



**Best Brand Building
Practices- What
Experience Teaches
Businesses**

Marketing In Asia

MARKETING IN ASIA

**Research
Report 2022**

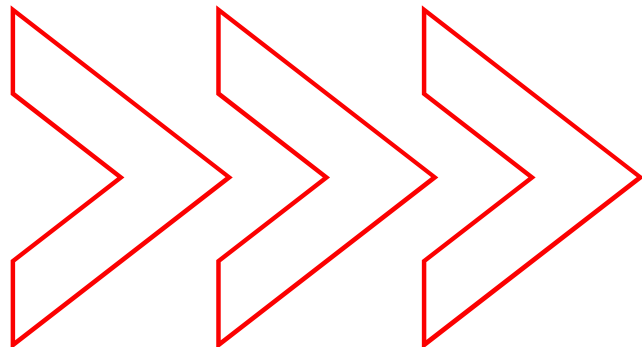


Message from the Director

"Personally, when I decide to go on a holiday or to purchase a product, there are one or two brands that come to my mind first. They simply stick."

Branding plays a key role in making people remember what we sell or do. Personally, when I decide to go on a holiday or to purchase a product, there are one or two brands that come to my mind first. They simply stick. To me, a branding strategy that sticks is very powerful. That being said, startups must take advantage of this to generate more.

Today, Marketing In Asia (MIA) is proud to share our findings on branding. As a startup, you may take advantage of the insights to firm up your branding strategy. In the end, your journey to growing the revenue will begin when the customer starts to remember your brand first and not your competitor's.



Akanksha Sharma
Director India - Marketing In Asia

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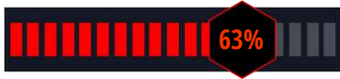
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BRAND

advertising FOCUS
TRUST Business
product quality
Design Quality strategy
Benefit Team
Marketing

Visual Summary

Practice 1. Maintaining Consistency Across Platforms



Percentage of respondents using one colour palette across all verticals



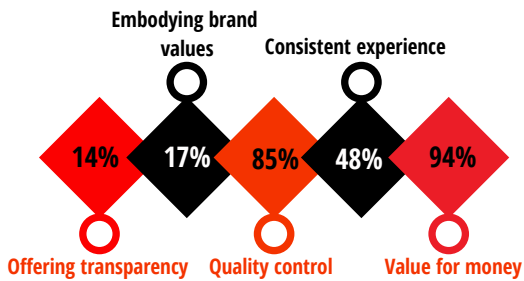
Percentage of respondents for who initially focused on consistency

Practice 2. Cultivating Brand Logo



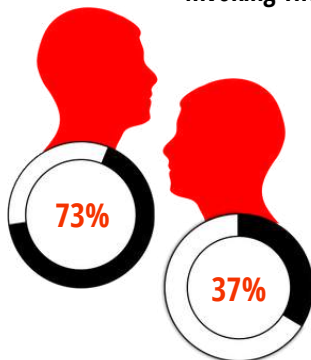
Percentage of respondents who use a single coloured logo

Practice 3. Building Trust

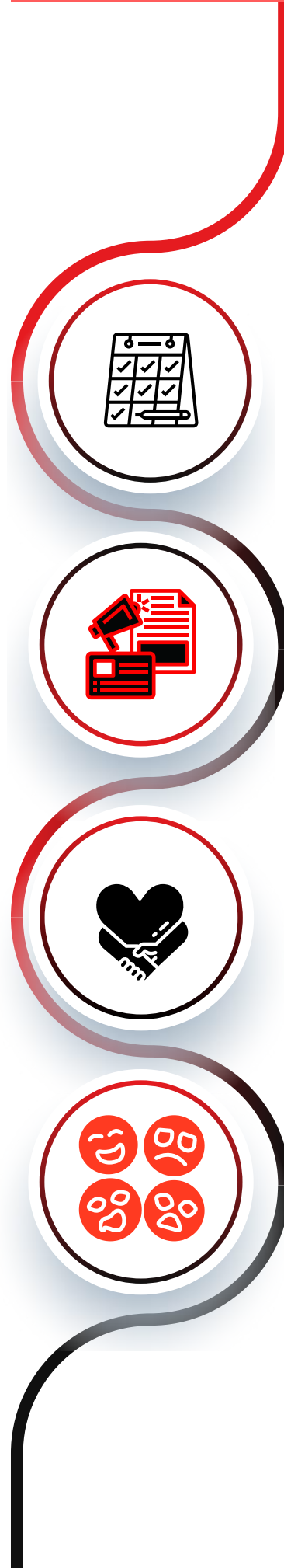


Percentage of respondents implementing the trust-building practices

Practice 4. Invoking The Emotional Element

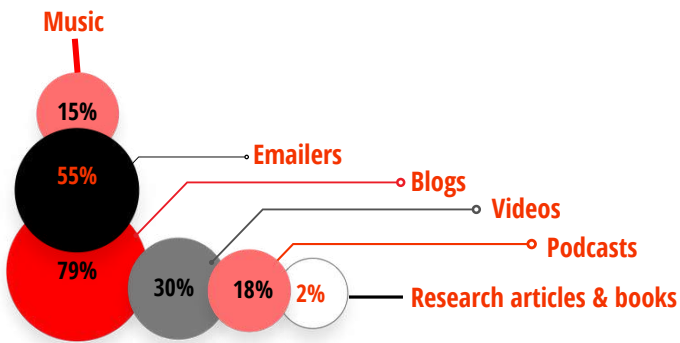


Respondents that believed that invoking emotional element can help strengthen the brand vs those who were actually able to do it



Visual Summary

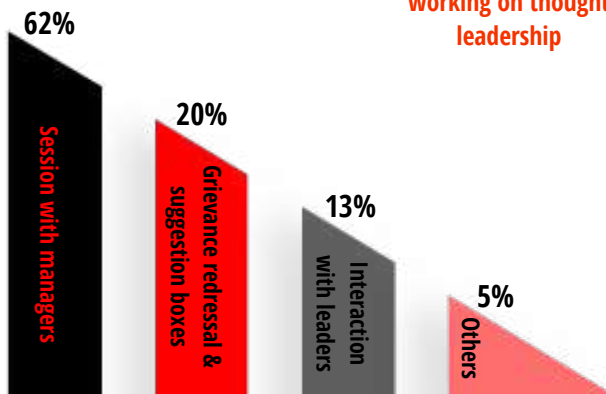
Practice 5. Leveraging Content Marketing



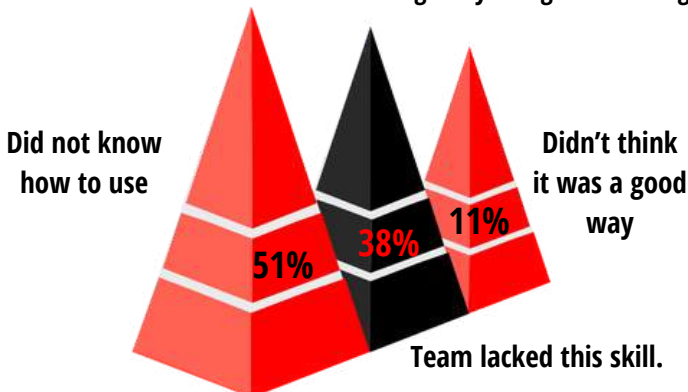
Practice 6. Establishing Thought Leadership



