

Learn | Validate | Reach | Measure

# In the Know

Issue 1

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TRUST

THE ATTEST MAGAZINE

# From the Editor



**Mark Walker**  
Marketing Director  
Attest

Welcome to the very first edition of our quarterly publication, In the Know.

In these pages (and in every future edition), you'll find a wealth of exclusive research and advice, all geared towards helping you navigate the messy, ever-shifting world of consumers.

We'll delve into their attitudes, behaviours and opinions on a huge array of topics, with each edition focused on a particular theme.

This quarter we're looking at trust.

Trust is essential to our existence as a species. In evolutionary terms, it has allowed us to cooperate, settle and form communities. Without trust, we would have died out a long time ago. So it's only natural that we place enormous value on trust, and that is just as true when deciding on which brands we're willing to buy.

Strong bonds of trust lead to long-term loyalty and increased life-time value for incumbent brands, acting as a moat around their business. Yet trust is easy to lose, with a misjudged marketing campaign, hike in price or bad experience.

And waiting in the wings are dozens more competitors, challenger brands and, perhaps the biggest threat of all, disenchantment leading to inertia, and steady market-wide decline.

In this edition we'll look at the strategies and tactics you can employ to rapidly win trust, and how to keep it, based on direct consumer feedback.

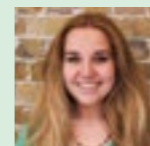
Until next quarter, enjoy being in the know!

Mark Walker

## Contributors



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[www.askattest.com](http://www.askattest.com)

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# Let's Attest That

Every week at Attest, we ask the UK to give us their opinions on what they're loving, what they're hating, and everything in between. Can you guess what the country thinks?

04

**Start Here**

**1**

Do you prefer the convenience of streaming TV, or the excitement of having to wait a week between episodes?

- A. Streaming! I can't get enough
- B. I like to wait, it's more exciting!

**2**

How would UK consumers like to see women portrayed in TV adverts?

- A. Funny
- B. Larger Bodies
- C. Clever
- D. Career Driven

**3**

Which artist would UK consumers pay the most to see live?

- A. Beyoncé
- B. Ed Sheeran
- C. Elton John
- D. Adele

**4**

Which food brand does the UK most associate with veganism?

- A. Nakd
- B. Alpro
- C. Tesco
- D. Quorn

**5**

What's the UK's favourite condiment?

- A. Ketchup
- B. Mayonaise
- C. HP Sauce
- D. BBQ Sauce

**6**

How many people frequently shop second-hand?

- A. 30%
- B. 40%
- C. 50%
- D. 60%

**7**

How many people are more likely to buy from a brand who supports Pride?

- A. 14%
- B. 38%
- C. 51%
- D. 62%

**8**

What's your favourite classic popcorn flavour?

- A. Sweet and salty
- B. Sweet
- C. Salty
- D. Toffee

**9**

If they had to, would people rather give up fruit or vegetables?

- A. Fruit
- B. Vegetables

**10**

What's the UK's favourite British cheese?

- A. Stilton
- B. Red Leicester
- C. Blue
- D. Cheddar

Turn to page 35 for the answers, and to see how well you know the mind of the British public.

05

## How well did you do?

**0-3**

Nice Try. Looks like you could benefit from the Attest newsletter though!

**4-7**

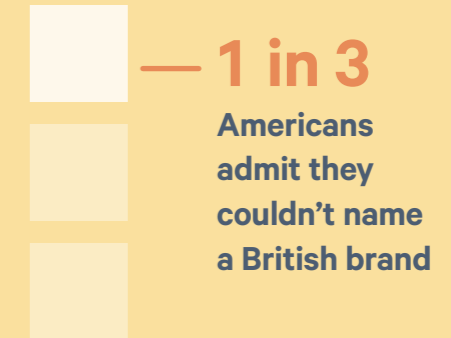
Wonderful stuff! Keep up the good work and things can only get better from here!

**8-10**

You didn't mention you were a genius! Top quizzing, we look forward to seeing you smash it again next time.



**3 in 5** Americans see British products as stylish (and Burberry is their favourite British brand)



# Ten Top Stats

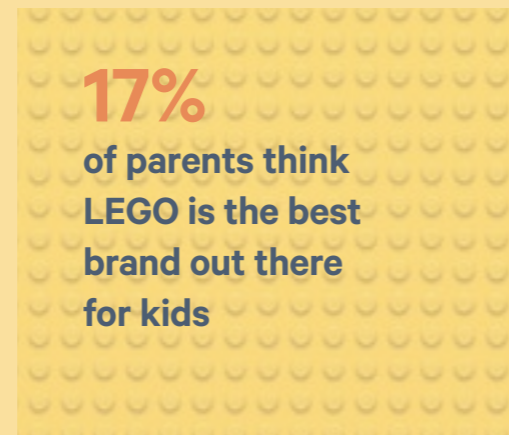
At Attest, we're inspired by the power to know. When it comes to shedding light on a question, there's nothing better than data. It's what we tell our clients, and it's a principle we live in everything we do.

Here are some of the interesting things data taught us this quarter.

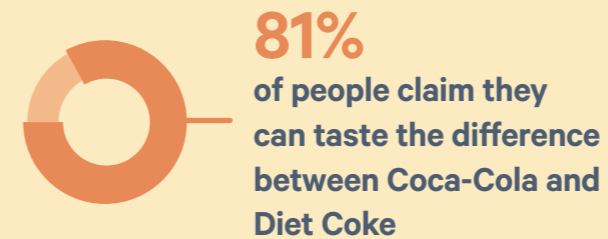


**28%** of people don't feel safe in an Uber (for **40%** of them this is because drivers drive too fast)

**53%** of people think that pineapple does indeed belong on a pizza



Apple is the UK's dream company to work for, with **1 in 10** Britons naming it as their dream employer



# Experts In the Know: How to Build Consumer Trust?

08

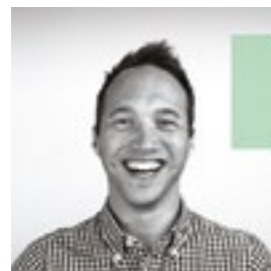


## Sarah Curran

Non-Executive Director, French Connection  
& Former Managing Director, Very Exclusive

'Like all relationships, there are no shortcuts to building customer trust. Customers tend to come from a cynical point of view if a sales agent tries to recommend a product as a must have: "of course you'd recommend it, you're trying to sell it to me." A way of removing this is to allow customer reviews and feedback.

Customers are more likely to put their trust in a product with good reviews. Do everything to encourage your customers to leave a review, but refrain from editing out negative reviews!

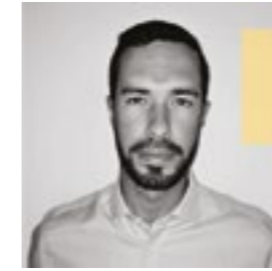


## Simon Goble

Chief Marketing Officer, DogBuddy

'For me, the easiest way for a brand to build trust with their consumer is to simply live up to the expectations they set and the promises you make. Just as with a good friend, if you say you'll be somewhere at a certain time, be there, at that time. It's no different as a brand. If you promise a quick and efficient service, make sure that's precisely what you deliver, each and every time.

If you fall short of your promise, your consumers will feel let down, and any trust you'd managed to build gets slowly gets chipped away. Over time, consumers will vote with their wallet in search of someone who follows through to do exactly what they say they'll do.'



## Tom Price

Commercial Manager, Nomadic Dairy

'The way you build trust is by having a proven track record. You have to have an amazing product that people want to keep coming back to. If every time they keep returning to it, it's the same or better, trust will come.'



## Anna Brook

Head of Brand and Content, Paws.com

'Knowing your brand purpose and demonstrating it authentically is vital. The most trusted brands have values that align with those of their customers - and they live up to them, come what may. At Paws.com, doing good for abandoned pets is baked into our business model.

Every single time a customer orders food for their dog, they also feed a quality meal to dog in a need at no extra cost to them. By sending our customers an email showing them the shelter dog that they've fed each time, we communicate this in a transparent, tangible way.'



## Christina Catharina Friis Blach Petersen

Founder and CEO, LYS Technologies

'Developing our customer trust is all about building a product and service that we truly believe can have a positive impact on their lives and that never stays still, always evolving alongside our customers' needs.'



## Riya Grover

Founder and CEO, Feedr

'Simplicity is key...

Customer trust comes from a foundation of understanding, so it's vital to keep branding and customer communications clear, streamlined and simple. In today's busy society, customers are

overwhelmed with information at all times, so it's key to ensure our messaging is as simple as possible whilst still conveying your brand. This is especially important with new products.

At Feedr, we're disrupting the employee perk and food delivery industries with a new type of employee food perk service. By nature of this, our product has the potential to seem overwhelming and complicated, so it's my job as a brand marketer to ensure our customers fully understand who we are and what we do, through simple but effective comms, which in turn will drive customer trust.'

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# Small, but MIGHTY

Three ways for challenger brands to win consumer trust

**Every consumer market is becoming increasingly competitive—consumers hold their purse strings closer in a climate of low consumer confidence, while a bigger range of brands compete for the tightly-held cash. Against this backdrop, trust can be the all important factor that sets you apart from competitors in your space.**

Trust is especially vital for retaining customer relationships over time. Trust is a buildable human commodity, that can start small and grow to be a big, powerful force, keeping a customer in your orbit years after your first encounter.

