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MBLM Announces Apps & Social Platforms Industry Ranks Low for Brand Intimacy

Brand Intimacy Agency Reveals Facebook Places First Followed by Google Maps and Pinterest

NEW YORK — September 28, 2017 — MBLM, the Brand Intimacy Agency focused on strategy, design, creative and technology, today revealed the [apps & social platforms](#) industry ranked 12th out of 15 industries studied in its *Brand Intimacy 2017 Report*. The report, which is the largest study of brands based on emotions, found that Facebook placed first in the industry followed by Google Maps and Pinterest. Brand Intimacy is defined as a new paradigm that leverages and strengthens the emotional bonds between a person and a brand. According to the 2017 report, top ranked intimate brands continued to outperform the S&P and Fortune 500 indices in revenue and profit over the past 10 years.

The apps & social platforms category has a Brand Intimacy Quotient of 18.8, which is well below the cross-industry average of 28.7. Facebook has a quotient score of 30.0 and places 68th in the overall study. For a brand with over 1.8 billion active monthly users and 79 percent of the online adult population as members, this is a poor showing. Interestingly, other social media brands with hundreds of millions of active users, like Instagram and Snapchat, do not even place in the Top 100 brands. Apps & social platforms ranks fourth of all industries in the ritual archetype, which describes brands as being ingrained into daily actions, becoming a vitally important part of daily existence. It also ranks third for daily use. Facebook has the second-highest percentage of daily-use consumers (78.9 percent) behind Apple, and ranks fifth overall for the ritual archetype.

“While social media platforms are very successful at attracting users, their weak Brand Intimacy performance demonstrates a pressing need to strengthen their brand and build stronger relationships with users,” stated Mario Natarelli, managing partner at [MBLM](#). “With technology evolving so quickly, social media brands need to adapt quickly or else they may fall victim to indifference, commoditization and distrust. We have seen recent examples of these brands falling out of favor, so building connections with users is key.”

The remaining brands in the top 10 for the apps & social media industry are: Spotify, Snapchat, Apple Music, Pandora, Seamless, Instagram and Twitter.

MBLM explored its research findings to try to determine why social brands have such a low Brand Intimacy score. Its analysis concluded:

- **Smartphones Steal the Show:** The technology & telecommunications industry performs well and consumers rely on smartphones to keep them connected. Apps become free extensions on these versatile devices and can easily be viewed as utilities or expected functions of a smart device that everyone with internet access feels entitled to.
- **Trust is a Must:** Privacy is a common concern when it comes to social media. Only four percent of Americans using social media say they have a great deal of trust that their devices are secure, with 53 percent claiming they have very little or no trust. The industry’s weakest performance is in the bonding stage, which characterizes a more committed relationship between consumers and brands in which trust is established.
- **Hiding in Plain Sight:** While people connect, share and express themselves on social media, these interactions tend to occur through the social media brands, not with them. They can be seen as utility brand. Apps & social platforms scores below average for the identity archetype (19 vs. 22), which describes a brand that reflects an aspirational image or admired values and beliefs that resonate

deeply with the consumer. These brands do not have a clear expression of their own identities, a user may identify with a friend on Facebook or a photographer on Instagram but it is unlikely they have an affinity with the platform itself. However, this apparent apathy is likely engineered so the brands can grow fast. Being agnostic, they can acquire hundreds of millions of followers by being a place for everyone.

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.

To download the full *Brand Intimacy 2017 Report* or explore the Ranking Tool please visit: <http://mblm.com/brandintimacy/>.

Natarelli and Rina Plapler, partner at MBLM, will be releasing their first book: [*Brand Intimacy, A New Paradigm in Marketing*](#).

Methodology

During 2016, Praxis Research Partners 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: Founded in 2004, MBLM is the Brand Intimacy Agency, which is dedicated to creating greater emotional connections between people, brands and technology. With offices in nine countries, its multidisciplinary teams help clients deliver stronger marketing outcomes and returns for the long term. To learn more about creating and sustaining ultimate brand relationships, visit mblm.com.