Practice 7. Considering Employee Happiness



Practice 8: Using Storytelling for Branding



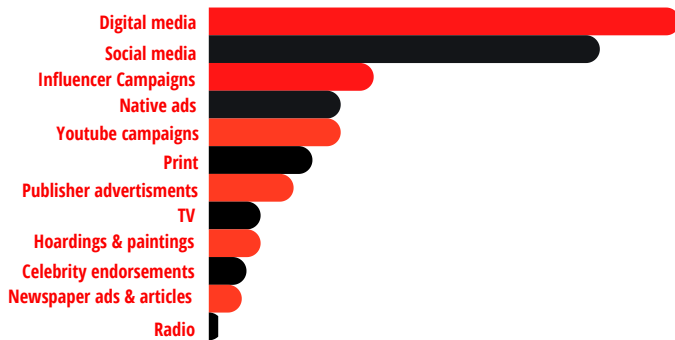
Visual Summary

Practice 9. Identifying With A Higher Purpose

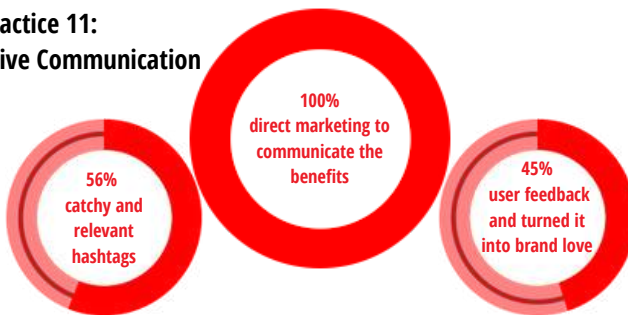


65% of respondents who feel it is an important branding practice

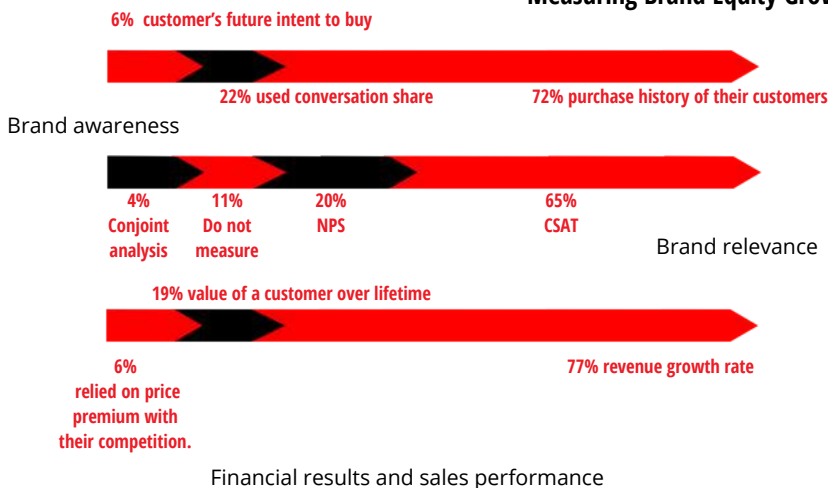
Practice 10: Building Top Of The Mind



Practice 11: Using Creative Communication



Measuring Brand Equity Growth



About the study

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

245

COUNTRY OF OPERATION

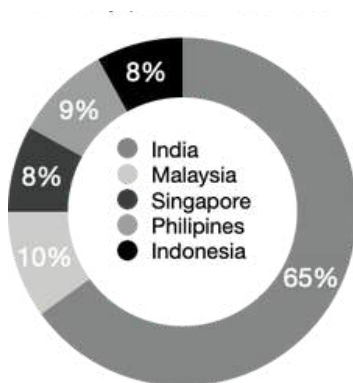
India, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Phillipines

MODE OF DATA COLLECTION

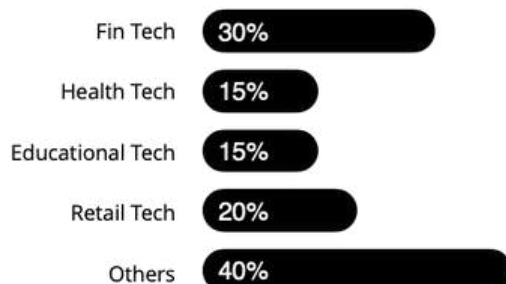
The data for the study has been collected using surveys, social media polls and secondary market research.



Age of the business



Country of operation



Industry / sector

Introduction

“Behavioral economics unequivocally tells us that consumers construct their identity through the brands they purchase”. - Dr. Sydney Ceruto, NYC Life Coach, LLC

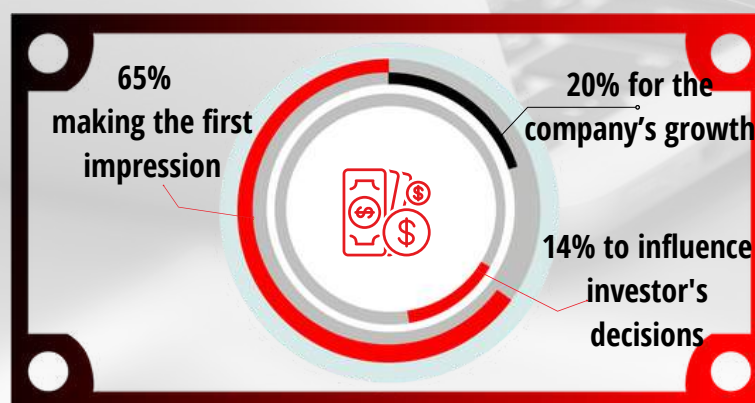
What is branding?

Coca-Cola has a global footprint thanks to its recognisable red and white colour scheme and cursive font. Did you know that besides being a household name, a whopping 94% of the world's population can also recognise its logo? This is what branding does.

Branding is the process of developing a name, symbol, or other distinctive feature that identifies one seller's products and services as distinct from those of other sellers. It is the sum of all the impressions, associations, and perceptions customers have about a company or product. Branding strategy is a planned process that helps build an organisation's reputation, identity, and value by creating a name, symbol, music, or design that represents the organisation uniquely.

Why do businesses, especially startups, need branding?

Many startups end up failing because they spend too much time perfecting the product rather than marketing it. Entrepreneurs have found that in order to have a successful startup, they need to be well-branded. There's nothing worse for a startup than to run out of seed funding and be left scrambling.



Why do startups think branding is needed?

Introduction

For startups, the key is visibility to start generating revenue and have better chances of making money. The faster it becomes visible, the closer it'll be to succeeding in getting funded. When considering a business investment, one should be aware that more than 80% of the decision-makers factor in brand reputation.

Our data indicates that 14% of respondents felt the need for branding to influence investor's decisions, and 20% felt it is essential for the company's growth.

