

# Brand Keys report uncovers insights in customer loyalty

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Brand Keys' latest report shows the top brands and strategies to build customer loyalty and transparency.

The best brands ground their identity in customer loyalty, emotional engagement and trust, research consultancy Brand Keys has revealed. A new report from the New York-based company shows insights on the importance of customer loyalty, touching issues as brand transparency, emotional engagement and meeting consumer expectations.



### **Consumers expect more transparency from brands than ever**

Consumer expectations for brand transparency are not new to annual increases – but Brand Keys’ latest Customer Loyalty Engagement Index has shown a new, unprecedented rise in the value of “trust.”

Due to growing concerns regarding privacy and data security, consumers now expect more transparency than ever from brands, according to the New York-based firm. Several categories were affected and a number of them recorded a 100% increase or more. The biggest spike has been recorded in the social networking category, with a 300% increase, followed by online retail (272%) and department stores (220%).

The report suggests that the new spike has been the result of several data breaches in the past year, involving brands like Adidas, Panera, Delta, Macy’s and others. Overall, according to president of Brand Keys Robert Passikoff, the new data shows that consumers and customers of the affected brands “may still shop, but they’re increasingly wary.”



### **The most successful brands build on customer loyalty**

Loyal customers are key to the success of a brand. In order to succeed in this new landscape, brands today need to move loyalty at the top of their to-do lists. Yet, marketers must be careful not to fall victim of misleading practices; “Brand awareness is not loyalty,” Passikoff says, “satisfaction is not loyalty; entertainment is not loyalty.”

‘Meeting expectations’ was among the most employed strategies from the top brands, but Brand Keys says the secret resides in emotional engagement as well. “Loyalty is a fusion of emotional engagement, trust, and an ability for a brand to meet or exceed expectations,” adds Passikoff. “The brands on top of this year’s category lists know that. More importantly, they know how.”

The Brand Keys data reiterates what countless other pieces of research have been saying with increased importance in recent years – companies need to be trustworthy and believable if they are going to attract and retain consumers.