



IPSOS THOUGHT PIECE

RAMADAN 2026

The 60-day shopping season brands need to plan for

A co-authored perspective by
Ipsos & TikTok for Business

AUTHORS

Puja Khandelwal
Research Manager
Ipsos in UAE

Hikmet Nursu Sofugil
Insights Partner
METAP TikTok



For years, the way people behaved during Ramadan followed a familiar pattern. Energy dipped through the long hot days and activity gathered after sunset, when the fast was broken. Shopping, socialising, and media consumption were largely concentrated into the evening.

That pattern is no longer reliable.

As Ramadan moves into cooler months and shorter fasting hours, the shift is no longer just about when Ramadan happens, but how it is lived.



Nearly **8 in 10 people** say Ramadan in March feels more relaxed and enjoyable than in hotter months,



and **1 in 2** say it feels significantly different, with their preparation changing as a result.

Energy lasts longer, opening up the day for more meetups, more planning, and more shopping. For brands, this changes where attention is won and lost.

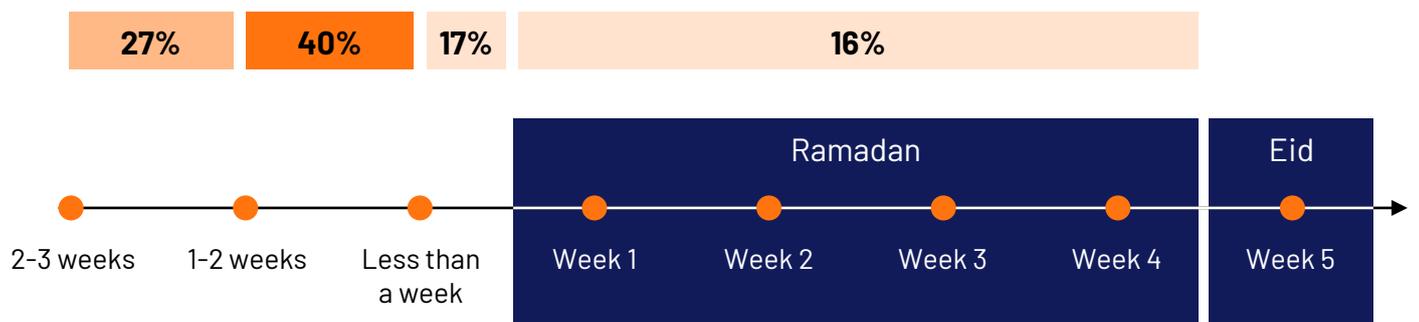


The changing rhythm of Ramadan

Ramadan is a multi-dimensional cultural moment that blends tradition, community, connection, and joyful expression. It's about preparing for shared iftars, refreshing living spaces to welcome guests, and picking gifts that express thoughtfulness. Shopping is woven naturally into how the month is experienced.

This heightened intent to shop now plays out over an even more extended window. Ramadan shopping now spans close to **60 days**, beginning up to **3 weeks** before the first fast and continuing through Eid and beyond. Around **27%** of consumers start planning their Ramadan shopping **2 to 3 weeks** in advance, with another **40%** beginning **1 to 2 weeks** ahead.

Planning for Ramadan shopping



As such, Ramadan cannot be treated as a short activation window anchored to iftar or the final days before Eid. It is a phased season, with different needs, mindsets, and behaviours emerging as the month unfolds.



Ramadan shopping unfolds in layers

Ramadan buying no longer follows a straight line from preparation to celebration. It builds in layers.

Planning begins early, often weeks before the first fast, as people organise meals, prepare their homes, and settle into new routines. This is reflected in everyday behaviour.

At this stage, decisions are deliberate and list-led, shaped by the desire to feel ready rather than to buy more.

As the month unfolds, those early plans begin to stretch. Hosting becomes more frequent and needs emerge that were not anticipated at the outset. The result is gradual basket growth rather than a single stock-up moment. **72%** of people spend more than they intended, often adding categories as the month progresses. Shopping becomes a series of adjustments, responding to how the month unfolds rather than to a fixed plan.

Eid brings with it a greater emphasis on gifting, self-treating, and marking the moment. Many plan Eid gifting ideas during Ramadan itself, and some purchases are deliberately held back for the occasion. What converts at Eid is often shaped by the weeks of discovery, comparison, and consideration that came before.

What will change/increase in the next 10 years?

60% Eating habits

57% Social gatherings

57% Digital media usage

What is already changed with Ramadan?

