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Department stores exceed expectations

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Department stores are exceeding shoppers' expectations of customer services according to a survey by Maritz Research.

The survey revealed more variance between expectations than the level of service provided in John Lewis, Marks and Spencer, Debenhams and House of Fraser.

Shoppers were asked to rate the service they experienced the last time they visited department stores and compare it with their expectations. Debenhams and House of Fraser scored lowest in terms of expectations demonstrating a need to build on brand reputation.

A third of shoppers plan to spend less in department stores this year according to Maritz. Product availability, value and customer service were identified as the most important factors to department store shoppers, store ambience and location were cited as less important.



"Customers are choosing more carefully than they have done in the past," says Maritz director of retail research Graham Devereux.

"There are still many opportunities out there but you have to be more tuned into customer needs than ever before."

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