As such, well-established brands with considerable history behind them have followings of loyal customers who have stuck with them through the years. For instance, when BMW was forced to recall 300,000 cars due to engine faults earlier this year, 81.9% of UK consumers still regarded BMW as trustworthy.

Though this sort of negative press goes some way towards explaining the rise of challenger brands—the 4.4% of BMW owners who now find their car producer to be either quite or very untrustworthy are ripe pickings for innovative newcomers and rivals—these younger companies face the hard task of winning over the majority of consumers who remain loyal to the big names despite scandals.

We surveyed 1000 UK consumers to illuminate how young challenger brands can win trust in their infancy, fast-tracking themselves to the relationships big brands have built up over decades.

### Prioritise Product

Considering all industries together, 'Good quality products/services' was ranked as the highest priority in securing trust from consumers (54%), a trend that remains across all demographics.

In other words, trust cannot be fabricated or sold through great marketing. Consumers will only build trusting relationships with brands that deliver on their promise—via a great product or service. Those that fail this first hurdle will face a major uphill battle to regain trust.

It's human nature to be drawn back to that which is familiar and which holds positive memories for us, hence a brand that provides

excellent products and services has a pool of trusting consumers who return to them repeatedly.

This is great news for challenger brands: consumers trust brands offering high quality products and services. That they are new to the market doesn't in any way rule them out of contention for winning consumer trust. Especially if they can build products and services that are of a superior quality to the traditional brands on the market, by innovating in ways that traditional brands struggle with.

It's the quality of product and service that has driven the success of subscription services, in direct competition with traditional shopping methods, in recent months and years. Harry's, replacing your razor blades at the pace you need; Bloom & Wild, posting seasonal flowers through your letterbox; HelloFresh, designing recipes and sending the pre-portioned ingredients straight to you.

All of these companies, and the dozens more that are available to subscribe to, succeed by easing the experience of shopping for their products. Providing a unique, hassle-free and memorable experience, accompanied by quality products, they secure a regular customer base who diligently pay their subscription bill every month.

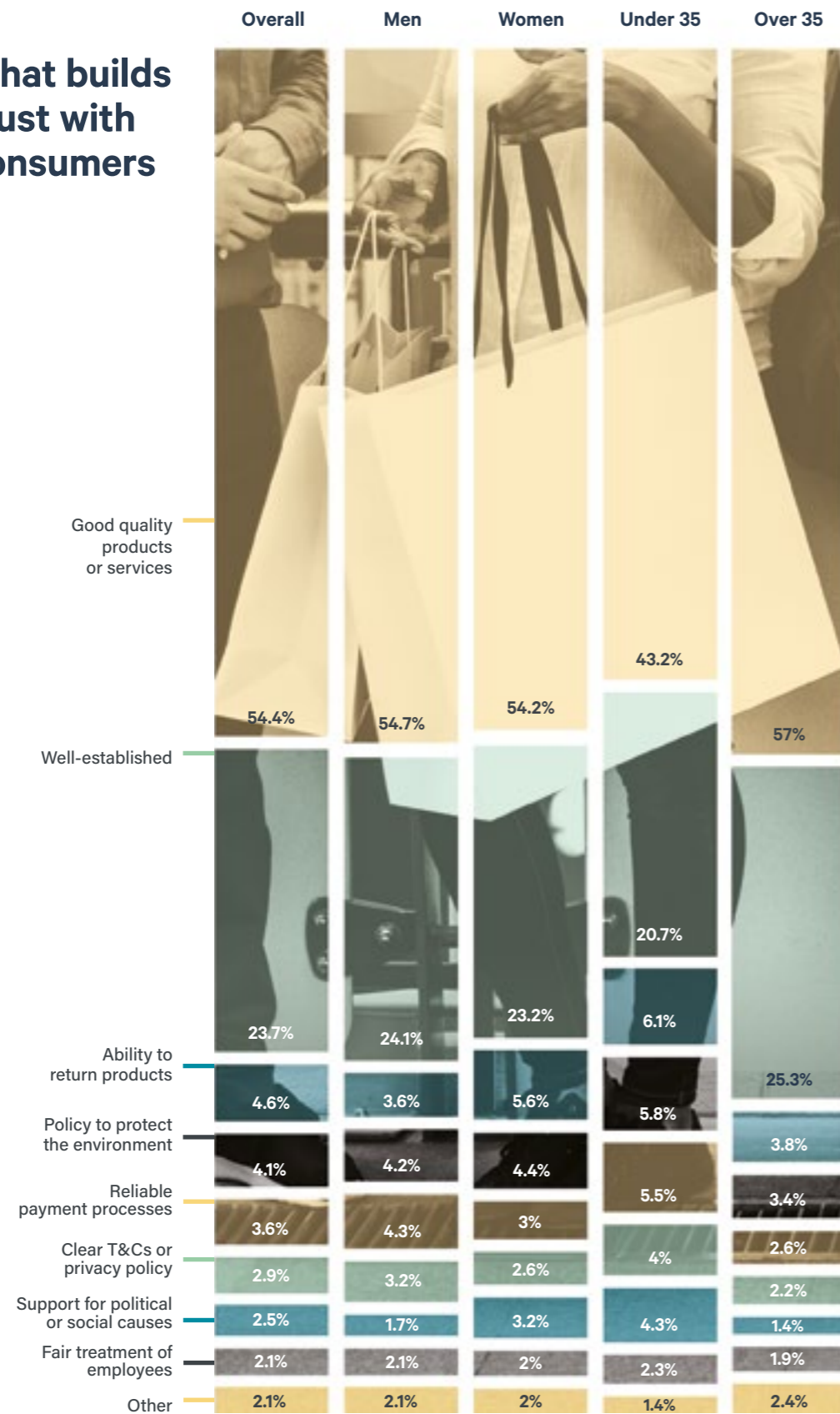
### Hipster vs Heritage

Being well-established is the second most-cited reason for what makes a brand trustworthy. Heritage, reputation and reliability blend together to make a compelling case for trusting a brand: you know what you're going to get.

And yet, this needn't be bad news for smaller brands. In some cases, heritage is little more than marketing spin. New doesn't have to oppose old, new can incorporate the best parts of the old and drive them forward.

Tyrells is one young brand who have established heritage in just a few short years. At only 16-years-old, Tyrells is already a household name, trusted by many and thought by many to be a traditional British product. But it's all a smart bit of marketing, really. They literally add age (and therefore trustworthiness, for 23.7% of consumers) to their company by putting black and white, old fashioned images on the packaging. It's a stroke of genius, designed to make you think the company

## What builds trust with consumers



are older than they are, to make consumers associate the brand with British history, and to build heritage.

If a challenger brand wants to win trust amongst older generations in particular (where being well-established scored 25.2% of the vote, versus just 20.7% amongst younger generations), then developing a marketing strategy that ties the brand to tradition, old-fashioned values or 'Britishness' can be a way to speed the process of developing heritage, and win the trust of these consumers.

That said, if your challenger brand is aimed at a younger audience, there's another important strategy.

### Social Salience

7.4% of UK consumers named a brand they'd been using for less than one year as the brand they trust most, spelling a positive outlook for challenger brands. For these consumers, social issues jump in importance, while being well-established and producing good quality products and services drop in priority compared to the rest of the population.

What draws consumers to a company they're new to, then, is more significantly made up of social priorities.

For older companies, who've had the loyalty of these consumers for over 5 years, social issues drop out of the picture almost entirely, showing that what keeps consumer trust over time is the quality of products and the increasing establishment and reputation of that brand.

A positive policy to protect the environment, support for political or social causes and fair treatment of their employees will assist challenger brands in winning consumer trust in the first instance, and give them the necessary opportunities for this trust to embed over time, with high-quality consumer experiences.

This is especially true given the rising frequency of social scandals amongst traditional, long-lasting brands; Oxfam, Tesco, and PepsiCo, for example. When these well-established brands mess up, challenger brands can offer a social haven for socially-minded consumers.

Our research shows that socially-minded

consumers are mostly younger generations. Under-35s trust brands for their forward-thinking social stances, with policy to protect the environment jumping to 5.8% from the average of 4.2%, and support for political or social causes jumping from 2.5% to 4.3%.

**7.4%**  
of UK consumers named a brand they'd been using for less than one year as the brand they trust most.

Toms are one company who built their USP and subsequent success around an ethical approach to business. Arguably aimed at younger generations, Toms have shot to fame since they were founded in 2006, as the 'One-for-One' company, giving one pair of shoes to a person in need for every pair bought.

### In Summary

The strategy a challenger brand takes for building trusting relationships with consumers is most wisely dictated by the age of the audience. Whilst challenger brands who identify their audience to be young can sing about their newness, innovation and social responsibilities, brands aiming at older generations are wiser to approach branding with the intention of building heritage.

