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Should retailers extend trading hours?

by Kirsty Dollison on July 14, 2014

In today's highly competitive, globalised retail trading environment, many Australian consumers are embracing online shopping.

This has forced retailers to reassess all aspects of their businesses, including their trading hours.

It is now evident that retail shops and services, such as post offices and banks', operating hours are outdated and do not acknowledge the shift in societies social patterns.

Changes in social patterns including more flexible and non-traditional working hours, the growing participation of women in the workforce, and growth of both dual income and single parent households have contributed to decisions by retailers to support the removal of trading restrictions.

Allowing retailers the option of trading any hour of the day, seven days a week, with the exception of Christmas Day, Good Friday, New Years, and the morning of Anzac Day is a progressive, forward looking approach to meeting the needs of modern families.

This would also allow retailers to set their own opening hours in response to business and consumer needs.

You could shoot a cannon through most retail stores before lunchtime and not hit anyone. It would make much more sense if these outlets operated between something like 11am to 5pm, as it would provide greater choice and freedom for shoppers, and might even help the retail sector.

When observing the operating hours of some European countries it's plausible to say that the modernisation of retail trading laws in Australia is well overdue.

A host of outdated trading hour restriction exist in areas such as in Queensland, South Australia, and Western Australia. Without any logic, these restrictions often discriminate between retailers on the basis of size, location, or products sold, allowing some stores to trade when others cannot.

It is crucial we acknowledge the shifts in society's trends, tastes and patterns.

Removing trading restrictions will benefit both parties. Extending operating hours will give shoppers every reason to steer clear of the threat online trading poses for retailers and services.

Kirsty Dollison is GM of TorchMedia.

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One Response to Should retailers extend trading hours?



Luke R July 14, 2014 At 2:58 Pm #

The answer to this is an unequivocal YES. Extended trading hours will have immense social benefits such as increased employment, reduced peak traffic in peak hours, reduced need for transport infrastructure, more flexible time - especially for students and non-nuclear families and increased competitiveness with on-line stores. A no-brainer.

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