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'Meaningful' brands also the most profitable

December 13 2013

"Meaningful" brands not only promote a better quality of life for consumers; they also outperform their peers by 120%, according to research.

Highlights

- Havas Media's Meaningful Brands Index measures the impact of brands on consumers' quality of life.
- Meaningful brands outperform the stock market as a whole by 120%.
- Nearly nine in 10 consumers believe companies should place at least equal weight on business and society.

By Patrick Mayock
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What's in a name? A lot apparently. In addition to the basic identity, a company's name can bring with it a range of expectations and perceptions tied to its brand equity.

Have a good brand? People are more likely to trust you, to do repeat business with you, to respect you.

Have one that's been dragged through the muddy waters of scandal or poor performance? People will avoid you like the plague.

But measuring abstract concepts like perception—and even brand equity, to an extent—is difficult. Fortunately for the rest of us, the data wonks at Havas Media have devised an analytical framework that does just that for 700 brands across various industries and sectors.

By pairing that sample with the feedback and opinion from more than 134,000 consumers, the group can measure what it calls "meaningful brands." The results are framed within its Meaningful Brands Index.

"It measures the impact of the brand's benefits alongside its impact on 12 different areas of well-being (such as health, happiness, financial, relationships and community among others) for a full view of its effect on our quality of life," [Havas explains on its website](#).

The top 25 most meaningful brands are littered with such familiar names as Google, Samsung, Microsoft and Apple. Noticeably absent of this upper crust are the hotel brands we all know, love and/or work for. The travel and tourism sector ranks as the fourth most "meaningful sector" behind retail, food and beverage, and IT and consumer electronics.

For those who might dismiss this measurement as touchy-feely fluff, know this: Meaningful brands outperform the stock market by 120%, according to Havas' research.

Furthermore, only 20% of brands worldwide are seen to meaningfully positively impact people's lives.

Talk about meaningful. If the majority of your customers want it, it might be a good idea to follow up.



Patrick Mayock



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The Meaningful Brands Index outperforms the stock markets by 120% – an out-performance on par with the top hedge funds



The majority of people worldwide wouldn't care if 73% of brands disappeared tomorrow



Just 20% of brands worldwide are seen to meaningfully positively impact people's lives

Havas Media Group's new metric of brand strength is the first global analytical framework to connect human well-being with brands at a business level. It measures the impact of a brand's benefits alongside its impact on different areas of well-being for a full view of its effect on our quality of life.

700 brands
Over 134,000 consumers
23 countries
12 industries

Global Meaningful Brand Index

Rank	Brand
1	Google
2	Samsung
3	Microsoft
4	Nestle
5	Sony
6	IKEA
6	Dove
7	Nike
7	Walmart
8	Danone
9	Philips
10	P&G



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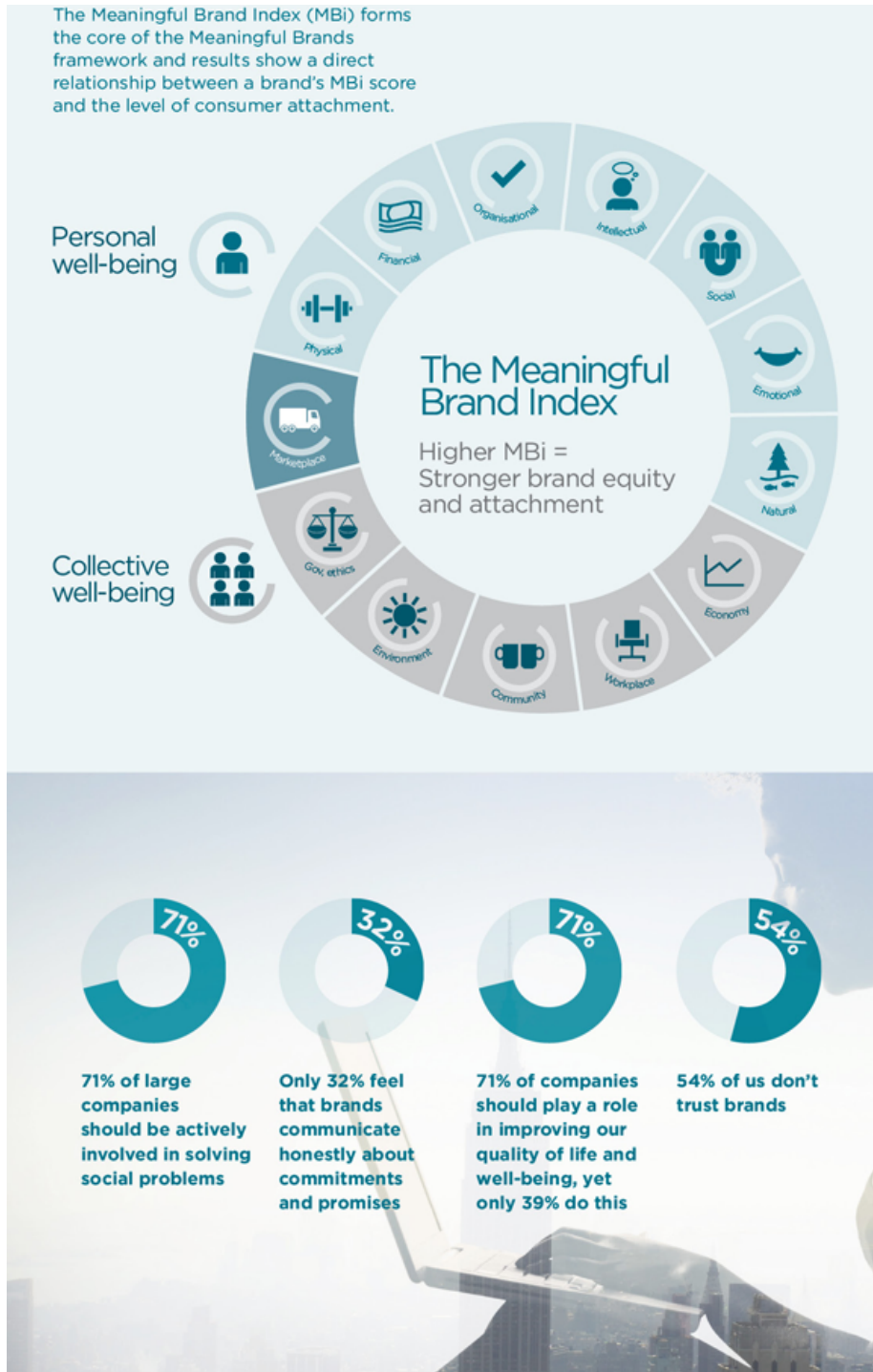
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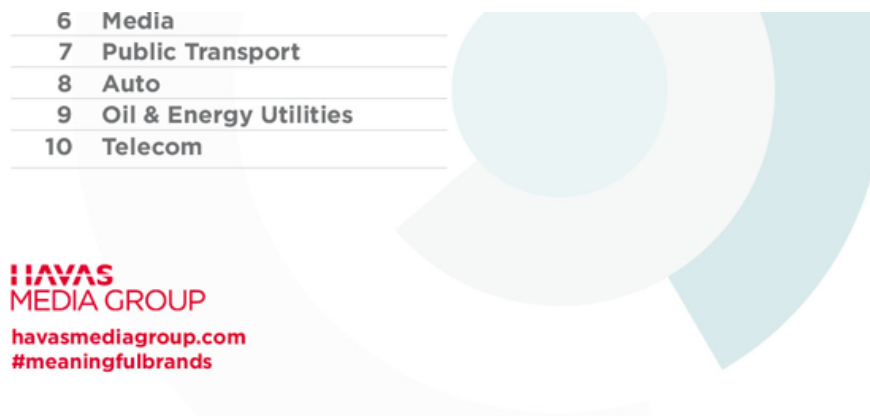


