



## Athlete's Foot continues to lead customer satisfaction

By Michelle Hammond  
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Shoe store chain The Athlete's Foot has topped another Roy Morgan survey of customer satisfaction, with customer service and product knowledge proving to be more important than price.

The chain, owned by listed retail group RCG Group, topped the survey of customer satisfaction at non-food retailers.

It scored a 90.9% satisfaction rating among the 448 customers surveyed, all of whom had purchased from the chain in the preceding four weeks.

The survey shows shopping at chemists and music stores also makes people satisfied, with scores over 89%, followed by bookstores including Borders.

However, The Athlete's Foot beat them all to the title, and it's not the first time the shoe retailer has come out on top.

According to an earlier Roy Morgan Retail Satisfaction report, released in December, 91% of customers are satisfied or very satisfied with The Athlete's Foot, which is well above the 85% average for shoe stores.

Norman Morris, industry communications director at Roy Morgan, says The Athlete's Foot is a highly targeted store with a very professional approach, which gives it an advantage over other more general stores.

Buying from Athlete's Foot can be quite expensive but the level of service is outstanding, which is very important. They appear to know what they're doing and reinforce this with their customer service and product knowledge, he says.

According to the latest report, Autobarn was the highest ranked automotive goods retailer. Chemist Warehouse took out the title in the pharmacy category, while the top ranked clothing chain was Bra N Things.

It's believed Bra N Things did well due to its extension into the online realm, where a 100% money-back guarantee is offered to customers for ill-fitting items.

The popularity of Borders, the ABC Shop, JB Hi-Fi and Dymocks may come as a surprise, with traditional retailers of books and music increasingly usurped by online stores.

Borders is admired by customers for its vast range and in-store cafes while JB Hi-Fi has built a reputation on being willing to haggle with customers on big ticket items.

Based on the findings in the latest report, Morris says price isn't the only factor driving customer satisfaction, with bargain stores including The Reject Shop, Go-Lo and Fantastic Furniture in the bottom half of the satisfaction rating.

Fantastic Furniture's poor rating can be partly attributed to some recent bad press, with its website featuring a product safety recall for a range of tables and an ACCC-mandated corrective statement for advertising for leather furniture likely to mislead.