Smokers and non-smokers agree: Bans are okay in public places

Contributed by Synovate
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Smokers also willing to pay price for tobacco-friendly flights

HONG KONG â€" As smoking bans continue to make headlines in Germany, Australia and the UK, findings from international market research firm Synovate's latest survey show that 80% of respondents in 15 countries across the globe are in favour of such bans, primarily because of the positive influence these are perceived to have upon public health.

The June 2007 study also shows that 60 percent of respondents who say they are smokers support bans in public places such as restaurants, bars and buildings, compared to nearly 90 percent of non-smokers.

Although pubs across the world have started retiring their ashtrays, other businesses have started looking into opportunities presented by catering to a smokers' market.

Seventeen percent of all respondents agree that they are willing to pay extra to fly on an airline that allows smoking â€" an insight that comes in handy for Germany's soon-to-launch Smintair, the world's first airline promising to "reinstate the liberty of smoking in all seats".

Synovate's smoking ban study polled over 8,500 respondents in Bulgaria, Cyprus, France, Italy, Korea, the Netherlands, Russia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Taiwan, Thailand, South Africa, the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom.

Smoking bans win global support

More than 70% of people believe that smoking in public is fine as long as there is adequate ventilation or designated smoking spaces, according to the Synovate study.

Just under half (48%) of people supportive of smoking bans are in favour of them because they believe they have a positive influence upon public health, 33 percent support them because they do not like to be in places where other people are smoking and 14% believe smoking bans make dining out and entertainment options more enjoyable.

Smoker statistics

Synovate's global smoking ban study found that, on average, 31% of respondents across the 15 countries surveyed classify themselves as smokers.

Slovakia has the most cigarette smokers, with half of all respondents smoking regularly, followed by Bulgaria (47%) and Russia (41%).

Singapore (13%) has the lowest numbers of smokers across all countries surveyed.

The smokers-only target market

While smoking in public spaces is becoming socially unacceptable in many places across the world, some unique marketing opportunities targeting smoker's needs are also emerging.

Seventeen percent of all respondents to Synovate's global smoking ban survey agreed that they would pay extra to fly on an airline that allows smoking.

Respondents in Slovakia (52%), Taiwan (28%) and Korea (20%) are most likely to be the first customers of any smoking-friendly airline, while passengers from Italy (6%), Singapore (8%) and the United Arab Emirates (9%) would prove harder to recruit.

Curiosities

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- Italians (96%), Thais (96%) and Taiwanese (93%) are most supportive of wide-ranging smoking bans.
- Seventy-three percent of non-smokers globally believe that banning smoking in public places is a good way to encourage smokers to stop.
- Twenty-eight percent of smokers who don't support the bans think they're just another way for the government to interfere in citizens' private lives.