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**PRESS RELEASE
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Most Innovative Tech Brands of 2019

**Consumers Intuitively Classify Innovation as
“Predictable,” “Lifestyle,” and “Mercantile”**

Amazon, CVS Health, and Slack #1 in Their Innovation Groupings

**40% of Brands New to 2019 List Includes:
Peloton, Duolingo, Oatly, Shopify, and Intuit**

**Consumers Step on Brakes for Lyft, Uber, GM, Tesla,
Slam Door on Airbnb and Tune Out YouTube and HBO**

NEW YORK, NY (July 22, 2019) – The annual 2019 *Most Innovative Tech Brands* survey conducted by Brand Keys, Inc. (www.brandkeys.com), the New York-based brand loyalty and emotional engagement research consultancy, found consumers’ process for appraising tech brands for innovation is a three-step process: acknowledgement, connection, and categorization. A brand’s ability to deliver something that emotionally engages consumers was viewed as the gateway to innovation.

Three Consumer-Generated Groups = Top 27 B2C and B2B Brand Innovators

This year 5,127 consumers 16 to 65 years of age named companies and brands as technological innovators, assessed them to identify innovation-synergies, and rated each brand for its ability to deliver on innovation expectations.

“Based on consumer-identified interrelationships between the 27 brands they named, we have designated groupings: ‘Predictable Innovators,’ ‘Lifestyle Innovators,’ and ‘Mercantile Innovators,’” said Robert Passikoff, Brand Keys founder and president. Brands are ranked according to their ability to meet consumer expectations. Unless indicated, brands appeared on the 2018 list.

Predictable Innovators include:

1. Amazon
2. Apple
3. Google
4. Samsung
5. IBM
6. Netflix
7. Microsoft
8. Pinterest

Lifestyle Innovators include:

1. CVS Health
2. Patagonia (new)
3. Nike
4. Truepic (new)
5. Spotify
6. Sephora (new)
7. Peloton (new)
8. Snapchat
9. Duolingo (new)
10. Hulu
11. Oatly (new)

Mercantile Innovators include:

1. Slack
2. Twilio
3. Shopify (new)
4. Instagram
5. Square (new)
6. Unmade (new)
7. Intuit (new)
8. Salesforce.com (new)

Innovation Half-Life, Emotional Sorting, and Brand Synergies

“Consumer expectations have normalized as to how they see innovation, still very high but the macro innovation playing-field has leveled off. Consumers want it all. They want it now. And they create specific synergies among and between brands they believe will transform their lives. The fact that 40% of the brands on this year’s list are new verifies the paradigm,” said Passikoff.

“Consumers’ views of innovation have migrated because they recognize it has a half-life. Emotionally and intuitively they classify and link their views of brands,” noted Passikoff. “In this instance the groupings were made emotionally by respondents, which resulted in three taxonomies.”

Innovation Inspiration and Inactivity

Eleven brands (40% of the brands) transformed this year’s innovation list with new products, new ways to learn, new ways to know the truth, new ways to stay healthy, new ways for brands to customize offerings, and new ways for outreach. The new brands that consumers felt inspired innovation, ranked by the degree they saw innovation transforming their lives, includes:

1. Patagonia
2. Shopify
3. Truepic
4. Square
5. Sephora
6. Unmade
7. Peloton
8. Intuit
9. Duolingo
10. Oatly
11. Salesforce.com

“Patagonia has figured out new ways for consumers to save money *and* save the planet. It should come as no surprise when they put you at the top of their innovation list,” said Passikoff.

Meanwhile, eight brands that appeared last year, were seen as ‘inactive’ regarding innovation this year, including: YouTube, HBO, Uber, Lyft, Tesla, GM, Airbnb, and LinkedIn.

“There’s homogeneity to categories consumers rated as relatively inactive, which provides confirmation of their normalized expectations for what *they* view as innovative,” noted Passikoff. “Besides always wanting more, consumers see brands’ abilities to deliver something that emotionally engages them as the gateway to innovation.”

“As good as these eight brands are within their categories, expectations move at the speed of the consumer and what’s currently on offer is viewed as conventional. We think it’s fair to say that *Game of Thrones* was more than just a TV show insofar as HBO’s innovation-perception was concerned.”

Consumers Engage With Brands That Inspire

The 2019 list makes it clear that consumers are looking for innovation that inspires. Brands that can, will transform their categories and the future of marketing. “Innovation always distinguishes between category leaders and brand followers,” said Passikoff. “Brands that want their innovation to engage consumers will have to be more nimble, inspirational, and emotional.”

“Consumers can’t necessarily articulate what innovations they want, but they recognize it when they see it. Actually, they feel it. Old problems, new technologies, and new creative strategies lead to category transformations. According to consumers, each brand on the 2019 list has done just that,” noted Passikoff. “New – and now – is the new inspired.”

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