

The changing nature of brand power

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Once upon a time, life was easy: You developed products, placed them in a well-located retail shop, wrapped them under an attractive brand and hired the best creative in town to promote them.

Advertising was king and when it didn't sell products, you could argue it was building brands. That was the recipe for success. How sweet, or so we thought. Many business and brands were successfully built on this approach, even if it wasn't always that easy.

Today, the digital ecosystem has disrupted our recipe for success, and the role brands play in building success. Anyone can build a digital presence and create a brand at almost the speed of light. As a result, there are so many products available under so many brands, it has become increasingly more difficult to attract sustained attention. Sustained is the key word here, as quick sales come and go with a bit of digital promotion.

What really matters today, arguably more than ever, is the trust a brand can bring to the purchase experience. This is particularly vital in the digital age. As more customers become physically disconnected with brands and the purchase process, brands need to bring an extra layer of comfort into their virtual relationship with customers.

While customers enjoy the ease of doing business online, letting their needs for immediate rewards go wild, they are also increasingly wary of post-purchase blues. These blues are created by the dissonance between what appears to be on offer and what is actually being sold and purchased.

The digital ecosystem has mastered the art of disguising the true quality of products, and modern customers need to rely on some reinforcement mechanism to press the 'purchase now' button.

This is where brands come into full flight. In many instances, the only rational and emotional bond between a pretty picture and nicely crafted copywriting, and the belief this is a genuine offer, is the brand. The brand is acting as the trust mechanism. It benefits both the rational brain, which is saying "for sure this brand wouldn't sell me a dodgy product", and the emotional one, which says "I trust them, this is great".

Trust is now the primary driving factor in engagement. Consumers need to be able to trust who they do business with no matter how, where and when they decide to make a purchase, whether it be in the comfort of their own homes on their computers or tablets, or on the train via their mobile phones.

Trust has always been on top of the pyramid of needs. But today, it's not just a want, it's a must. If you thought digital could create lasting brands via a bit of promotion, then think again. Brands have more tangible meaning than ever and your commercial success depends on it.

Tags: [digital strategy](#), [omni-channel retailing](#), [marketing strategy](#), [brand strategy](#)



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