For all challenger brands, though, the overwhelming focus must remain: develop high quality products and services, to give consumers positive experiences and ensure repeat business. ■



# Winning Trust is a Winning Formula

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With Charlie Mayfield,  
Chairman of John Lewis

Arriving at the office of Charlie Mayfield—combined CEO and Chairman of John Lewis—there is a sense from the off that this is a business with a clear ethos.

The very name of the building—Partnership House—is a constant reminder that at John Lewis, the engine at its heart, and the thing that sets it apart is the commitment to working as a cohesive whole. It's the reason their recent rebrand has added '& Partners' to the ends of both John Lewis and Waitrose, names that will be

“What we can do is offer something that no one else offers.”





Above: The John Lewis store on Oxford Street, before the recent rebrand

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both a statement of intent, and a challenge to those at the top of the business to ensure that in every way, they excel in the eyes of their key stakeholders.

No one can deny that trust is one of the values the British public would most associate with John Lewis, coming 7th in our most-trusted brands report. From the small details, like shop assistants knowing exactly where every product is located, to the impressive promises like their famous price-matching policy, John Lewis feels like a brand that wants the best for its customers on each step of the journey. Mayfield puts this down to the way the company treats their employees.

Strikingly humble for a man at the top of one of Britain's most successful retailers, he concedes that, "If John Lewis is one of the most trusted brands in the UK, it's because it starts with the way we operate internally. Essentially, our partnership model holds us accountable right the way across the business."

"Every single person who works at John Lewis, from me to the people in the Waitrose down the road, has a stake in the business and is a part of the business. As such, it's very important to me to create an environ-

ment where our partners are happy in their employment. It's something that's reflected in our staff turnover. In the first 2 years of employment, there's some turnover because we employ a lot of students so there's a natural churn. But beyond that, our turnover of employees is almost non-existent."

This longevity of staff speaks not only to the company's standing as a valued place to work, but also translates into the creation of a consistent and thorough consumer experience.

"The fact that people like to stay working for us over long periods means that they become experts in the department they're working in, so when they're with customers, they're real advocates and specialists in what they're selling."

The focus on consumer experience—and particularly on in-store experience—is in part because it's what John Lewis is so well-known for. Mayfield is aware of the pitfalls of trying to compete in an area where you're likely to lose—he cites the rise of Amazon as people's go-to destination if they simply want convenience—and so John Lewis uses its shop floor to excel where brands like Amazon can't.

"We know that we can't compete with Amazon if all we do is try to come up with better algorithms. We'll never win. But what we can do is offer something that no one else offers. Let's take women's clothing, for example. You can get good quality women's clothing now without having to go into a shop. So if you've taken the trouble to come into a shop, you need to be getting something extra. The shop assistants, and the interactions you have need to be adding to the experience of buying that product. It's no longer enough just to produce quality products."

"One thing we do that's different from other businesses to incentivise partners to create a great customer experience, is that no one works on commission. So in John Lewis, no one's ever going to try to sell you that specific computer if it's the most expensive one, any more than they're going to try to sell you another, less expensive version. Because there's no personal financial incentive it means that the John Lewis experience is about matching the right products with people, rather than selling them the most expensive thing."

"What we realised is, if a consumer comes in and has a positive experience—where they feel they received assistance that was

most beneficial to them rather than to John Lewis—they're more likely to come back to us next time they need something. Overall, it's a better outcome for everyone. And it comes back to the collective responsibility at the heart of our partnership model: it's a win for the company, and everyone shares in those successes."

His attitude is one of quiet diligence, with the goal of constantly putting both employees and consumers at the forefront of the company's decisions. Mayfield is balanced in his view of what these decisions should be aiming to achieve.

"Maximising profits, or growth, are not our end goal. There are certainly many things we could do in the morning that would mean we increase our profits, but this isn't the only thing that matters. What we want to do is to make enough that we can pay our partners; promote sustainability; and promote initiatives that we think matter."

These initiatives are more wide-ranging than you might think. Of course, with any heritage brand, there's the danger that inertia can set in, and a reliance on what's worked in the past. But Mayfield is aware that trust isn't a fixed concept: just because consumers looked to you a year ago to meet their needs, if you fail to move with them, you will very quickly be usurped. Mayfield explains that this is the reasoning behind their 'It's Your Business 2028' strategy, which sets the company's centenary as a literal (and metaphorical) pinpoint on the horizon to aim for.

"Ultimately, there's no white knight who's going to swoop in and save us. The world will change hugely over the course of the next few years and we can't anticipate what that's going to look like, but what we can do is ensure that we're innovating to a point where John Lewis is still relevant and still thriving."

"If you do what you did well last Christmas this Christmas, you are not going to succeed. It's human nature to want to identify what went well and then repeat it, but it won't bring you long term success. With every decision we make, we're thinking about what we need to do next Christmas, but we also bear in mind what we need to be doing in five Christmases time."

Mayfield has countless examples of where the brand has—quietly, behind-the-scenes—been fighting like mad to stay ahead.

**"What we want to do is to make enough that we can pay our partners; promote sustainability; and promote initiatives that we think matter."**

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“Four years ago, we decided that we needed to stop trying to take up more space. It was a break with the traditional metrics of success—which usually might be implied by how many shops you have—but it was an attitude that wouldn’t let us survive.”

There’s a definite acceptance that not everything will be a success. Mayfield takes the internet as an example.

“When the internet was still in its nascent stages, dot com was a bit like AI is today. It was a buzzword, and people knew it would play some sort of role but we had no idea what size that role would be. Dot com could have been this big, or it could have been this big. Turns out it was this big! It’s an example of something we invested time and money in to future-proof ourselves, not knowing that it would necessarily pay off. But as it turns out, if we hadn’t, we’d be toast.”

This is a responsibility that Mayfield clearly takes seriously and personally.

“In a business this large, naturally, there’s a certain amount of inertia that needs to be constantly combatted. It’s hugely important for the senior leadership to make sure that those kind of experiments get enough oxygen to thrive and take off. They could easily get swept under the rug because they’re not necessarily going to make you money in the short term, but long term, they’ll be the things that keep you afloat.”

Innovation at John Lewis comes in different forms. There is the steady improvement of what currently exists; the tangibly and immediately useful. But there is also space for the more nebulous, but potentially brilliant ideas. It means that they’re innovating for next Christmas, as well as keeping their eye on those Christmases five, ten, twenty years down the line. The madcap ideas that teeter on the brink of either flopping completely, or being the next big thing, are explored in the suitably mysterious ‘Room Y.’

Room Y is where John Lewis’s resident Futurologist works. His name is John Vary, and while his job title might give the impression that he works in a kooky lab, filled with potion bottles and time machines, in fact he’s right at the heart of business in their Head Office in Victoria. Vary heads up a team known as skunkworks who are “dedicated to radical innovation which has no creative constraints.” It’s up to them to look forward to

**“Much of the change we implement is fed back up the chain, from customers and employees. It’s a channel that’s at the heart of who we are as a company.”**

2030, and envisage what on earth the world might look like, and how John Lewis can play a central role.

Mayfield accepts that this sort of venture will inevitably have a low hit rate. It’s this attitude, and his dedication to fighting for it to be given time and money anyway, that mean that some of Room Y’s sparks gain enough oxygen to flourish. And in the meantime, Mayfield is careful to concentrate on the sturdier plates he has spinning.

“Much of the change we implement is fed back up the chain, from customers and employees. It’s a channel that’s at the heart of who we are as a company, because these are the people who know what needs to be altered on a daily basis.”

The partnership model lends itself to constant, honest feedback. Mayfield gives a nearby branch as an example, “The Waitrose down the road on Victoria Street, for instance, has eight partnership representatives. They meet regularly with the branch manager to feed back changes they’d like to make on the shop floor. It’s a very open forum, and

we have a lot of fiery debates on the back of listening to so many opinions, but it keeps the leadership on our mettle.”

This sort of ear-to-the-ground listening, frequently points John Lewis’s senior leadership to some of the big changes they go on to implement. It’s led them to realise that people don’t typically come in store for other brands’ products (they’d be more likely to go to Amazon for this service).

“We realised it no longer makes sense to be channelling energy towards selling other people’s products. Why? Amazon. So what we need to be doing is creating our own products that are better than anything you can get anywhere else. So we’ve put our resources into sourcing, designing and creating the very best products.”

It’s these types of consumer insights that have led to the company-wide ambition for 50% of all products they sell to be own-brand or exclusive to John Lewis.

The importance placed on listening to employees’ views, creates a culture where employees feel empowered: they can realistically strive for exceptional customer experience, and the leadership will give them the tools they need to do this. Before their White City store opened in March, all new staff were given theatrical training. A bond and a positive company culture was forged before the shop even opened its doors, and staff were endowed with the confidence to reimagine customer experience and make it the best it can be.

Ultimately, much of what John Lewis do (starting with Mayfield at the top, and washing down—and back up—the chain of command) is to set the sky as the limit when it comes to customer, and employee experience.

Hearing about the workings behind the brand, it’s easy to see just how hard the John Lewis legs paddle below the surface. It’s evident that Mayfield is proud of what they’re doing, but that, ultimately, he’s an extreme realist.

“It’s not the land of milk and honey, at the end of the day this is a business and hard decisions have to be made. There are stores closing; our profits are down; people are having to take redundancy packages.”

