

CASH . CONVENIENCE . SERVICE

# **SPARK CASH INDEX**

September 2011

## **About Spark ATM Systems**

Spark ATM Systems is South Africa's leading independent ATM provider, deploying convenience Automated Teller Machines ('ATMs') in retail, convenience and hospitality locations across South Africa.

## **Introduction to the Spark Cash Index**

The amount of cash withdrawn at ATMs is a real-time indicator of cash availability and consumer spending in the economy. From our records we have noticed that over time the average amount of cash withdrawn at our network of ATMs corresponds with general economic conditions in the country. We have also seen that consumers vary the amount of cash they withdraw based on prevailing economic conditions, particularly consumer confidence, variations in the prime interest rate and recurring seasonal trends.

## **Key Indicators**



## Commentary

#### **Cash Withdrawal Values Continue to Show Positive Trend**

Average cash withdrawal values across South Africa – as measured by the Spark Cash Index (SCI) – increased from August to September this year.

The average cash withdrawal value across South Africa for September 2011 was R414, 1.97% up on August's average withdrawal of R406. "This increase in September is consistent with the pattern the previous few years have shown", says Marc Sternberg, MD of Spark ATM Systems. "Cash withdrawal values usually take a dip from July to August with people returning to work after the July holidays, and then they climb steadily from September through to the big annual spike in December."

September's value is also 1.97% up on the value for September 2010 of R406. This is positive news for the SA economy and consistent with the general positive trend that the Index is showing. "It is especially positive to note that September 2011's value of R414 is the fifth highest ever measured since we launched the Spark Cash Index in 2007", says Sternberg. "Based on the trend the SCI is showing this year, there is a high possibility we will have a record month this December in terms of average cash withdrawal values across SA."

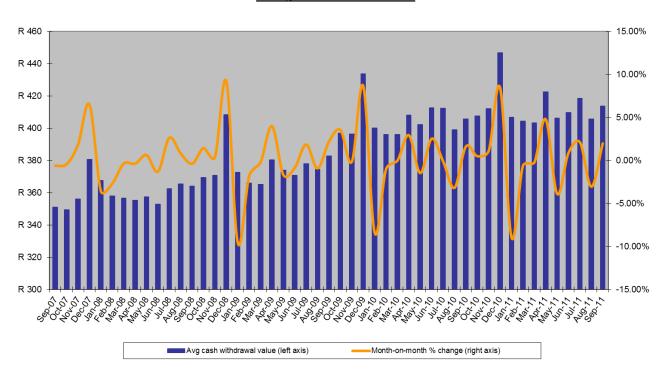
Stats SA's Retail Trade Sales (RTS) values follow the same pattern as SA cash withdrawal values. Released two months ahead of the RTS, the SCI figures therefore predict the pattern that RTS will follow. The July RTS figures which have just been released show the same spike the SCI values experienced in July this year. The RTS figures can be predicted to drop in August and then start climbing steadily in September.

The Spark Cash Index is a useful 'real-time' gauge of consumer spending, utilising Spark ATM Systems' network of over 1,400 ATMs located countrywide to reflect accurate, broad and timely cash demand and utilisation data. Spark ATMs are typically located in convenience stores, petroleum stations, specialist retail nodes and leisure & hospitality venues.

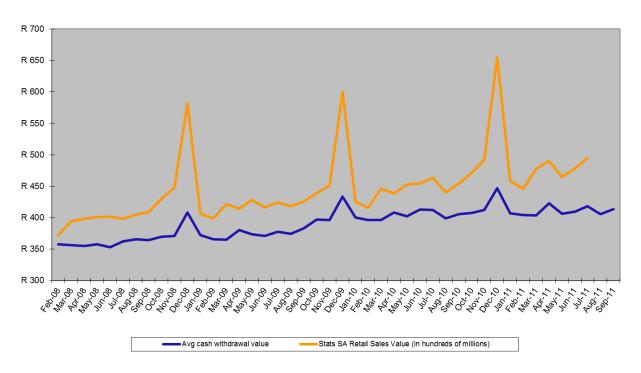
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## **Graphic Data**