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Top ten meaningful sectors

Rank	Industry
1	Retail
2	Food & Beverages
3	IT & Consumer Electronics
4	Travel & Tourism
5	Consumer Goods



Now on to the usual goodies ...

What's making me happy this week

Attempts by the ambitious constituents of Allen County in Indiana to put an end to dirty hotels—or at least make them more transparent.

On 1 November, the country's board of commissioners passed a new lodging establishment ordinance stating area hotels and motels must meet "minimum standards of cleanliness and sanitary" beginning 1 January 2014. The ordinance was put into motion after Visit Fort Wayne started to see an increase in complaints from visitors on the cleanliness of their guestrooms.

Each hotel will be subject to an annual inspection, from which hoteliers will receive a grade to post at the front desk. (Think of it as the restaurant inspection grades posted in cities such as New York.)

Many of the details are still fuzzy, first among them: Who pays for this? HNN's Alicia Hoisington is looking into it and likely will have a report next week. Stay tuned. (And in the meantime, watch out for dirty hotels.)

Stat of the week

85%: Domestic demand as a percentage of total demand in Mexico, [as reported by Jonathan Kracer](#), HNN columnist and managing principal of Sion Capital LLC. This is but one of numerous market dynamics investors must understand before diving into this recovering market.

Many have avoided Mexico in recent years as headlines scream of cartel- and gang-related violence. But the investment landscape has become increasingly stabilized and rife with opportunity, Kracer argues. Indeed, many hoteliers are now more eager to seize their "Mexico moment" than ever before.

But they would be wise to look before they leap, Kracer writes. In addition to becoming familiar with the country and its key players, investors must also understand Mexico's segmentation and culture as well as acknowledge the institutionalization of its hotel industry.

Quote of the week

"There really is no ceiling for us. ... There was an article on the front page of the (Miami) Herald that said Middle America is now longing to experience South Beach like the rest of the 'elite' in the country, and we've been able to capitalize on that dynamic. There is no limit."

—Bobby Finvarb, head of Finvarb Group and The Robert Finvarb Companies, discussing [the rate outlook for the Miami market](#).

Finvarb was one of three Miami hoteliers who spoke during a panel at last month's Tour de Data Miami who shared a pie-in-the-sky projection for the market's rate growth. While the city's year-to-date growth of 7.9% isn't the highest in the country, it may just have the most potential—thanks to a beautiful weather, little to no seasonality and an increasing stream of international demand.

Reader comment of the week

"The cost of capital is low; the macro economic fundamentals are ok; political stability; excellent banking sector and strong institutions - in other words all the ingredients for investment and growth..."

—Reader "Niven" commenting on "[Challenges exist in striking Africa deals.](#)"

Email [Patrick Mayock](#) or find him on [Twitter](#).

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