It’s what drives him to keep listening, to keep innovating, and to keep improving. I get the



Above: John Lewis & Partners experience desk

sense, walking out, that this is a man who has mastered the knack of fostering two distinct environments within one business. There is a precision focus on the everyday—steady, prosaic alterations are made to ensure that what already exists is the best it can be for customers—and at the same time, encouragement of off-the-wall suggestions which are given the time and space they need to take off.

This is a brand that wants to, now and in 50 years time, make sure they’ve done everything they can to be the best they can be for customers which, ultimately, is what trust is all about. ■

# A Healthy Brand is a Happy Brand

## Seven brand health metrics you need to know

The effects of good branding impact our decisions every single day. Whether you're stumbling to work, bleary-eyed and in need of a coffee, scouring the high street for that trusty red and white star, or you're jetting away for some last minute sun and you find your fingers reaching for the 'b' and 'a' keys before your brain has even caught up, brand is playing a role.

Adverts, word of mouth, reviews, product placements, the shopping experience....every little interaction contributes to the elusive construction of 'brand'. It's what determines the shops you feel happy to be in; the websites you can bank on; and the chains you'll wax lyrical about at dinner parties.

The status of a well-loved brand can be

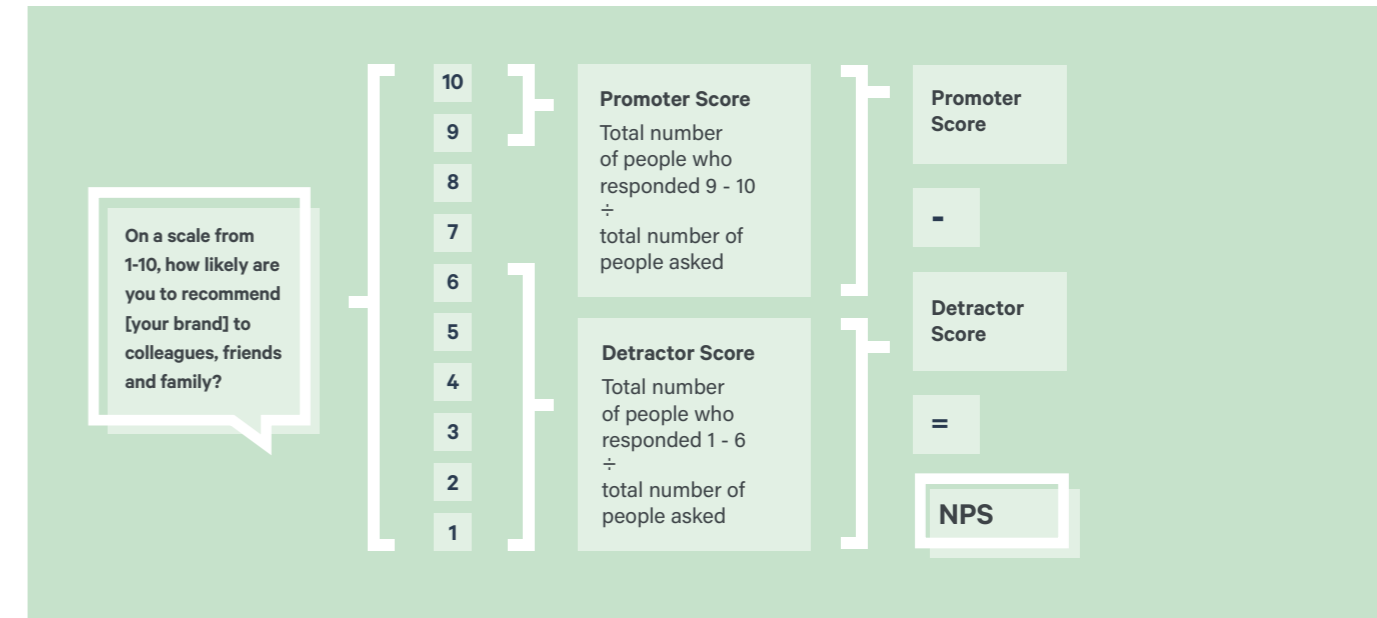
achieved whether you are a multinational giant, or a tiny independent, hiding in a corner of the internet. That's something to feel very excited about: no matter what stage of the journey you're on, brand can be the turbo jet powering your sales, and that's definitely something we think is worth properly measuring.

But how can you measure brand? It's just a feeling, right? Wrong.

We've put together a handy list of the seven most important metrics you can use to keep track of your brand. Quantifying 'what people are saying about you' sounds like a tough gig, but through these simple and easy-to-action figures, you'll get a good sense of where the needle currently is, and what you can do to nudge it in the right direction.

## 1. NPS (Net Promoter Score)

When word-of-mouth from genuine brand ambassadors is such an effective way to win new customers, it's important to make sure that the people using your brand want to rave about it to their friends and family.

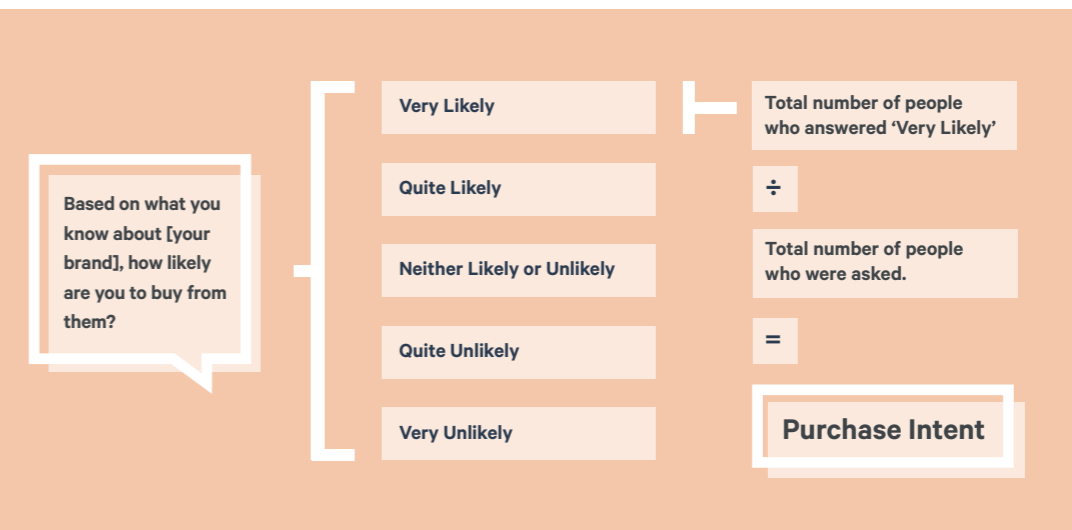


Since the scale ranges from -100 to 100, any positive score is considered good. That said, you really want to have a score of above 50 to be secure in the knowledge that people are singing your praises far and wide.

## 2. Purchase Intent

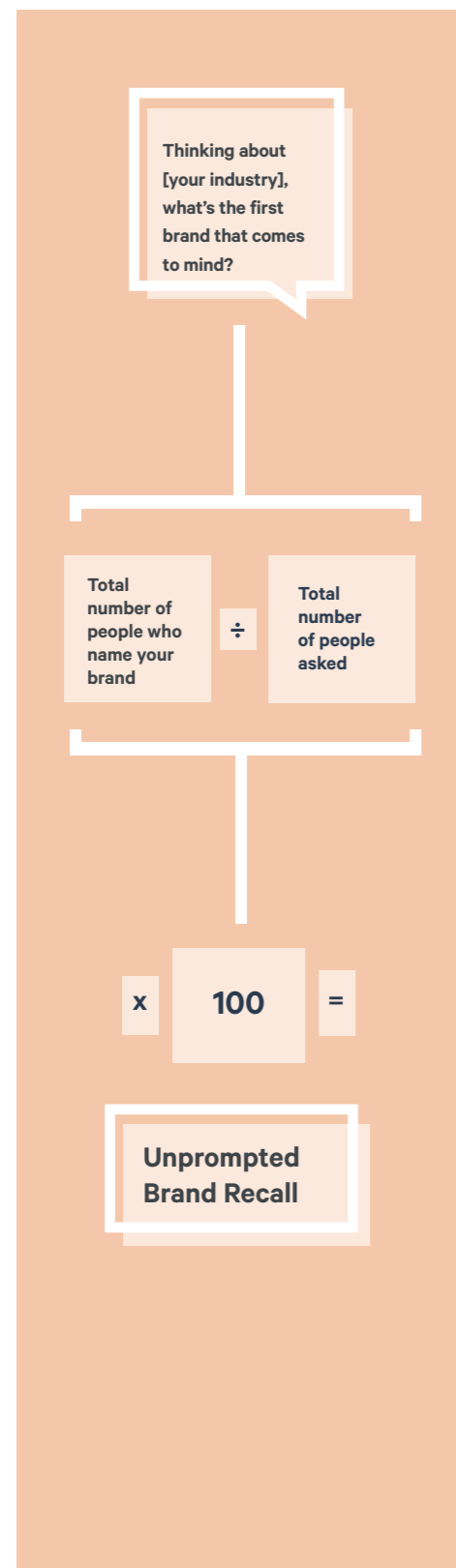
A Purchase Intent score documents how likely people are to buy from your brand in the near future.

