

Perceived value of products carrying 'Trump' name fell over past 3 years, survey finds

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Erica Sweeney



Dive Brief:

- The "added value" of the Trump name associated with products has declined across several categories from April 2015 to October 2018, according to a Brand Keys survey of 1,500 Republican, Democrat and Independent consumers provided to Marketing Dive.
- In the TV/entertainment category, the Trump brand lift dropped from 37% in April 2015 to 27% in October 2018. Also, lift dropped from 30% to 2% in dress shirts, 29% to 1% in ties and 20% to 2% in suits. The Trump name brought some gains in the country/golf club category, growing from 35% to 52%, as well as in hotels, which grew from 31% to 53%, and real estate, which grew from 30% to 40%.
- Researchers noted that before the 2016 election, the Trump name attached to products saw an increase in perceived value of 30% or more, compared to the average of 12% to 15% for most celebrity-endorsed products. Also, three years ago, more than 20 companies had Trump-branded products, but the share is now mostly limited to "Make America Great Again" hats, golf clubs and real estate.

Dive Insight:

While the Trump name still holds considerable political power, its perceived brand value attached to products and services outside of politics appears to be waning in some key categories. The name has shown gains in the hotel, real estate and golf and country club categories, but that could be changing. Condo owners recently had the name "Trump

Place" removed from a New York City Building, and the Trump name was also removed from the former Trump Soho hotel. Sales are also reportedly slowing at Trump Tower, leading to a 15% drop in brand equity in that category, according to Brand Keys.

In 2000, consumers associated the brand name Trump with luxury, wealth, comfort and lavish lifestyles. As consumers continue to expect brand values to align with their own, the divisiveness of the current political climate could be bleeding over into how consumers perceive products carrying the president's name, however. Political polarization and social movements, such as #MeToo and #TimesUp, are leading to shifts in consumer engagement and brand loyalty, a separate Brand Keys analysis revealed.

Consumers are more frequently holding brands accountable in tying themselves to a social or political cause. Sixty-four percent of consumers decided to purchase from or boycott brands because of the stances they take on such issues, the recent 2018 Edelman Earned Brand study revealed.

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