

4 ways to beat tricky last-mile deliveries in SA townships this Black Friday

The 2022 South African Township CX Report, which surveyed more than 1,400 township residents, found that in the space of a year online purchases grew by a staggering 42%, from 28% in 2021 to 70% in 2022.

Given their love of technology and the internet, it stands to reason that millennials and the Gen Z generation are clicking more to shop online. As the report notes, "the younger the audience, the higher the propensity is for online purchases".



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

According to the data, township shoppers favour fashion, mobile data and food, and with Black Friday coming up, it can be expected that even more people will be looking for great deals ahead of Christmas.

But as much as e-commerce is on the rise in townships, it's also important to understand it's not all plain sailing, says Lars Veul, CEO and co-founder of Pargo.

"Retailers looking to break into these markets will find that cash is still king, and there remains a lot of scepticism around online transactions. While telecommunications companies are turning to WhatsApp to provide payment alternatives, many residents still don't have smartphones that support mobile payments.

Deliveries to consumers present another challenge. "Often courier companies are reluctant to enter areas identified as

crime hotspots, and even if they do, there can be the problem of inefficiencies in geo-location apps that might not pick up specific addresses."

Effective delivery can't be emphasised enough.

A study published in August, *Online shopping behaviour and service quality perceptions of young people in South Africa: A Covid-19 perspective*, says young shoppers consider delivery costs, time waiting for a delivery and order accuracy as the most important factors in selecting an online store.

There are ways for township challenges to be overcome, however, thanks to huge advancements in technology. Veul provides a few things to consider ahead of Black Friday:

Build trust

It's important to remember that residents may have saved up precious rands for months to make a purchase online. That should be respected and they should always be reassured their parcels are on the way. This can be done through real-time driver tracking and automating delivery status changes.

Research the area

If there are crime hotspots, know where they are. This also applies to areas that most people consider safe. The old adage of "location, location, location" is just as important in the townships as it is elsewhere. If many orders come in for Black Friday, select a click & collect pickup point that is easily accessible to all.

Free delivery

Free delivery is a massive drawcard, especially in townships where money is tight. It's a no-brainer that if your delivery is free and your competitors are not, the customer will choose you.

Social's where it's at

Selling on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram is big business. It's affordable and anyone can do it. It also represents the perfect chance to reach out to township residents.

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