If you're a provider of low-cost items, it's particularly important that purchase intent remains high so that you know consumers are thinking of you first when making more frequent, potentially impulsive purchases.



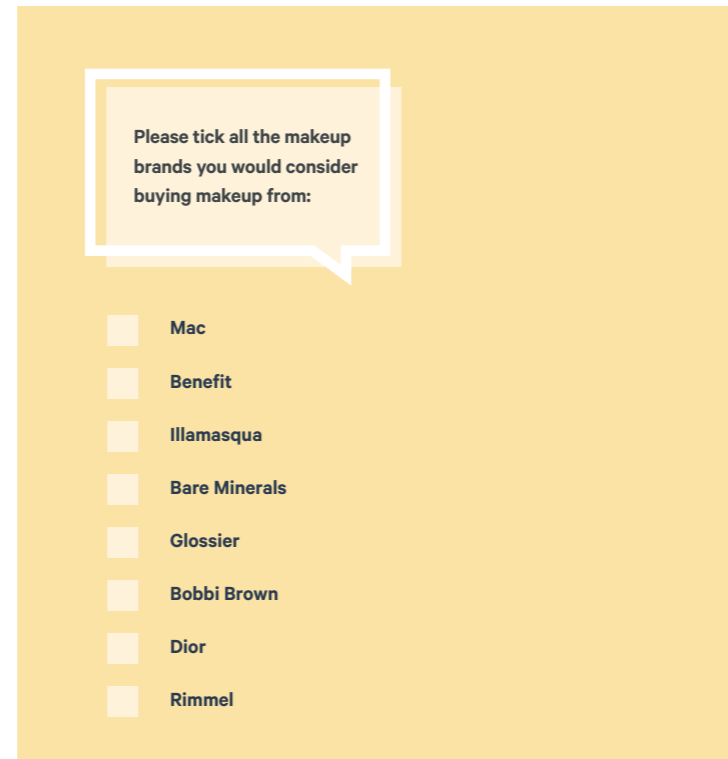
### 3. Unprompted Brand Recall

If you're hitting this metric's upper echelons, you can feel safe in the knowledge that you are killing it. Unprompted brand recall is a measure of how many people think about your brand without any pushing. When they're asked to think about an industry, your brand springs to mind first. Totally organic, no hints needed.



### 4. Preference in Category

The helpful younger sibling of unprompted brand recall, this metric gives consumers the best chance they'll get of showing their interest in your brand. This is one of the more achievable metrics, and so it's one that even the smallest of brands need to have under their belt.



This will show you where you stand compared to your competitors, and if you're not succeeding here, alert you to the fact that your brand needs some serious tending to.

### 5. Time on Site

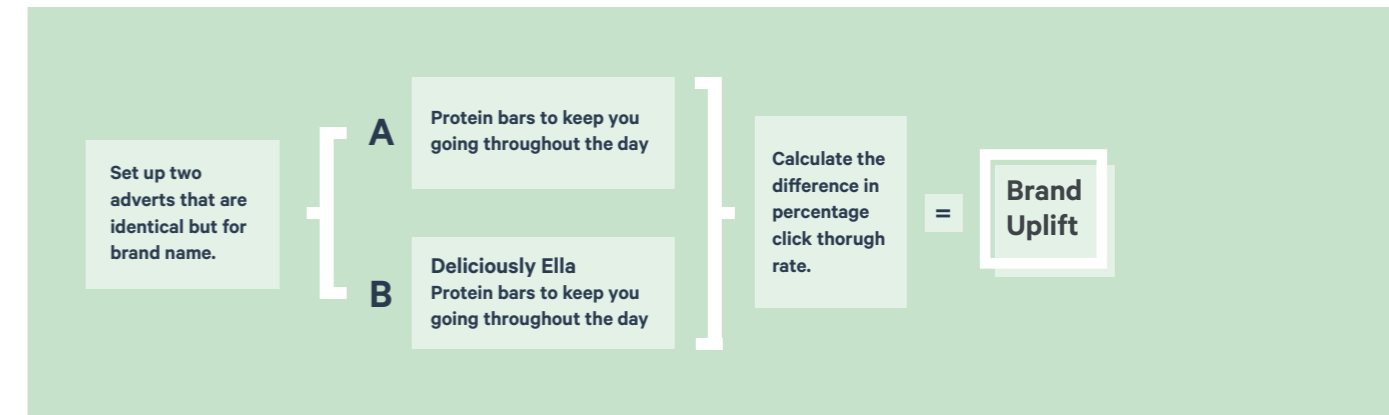
Holding people's attention should be something to strive for. Of course it's great if you've attracted potential clients over to your page in the first place, and trying to keep them there for longer and longer is a laudable aim to have.

Tracking time on your site couldn't be simpler. Head to your Google Analytics dashboard, and check the figure located under 'Behaviour.'

### 6. Brand Uplift

Uplift demonstrates the value that your brand is directly adding to your company. It shows that, when faced with two otherwise identical products, your brand's identity (name, logo, image, associations) will win their custom.

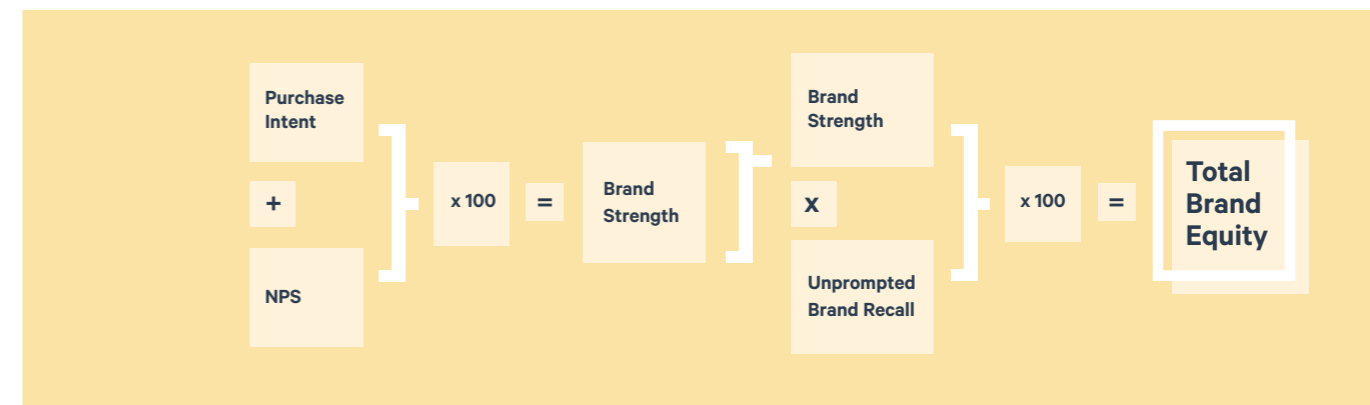
It's a healthy indication that your brand stands a chance of beating own-brand and budget items since it means that your company's identity can overcome the incentives of lower price.



### 7. Total Brand Equity

The maestro of brand health metrics, if you can hit the sweet spot here, you know you're onto a winner.

This figure is the mothership. It's an indication not only of how well-known your brand is, but also how well-liked it is amongst those people who have heard of you. Knowing that this figure is high and healthy will give you the data you need to prove yourselves to investors, to strategise with confidence, and most importantly to sleep soundly at night.



If you take the time to get on top of these 7 metrics, and work hard to ensure brand is consistently performing well in them, your life will be transformed. Not only will you find reporting on numbers, and crafting future brand strategies significantly more straight-forward, but you'll see growth figures explode across the board. ■

# Wear Your Heart on Your Sleeve

## Four brands telling it how it is

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For centuries, philosophers and laymen have pondered the value of honesty. In a society where it's widely accepted that being dishonest is a poor trait in a human being, why are the rules different for brands?

The news fails to be truly shocking, more so disappointing, when it's frequently revealed that a brand has been dishonest to the public in some way. In fact, it's a worryingly-accepted norm that brands are opaque,

hiding things from the outside world. Inter-competition between brands is somewhat to blame for this secrecy. The recipes of Coca-Cola, KFC and others are closely guarded corporate secrets after all.

Increasingly, though, there's an emerging trend for brands to include honesty in their policies and strategies. We look at four brands who are successfully embodying the virtue in at least some of their strategies.

### Oasis

Oasis's honesty comes in the form of a tongue-in-cheek sense of humour. It's a strategy with potential for controversy, and therefore not widely embraced, but in their #RefreshingStuff campaign, they manage to pull it off.

It pokes fun at Cause Marketing, one of the most prevalent advertising trends at the moment. The advert takes the mickey out of brands who use ethical issues and social justice just to push their product. In the campaign, The Togetherness Bottle satirises the idea that a drinks brand holds the power to unite people with severely opposing viewpoints (no offence, Heineken). Instead, Oasis's message is that no one brand can change the world, and any brand who purports to be pulling the wool over consumers' eyes.

They clearly think the way to a consumer's wallet is through their funny bone rather than their heart, but their honest portrayal of a growing advertising trend does feel, frankly, refreshing.

