

2019 Research Conference to unpack retail trends, tech and the 'Afripolitan' consumer

The 9th Annual South African Council of Shopping Centres (SACSC) Research Conference, a mainstay event on SA's shopping centre and retail industry calendar, is set to take place at the Maslow Hotel in Johannesburg on 3 April 2019. This year, the spotlight is on retail trends, new 'Afripolitan' consumers and technology.



The conference is sponsored by Excellerate JHI and brings together around 300 industry executives, professionals and thought leaders to share ideas, gain valuable insights and network at a power-packed one-day event.

SACSC chief executive officer, Amanda Stops, comments: "Now in its 9th year, our popular Research Conference has become an established annual retail property industry event in SA and the continent. The event focuses on trends and technology. However, with consumers being at the heart of our industry, this year we zone in further to get a better understanding of what 'Afripolitan' consumers want and marketing to African consumers."

Confirmed speakers at this year's event include:

- Naeem Tilly, head of research, Sesfikile Capital
- David Smith, an equity analyst, Investec Securities
- Mike Vincent, a director at Deloitte
- Cedric Sennepin, CEO of Leroy Merlin SA.
- Andrew Smith co-founder and CEO, Yuppiechef
- GG Alcock, founder of Minanawe Marketing and author of KasiNomics, Third World Child, Kasinomic Revolution.
- Dr Ankit Katrodia, a Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship at the University of KZN's Graduate School of Business and Leadership.
- Doris Viljoen, senior futurist at the Institute for Futures Research
- Jess Jorgensen, director at Instant Grass International
- Jessica Passtore, senior analyst - Competitive Intelligence, Whole Foods Market

Agenda highlights

While Naeem Tilly and David Smith will talk about SA's economic and consumer outlook as well as the state of the retail market, Mike Vincent's presentation looks at whether South African retailers are ready for the 'connected retail revolution'.

Leroy Merlin's Cedric Sennepin will talk about the French DIY retailer's entry into the South African market and how to re-invent the future of retail. Yuppiechef's co-founder and CEO will speak about establishing one of SA's first online stores and how Yuppiechef is now opening physical stores.

In a presentation dubbed 'The Age of the Afropolitan', GG Alcock will talk about marketing as well as understanding and communicating to modern African consumers. Dr Katrodia will present a 'Case Study at Durban Shopping Malls', which investigated the determinants of shopping and buying behaviour.

Meanwhile, Viljoen will present a futurist's overview of how emerging technologies and South African realities could shape shopping centres over the next 10 years. In the conference's closing session, Jorgensen will speak about influencer marketing in the retail sector, while Pastore will look at the next generation of shoppers and how consumers are evolving.

Nomzamo Radebe, CEO of JHI – a Division of Excellerate, says the group is proud to sponsor the SACSC Research Conference.

"We are delighted to once again be partnering with the SACSC to further knowledge sharing and innovation within the South African retail industry. Faced with an incredibly fast-changing, disruptive and complex economic environment, we believe that deep-seated research, knowledge sharing and out-of-the-box thinking is essential to long term success and sustainability for all stakeholders. This year, we place emphasis on understanding the 'customer of the future', as well as how retailers can leverage technology to provide tailored customer experiences," she adds.

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