

Armani and Nike Top Brand Keys Fashion Index but Logos and Labels Seen Losing Consumer Appeal

NEW YORK, NY April 11 - A new study of fashion and apparel brand labels and logos demonstrates their power declines over aging market segments. Armani and Versace turned in the most powerful performances, making the Top 10 among the youngest and the oldest age groups and with both sexes (only Armani made it among the "middle-aged" 35-44 group), according to the first Brand Keys Fashion.

The importance of apparel logos/labels/trademarks

When asked how important apparel brand logos and labels are to consumers now versus a few years ago, the majority of the respondents (57%) reported that they are now less important. Of the 7,500 respondents, almost six times as many said logos and labels were now either "much less" or "less" important to them than said they were now "much more" or "more" important.

"Increasingly, apparel brands do not resonate with the values of their target consumers and marketers do not support the brand in appropriate ways," said Robert Passikoff, president, Brand Keys.

"Moreover, they do not span generational perceptions of the value of a mark generally, and of individual brands specifically."

Key findings

Surprisingly, women were significantly more likely than men to report that clothing logos and labels are now less important to them than they used to be. Specifically, as of Spring 2002, women were 7.6 times more likely to say that logos/labels were now less important to them ([See Table 1](#)).

Examining the results by age ([Table 2](#)), the oldest age group (45-59) was the most likely to say that the importance of logos and labels had declined (69%). Only 6% of this older group said they had become more important.

What was surprising was that even among the youngest age group (21 to 34), over twice as many respondents said logos and labels are now less important to them than those that said the logos and labels are now more important. "It appears that even among traditionally fashion-conscious younger adults, a rejection of the use of one's clothes as a statement about oneself seems to be taking place," said Passikoff.

Personal importance of specific logos and labels

When asked about the personal importance of apparel logos and labels ([Tables 1 and 2](#)), only 10% of respondents said that these symbols are now more important than previously.

However, when asked about the value, importance, or desirability of specific brand name labels and logos, a far larger percentage indicated a growing desirability for a wide variety of brand names ([Tables 3 and 4](#)).

"We suspect this paradox is similar to what happens when consumers state that they are not influenced by advertising, yet don't hesitate to cite TV ads as a major source of information about the products and services they use," added Passikoff.

For both men and women ([Table 3](#)), and for respondents regardless of age ([Table 4](#)), the single-most valuable "brand" logo or label was for "my favorite sports team."

Almost half (46%) of the respondents said that the label/logo of their favorite team was important to them in terms of the clothing they wear. As might be expected, men (55%) and ages 21-34 (58%) were much more likely than other groups to say that the logo of their favorite team was important to them.

"This finding clearly indicates the power and potential of sports licensing and merchandizing in America today," noted Passikoff. "Needless to say, the use of team logos to sell products must be conducted at the local-market level, since sports team preferences are highly locally determined."

For men ([Table 3](#)), of the top 10 brands surveyed, four dealt with the four major professional sports leagues (baseball, football, basketball, and hockey); two dealt with athletic shoes (Adidas and Nike).

For women ([Table 3](#)), except for Nike (the #1 brand surveyed), the other nine on the Top 10 list are upscale fashion brands, from Armani and Dior to Versace and Vuitton.

"Looking at the results by age ([Table 4](#)) shows that the oldest group is the least likely to indicate that the logos or labels of specific clothing brands are now more important than they were previously.

The Top brands

Among the 45-59 age group, Adidas is the #1 brand, while a number of traditional brands also made the Top 10 list: Armani, Chanel, Perry Ellis, Ferragamo, Gucci, and Versace.

For the youngest group (ages 21-34), Nike was the #1 brand (just beating out Fendi), while Adidas didn't make the top 10. Whereas Major League Baseball and the NHL made the list among 45-59 year-olds, it was the NBA that scored among the youngest group, and the NFL among those 35-44.

Logos, Labels, and Marks Assessed

Armani	Fav. Sports Team	Nautica
Abercrombie & Fitch	Fendi	NBA
Adidas	Ferragamo	NFL
Bill Blass	Fila	NHL
Brooks Brothers	GAP	Nike
Burberry	Geoffrey Beene	Paul Stuart
Calvin Klein	Giorgio Armani	Perry Ellis
Champion	Gucci	Polo
Chanel	Hermes	Prada
Dior	Hugo Boss	Puma
DKNY	Lacoste	Ralph Lauren
Donna Karan	Levi's	Reebok
Ellesse	London Fog	Tommy Hilfiger
	Louis Vuitton	Versace
	Major League Baseball	Yves Saint Laurent

Methodology

Since 1998, Brand Keys has conducted its national bi-annual Customer Loyalty Index survey on the leading brands, currently assessing 28 product and service categories. This is a telephone survey conducted each wave among a total sample of 16,000 men and women throughout the United States. All respondents are between 21 and 59 years of age.



In the recently-completed Spring 2002 wave, we added a series of questions on the value or importance that consumers place on the brand name logos, labels, and trademarks of the clothes they wear:

- First, the respondents were asked to indicate the importance to them personally of the brand name logos, labels, and trademarks of the clothes that they wear, compared to how important they were to them "a few years ago." The respondent choices were as follows: Much more important, More important, About the same, Less important, or Much less important.
- Second, the respondents were read a list of 41 brands (including the NFL, NBA, MLB, and NHL, and "their favorite sports team."), and for each, were asked the importance to them now, compared a few years ago, of wearing clothing that carries that particular brand's label or logo.

Almost half of the Customer Loyalty Index respondents (7,500) were asked this series of questions. As a result of this very large sample size, the findings are highly statistically reliable.