



**Environics Communications**  
**CanTrust Index**

**Trust and Primary Shoppers**

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# Trust and Primary Shoppers

**The Environics Communications CanTrust Index** examines the sources that Canadians trust for important information, as well as their trust in organizations and leaders. We examined several population segments, and found that Primary Shoppers (respondents who identify as their household's Primary Shopper) hold the lowest overall levels of trust in almost every area, when compared to Canadians in general.

Environics Communications identifies and engages with audiences and influencers to build trust in companies and brands. This survey, with special analysis about Primary Shoppers, is part of our service to clients and demonstrates our commitment to knowing Canadians.

Perhaps owing to being more experienced compared to the average Canadian, the Primary Shopper is discerning, and even skeptical, of organizations and their communications efforts. Tasked with making purchasing decisions for their family, the Primary Shopper relies on friends and other consumers to skillfully navigate the consumer landscape.



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### Who are Canada's Primary Shoppers?

Members of this segment are more likely than the average respondent to be female, English-speaking and born in Canada. They are also more likely to be Facebook users and rent or lease their home.

### Lower trust in organizations

CanTrust Index survey respondents who identify as their household's Primary Shopper are more likely to be distrustful of any organization and their ability to do what is right for Canada, Canadians and our society. This includes not-for-profits, news media, small, medium

and large-sized corporations and governments. Primary Shoppers are more likely to indicate that they have no trust in any of these organizations in their ability to do what is right for Canada, suggesting that there is room for improvement when it comes to building confidence amongst this key consumer group.

When it comes to trust in political and business figures, Primary Shoppers again display the lowest levels of trust. For instance, when compared to Canadians as a whole, Primary Shoppers are less likely to trust in their community mayor (by 4%), their provincial premier (by 4%), and their prime minister (by 3%) in their ability to do what is right for Canada.

### Lower trust in industries

Compared to all Canadians, Primary Shoppers are also less likely to trust in various industries and their ability to do what is right for Canada. Notably, Primary Shoppers are slightly less trusting by 2% in social media platforms, in the energy industry, and in telecommunications when compared to the Canadian average. They are also 3% less likely to trust banks and food retailers, and 4% less likely to trust the broadcast and streaming industry. Interestingly, one-third of Primary Shoppers say they have no trust whatsoever in any of the above industries.

1/3

Of Primary Shoppers say they have no trust whatsoever in Canadian industries.



An organization's actions also play a role in influencing how much Canadians trust in its ability to do what is right for Canada. However, the Primary Shopper places lower levels of importance on these actions, when compared to the average Canadian. Primary Shoppers place less importance on a company's support of local charities (lower by 4%), on their ability to create jobs and invest in their community (by 3%), and on the degree to which an organization is open and accessible through communications (by 3%). They are also less likely than the average Canadian to trust in an organization if they know someone who likes working there (by 4%).

#### Trust in sources

Just as for Canadians overall, Primary Shoppers rank word of mouth recommendations at 75% as the most trusted source of information about a product, service or brand. A close second is sampling the product or service at 74%, followed by online reviews (50%) and editorial content (47%). As shown elsewhere in this study, trust in companies is below the national average for these shoppers.



# 83%

of Primary Shoppers  
will check online  
reviews prior to  
making a purchase

#### Online and social media

Primary Shoppers (like the average Canadian) express low levels of trust in information from companies on social media.

When it comes to the online activities of corporations on social media, 7% of Primary Shoppers feel it is not at all important for a CEO of a major company to be visible and accessible on social media – a sentiment that is significantly higher than the average Canadian.

Primary Shoppers are also slightly more likely to advocate for a cause than Canadians as a whole. Primary Shoppers who have signed an online petition are 3% more likely than the average Canadian to participate in additional activities, such as making a donation, volunteering their time, or attending a demonstration.

Many Canadians (84%) will check online reviews from experienced consumers prior to making a purchase and Primary Shoppers (83%) are also likely to conduct this research.

# Actionable Insights

1

Because Primary Shoppers demonstrate the lowest levels of trust across all organizations and industries, continued efforts in reputation management are essential to improving trust amongst this group.

2

Since Primary Shoppers have low trust in information shared by companies on social media, ensure that your brand has the right mix of marketing tactics and channels to reach these consumers. Verification by third-parties is useful.

3

Primary Shoppers listen to others, so make sure your product's reputation ecosystem is a positive place.

4

After signing an online petition, Primary Shoppers are more likely to take an active advocacy role on behalf of a cause, so by providing opportunities for these individuals to engage with a brand in meaningful ways, they might be more likely to become an active ambassador on a brand's behalf.

For more information, please contact Vanessa Eaton at Environics Communications at (416) 920-9000 or [veaton@environicspr.com](mailto:veaton@environicspr.com)

The Environics Communications CanTrust Index is based upon an online survey of 1,001 Canadians 18+ years of age conducted between February 29 to March 7, 2016. It is nationally representative by region, age and gender. The subsample of new Canadians (with 15 or fewer years in Canada) was 151. The subsample of Primary Shoppers was 562.