### KFC

It's no secret that KFC have experienced some branding hardships in recent months, following the forced closure of 900 shops due to supply shortages.

The marketing team were backed into a corner: they couldn't deny anything had gone wrong. Thousands of hungry consumers had been denied their fried-chicken fix. They had to be honest and apologise, but no one expected them to be so explicitly honest.

### Starbucks

You'd be forgiven for thinking that we have a short memory for including Starbucks on this list. Admittedly, they don't have a squeaky-clean track record when it comes to being honest with their finances. But in the wake of a social justice scandal caused by the insensitivity of a manager of one of their Philadelphia coffee shops, it might not have shocked many people if the brand had fired the employee, brushed the disaster under the carpet and moved on with their path to coffee-dominance.

Instead, they took the decision to close 8,000 stores, sacrificed several million dollars, and enrolled their employees in an afternoon of Unconscious Bias Training.

The Starbucks bosses looked at the situation, acknowledged that the company have a problem with racism, and attempted to make a genuine step towards tackling the issue.

The sheer volume of column inches dedicated to this process are evidence of the PR risk involved in an open and transparent strategy. In this instance, Starbucks left themselves open to criticism, but stood by their proposed solution in the name of working for the public good.

### Oatly

Oatly's honesty is splashed all across their Instagram. Aimed at a health-conscious millennial market, they haven't opted for the cheeky, headline-worthy approach of Oasis, but rather a cut-the-rubbish, honesty's-the-best-policy strategy.

They take the traditional rules of marketing—build a vision and present a story to encourage consumers to buy into that vision—and straight up break them. Instead, they break it down for us: we make oat milk and we want you to buy it. That's it.

It's a bold, almost crude strategy, but given most consumers see thousands of lengthy ads a day, it works. They come across as a brand who don't want to waste your time, rather, to level with you and let you know about a product that's cool and new. Job done. ■

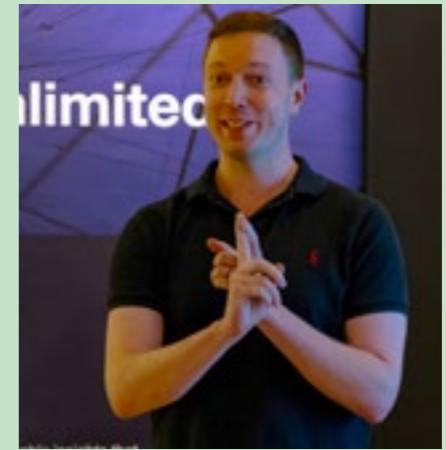
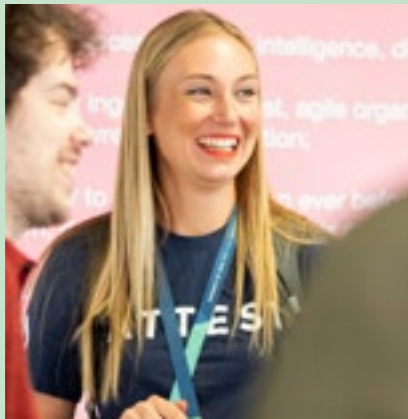


Above: An Oatly billboard

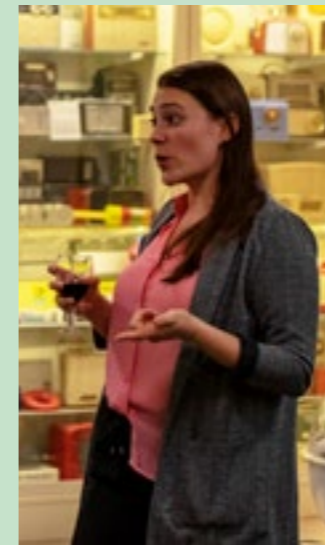
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Attest at  
Vue.js annual  
conference



Attest host an evening  
on 'How to Build an  
Employer Brand' at the  
Museum of Brands



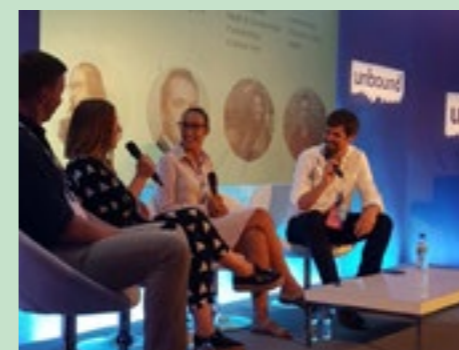
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# Don't Fake It, You Won't Make It

## How to find genuine influencers in a world of social make-believe

Earlier this year, the New York Times published an exposé of Devumi—a company selling social media followers. Influence, they showed us, is now for sale. The trusty Follower count at the top of your favourite influencer's feed—often ranking in the thousands or millions—may well be a lie. And not one that's easy to detect.

There is an army of bots swarming the web, multiplying exponentially every day, being bought and sold to inflate people's online popularity. For a modest price, they will flock to any social media account to like and share everything they post.

It's a tempting proposal, and one that's surprisingly simple to put into action. A google search yields plenty of sites where you can readily purchase 250 Instagram followers for as little as a cup of coffee. Or, if you're going for the big time, you could skyrocket yourself to 100K followers for only £300. That's more followers than former S-Club 7 member, Rachel Stevens (95K); three times as many as Hanya Yanagihara (30.4K) whose bestseller *A Little Life* was nominated for the Man Booker; and well on your way to as many as Wimbledon-finalist, Sabine Lisicki (138K).

Simply put, this practice—and the premise on which the likes of Devumi are founded—is deception. It skews the numbers so that, in

one click, brand new accounts can join the ranks of those who've spent years building a follow-worthy career or online presence.

And far more sinister consequences lie in wait. An Instagrammer with a following of 100K, has the potential to earn £1500 per post. In the eyes of advertisers, the reach you now represent gains the status of a New York billboard: promote something here and thousands will see it.

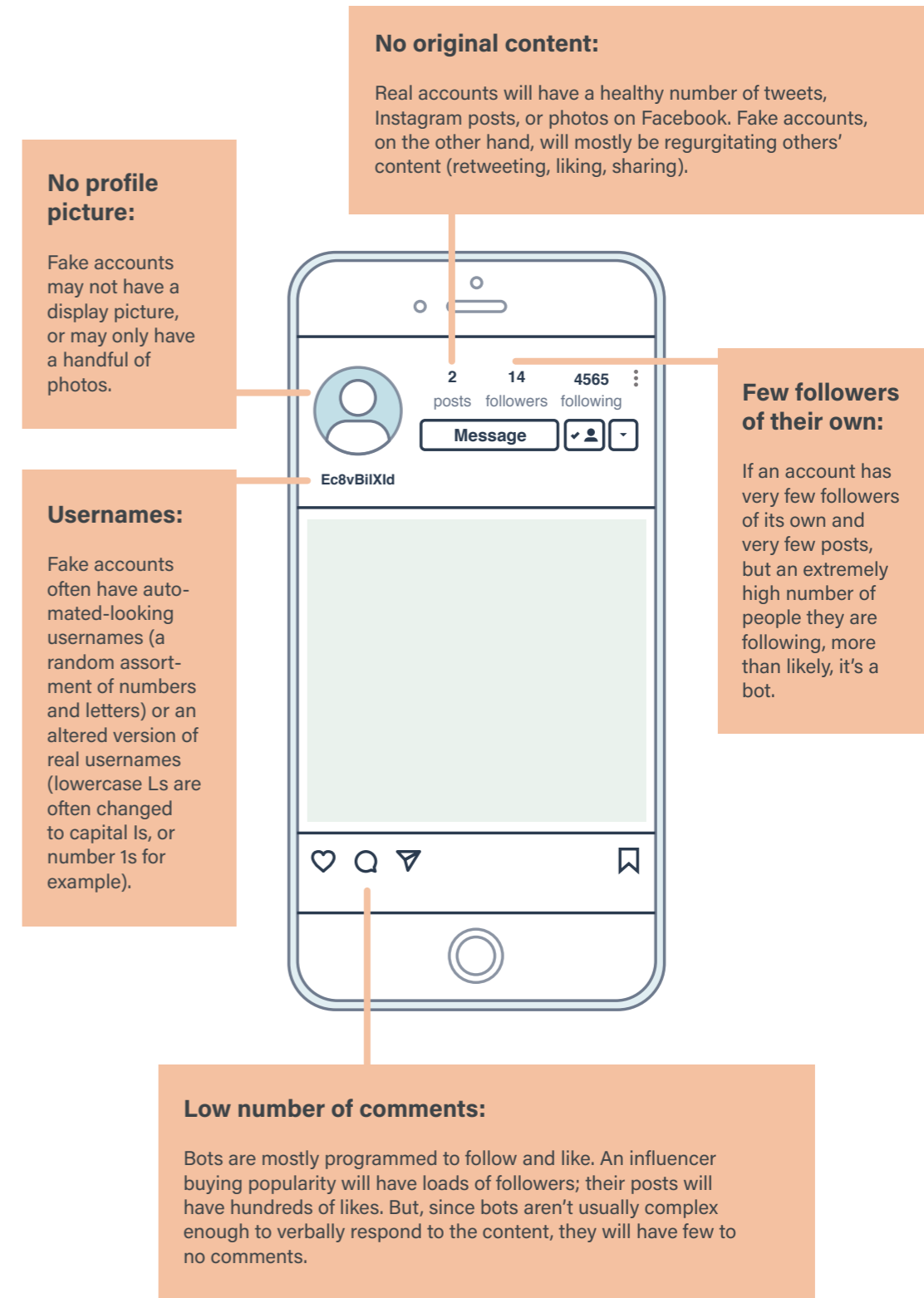
But exactly who is going to see it? This is the question that marketers and brand promoters need to ask themselves. Position your product with a genuine influencer and it'll be spread to a legion of devoted fans, wanting to copy their favourite blogger. Money well spent. But if you don't do your research, you risk wasting thousands of pounds getting word of your product to an army of bots. And though they may retweet it, like it, and share it, the one thing they definitely won't do is buy it.

