British Columbians Name Most Environmentally-Friendly Retailers

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Majority (71%) Say A Retailerâ€™s Environmental Activities Important In Their Shopping Decision

Retailersâ€™ activities in helping to preserve and protect the environment are visibly still very relevant to British Columbians. According to a recent study by Ipsos Reid conducted in the spring of 2012, a large majority (71%) say that retailersâ€™ actions are either very or somewhat important in deciding where to shop.

The importance placed on this aspect of a retailerâ€™s performance has remained high each time it has been tested (67% in 2011; 72% in 2010; and 74% in 2009).

But what kind of a grade do BC retailers get when it comes to environmental performance and who are the retailers that stand out in the minds of British Columbians as doing a particularly good job? These were some of the questions Ipsos Reid posed in the 2012 edition of the Retailers and the Environment Study, an annual study of the attitudes and opinions British Columbians have about the environmental actions of retailers operating in the province.

Collectively, results suggest that not all British Columbians are satisfied with the job that retailers are doing; only 39% give retailers as a whole in BC a good score (2% very good, 37% somewhat good). But this is because more British Columbians are unable to answer (34% donâ€™t know) rather than a lot feeling they are doing a poor job (25% give retailers a poor score, 2% very poor).

Catherine Dawson, Senior Vice President, Ipsos Reid in Vancouver explains,
â€œOur results are clearly reflecting the fact that many consumers havenâ€™t heard about actions taken by BC retailers when i comes to environmental protection and sustainability. This suggests that better communication tactics by retailers can make a difference as much as better environmental strategies can.â€•

However, even if all retailers are not demonstrating their eco-smarts, there are some retailers in BC that are standing out. Survey respondents were asked to name one retailer they thought best exemplifies an environmentally-friendly business (without a pre-determined list to choose from) and 70% were able to name a retailer that they feel is making the grade.

Topping this list is BC-based outdoor activity and recreation retailer Mountain Equipment Co-op. Other BC-based retailers including London Drugs, Save-On-Foods, and Choices ranked in the Top 10 alongside international brands such as Starbucks, The Body Shop, and Whole Foods. A complete Top 10 list is as follows:

Top 10 Mentioned Environmentally-Friendly Retailers in BC
Mountain Equipment Co-op
Save-On-Foods
Starbucks
Thrifty Foods
The Body Shop
Real Canadian Superstore
London Drugs
Choices Market
Whole Foods
Safeway

This study is part of Ipsos Reidâ€™s 2012 Retail Trends in British Columbia Study which features regular special feature reports on current events in the retail industry.

These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid study fielded from March 26 to April 3, 2012. This online survey of 1,177 adult British Columbians, 18 years and older, was conducted using Ipsos Reidâ€™s proprietary â€œVoice of the West Interactive Forumâ€• â€“ an online panel of more than 6,000 British Columbians who have been randomly recruited to match the overall characteristics of the adult residents of the province. Statistical margins of error are not applicable to online studies of this nature, however, an unweighted probability sample of this size, with a 100% response rate, would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 2.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

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