

Craft Retailers



The South African government has identified the craft industry as a key focus area contributing to sustainable development, economic growth and employment opportunities. An increasing demand has also emerged for craft products globally, .The rise in consumers' disposable incomes and the tendency to accessorise and re-style homes with unique articles are the major driving factors of the surge in demand for crafts and decorative products. However, the industry faces many challenges such as global competition and lack of resources.

Craft producers in South Africa struggle to access the formal craft retail market.. This challenge is due to the lack of understanding of the craft retail buying process, what craft retailers consider as important when searching and selecting suppliers as well as the source of information they make use of. Craft producers are often unable to manage complex communications and networking necessary to sell products to the formal economy. Therefore, craft producers need support such as financial access, financial management, business management, marketing, supply chain management, technical training, and managerial training to access the sophisticated and formal retail market. A study was conducted by K.M. Makhitha, a [PHD student](#) in the [Department of Marketing Management](#), who aimed to determine the craft retail buying process, importance of supplier selection criteria and the information sources utilised.

The findings revealed that retailers go through a lengthy buying process and that 'product quality', 'product is exciting' and 'product styling' were the three most important supplier selection criteria. The study found significant differences between the different types of formal craft retailers and the importance they attach to some of the supplier selection criteria. It was also evident that craft producers could utilise personal and promotional information source to communicate with retailers. . An understanding of these supplier selection criteria used by craft retailers could enable informal craft producers to gain access to the formal market. The study proposed a marketing strategy for craft producers to enable them to market their craft products more effectively to craft retailers.

This research was conducted as part of the fulfilment of the [Master's degree](#) in Marketing Management in 2014 with the [Department of Marketing Management](#) by K.M. Makhitha, under the supervision of [Prof. M. Wiese](#) and [Dr. G. van Heerden](#).