For all the noise they make, it's in a robotic echo chamber.

Relying on social data to find real influencers in a world where people can buy massive audiences for a few dollars no longer works. If you're going to spend money on having an influencer endorse your brand, you'd best be sure they're for real.

## How to spot fake social media profiles

Scroll through their follower list, keeping your eyes peeled for tell-tale signs of bots:





**Talk to the people you're trying to influence**

It makes sense to start with your existing customers. Who do they follow and admire? You can tap into the collective wisdom of your existing customers through a simple survey, and in no time you'll have a clear picture of the figures that resonate with your audience.

That said, it's also helpful to get the views of people who aren't already actively subscribing to your brand. After all, it's more important to hunt influencers who'll entice new customers to you. Using Attest's full subscription service, and the millions of people across the globe you'll have access to, will give you unbiased list of influencers people will respond to.

Ask them who they most trust and respect, who they're listening to and reading, and who they're following.

The allure of getting your brand out to hundreds of thousands of consumers through an influencer is strong. But, like so many things, it may well be too good to be true.

You're much better off focusing on legitimate influencers who will truly engage and enlarge your customer base. Don't be seduced by the razzle-dazzle of a high follower count. Talk to the people already invested in your brand, and then talk to the people who haven't yet heard of you but ought to.

Get a feel for who the true movers and shakers are in your industry and, when you've got the full picture, your money will be much more reliably spent.

**Get searching...**

If the influencer you're targeting has a website, check its SEO authority. Use tools such as SEMRush to check how much organic traffic it's receiving; Buzzsumo to search for their name along with your keywords to see if they're being mentioned in the right areas for you; and Moz to check their site's backlinks and Domain Authority.

Backlinking is a particularly good sign: if others are giving them independent votes of confidence by linking to them, they're probably legitimate—and producing good content worthy of influence.

Don't forget to search for industry power lists and rankings, and conference programmes to see who's been selected to speak on them. Individually you can take each with a pinch of salt, but together if you start to see patterns—the same names cropping up—it should give you confidence that this person has built a platform which will provide genuine influence. ■

You can readily purchase 250 Instagram followers for as little as a cup of coffee.

# TRUST ISSUES

## The most and least trusted brands in the UK

Almost every week there's some major scandal involving the biggest brands around the world, that causes widespread facepalming amongst consumers up and down the UK.

But just how often is this momentary disappointment translating into genuine distrust in these brands? How forgiving are consumers when a brand misuses their data, forgets to pay their taxes or accidentally dumps oil into the ocean?

Are there smaller-scale actions, for instance a dodgy returns policy or lack of customer service, that afflict consumers more personally and have a bigger impact on the trust in this relationship?

According to the GfK Consumer Confidence Index, consumer confidence peaked in June 1987 (10 Index Points), but dipped to its lowest point in July of 2008 (-39 Index Points) and hasn't recovered fully since, failing to rise above negative scores since the Brexit vote in mid-2016.

In April 2018, GfK's statistics put the UK's consumer confidence at -9 Index Points. These negative results indicate pessimism among UK consumers regarding the state of their personal

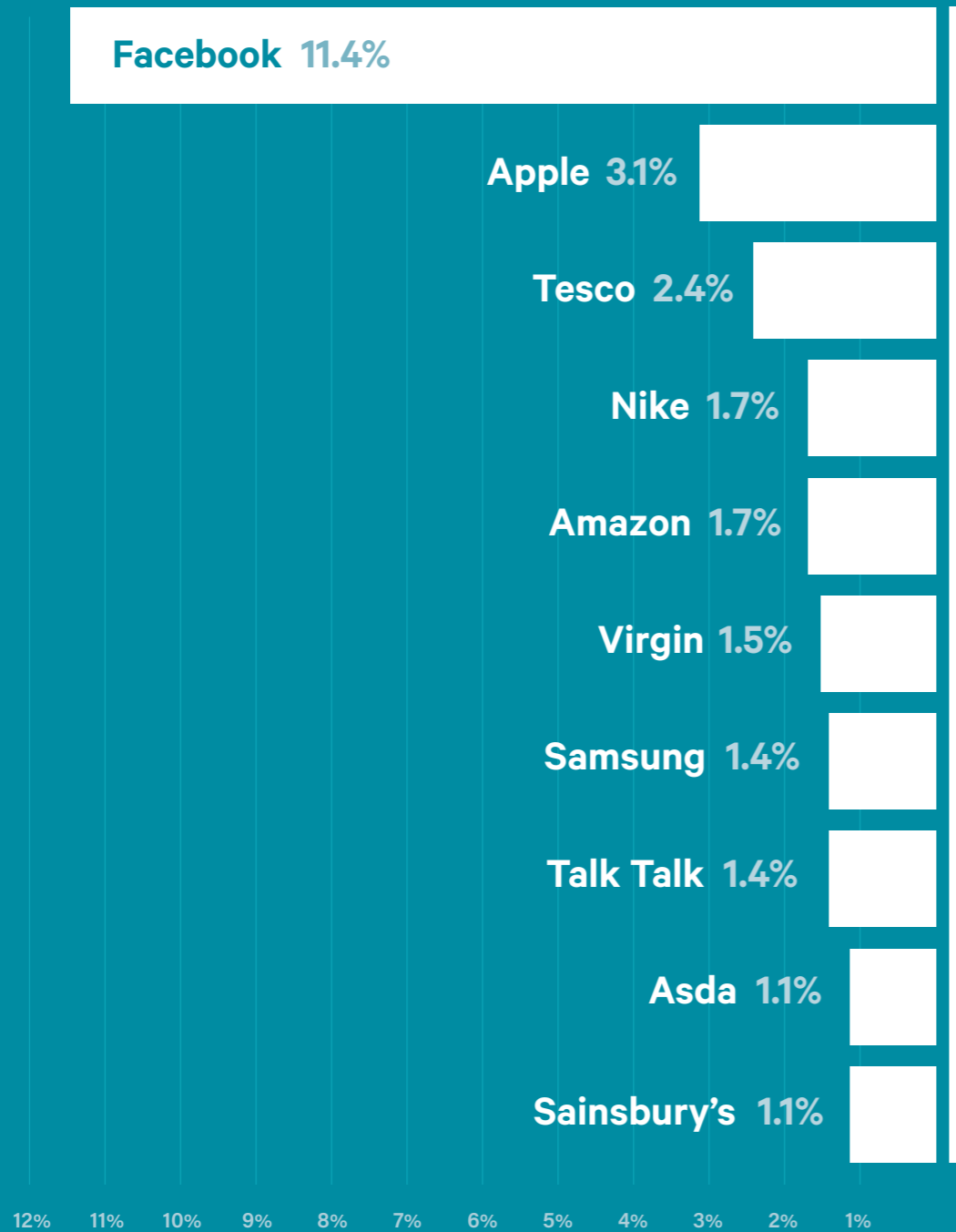
finances and the economic situation across the UK.

In a market, then, where consumers are wary of spending money, brands must act to safeguard trust and loyalty from consumers, to keep shopping habits alive and consistent.

In an increasingly online world, more and more tech-based challenger brands crop up every week, many of them promising they're worthy of consumer trust from the outset. The rise of non-traditional banking systems is a clear example of this trend. These brands, starting with PayPal and more recently Monzo, profess to give consumers control over their own finances, taking the control away from the 'untrustworthy' traditional banking systems.

The introduction of GDPR also reflects the widespread sentiment that consumer data is in the wrong hands; the hands of multinational corporations. The 'right-to-be-forgotten' requirement included in this new legislation is evidence that there's a noticeable concern with the way brands currently collect and retain data about consumers. In fact, consumer mistrust of brands is rife, and a real problem facing brands today.

