

Technology Brands Dominate In Corporate Reputation Stakes

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Google has beaten Apple and Sony to take the top position in the TNS Corporate Reputation

The study, by the world's largest custom research company, TNS, assesses organisations on their business success, favourability, trustworthiness and product / service quality.

The results demonstrate that technology companies dominate the list of most reputable organisations in the UK. Among the 12 technology companies in the top 25 most reputable organisations, Apple and Sony were ranked in third and fourth place, pointing to consumers' high regard for technology brands.

However, retail and FMCG brands are also prevalent on the list, taking 11 of the top 25 spots. Brands such as John Lewis, Marks & Spencer, Tetley, Kellogg's and innocent ranking highly alongside the big four supermarkets.

Just behind Google, Kellogg's leads the FMCG category in second place, indicating that brands that remain faithful to core values will withstand the test of time. The research found that even those who do not purchase Kellogg's products strongly admire the brand, demonstrating its well-established reputation in the marketplace.

Gemma Hicks, Head of Stakeholder Management at TNS, comments:

"In this post-recession, yet still potentially volatile market it is interesting to note the brands (outside of the technology industry) that remain reputable in consumers' minds. We would not assume nostalgia, quality and supremacy to be priorities for consumers during an economic downturn but if a brand has built its heritage on these values, remaining true to them will pay dividends.

"We are seeing high reputation scores being driven mostly by a strong reaction to company success, proving that people are a lot more rational in their assessment of reputation. We also found that consumer trust in brands has dropped across most companies we indexed. This less emotional, more rational view of brands means that companies need to demonstrate that they are a provider of quality goods and services to be considered a highly reputable brand in a recessionary environment."

Virgin Holidays, Kuoni and Visa are the only travel and finance brands in the top 25, perhaps signifying that these sectors are still suffering from the repercussions of the recession.

Other findings:

Trust

Of the companies included in the study retailers are generally still considered to be the most trusted:

* 63% of Britons believe they can trust Marks & Spencer, with John Lewis, Sainsbury's and Morrisons following closely behind, at 59%, 55% and 55% respectively.

* FMCG brands Kellogg's, innocent and Tetley are considered to be three of the most trustworthy UK brands with 64%, 56% and 55% respectively of those questioned saying they trust them.

Success

* Microsoft is considered to be the most successful brand in the UK with a massive 81% of people considering them to have either excellent or very good success. Apple and Google also rank highly, with 80% and 79% respectively.

* Kellogg's, Coca-Cola and Tesco are the only non-technology brands who are considered to be highly successful by more than 70% of people (with 72%, 79% and 75% respectively).

Quality

* Google ranks top in its quality of service offering, with 70% of Brits ranking the company's service as "excellent" or "good".

* Technology brands Samsung, Sony, Apple, Nintendo and Microsoft are also in the top ten of the most highly rated in terms of quality.

* 62% and 61% of people identified Marks and Spencer and John Lewis as quality brands, indicating that they are delivering on their promise to offer quality.

*The corporate reputation of each company was determined by measuring people's views on five different dimensions of reputation - trust, favourability, business success, product / service quality and overall reputation. When the TNS Corporate Reputation Index was the same for different brands, ranking was based on scores for overall reputation.

The research was conducted in September 2010 using TNS Omnibus online omnibus comprising 3197 nationally representative interviews among GB adults (aged 16 to 64). The study was developed by the Stakeholder Management department of TNS UK to rank the corporate reputation of 75 household brands.

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