

8 trends driving innovation in sub-Saharan Africa

Across all consumer industries, innovation in sub-Saharan Africa is seeing new products and services offered to address challenges the continent faces...



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At Euromonitor International's first conference in Johannesburg this week, the global market research company identified the top trends driving innovation in sub-Saharan Africa's retail market:

1. Accommodating basic services

There is a long-term benefit in helping communities gain access to basic services, such as water, electricity, and agricultural expertise to develop farmlands.

2. Going rural

Urbanisation has been the standard metric for defining the development of a country. The continent has a lot to gain by looking at opportunities within rural areas.

3. Sustainability

In a region that already suffers from droughts, heat stress and flooding, sustainability is not just about using recycled products but addressing water shortages on the continent.

4. Local ingredients

Despite the wealth of ingredients available in sub-Saharan Africa, ingredients are still imported from other countries, as the technical expertise for processing is lacking.

5. Technology, mobiles, hubs and apps

Many Africans are using technology to create opportunities beyond mobile payments.

6. Partnerships and cooperatives

Small business is fast becoming the success story of Africa, with many of them locally based and able to tap into the needs and interests of the local community.

7. Go very local

While Africans are embracing modern technology, they also want to keep cultural and social nuances alive.

8. Creative paying systems

Payment systems are helping businesses and consumers alike get access to basic needs and services.



Euromonitor's top 10 global consumer trends for 2019

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Opportunities to win

According to Matthew Carty, global sales director - academics, "The eight trends impacting innovation in sub-Saharan Africa provide insight into opportunities to win in Africa. These trends leverage local resources and infrastructures influencing the flow of goods between countries - or through the supply chain and into the hands of the end consumer."

The sub-Saharan African market faces numerous challenges. Opportunities can be developed by turning challenges into concepts and turning those concepts into opportunities. The eight trends see innovation and solution-provision going hand in hand. This will foster economic empowerment, enabling Africa to continue its story as a continent on the rise.

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