Brands are one of the main ways that someone will find out about what is happening in a business. People will tell their friends, communities, and family to come to support a brand. Brands help the product spread all around so that more people learn about them and buy their products. A strong brand can help get noticed and establish credibility with investors and other stakeholders. This is one more reason to make branding a priority for business- this way, it'll be able to grow more value!

Strong branding has the power to provoke a multitude of emotions in consumers. It's often the case that they're interested, trusting, and optimistic with brands they prefer. If you establish these feelings, then you can advantageously promote products that stir up similar emotions.

What can be done?

First impressions are essential, and a Crowdspring study reaffirmed this fact that says that it only takes 10 seconds for people to form a first impression [1]; further, our study found that a brand helps people form a first impression 66% of the time.

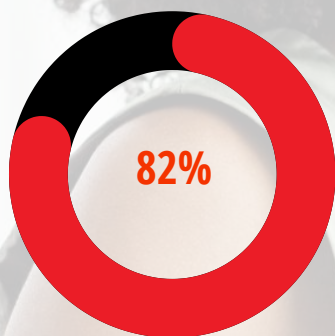
Now, that the importance of brand building has been established let's move on to how to create one? In this research, MIA talks about the best brand-building practices that the startups can benefit from that are sure to deliver results and help gain visibility.

Best Brand Building Practices



1. Consistency across platforms

Consistency across platforms is key to building a brand people can trust. The visual identity should be consistent across all marketing verticals to match the persona of the business, and it should be visually compelling for people so that they remember you. Many companies have struggled to create a consistent message across all their marketing touchpoints, but this is an essential step in building a brand. Our study indicates that 82% of the participants agreed that consistency across marketing collaterals is vital for brand building. One of the most prominent measures that most of the respondents adopted was using one colour palette across all verticals (63%). Amongst them, 68% started strong, but as time went by, the importance of the subject took a back seat.



Percentage of respondents who agreed that consistency across platforms is an essential branding practice

With the ever-changing marketplace, it is crucial to create a brand that can be consistently presented across platforms, allowing you to maximize revenue. Presenting consistent branding gives you nearly 3x the chance of being seen than having inconsistent branding [2]. Creating a consistent message that reinforces brand identity and core values is a surefire way to help prevent customer confusion and increase customer loyalty. The business is sure to cash in, thanks to higher recall rates!



Percentage of respondents using one colour palette across all verticals



Percentage of respondents who initially implemented the practice but could not maintain it.

Best Brand Building Practices



2. Cultivating the brand logo

Humans are visual creatures. We tend to make decisions based on what we see. This is why it is important to have a strong brand image that people will remember. A company's brand image is a critical component of its success. With this in mind, it is essential to have a clear idea of what your brand logo looks like.

Sticking with monochromes

Consistently using one colour in your logo, branding, digital content, and promotional material can help make your brand more recognizable. It helps to drive brand recognition up by as much as 80% [3]. Only 41% of the respondents agreed to use a single coloured logo in sync with maintaining consistency.

Taking note of product packaging

It's not just about having the perfect colours for the product packaging; it's about how the colours make your products recognizable in the market. For instance, 33% of the world's most renowned companies use some tone of blue in their logos [4]. Having a simple yet attractive font that is crisp and legible, a consistent colour palette, and using hot colours are some of the ways every business must invest in that is looking forward to creating a big brand.



41%

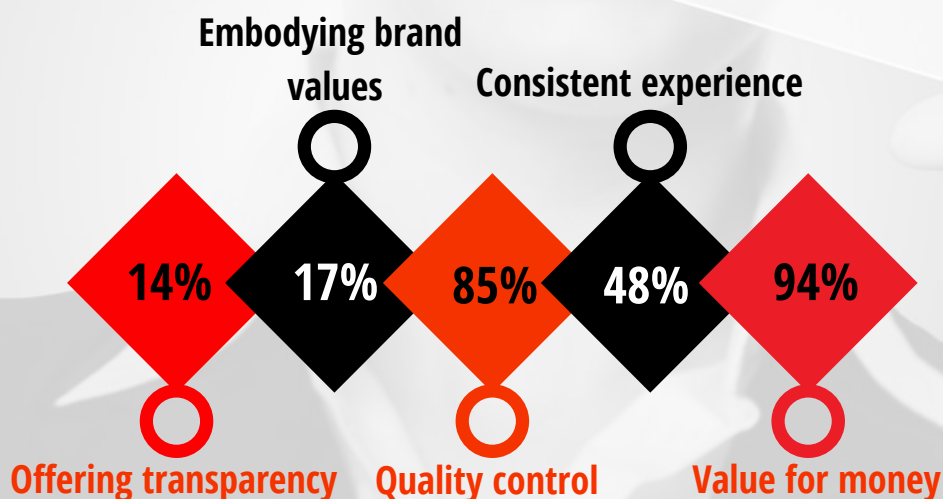
Percentage of respondents who use a single coloured logo

Best Brand Building Practices



3. Building trust

The biggest challenge in brand building is creating trust in your brand and gaining trust in your industry. Social media is ubiquitous nowadays, and as such, consumers are empowered by technology to voice their feelings about your product in an instant. In order to survive and succeed, a company must build lasting trust with their customers. This sentiment is as important to them as launching relevant products into the market. Let us discuss some practices that can help companies in gaining trust.



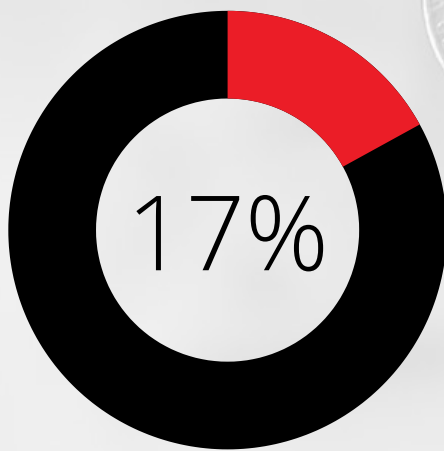
Percentage of respondents implementing trust-building practices

i. Offering transparency

As per a study, 39% of consumers would start using a brand if it offers full product transparency [5]. This is a remarkable statistic! It represents how highly customers place transparency and the importance complete information about a brand plays.

Our data reveals that while more than three quarters (78%) of the respondents wanted to build trust among its customers, only a handful (14%) were providing transparency in their offering.

Best Brand Building Practices



Percentage of respondents who work towards embodying their brand values across organisation

3. Building trust

ii Sharing & embodying your brand values across the organisation

A Fundera study showed that out of a given group, more people (89%) stick to buying brands that share their values [6]. You know the importance of knowing your brand, but why don't you see it at work? The workplace should reflect who you are and everything that you do. As much as you might strive for your brand to be known for specific values or differentiators, your brand is only as sharp as the engagement you and your team have with clients, customers and other collaborators. If your team cannot embody your values, it might be time to take a hard look at what you are aspiring to be.

Our data reveals that out of those who wish to build trust, a mere 17% embody their company values and represent what they are selling.

