Global Advertisers And Their Fans Explore Value Of Social Media

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Research proposes basic expectations and differentiators for fan pages

Millward Brown and Dynamic Logic in co-operation with the World Federation of Advertisers (WFA) have researched what people around the world gain by becoming fans of brands, what global marketers expect from social media and what drives most value for both groups.

Value of a Fan suggests 10 key factors as driving a stronger response to fan pages. It splits these into five basic expectations from fans, which apply to all brand pages, and five proposed differentiators, which can help pages standout but may not all be appropriate to all brands.

The five health checks identified in the report are regular posts, trustworthy brand news, new product information, contests and special offers while brands that can also deliver either a sense of fun, variety, innovation, interactivity or community will stand out from other pages and see a stronger brand response.

Value of a Fan suggests that successful pages deepen both brand equity and engagement. The research notes that the pages generating the strongest brand response were not necessarily those with the largest number of fans.

The report also identifies the perceived value that social media delivers for marketers. Of the participating WFA members, 85% regard fan pages as a means of securing additional insight and increasing loyalty, while 80% cited the opportunity to increase advocacy.

Of those participating WFA members, 96% are spending more in this area and 27% are finding that running fan pages takes more time and money than anticipated.

Despite increased time and money being invested, 50% of the WFA members who participated were unsure of their return on investment, 23% thought they were getting a good return but 27% regarded payback as just average or poor.

Value of a Fan is based on interviews with 24 multinationals in WFA membership and online questionnaires with 3,687 of their fans. The fan pages selected included brands from the confectionery, alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks, personal care and telecommunications sectors.

Although some pages were global, others were specifically targeted at consumers in Australia, France, Germany, Sweden, the UK or the US.

Duncan Southgate, Global Innovation Director at Millward Brown, said:
â€œFan expectation of brands in the social media space is increasing all the time and Value of a Fan seems to demonstrate that marketers only get out what they put in. Marketers that donâ€™t regularly add new and interesting content to their fan pages and embrace what their fans want from the page are missing out on an opportunity to build loyalty among some of their most important consumers.â€•

Robert Dreblow, Marketing Communications Director at the WFA said:
â€œMany marketers are asking the question â€˜what is the value of a fanâ€™? This project is a great first step towards creating dashboard of learning to enable companies to answer that question for their own brands. We welcome further work in this area."

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