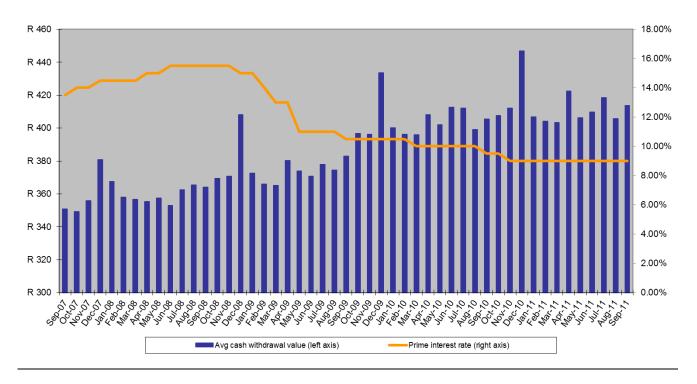
<u>Graph A</u> <u>Average cash withdrawal value</u>



<u>Graph B</u> <u>Avg cash withdrawal value vs Stats SA Retail Sales Value</u>



<u>Graph C</u> <u>Avg cash withdrawal value vs Prime interest rate</u>



#### **Data**

Month	Avg Cash Withdrawal	Month on Month Change	Year on Year Change	Prime Interest Rate
Sep-07	R 351	-0.62%	N/A	13.50%
Oct-07	R 349	-0.43%	N/A	14.00%
Nov-07	R 356	1.86%	N/A	14.00%
Dec-07	R 381	6.49%	N/A	14.50%
Jan-08	R 368	-3.58%	N/A	14.50%
Feb-08	R 358	-2.69%	N/A	14.50%
Mar-08	R 357	-0.37%	N/A	14.50%
Apr-08	R 355	-0.38%	N/A	15.00%
May-08	R 357	0.62%	N/A	15.00%
Jun-08	R 353	-1.30%	N/A	15.50%
Jul-08	R 362	2.63%	N/A	15.50%
Aug-08	R 365	0.81%	N/A	15.50%
Sep-08	R 364	-0.37%	3.76%	15.50%
Oct-08	R 369	1.43%	5.72%	15.50%

Nov-08	R 371	0.38%	4.15%	15.50%
Dec-08	R 408	9.19%	7.23%	15.00%
Jan-09	R 373	-9.58%	1.36%	15.00%
Feb-09	R 366	-1.83%	2.22%	14.00%
Mar-09	R 365	-0.22%	2.37%	13.00%
Apr-09	R 380	3.98%	7.02%	13.00%
May-09	R 374	-1.68%	4.60%	11.00%
Jun-09	R 371	-0.84%	5.07%	11.00%
Jul-09	R 378	1.85%	4.24%	11.00%
Aug-09	R 374	-0.92%	2.45%	11.00%
Sep-09	R 383	2.21%	5.16%	10.50%
Oct-09	R 397	3.53%	7.44%	10.50%
Nov-09	R 396	-0.16%	6.87%	10.50%
Dec-09	R 434	8.65%	6.24%	10.50%
Jan-10	R 400	-8.40%	7.40%	10.50%
Feb-10	R 396	-1.02%	8.26%	10.50%
Mar-10	R 396	0.02%	8.47%	10.00%
Apr-10	R 408	2.94%	7.31%	10.00%
May-10	R 402	-1.47%	7.53%	10.00%
Jun-10	R 413	2.54%	11.26%	10.00%
July-10	R 412	-0.09%	9.10%	10.00%
Aug-10	R 399	-3.18%	6.61%	10.00%
Sept-10	R 406	1.62%	5.94%	9.50%
Oct-10	R 408	0.50%	2.71%	9.50%
Nov-10	R 412	1.10%	4.00%	9.00%
Dec-10	R 447	8.45%	3.03%	9.00%
Jan-11	R 407	-8.97%	1.67%	9.00%
Feb-11	R 404	-0.63%	2.06%	9.00%
Mar-11	R 403	-0.24%	1.83%	9.00%
Apr-11	R 423	4.78%	3.56%	9.00%
May-11	R 406	-3.88%	1.00%	9.00%
June-11	R 410	0.90%	-0.67%	9.00%
July-11	R 418	2.11%	1.51%	9.00%
Aug-11	R 406	-3.05%	1.65%	9.00%
Sept-11	R 414	1.97%	1.97%	9.00%

## **Explanatory Notes and Contact Details**

The value for the Spark Cash Index value is obtained using the following formula: Cash dispensed for the month divided by the number of cash withdrawals for the month across a selection of Spark ATM's network of ATMs. The sample size is hundreds of thousands of transactions in both urban and rural areas across all nine provinces of South Africa, therefore representing a very good cross section of South African consumers.

The data presented is raw data and has not been adjusted for seasonality or for the effects of inflation.

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