Best Brand Building Practices

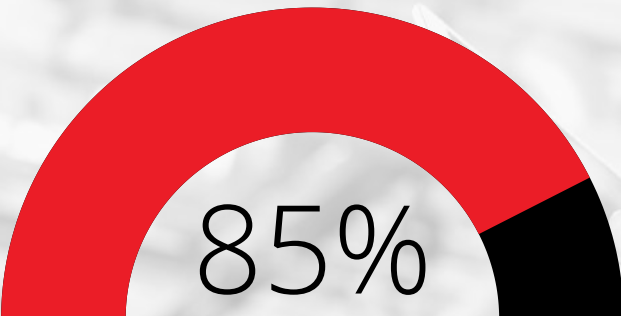


3. Building trust

iii. Administering quality control

In order to build trust with customers, companies need to deliver on their promises and provide quality products. If you had previously gained the trust of your customers by administering quality control, then introducing any new lines of products is easier as 60% of your customers will be willing to try it [7].

According to our research, more than 85% of startups understood the need for quality control and were working towards achieving it.



85%

Percentage of respondents
who work towards
administering quality control

Best Brand Building Practices



3. Building trust

iv. Consistent experience in every interaction

The success of any brand depends on the customer experience, which can be defined as how customers perceive the quality of their interactions with a company and how they feel after those interactions. Facebook surveyed 15,000 consumers and found that when asked what keeps them coming back to their favourite brands, people mentioned a combination of factors including product quality, consistency in experience and interactions and cost [8]. In today's buyer-centric society, consumers expect to be able to have an affordable quality product and have a consistent experience with brands every time they shop.

Our data showed that only 48% of the respondents were consistently working towards delivering a memorable experience to their customers in every interaction. While customer experience was a priority for many (86%), it was limited to first interaction only. This goes for customer service as well.



Working on consistent experience in each interaction
Customer experience limited to first interaction only.

Best Brand Building Practices



3. Building trust

v. Value for money

Price is a pain point for all customers, and unless the product is value for money, no customer would ever return to spend even a dime on it again.

Almost all (94%) of the participants in the study claimed that they had priced their product/service, keeping its worth in mind and aimed at delivering value for money.



94% of respondents claimed to deliver value for money

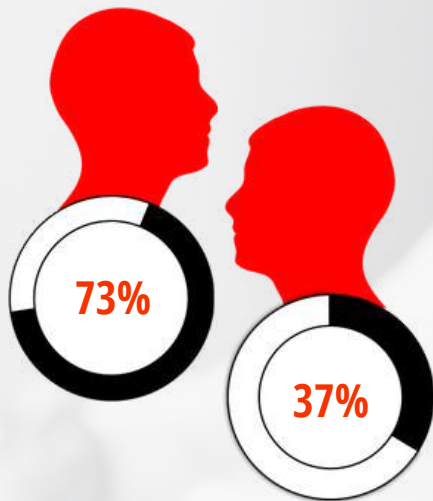
Everlane - the brand that went out of its way to establish trust and transparency

Everlane, the big clothing brand, put its pricing and labour information on a film at a time when consumers had no idea about the ins and outs of the production process of their products. Now, they're one of the brands that consumers trust to be transparent with a variety of facts. It realized early on that millennial users only care about authenticity and transparency, so they made the surprising decision to be openly transparent with their customers. Inculcating such a level of trust and building that sense of security in the customers is not an option but a conscious choice that every business should make. One thing that many (70%) brand managers already know is that building an audience and establishing trust is a great goal that will eventually result in more sales which will drive customer loyalty leading to more business in the long run [9].

Best Brand Building Practices



4. Invoking the emotional element of customers, so they relate to a brand more strongly

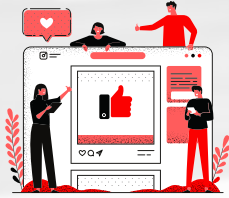


Respondents that believed that invoking emotional element can help strengthen the brand vs those who were actually able to do it

Today, as brands introduce themselves to the masses, with new social media platforms and automation tools that are constantly advancing, something about the human connection is being lost. These new technologies often result in brands that do not speak in our voice. A person is highly likely to recommend a brand they are emotionally invested with. According to brand positioning research conducted almost a decade ago, that will always hold true; if a company successfully connects emotionally with its customers, then it can count on 94% of those customers to recommend it to others. The idea is to hijack human psychology and how we think, but few are actually leveraging this. While 73% of the respondents agreed with the concept, only 37% were actually able to leverage it.

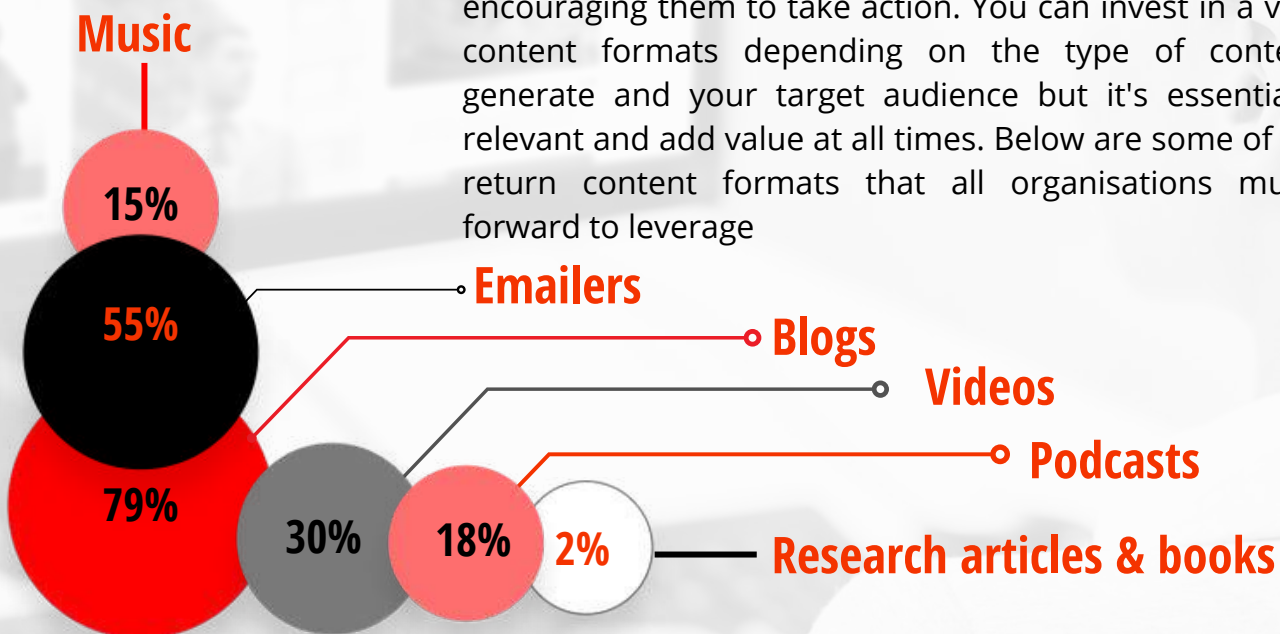
Successful companies know that consumers are motivated by emotion, so they focus more on the feelings that their product invokes and less on the details. They use this type of marketing to get past detail-oriented mindsets and better connect with consumers by focusing on building loyalty. Loyalty is about human emotion, and this means it's also about the customer. Choosing to spend your money with a company that makes a customer feel good means they are more likely to make repeat purchases in the future!

