

Brand Keys 2020 Loyalty Leaders List: 20 New Brands Show Up: Disney, Clorox, Campbell's, Zoom, Mattel, Charmin & CVS

COVID-19 Kills Traditional Category

Contenders & Changes Consumer Brand

Alliances: Loyalty Shown To Brands That "Showed Up" and "Delivered"

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Consumers asked, 'Who showed up and who delivered when I needed them most?' Even during a pandemic, consumers demand their expectations be met. Brands that did were recognized. No-shows got snubbed!"

Robert Passikoff, Ph.D., Brand Keys founder and president

annual Brand Keys Loyalty Leaders List has the most, new entries into the Top 100 since the survey was initiated. The study is a cross-category examination of brands in the time of COVID-19 and massive economic disruption. The annual survey, conducted by [Brand Keys, Inc.](#) the New York-based brand loyalty and customer engagement research consultancy, had consumers examine 1,121 brands in 109 categories this year.

Who Showed Up? Who Delivered? Who Did What Was Expected?

"Consumers demand that their expectations be met. Some brands delivered, others didn't. Consumers acknowledged brands that showed up and snubbed no-shows," said

Robert Passikoff, Brand Keys founder and president. "Even during difficult times like these, consumers won't settle for a hearty, 'We're in this together.' They don't settle for easy, they don't settle for average, they don't settle for ordinary."

2020 Top 20 Brand Keys Loyalty Leaders (#s in parentheses indicate 2019 loyalty rankings)

1. Amazon: online retail (#1)
2. Netflix: video streaming (#6)
3. Amazon: video streaming (#7)
4. Apple: smartphones (#8)
5. Domino's: pizza (#15)
6. Google: search engines (#2)
7. Disney: video streaming (new)

8. Home Depot: Home improvement retail (#37)
9. WhatsApp: instant messaging (#12)
10. Samsung: smartphones (#3)
11. Instagram: social networking (#22)
12. Nike: athletic footwear (#17)
13. PayPal: online payments (#21)
14. Amazon: tablets (#4)
15. Apple: tablets (#5)
16. Discover: credit cards (#18)
17. YouTube: social networking (#35)
18. Hyundai: automotive (#10)
19. Hulu: video streaming (#32)
20. Trader Joe's: natural food retail (#9)

10X Supercharged Newcomers

"Consumers rated new brands at ten times the usual rate," noted Passikoff.

"Twenty brands debuted in the Top 100, with brands' movements up the Loyalty Leaders List supercharged largely by

being there when needed most. Those brands didn't disappoint and met incredibly high expectations. Consumers recognized them for that."

The new brands and their categories speak for themselves: Disney (#7), UPS (#21), FedEx (#25), Clorox (#30) Purell (#39), CVS (#41), Zoom (#48), Ben & Jerry's (#61), Square (#67), Progressive (#69), Budweiser (#72), T-Mobile (#73), Coors Light (#75), Charmin (#76), State Farm (#78), Campbell's (#88), Grand Theft Auto V (#92), Mattel (#94), Crossfire (#99), and Farmers Insurance (#100).

2020's Biggest Winners

Loyalty is always predictive of future consumer behavior. "The more loyalty, the better behavior toward a brand. The better behavior, the better a brand's bottom line," added Passikoff.

Brands that exhibited the largest loyalty increases this year included Smirnoff (+26), Dollar Tree (+20), GEICO (+19), YouTube (+18), Jack Daniels (+16), Whole Foods (+16), Ketel One (+16), and Chobani (+15).

Categories & Brands Were Vaporized

"The combination of the economic crisis and COVID-19 obliterated certain categories," said Passikoff. "Eighteen brands – including McDonald's, Expedia, Under Armour, LinkedIn, and Delta – that normally would have appeared in the Top 100 Loyalty Leaders List were excluded this year, seen by consumers as dispensable or AWOL."



Categories that fell into that rubric included apparel retailers, automotive, fast-casual restaurants, all travel related categories (car rentals, airlines, automotive, online travel sites) and B2B products and services.

Loyalty Deflation & The New Abnormal

“The COVID-19 and economic crises hit certain categories harder than others,” admitted Passikoff. “The loyalty assessments reflect true allegiance, but it’s only fair to note that consumers either did not have access to or the immediate need, had the pandemic not been raging, stores weren’t forced to close, unemployment wasn’t so high, and the “new normal” wasn’t so abnormal.”

Those realities affected loyalty levels of these brands and their ranking in the Loyalty Leaders Top 100: Avis (-58), Ford (-58), T.J. Maxx (-46), Old Navy (-35), Twitter (-26), Lancôme (-25), Ralph Lauren (-23), Uber (-23), and Estee Lauder (-19).

Loyalty Is Emotional. So Are Consumers

Brands that connect emotionally with consumers, and brands that meet consumer expectations will always deal better and do better during crises – usually six times better. This year’s Loyalty Leaders List proves a brand can come away from watershed moments even stronger than before. Brands that do it right, brands that show up, become surrogates for comfort, support, and added-value. Those brands always do better than the competition.

“Brands that make loyalty and emotional engagement a priority,” noted Passikoff, “always appear high on the Loyalty Leaders List. More importantly, they show up on consumers’ shopping lists too.”

Methodology

Brand Keys Loyalty Leaders analysis was conducted August and September 2020. It includes 52,515 assessments (M/F, 16 to 65 YOA, recruited from 9 US Census Regions). Respondents self-selected categories in which they are consumers and brands for which they are customers. For the 2020 survey consumers assessed 109 categories and 1,096 brands.

For the complete 2020 Top 100 Loyalty Leaders List, go [here](#):

For more information regarding the Brand Keys 2020 Loyalty Leaders List, a particular brand’s position on the list, or information about integrating predictive loyalty, emotional engagement, into marketing efforts, please contact: Leigh Benatar at leighb@brandkeys.com.

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