## The UK's Least Trusted Brands

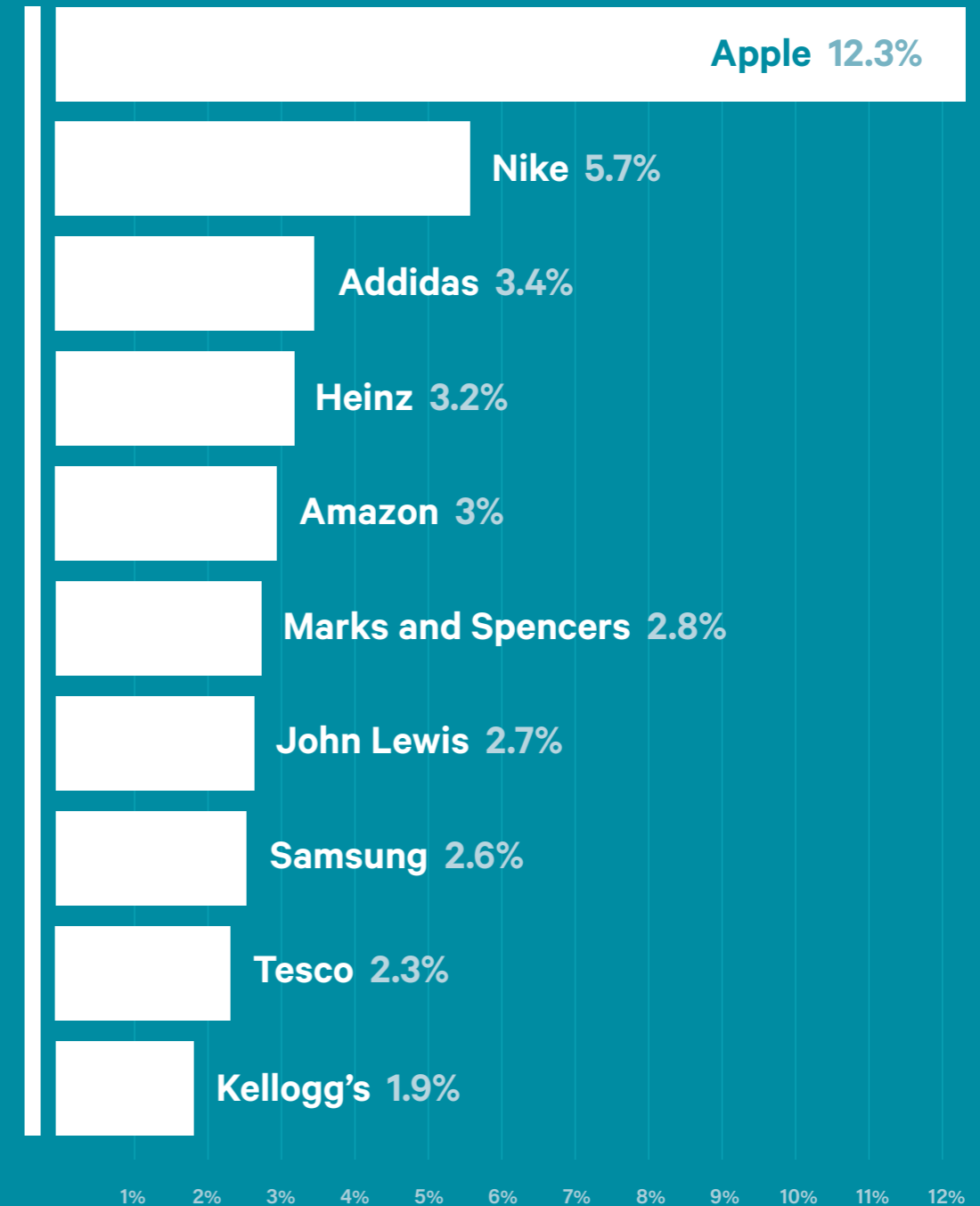


Trust issues aren't confined to either just the online space or the offline markets. With mass media exposing the flaws of traditional and bricks & mortar brands just as frequently as the failings of online and challenger brands, we look at the factors affecting consumer trust, identify the most and least trusted

brands and give our recommendations for how a brand can win and retain consumer trust in this challenging climate.

Five brands appear in both the top 10 most trusted and top 10 least trusted brands lists. Apple, Nike, Amazon, Samsung and Tesco

## The UK's Most Trusted Brands



are all experiencing a split in consumer sentiment. Not only do these brands have both supporters and detractors, as all brands would expect to, consumers feel so strongly about these five to put them at the very top of both of the lists.

The only brand from these five, appearing in

both of our top 10 lists, to have more consumers lacking trust in them than not, is Tesco. Amongst the 2.3% of consumers who trust this brand, the main reasons they're found to be trustworthy is because they are well-established (39.1% of the vote) and because they offer good quality products and services (34.8%).

Yet amongst the 2.4% of consumers who do not trust the supermarket brand, bad quality products (25%) and bad customer support (16.7%) were the main reasons they were found to be untrustworthy.

Clearly, amongst supermarket shoppers, quality of products and service is a determining factor in the trust one has in that brand, but there is a near-even split between the number of consumers pleased with the service and products on offer, and those displeased.

**Factors Impacting Trust**

The number one reason UK consumers trust brands is because of their provision of good quality products and services. 54% of the population cite quality as the main reason they would think of a brand as reliable, and return to them again and again. This is mirrored in the fact that the highest ranking reason for consumer mistrust is the exact opposite: low quality products. This was closely followed by poor customer support.

Contrary to the level of coverage by the press each week, the ethical motivations and actions of brands had relatively little impact on trust levels amongst UK consumers. Fifa, who have been the subject of multiple allegations of corruption, exploitation and fraud in recent months and years, weren't mentioned by a single consumer as an untrustworthy brand.

KFC, who let thousands of customers down in early 2018 by running out of chicken, were only recalled by 0.5% of consumers as the most untrustworthy brand. And Starbucks, with recent, widely-publicised history of tax-avoidance were named untrustworthy by just 0.8% of consumers.

When we look at Attest data, this is explained more clearly. Ethical motivations (classed as a policy to protect the environment, support for your personal social or political causes and good treatment of their employees) only made up 8.8% of the vote for why consumers do trust brands.

Although they make up a bigger proportion (15.8%) of the reasons why consumers don't trust brands, when they fail to act in these ways. Clearly, then, negative press around these ethical topics weighs more heavily on the minds of consumers than any positive policies and actions.

**The ethical motivation of brands has relatively little impact on trust levels.**

Another factor impacting consumer trust was the age of the company. A brand being well-established was the second greatest reason consumers were willing to trust a brand, with 23.7% of the vote. Four of the brands in the top 10 most-trusted are over 100 years old, whereas only one brand in the top 10 least-trusted has been running for more than a century.

In a market where consumers are overwhelmingly pessimistic about their personal and national economic situations, consumer trust is evidently tricky to win.

Though some older, well-established brands have done well to win and maintain consumer trust over the years, by providing excellent products and service as their first priority, traditional brands aren't excluded from the list of brands consumers lack trust in.

In fact, mistrust in traditional providers has fueled the growth of challenger brands aimed at giving consumers control over their data for a perfectly seamless service.

The recurring theme throughout is excellent quality products and services: ensure you consistently deliver and consumers will learn to rely on you. While ethical motivations did impact brand trust amongst younger generations, especially negative press surrounding scandals, most consumers seemed to be more motivated by the quality of the products and services they're shelling out for in this tough economic environment.

It's vital, then, that brands of all shapes and sizes keep their finger on the pulse of changing consumer sentiment, and responses to their products and services. And the best way to keep track of this? Keep asking questions. ■

**Let's Attest That: Answers**

- 1. A** That's right, we're all addicted to Netflix. 60% of people prefer bingeing than waiting between episodes.
- 2. B** With 23% of the vote, UK consumers would like to see more women with larger body sizes in TV adverts.
- 3. A** Beyoncé narrowly pipped Ed Sheeran to the post as the act people would pay most to see live!
- 4. D** 24% of people chose Quorn as the brand most associated with veganism, despite its primary range being vegetarian! Linda McCartney and Tesco came in at 2nd and 3rd place.
- 5. A** Of course ketchup is our favourite condiment! A hot dog just isn't a hot dog without some Heinz.
- 6. C** An impressive half of the population count themselves as regular second-hand shoppers. And when it's so much cheaper, often better quality, and good for the environment, they'd be mad not to!
- 7. C** From Virgin to Skittles to Topshop, there were a lot of brands supporting Pride this year! And it's a good job too, because over half of us would be more inclined to buy from them.
- 8. B** The British sweet tooth is out in full force. Sweet popcorn took the crown with 30% of the vote, and toffee came in second with 29%.
- 9. B** 60% of people would rather say goodbye to delicious summer salads than risk losing strawberries and cream!
- 10. D** 53% of us think that cheddar is by far the most superior of the British cheeses.

# Hot Right Now

It's every brand's dream to one day dominate a market. Becoming a household name holds enormous prestige in itself, but it also does wonders for revenue streams. If you can become the brand that pops into people's minds before any other, there's a high chance you will be winning their business.

This quarter, the brands that are ruling Britain's share-of-mind in their respective markets are as follows:



It's a mélange of heritage brands, and a few relative newcomers (Netflix, and TUI are quite recent brands in many people's lives). Hats off to these powerhouse companies, working hard at their marketing, social media, and sales and digital strategy. It's all paying off, because they're the hottest brands for British customers this quarter.

## Even more insight

We live and breath consumer understanding, so whether you're an existing client or interested in becoming more consumer-centric, we'd love to chat!

You can reach us using any of the below:

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