Best Brand Building Practices



5. Content marketing

As content marketing evolves, it has become a pivotal branding practice. Creating, publishing and sharing interesting content is an effective way to establish your brand and convey the values of your business, thus connecting with customers and encouraging them to take action. You can invest in a variety of content formats depending on the type of content you generate and your target audience but it's essential to be relevant and add value at all times. Below are some of the high return content formats that all organisations must look forward to leverage

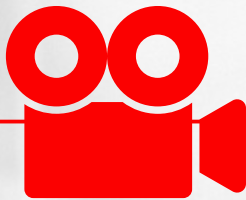


i. Blogs

Companies can use their blogs to promote their brand values in the communities. It's a great way to attract new customers or spark conversations with existing ones and is an excellent way for businesses to integrate social media into the marketing mix, as brands that blog have reported a 67% increase in their lead generation [10].

Our data also revealed that blogging is the most sought-after content format, with 79% of the participants agreeing to use blogs and articles to reach the target audience.

Best Brand Building Practices



5. Content marketing

ii. Videos

A recent study reveals, that creating content on social media and making it available in video format for consumers to see can enhance lead generation [11]. The growth of social media has made it easier for companies to reach out to their target audience through videos rather than through written text. This makes videos an excellent medium for organisations that are looking to build brand awareness, generate leads, and convert visitors into customers. Why big brands use video formats is because it allows for more in-depth content that consumers can digest in less time than other formats, people tend to have more engagement with the video format and it allows for better branding opportunities. As more and more businesses have moved toward a video-centric marketing strategy, companies would be wise to include videos in their content marketing strategy as nearly half of respondents (54%) desire the inclusion of promotional videos from the brands they support, followed by interactive articles and blog posts [12].

Perks aside, creating videos is also expensive, time-consuming and difficult owing to which most startups refrain from using it as seen in our data where only 30% of the participants said that they were building some sort of engagement using video marketing.

Today, marketing isn't about being just something your target audience can read or watch. It's about being authentic, involved, and visible as a brand. Video is the medium of choice for today's public; it must be integrated into any digital marketing strategy. For startups, it's time to stop worrying and put yourself, your message and your expertise out there and the best way to prompt people to learn more about your business is through blogs- no- video blogs!



Percentage of respondents using videos for branding

Best Brand Building Practices



5. Content marketing



iii. Podcasts

Podcasts are an effective way to promote brands owing to their more personalised and intimate approach to communicating with a target audience. They are known for their ability to pinpoint smaller, niche markets and produce a good return on investment compared with traditional advertising methods. Recent research has shown that podcasts can hyper-target audiences, often giving the business an edge over its competitors in the long term. The two biggest driving aspects for including podcasts as a part of your branding strategy are low competition and high audience. According to research, there are only 700000 podcasts that air at a time compared to 80 million business pages on Facebook [13]. Of course, the number shrinks further once you drill down on a topic. The number of podcast listeners across the globe has jumped from 275 million in 2019 to 384 million in 2021 [14].

Even though podcasts have been around for a while now, they are gradually gaining the popularity they deserve. Our data revealed that 18% of successful startups efficiently used podcasts for their branding activities.

Hackable - the McAfee podcast

Launched in 2017, this McAfee podcast did wonders for its company. Ever since the launch of the podcast, McAfee NPS is trending on an upward curve. According to a case study, 65% of the listeners developed a higher opinion of the brand, 77% said they loved the content and 88% said they gained knowledge after listening to it. Podcasts are slowly capturing the market and it is important to ride the wave at the right time.

18%



Percentage of respondents using podcasts for branding

Best Brand Building Practices



5. Content marketing

iv. Emailers

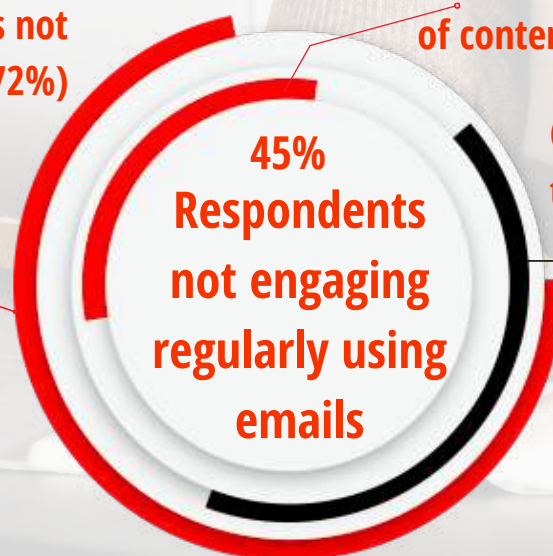
Sending personalised emails and offering special deals based on customer history, place in the journey and part of the email marketing funnel the customer is in, is well-received by many these days. This can provide a better experience for customers. According to research, a vast majority (73%) of consumers like brands that can personalise the shopping experience with offers [15]. Sending emailers, newsletters, and personalised offers representing their preferences and interests go a long way in building a loyal customer base.

Our data showed that almost 55% of startups were using emails and sending personalised offers, emails and newsletters to their customers to build engagement and brand themselves. Those who were not regular in practice said they could not create engaging content (72%).

Content created is not engaging (72%)

Unable to identify the type of content needed (30%)

Organisation lacks in the skill (42%)