77% say they **cook more** at home during Ramadan

74% Tried new recipes & used ingredients that **keep warm**

69% Preferred shopping time changed with more **late-night shopping**

66% Buy **winter-specific clothing**

63% Impacted **leisure activities & social gatherings**

59% Buy **groceries in bulk**

57% Shop more **cozy home furnishings & decor**

49% Shopping

45% Outdoor activities & exercise

1 in 5 Travelling

Why brands need a new Ramadan playbook

Ramadan today is no longer defined by a handful of peak moments. It is a prolonged period of planning, participation, and celebration that now stretches across nearly 2 months. Watching, searching, creating, and resharing Ramadan content have all increased, signalling a more participatory and sustained relationship with the season. **7 in 10** people actively seek Ramadan-related content across digital platforms, up **8%** year on year.

For brands, brief or late presence is no longer enough. Relevance now builds slowly, through consistent, well-timed appearances.

1. The Ramadan window is wide open

Ramadan-related planning and shopping now extend well beyond the fasting period, changing how and when decisions are made.

Why it matters

The 2026 research shows that Ramadan shopping now spans close to **60 days**, with around **27%** of people starting planning 2 to 3 weeks before the first fast. Intent forms early, but purchasing decisions continue to unfold across the month and into Eid.

This means behaviour is no longer concentrated in a short window. Attention, planning, and purchase are distributed across time, making short, late campaigns increasingly misaligned with how people actually engage during Ramadan.

What brands can do

Shift from fixed-date campaign planning to a seasonal approach. Early presence matters, particularly for shaping consideration before routines settle and preferences are formed.

2. Decisions are driven by readiness and generosity

Ramadan shopping is shaped as much by emotional and social motivations as by price.

Why it matters

While promotions remain influential, they are not the primary driver of behaviour.



The research shows that **75% shop to feel fully prepared for Ramadan**



and **73% shop for gifting.**

These behaviours reflect a month structured around generosity, hosting, and shared experience rather than impulse buying. It's also worth noting that **36%** are motivated to shop because they have more time to browse and shop online.

Brands that focus only on discounts risk missing the broader context in which decisions are made.

What brands can do

Frame value beyond price. Messaging that speaks to preparedness, usefulness, and generosity aligns more closely with why people continue to shop throughout the month.

Why brands need a new Ramadan playbook continued

3. Stretched budgets, growing baskets

Despite increased planning, actual spend often exceeds intent as the month unfolds.

Why it matters

The research highlights a consistent gap between planned and actual spending. While people begin Ramadan with budgets and lists, **67%** end up shopping more than planned, and baskets grow as needs evolve. This is not driven by a single stock-up moment, but by cumulative additions shaped by hosting, gifting, and changing household needs.

At the same time, budgets feel stretched, making people more selective even as they continue to purchase across multiple categories.

What brands can do

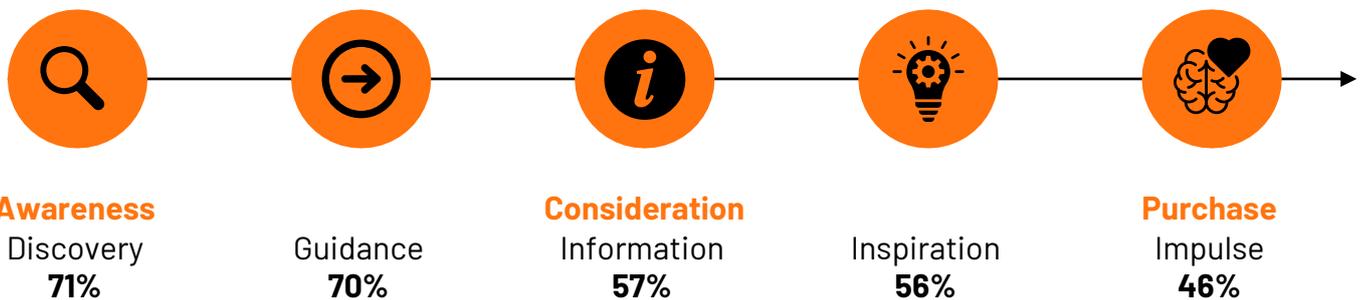
Support incremental decision-making. Flexible offers, bundle formats, and reminders that fit naturally into ongoing routines help brands stay relevant as baskets build gradually rather than all at once.



Where digital platforms fit in a longer Ramadan journey

As Ramadan stretches across more weeks and moments, platforms play an increasingly important role in shaping how people engage with content and brands. Around **7 in 10 people** say they want brands to show up during Ramadan with experiences that feel creative, seamless, and entertaining rather than purely promotional, signalling a clear shift in expectations.

Video entertainment & digital media apps are driving the **purchase journey** during Ramadan



TikTok stands out in how closely it aligns with these behaviours. People spend more time on TikTok during Ramadan than on any other video platform, watching videos **2x** more often than elsewhere. It is rated **1.2x** better at delivering Ramadan moments as they happen and is the top platform associated with Ramadan culture, community, entertainment, and shopping.

