

BRANDS IN MOTION AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH KEY FINDINGS

Examining the emotional and rational drivers that motivate Australian customer choices within today’s constantly evolving environment, WE Buchan has launched its first global study in partnership with its partner, WE Communications titled *Brands In Motion*.

The findings clearly demonstrate how changing environmental factors and underlying consumer expectations result in brands existing in a state of ‘motion’. It found that to achieve business success, brands must create deep connections at both an emotional and rational level with customers, in order to thrive and create positive momentum in an ever-changing marketplace.

The results were plotted on WE’s proprietary *Motion Matrix*, a diagnostic tool using rational and emotional scores to capture the movement of each category against four quadrants – mover, defender, agitator and survivor. The drivers to determine these include:

Rational Drivers –

1. Executive behaviours
2. Innovative
3. Intent to Purchase
4. Necessary
5. Financial Performance
6. Industry Leader
7. Quality
8. Responsible
9. Value
10. Easy to work with

Emotional Drivers –

1. Customer experience
2. Defend or shame
3. Disappeared
4. Love/ hate
5. Overall Impression
6. Social Impact
7. Buzz
8. Forgive / Not forget
9. Life Impact
10. Shared Values

The industries surveyed include:

- Finance/ Banking
- Computing Devices
- Tech B2B
- Health/ Wellness
- Healthcare B2B
- Smart Home



Key findings of the study include:

Reality 1: Stability is an element of motion

- 83% of respondents believe brands provide stability in uncertain times (versus China 89%, UK 75%, USA 81%)
- 37% of respondents believe that businesses / brands are responsible for creating stability
- 68% of respondents either strongly (29%) or somewhat agree (39%) that they expect brands to take a stand on important issues

Reality 2: Innovation is important to Australians

- 67% of Australian respondents believe that being ‘cutting edge’ — whether enabled by technology or inspired by it — leads to positive brand outcomes in areas that transcend product
- The Tech B2B brands and the Computing Devices category performed well amongst respondents, with 72% and 75% stating their overall impression of the respective sectors was ‘amazing’

Reality 3: The Unilever Effect Is Here

- 69% of surveyed consumers said they placed a balance on brands delivering highly effective, high-functional benefit products and services
- Behaviors of executive leaders of companies in the Health and Wellness sector had the strongest influence over the decision to support the brand (60%) which was also reflected in the German market (67%) but less so in China (42%)

Reality 4: Love You Today, Shame You Tomorrow

- Of the eight brand categories surveyed across Australia (Computing Devices, Smart Home, Automobiles, Finance/Banking, Health & Wellness, Alcoholic Beverage, Tech - B2B, Healthcare - B2B), just over half of the people (54%) said they loved the industry
- 100% of people said they would gladly join in publicly shaming that industry if it stepped out of line.
- Tech B2B generated the highest likelihood to defend, with 48% of respondents indicating they would ‘defend to the bitter end’

Reality: The Unilever

- 48% of the 4908 respondents gave an indication that they are more likely to support a brand that provides a high level of functionality/provides personal effectiveness.
- 69% Straddle the middle = Unilever Reality/Expect both

BACKGROUNDER – THE MOTION MATRIX

Motion Matrix is a diagnostic tool that uses rational and emotional scores to capture the movement of categories and brands against four quadrants.

By understanding consumer mindset through the lens of motion, WE’s Motion Matrix allows brands to not only see where they land, but get prescriptive guidance on what they can do to move.

- **Those that score high in both emotional and rational drivers are Movers** — a brand or category that has found the right balance of emotion and rational thoughts. They’ve learned to harness their own motion and the motion around them, but have to keep pushing and continue to find what’s next. In Australia, the Computing Devices and Tech B2B categories fell into this quadrant, which was in-line with all other markets aside from the UK.
- **High in rational but low in emotional drivers are Defenders** — They may be selling commodity, low- margin/high-value products and services or be part of highly regulated industries, which saw the Finance/Banking category land here in the Australian data. Many companies that fall here might be satisfied with being a Defender, but due to low emotional connection, they risk losing customer support in times of crisis. If they want to shift, they need to start engaging with consumers.

- **Low rational and high emotional scores fell into the Agitators quadrant.** These are the game changers, wooing consumers into what's possible through high experience and engagement. It's no surprise that the Smart Home category found itself in this quadrant in Australia, with brands like Google and Amazon aggressively pushing their smart home products in 2017. This was in contrast to China, who already see the Smart Home category as a Mover.
- **A Survivor scores low in both emotional and rational drivers.** These brands have either just pulled through something big or are on the precipice of needing to. In Australia, the Health/Wellness and Healthcare B2B categories landed here, which was a similar result across the other six markets surveyed. Survivor brands and their categories need to get laser focused on how to turn motion into an advantage for them — be ready to move fast to reach people on a rational and emotional level to move their brand to a leading spot in the industry — or risk becoming irrelevant.

The Matrix will give brands much stronger guidance on how to pivot their marketing and communications efforts to account for the prevailing mood of the Australian market.

For more information, press only:

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