Best Brand Building Practices

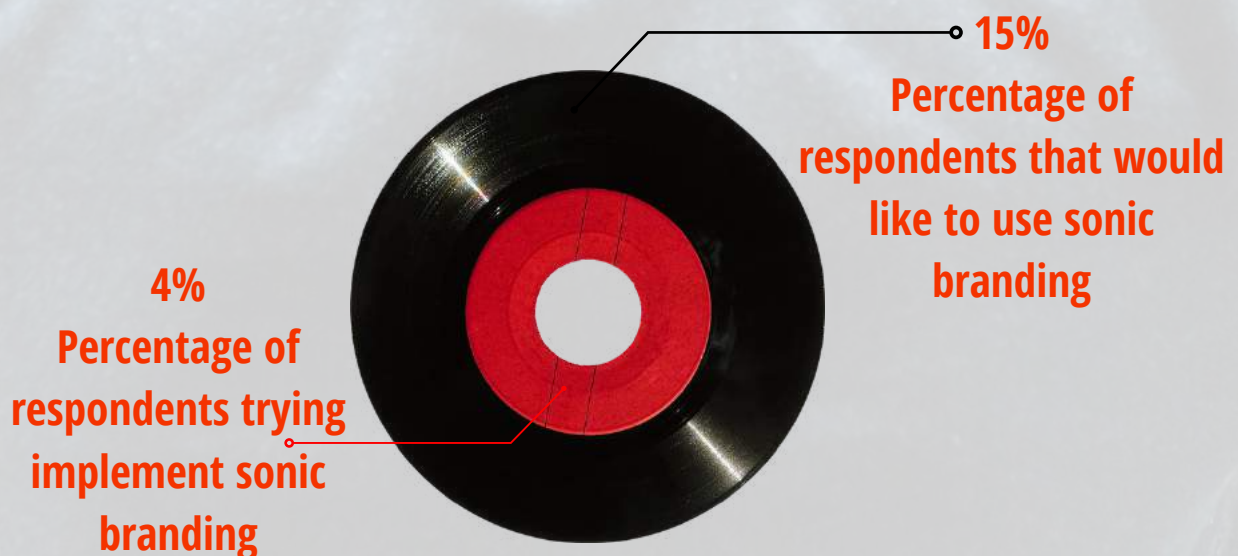


5. Content marketing

v. Music

Who doesn't recognise the classic "ta-dum" of Netflix or "I'm loving it" of MacDonald? Surely everyone does! If you are also looking forward to making a brand for yourself and gaining an edge over your competitors, an addition of a sonic logo might help. It is necessary that the tune you choose is unique and catchy in order to increase your chances of increasing brand recall. According to research sonic branding increases the odds of a brand being selected by consumers over its competitors by 46%, but only a few organisations are investing in it [16].

According to our data, only 15% of startups had given it a thought, and only 4% were trying to implement it on the ground.



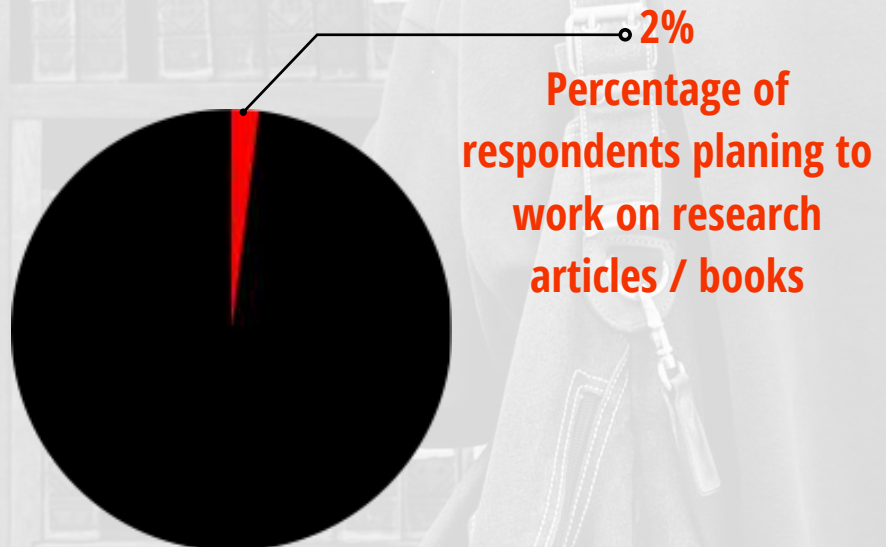
Best Brand Building Practices

5. Content marketing

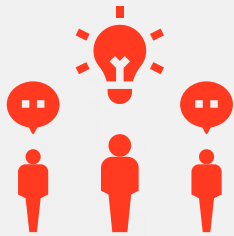


vi. Research articles / Books

Coming out with research reports, white papers and books is a sure-shot way of establishing leadership and gaining followers thereby gaining customer loyalty provided the content you deliver is credible, authentic and valuable to the end customers. However, it is not an easy road to take. Only 2% of the participants said they are working on this avenue.



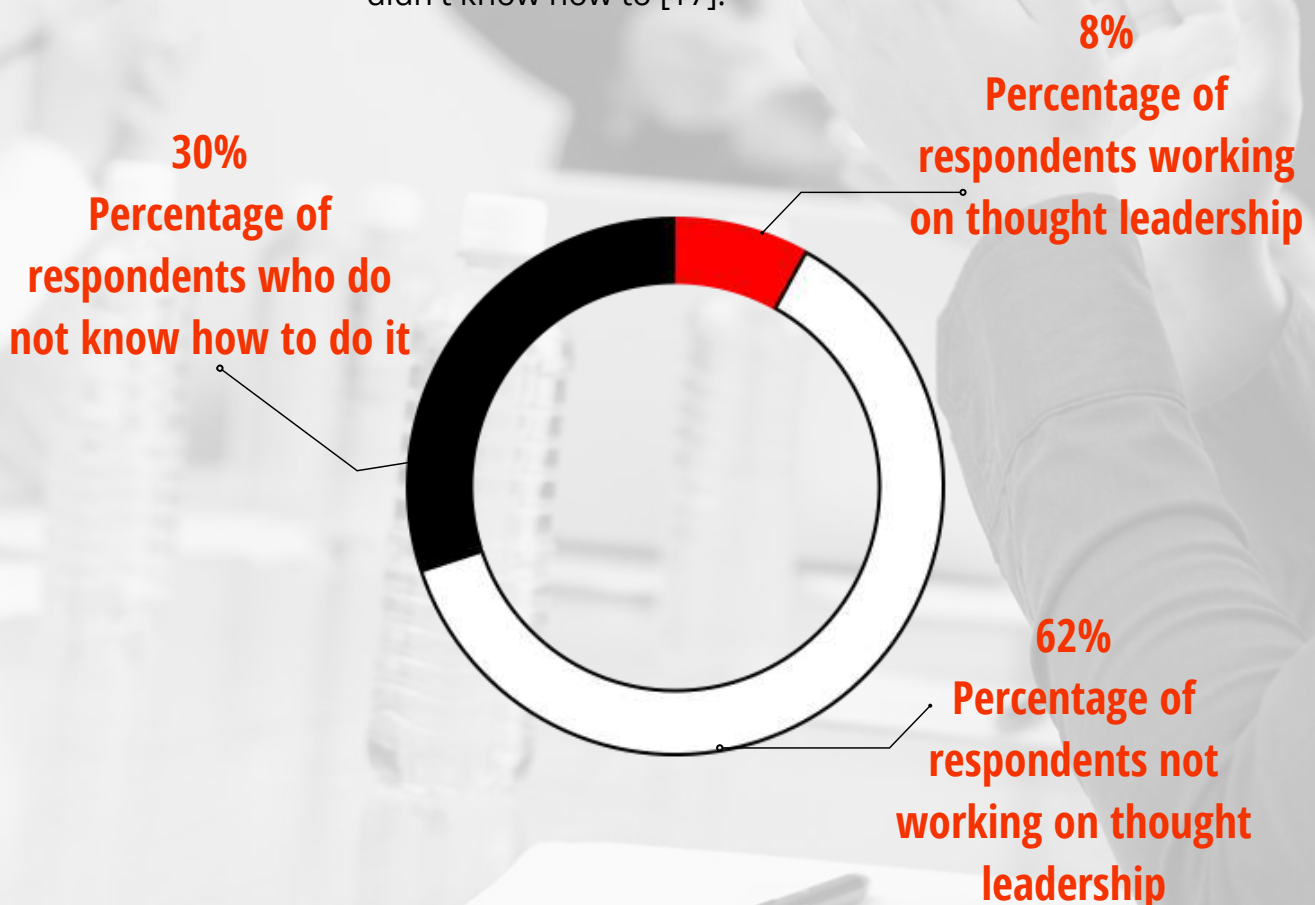
Best Brand Building Practices



6. Thought leadership

One of the surest ways to become a leader in your field is to share your expertise and make it really easy for people to find you. One way to do this is by writing blog posts, giving presentations at conferences or writing an article or two on a subject you're an expert in. You can build a positive reputation as an expert in your field by using social media to share your content and engage with other people.

