



## Think Before You Click: Does Shopping Behavior Impact Sustainability?

March 1, 2016

### Study shows that shopping at a mall can be seven percent more sustainable than online shopping

NEW YORK, March 1, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Simon Property Group released a white paper today that contains the results of a study of the environmental impacts of online versus physical shopping behaviors. The study, conducted by Deloitte Consulting, shows that shopping at a mall has a seven percent smaller environmental impact than online shopping. The white paper – [Does Shopping Behavior Impact Sustainability?](#) - uses shopping data that represents customer behaviors for mall and online shopping and concludes that brick-and-mortar shopping represents a better sustainability performance over online shopping.



To understand the environmental impacts, the study created a "cradle-to-grave" Lifecycle Analysis (LCA) that examines the environmental impacts of all material, energy and fuels attributable to a product in its lifecycle. The LCA also assumes the consumer purchased the same basket of goods online as they would in a brick-and-mortar location.

"The difference in the environmental impact of shopping at physical stores versus online rests on a number of factors," said Jason Mathers, Senior Manager - Supply Chain Logistics, EDF. "As this paper makes clear, consumer choice about the number of items purchased, the likelihood of returns and the ability to combine trips can help make shopping in-person the lower impact choice. We welcome this contribution from Simon on the ongoing discussion about how to improve the sustainability of all of our shopping choices."

Additional findings from the research show that:

- **Traveling to the mall in groups lowers the environmental impact per product bought.** The average mall shopping group size is 2.2, and when people travel together and buy more products per trip, the average fuel burned to buy each product is lower.
- **Shopping online leads to more returned products which considerably increases the environmental impact.** The data shows that 33 percent of online purchases are returned versus seven percent in the case of brick-and-mortar.
- **Packaging for online orders (corrugated boxes, bubble wraps, etc.) have a larger overall environmental impact** compared with the impact of a plastic/paper bag consumers bring home from the mall.

"Sustainability is an important consideration for our employees, customers and other key stakeholders," said Mona Benisi, Senior Director of Sustainability at Simon Property Group. "Understanding sustainability impacts help us to formulate strategies to best serve our mall guests and retailers within our properties. In an age when consumers are increasingly demanding same day or fast delivery, which requires more resources and fuel to fulfill, the negative impact of online shopping is likely to worsen. This study underscores how the choices consumers make when shopping impact the environmental footprint and may influence future behaviors."

To read the white paper click [here](#)

#### About Simon

Simon is a global leader in retail real estate ownership, management and development and a S&P100 company (Simon Property Group, NYSE: SPG). Our industry-leading retail properties and investments across North America, Europe and Asia provide shopping experiences for millions of consumers every day and generate billions in annual retail sales. For more information, visit [simon.com](#).

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