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Loyalty Hall of Famers Announced - Discover, Avis, Domino's, Hyundai, Netflix, Dunkin' and Konica Minolta Reach Record Milestones

**Consumer - Brand Expectation Gap Widest In 25 Years
With Notable Shifts in Rational/Emotional Behavior Ratio**

NEW YORK, NY, January 24, 2022 – Brand Keys (brandkeys.com), the global leader in brand loyalty and emotional customer engagement, released their Silver Anniversary Customer Loyalty Engagement Index (CLEI). The 2022 survey – recognizing brands that have held the #1 spots for loyalty for a decade or more – revealed a radically widening gap between customer expectations and brand delivery, as well as an extraordinarily more emotional consumer decision-making process.

Consumer Emotional And Expectation Inflation

The survey found consumer behavior and loyalty now almost entirely governed by emotional values, which represent additional meaning to the customer beyond product function – how the product or service makes the customer feel, rather than what the product does.

In 1997, the ratio between rational and emotional was about 60:40. Consumers now put more emotional weight into their purchase decisions. The mean, across all categories surveyed, is closer to 80:20, *emotional* to rational, with rational category values filed under “Primacy-of-Product” or “Price-of-Entry” by consumers.

Twenty-five years tracking brand loyalty makes it clear consumers do not settle for what exists. Cross-categories, the net increase since 1997 in consumer expectations for their Category Ideal has been 40%. “A lot higher in categories like Tech and Social Networking,” noted Robert Passikoff, Brand Keys founder and president. Brands only keep up by 10%, leaving an awfully big gap between consumer desire and brand delivery.”

Loyalty Hall of Fame

“The 25th anniversary of the CLEI seemed an appropriate time to recognize brands consumers have *consecutively* rated #1 when it comes to loyalty,” said Passikoff, “A testament to these brands’ abilities to meet their customers’ expectations and generate emotional engagement over sustained periods of time.” This year the following brands deserve specific note:

Credit Cards 25 years	Car Rental 23 years	Search Engine 22 years	Video Streaming 20 years
DISCOVER	AVIS	Google	NETFLIX

With these other brands rated #1 for a decade or more:

- Domino's (Pizza) – 18 years
- Dunkin' (Out-of-Home Coffee) – 16 years
- Konica Minolta (MFP Office Copiers) – 15 years
- Hyundai (Automobiles) – 13 years
- AT&T Wireless (Wireless) – 13 years
- Amazon Kindle (E-Reader) – 12 years
- Amazon.com (Retail: Online) – 11 years
- Home Depot (Retail: Home Improvement) – 10 years

“Increase brand loyalty and customers are six times more likely to engage with you, buy you, and buy you again. They’ll pay more attention to your marketing efforts and your advertising. And in light of the COVID pandemic, perhaps most importantly, consumers are six times more likely to give brands the benefit of the doubt in uncertain circumstances. Like product shortages, supply-chain SNAFUs, and even price increases,” noted Passikoff.

Owning Value = Owning Customers

Value-ownership, a brand-state that goes well-beyond 20th century differentiation, now defines category leadership. “Brands that meet expectations *and* emotionally engage will survive. Brands that want to own categories and customers will have to *own* an emotional value that will differentiate them *and* be something consumers cede to the brand,” noted Passikoff. Discover has done it using “reassurance.” Netflix via “diversion.” Amazon through “immediate gratification,” Hyundai thru “altruism,” and Instagram by “inspiration.”

Brand Keys Loyalty Database Access

The 25th annual survey adds an additional 88,126 consumer interviews to the world’s largest and most-continuous database of predictive brand loyalty tracking metrics, now 4.3 million customer assessments. It provides access and insights to predictive, consumer brand behavior archetypes identifying where category and brand-specific loyalty has come from and where it’s going. “Given the economics of loyalty today,” noted Passikoff, “The database is an atlas that can show brands where loyalty lives, how to acquire loyalty and how to keep customers loyal.”

A complete list of the 2022 CLEI brands rated #1 for loyalty in their categories can be found at <https://brandkeys.com/customer-loyalty-engagement-index/>

For more information about accessing the Brand Keys loyalty data base, 2022 CLEI survey results, or information about integrating predictive loyalty and emotional engagement metrics into your marketing and branding efforts, contact Leigh Benatar at leighb@brandkeys.com.

Methodological Framework

For the past 25 years, Brand Keys has interviewed consumers, 16 to 65 years of age from the nine US Census Regions. Respondents self-select categories in which they are consumers and brands for which they are customers.

Brand Keys uses an independently-validated research methodology fusing emotional and rational attributes, benefits, and values of categories to identify four category-specific path-to-purchase behavioral loyalty drivers, the expectations consumers hold for *each* drivers, and the values that form the components of *each* driver, including their percent-contribution to brand engagement, loyalty, and brand profitability.

A combination of psychological inquiry and higher-order statistical analyses, the approach has a test/re-test reliability of 0.93, with results generalizable at the 95% confidence level. Brand Keys loyalty assessments correlate very highly with positive consumer behavior in the marketplace at the 0.80+ level and have been successfully used in B2B, B2C, and D2C categories in 35 countries.