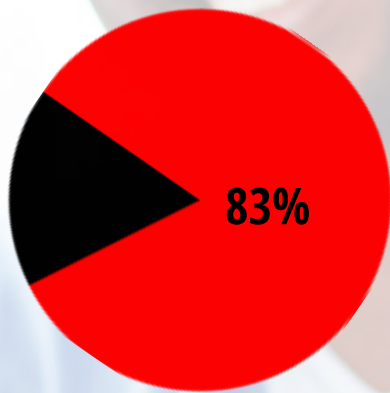
According to MIA research, a mere 8% of startup founders thought they were doing the right kind of marketing in order to establish their company's thought leadership, and 30% of the startups wanted to do this but didn't know how to [17].



Best Brand Building Practices



Percentage of respondents working for employee happiness



7. Keeping the employees happy

Employees are one of the most powerful marketing assets a company has. If they leave your company feeling like they were appreciated, empowered and treated with respect, then you won't have a problem attracting talent. They will strengthen the brand more than you imagined. Focus on your internal customers - they'll take care of the rest. On the other hand, bad employer branding can have catastrophic consequences. You'll find it hard to recruit talent when you have a negative reputation among job seekers as people value the opinion of former employees on the internet, which could destroy your company in a blazingly fast time.

Our data indicated that most respondents (83%) were aware of this and were therefore taking the necessary steps in the direction to cultivate a healthy relationship with their employees. These included weekly interactions of all employees with the leadership (13%), frequent one on one sessions with the managers (62%) and keeping a grievance redressal channel and suggestion boxes to protect employee identity (20%). 5% also invested in other modes like informal chats & understanding the pulse of employees by observing the internal chatter.

62%

Session with managers

20%

Grievance redressal & suggestion boxes

13%

Interaction with leaders

5%

Others

Best Brand Building Practices



8. Using Storytelling

Philips delivers one of the best examples in this category in its journey from evolving from a TV set manufacturing brand to a household name that caters to making life better through innovation. While marketing its Shaver unit, Philips used storytelling to deliver the message using social media - A barber that helps the less unfortunate by shaving and trimming their hair, even when they can't afford it. He transforms how people look and helps them harness self-love, and the change that it brings in their lives is astounding! This simple story got Philips \$27MM in sales [18]. This is the power of storytelling.

Unfortunately, our data reveals that only 22% of the participants used storytelling for branding. Out of the 78% who denied, more than half (51%) of the participants did not know how to use it and 38% said their team lacked this skill. 11% of the participants also said they didn't think it was a good way of branding.

Sooner rather than later, brands will get smarter and more targeted in their marketing messages by telling more concise stories that are targeted to a particular niche, delivering either new content or often taking a fresh take on an otherwise over-saturated topic. The most effective way to get people to commit to a new idea or method is by instilling in them an appreciation for its history, and what better way than to narrate your story.



22%

Respondents who use storytelling

Did not know how to use

51%

38%

11%

Didn't think it was a good way

Team lacked this skill.

Best Brand Building Practices



9. Identifying with a higher purpose

The new generation is sensitive towards the global cause and is looking forward to doing its bit. It's clear that today's organisations need to think about more than just their work and self-improvement if they want to be successful in the future. Those who focus on servant leadership and set their teams up for success will have higher employee retention rates. 65% of our respondents identified it as a significant branding practice.

A Deloitte study revealed that 20% of consumers consider how the company treats the environment, and 19% of consumers look into how the company supports the community in which they operate before choosing a brand [19]. Companies that put their profits where their values lie are experiencing higher customer loyalty.



65%

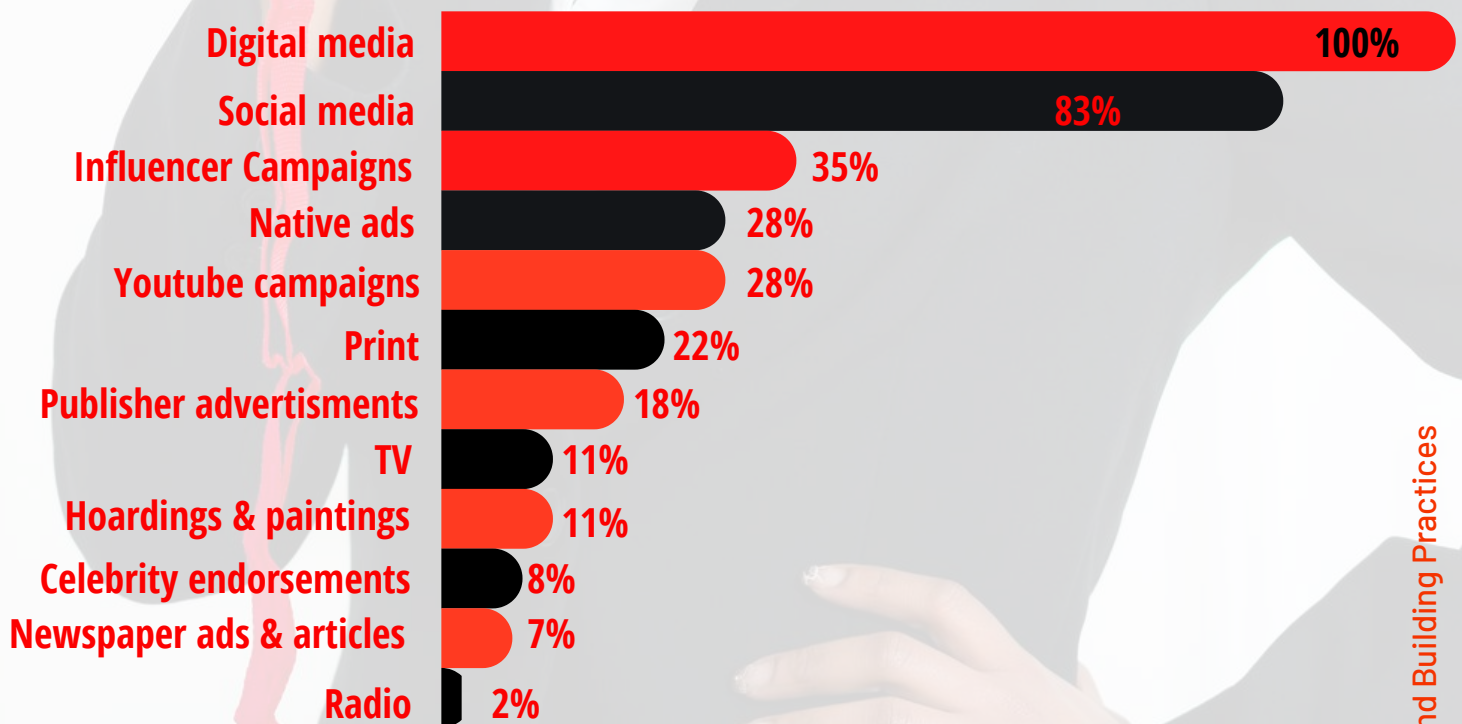
Percentage of respondents who feel it is an important branding practice

