

Brand experience drives up loyalty

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Date : September 18, 2016



LONDON: **Brands** can increase customer loyalty while also boosting the likelihood of repeat business and **brand** advocacy if they can offer an emotional connection with consumers, a new study has found.

According to creative agency Rufus Leonard, loyalty to a brand does not hinge solely on customer satisfaction and experience, but also on whether a brand can engage with consumers across five key touchpoints.

For its inaugural Brand Experience Index, Rufus Leonard identified these five facets of experience that consumers have when interacting with a brand as "think", "sense", "feel", "do" and "connect".

It then tested these touchpoints on 2,000 UK adults with regard to 30 brands across the retail, telecoms and airline sectors, [Marketing Week reported](#).

Within each sector, Rufus Leonard selected 10 brands, five established brands and five challenger **brands**, based on longevity and revenue, and assigned a score with 140 at the top end of the scale and 20 the lowest.

According to the methodology, Singapore Airlines topped the rankings with 96 points, closely followed by Lycamobile (94), giffgaff, the UK mobile operator (92), IKEA (91) and Emirates, the Dubai-based airline (90).

The report said the airline sector fared well, although Ryanair, the budget Irish carrier, performed the worst with a **Brand** Experience Index of 66.

Rufus Leonard noted that Singapore Airlines achieved a "think" metric 20% higher than all other airlines in the study while its "connect" score was 17% higher than the sector average, which was attributed to its successful frequent-flyer programme.

Singapore Airlines also scored 18% higher on the "do" metric, which the report attributed to the company's **digital** innovations, such as an app that helps passengers to review and control their in-flight entertainment from their phone.

While this is all good news for Singapore Airlines, there are broader lessons for all **brands** because the study claimed a direct correlation between a strong **Brand** Experience Index score and brand loyalty and advocacy.

It said every 10-point increase gives a 13% rise in agreement with the statement "this brand will be my first choice in the future", a 9% increase in agreement with "I will be loyal to this brand in the future", and a 17-point rise in the Net Promoter Score.

Commenting on the findings, Laurence Parkes, Chief Strategy Officer at Rufus Leonard, said: "Because of the fragmentation of **marketing**, you have agencies that focus on particular areas – the experiential agency focusing on 'sense', the ad agency looking at 'feel' and 'think' and the **social** agency looking at 'connect'.

"The challenge is to pull those elements together and say that a **brand** should be thinking about all five areas if it wants to create a deep connection with customers."

Data sourced from Marketing Week; additional content by Warc staff

This article first appeared in www.warc.com