This difference is also visible in how people engage. Ramadan-related activity has grown across watching, searching, creating, and resharing content, indicating a more participatory relationship with the season. TikTok is particularly well suited to this behaviour, supporting discovery and inspiration throughout the month. Users are **1.2x** more likely to discover brands and products they had not previously considered after exposure on the platform.

That influence carries through to action.



TikTok users are **1.3x** more likely to purchase during Ramadan and **1.3x** more likely to explore or buy products in-store after seeing Ramadan-related content.



Nearly **1 in 2** also report offline actions such as visiting stores, dining out, or purchasing gifts.

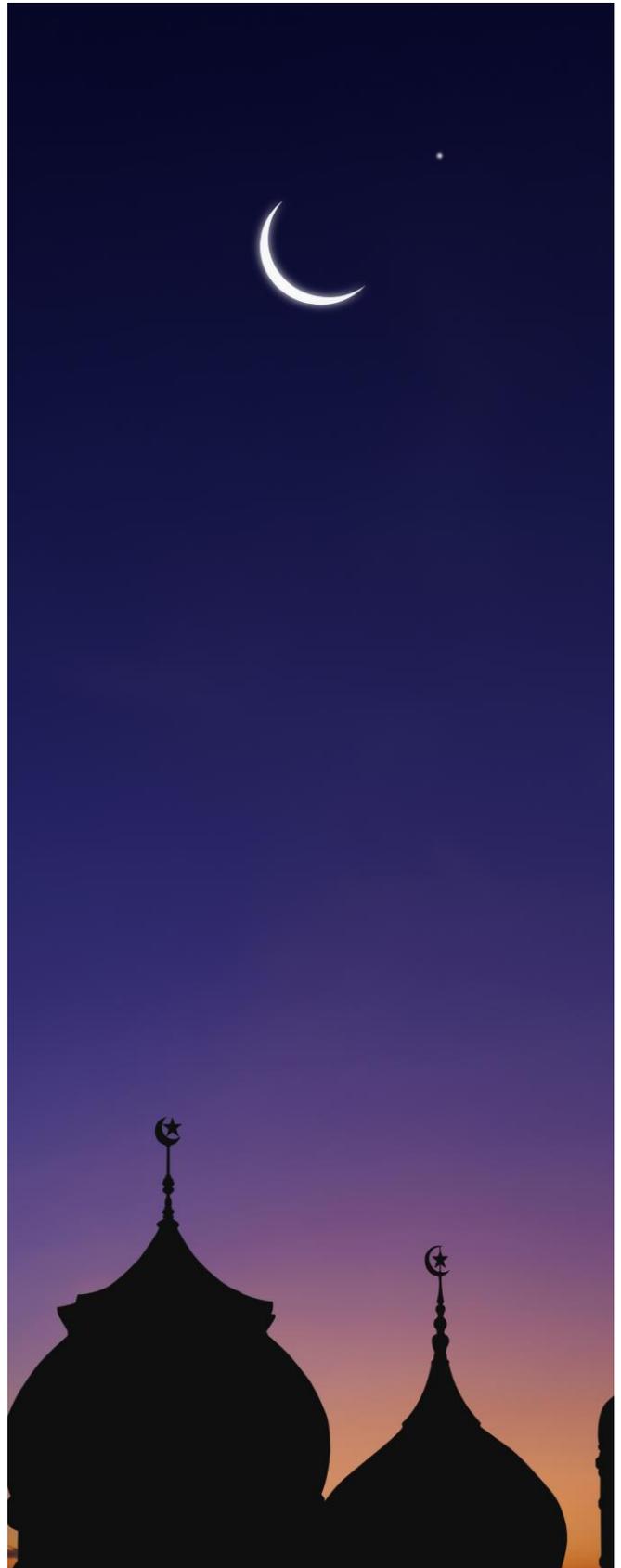
In a Ramadan defined by continuity, TikTok’s distinction lies in its ability to reflect the cultural rhythm of the month while still driving meaningful outcomes across the user journey.

Keeping pace with a changing Ramadan

Ramadan is no longer organised around a single moment of attention. It unfolds across days and weeks, shaped by preparation, generosity, routine, and celebration.

This shift changes how people plan, how they shop, and how they engage with brands. Influence is no longer created by brief visibility or last-minute intensity. It builds through presence that feels timely, helpful, and attuned to how the month is actually lived.

For brands, keeping pace with Ramadan now means showing up early enough to matter and long enough to stay relevant.



Source

TikTok Ramadan & Eid Study conducted by Ipsos among 1600 adults in UAE & KSA

For further details, please contact

Puja Khandelwal

puja.khandelwal@ipsos.com

Hikmet Nursu Sofugil

hikmet.sofugil@bytedance.com