Best Brand Building Practices



10. Top of Mind via sustained advertising

Top of the mind recall usually comes in handy in building a product/service or company recall in the minds of the consumer by creating awareness around the product, and hopefully, motivating them to buy more of that product than its alternative when faced with a vast array of similar products. According to our findings, all of the participants were using digital media exposure to achieve this, followed by native ads (57%), social media posts (42%) & youtube campaigns (28%). Stats on the use of other tools are provided in the chart below.



Best Brand Building Practices



11. Creative communication

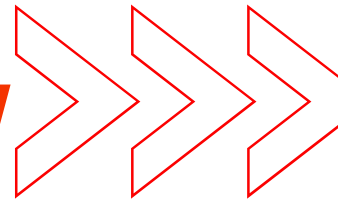
If observed closely, one can notice that some ads have a lifetime memory while others fade away in a jiffy. For all those Indians born in the 90s, Fevicol ads are a burst of laughter for a lifetime. People still fondly remember those creative bone ticking ads and are able to associate them with Fevicol.

Creatively embedding your product in the minds of your consumers is essentially the essence of branding. Our data indicated that all the participants used direct marketing to communicate the benefits of their product/service and 56% used catchy and relevant hashtags on social media followed by 45% who used user feedback and turned it into brand love with user-generated content and only 4% used humour in their ads and marketing campaigns.

Psychology says, for any person its easier to memorise things that have some sort of connection with the person. Experimenting with the ways of communication is one way to build that connection. A tag line that they can resonate with, a jingle that they can hum, a message that they can't forget, so on and so forth. Loyalty begins by constructing memories.



Measuring Brand Equity



Growth

Branding is like a culture; it goes down to every little detail. Periodically checking in on the brand and getting feedback from your customers about your alignment with the values you stand for and the efforts that have cashed in, can give you an idea of whether your company is living up to its attributes. This is where measuring brand equity growth comes in. Some factors to consider are:

Key Indicator

What it measures

Findings from our data

Brand awareness

Brand awareness is an effective marketing tactic that leads people to develop a strong preference for your brand. It's important to make a brand recognisable and memorable because it's a major force behind the creation of loyalty

72% of the participants were addressing this using the purchase history of their customers, 22% used conversation share while just 6% were looking into a customer's future intent to buy.

6% customer's future intent to buy



22% used conversation share

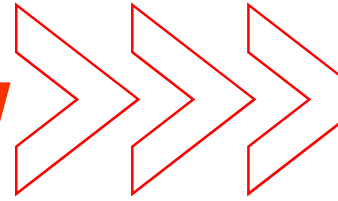
72% purchase history of their customers

Top of the mind awareness

As a measure of how highly a brand ranks in the minds of its consumers, it is one of the most important metrics in measuring brand equity growth. When looking for a specific industry, product or service - top of mind awareness is the first thing consumers think of. Companies who are branded well usually end up being higher in popularity and have more success with their marketing campaigns

78% of the participants relied on direct traffic & 65% used branded search volume to measure the metric. Brand mentions were used by 51% followed by social media reach 50%, social media followers 44% & paid media reach 32%. Owing to the complexity of the task only 2% used share of search and 15% used brand recall lift.

Measuring Brand Equity

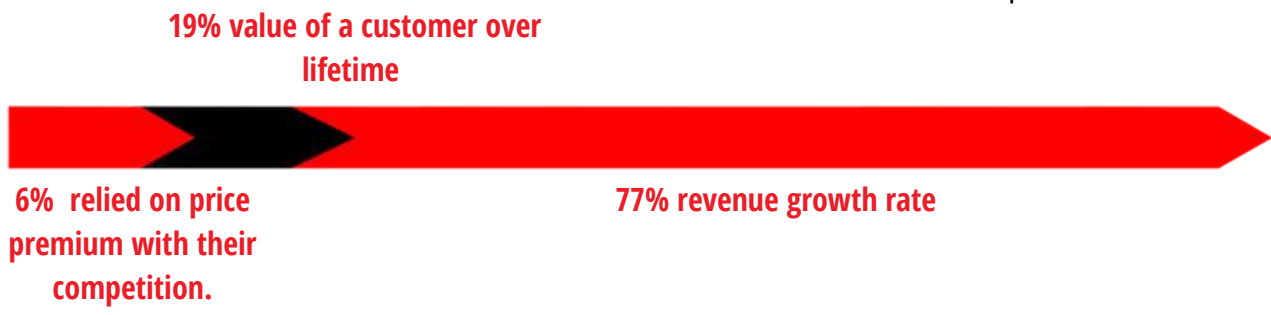


Growth

Key Indicator	What it measures	Findings from our data
Brand relevance	Brand relevance can make people feel as if they know you and care about you. As the name suggests, it is about how relevant you are to them.	According to our study, 65% of the participants used customer satisfaction (CSAT) to measure this, 20% used a Net Promoter Score (NPS) and 4% used Conjoint analysis. 11% did not feel the need to measure brand relevance.



Financial results and sales performance	Measuring financial results and sales performance can directly indicate where you stand. Numbers can give the most definitive answers and clearly showcase your progress overtime.	77% of the participants relied on the revenue growth rate to measure the outcome of their efforts. 19% used value of a customer over lifetime and 4% relied on price premium in comparison with their competition.
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Conclusion

Brands have had many different meanings over time. Two hundred years ago, a brand was just the name and a logo. In the 1900s, the idea of an emotional bond with customers was added. Nowadays, people buy things not just because they're cheap but also because they want to support the company and its efforts to promote a social mission. In this regard, businesses can deliver life-changing experiences for their customers and inspire them with their values through engagement.

All the branding practices discussed in this study aim at eventually building not just a brand but unwavering customer loyalty. Entrepreneurs need to be flexible and explore all possible routes before knowing what will work. A brand that is still in its initial stages can invest in experimentation until it hits the right nerve. Once the brand has taken root in the minds of the customers, stick to it.

While working towards building a brand is essential, it is equally important to measure those efforts. Branding is a never-ending process. A brand may feel they have a good understanding of what their brand stands for, but it's always important to know what the consumers think about it. Investing in measuring the brand equity growth can help save time and money and prompt ideas for your next marketing campaign. A brand is not just about a logo and a product. It is an intangible asset that needs to be built over time.

Endnotes

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