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## **Apparel Ranked in Top Half of All Industries Studied in MBLM's *Brand Intimacy 2018 Report***

*Nike Placed First, Followed by Levi's and Under Armour*

NEW YORK — September 5, 2018 — The apparel industry ranked seventh out of 15 studied in MBLM's *Brand Intimacy 2018 Report*, which is the largest study of brands based on emotions. The top three in the industry, whose ranking remained unchanged since 2017, were Nike, Levi's and Under Armour. The remaining brands in the Top 10 for the apparel industry were: lululemon, Adidas, The North Face, Gap, Ralph Lauren, Victoria's Secret and Puma.

Brand Intimacy is defined as a new paradigm that leverages and strengthens the emotional bonds between a person and a brand. MBLM's study again revealed that top intimate brands in the U.S. surpassed the top brands in the Fortune 500 and S&P indices in revenue and profit over the past 10 years.

"Despite an industry with iconic brands, apparel brands fall below the average when it comes to Brand Intimacy," stated Mario Natarelli, managing partner at MBLM. "As our clothes buying patterns shift, we believe apparel companies have to deliver new ways to build stronger bonds with customers."

Other noteworthy apparel findings in MBLM's *Brand Intimacy 2018 Report* include:

- The apparel industry had an average Brand Intimacy Quotient of 26.6, which was below the cross-industry average of 27.1
- Indulgence, which is related to moments of pampering and gratification, was the most prominent archetype in the category, and Victoria's Secret was the top-performing brand for indulgence
- Nike was the top brand in the category overall and ranked #1 for both men and women, as well as for millennials, whereas users aged 55–64 preferred Levi's
- Nike also had the highest percentage of customers in fusing, the most advanced stage of Brand Intimacy
- The North Face and Gap considerably improved their intimacy scores since last year, whereas lululemon and Levi's declined in this year's rankings

To view the apparel industry findings, please click [here](#). The full *Brand Intimacy 2018 Report* and the Ranking Tool can be found [here](#).

This year's report contains the most comprehensive rankings of brands based on emotion, analyzing the responses of 6,000 consumers and 54,000 brand evaluations across 15 industries in the U.S., Mexico and UAE. MBLM's reports and interactive Brand Ranking Tool showcase the performance of almost 400 brands, revealing the characteristics and intensity of the consumer bonds.

### **Methodology**

During 2017, MBLM conducted an online quantitative survey among 6,000 consumers in the United States (3,000), Mexico (2,000), and the United Arab Emirates (1,000). Participants were respondents who were screened for age (i.e. 18 to 64 years of age) and annual household income (\$35,000 or more) in the U.S. and socioeconomic levels in Mexico and the UAE (A, B, and C socioeconomic levels). Quotas were established to ensure that the sample mirrored census data for age, gender, income/socioeconomic level, and region. The survey was designed primarily to understand the extent to which consumers have

relationships with brands and the strength of those relationships, from fairly detached to highly intimate. It is important to note that this study provides more than a mere ranking of brand performance and was specifically designed to provide prescriptive guidance to marketers. We modeled data from a total of 54,000 brand evaluations to quantify the mechanisms that drive intimacy. Through factor analysis, structural equation modeling, and other sophisticated analytic techniques, the research allows marketers to better understand which levers need to be pulled to build intimacy between brands and consumers.

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**About MBLM:** MBLM has invented a new marketing paradigm, Brand Intimacy, delivering expertise and offerings across three areas of focus: Agency, Lab and Platform. With offices in seven countries, our multidisciplinary teams help clients build stronger bonds and deliver optimized marketing outcomes and returns for the long term. To learn more about how we can help you create and sustain ultimate brand relationships, visit [mblm.com](http://mblm.com).