with the Best New Product Awards, BrandSpark has a deep global perspective on the drivers of innovation unlike any other research company. For more information, visit [www.BrandSpark.com](http://www.BrandSpark.com).

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Artwork is available for download at [www.JeffersonDarrell.com](http://www.JeffersonDarrell.com).

For interview requests, to receive additional information about 2014 Best New Product Award winners, Canadian consumer trends or for more information about the BrandSpark Canadian Shopper Study, please contact:

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