Research and Results Overview 2019

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The research process was managed by The Centre for Brand Analysis (TCBA) in partnership with Dynata, one of the world's leading data research companies. The 2019 research again sees some interesting trends emerge. For individual brands, their ranking 'range' and, more importantly perhaps, position within their category, will typically be determined by major factors such as awareness, physical and mental availability, market size and share as well as the customers' experience. Fundamental changes against these metrics tend to be slow and examples of brands deviating significantly from their 'range' tend to be less common. Large deviations can be a leading indicator of the start of long-term brand decline or indeed growth.

More commonly a brand's ranking will move up and down within its typical range, with these shifts often reflecting shorter-term factors such as current brand activity, from the latest marketing campaign to new product developments, the commentary around that brand from third-party observers and influencers – including positive and negative press coverage – along with share of voice at the time of the research and any external market or competitor activity.

While for brand owners the insight from the research stems from exploring the short and longer-term data at a category level, naturally individuals are often interested in the overall winners or top 20. Turning our attention to the top 20s, the results of both the Consumer and Business Superbrands surveys reflect a notable medium-term underlying consistency with leading brands tending to remain within their ranges, notwithstanding some 'within-range' short-term variability.

Nineteen of the top 20 Business Superbrands have featured in the top 20 on multiple occasions over the last five years; 16 of these brands featured in the top group last year, while three of the four 'new entries' are simply bouncing back up toward the top end of their range this year and re-entering the leading group. Google remains omnipresent in the top 20 since the methodology was changed in 2006, albeit falling for the fourth year running, down marginally once again from sixth to ninth this year; 13 of this year's top 20 are omnipresent over the same period.

Johnson & Johnson and FedEx are back in the Business Superbrands top 20 after a temporary one-year absence – when they were marginally outside, in 24th and 22nd place respectively – while the Royal Mail is back in after a two-year absence, in which it placed 21st on both occasions. Only the surprise entry of Screwfix is genuinely a fundamental shift. This year the fast-growing multi-channel supplier of trade tools, plumbing, electrical, bathrooms and kitchens broke out of its typical range in the mid-30s to mid-40s – in the previous four years it placed 40th, 34th, 45th and 44th – so it will be interesting to see if the brand falls back into that zone or maintains its new higher range.

Seventeen of the Consumer Superbrands top 20 have also featured in the top 20 over the last five years more than once, while 11 of this year's top 20 were present in the previous year. Many of the 'new entries', as with the Business Superbrands, simply placed towards the bottom end of their longer-term range last year and have edged back up again to re-enter the leading pack. British Airways, Dyson, Kellogg's and Mercedes-Benz all returned after a one-year break for instance.

This overall consistency in the survey is reflective of how brand perception and positions do tend to shift slowly over time. Reflecting this underlying consistency, as is typical every year, in the vast majority of cases the category leaders and order of brands within categories remains fairly constant. Of the 63 B2B categories only 15 had new leaders while one new category was added. Similarly of the 78 consumer categories only 15 were topped by a different brand from last year, while there were three new categories.

In terms of the overall results the leading brand in both Consumer Superbrands and Business Superbrands remains the same as 2018, headed by LEGO and Apple respectively. This is the second year running in which Apple has topped the Business Superbrands rankings, having placed second in the previous three years. Fellow US tech titan, Microsoft, edged up one place to second in the rankings while Emirates also enhanced its position, by two places, to secure third spot. In the Consumer Superbrands rankings, LEGO retained the number one position for the second year in a row, having placed third in 2016 and second in 2017. Apple meanwhile moved up one place to second, reversing positions with Gillette, which moved down one place to third.

An additional data point, introduced last year for the first time in the Consumer Superbrands survey, is the relevancy index, which in addition to longer-term trends within the core survey can be a useful indicator of future potential brand growth or decline. Consumers are asked whether they believe an individual brand has gained or lost relevance to people today, compared with the past. This reduces the impact of longer-term goodwill on a brand's scores, and focuses consumers' minds on current use and importance of each brand to them. This index surfaces quite a different set of brands. Established titans like FMCG brands Coca-Cola or Gillette are replaced by rising disruptive brands, such as Netflix and Purplebricks. Unsurprisingly many technology, or technology enabled, brands make the top 20 for relevance. Other interesting shifts in consumer behaviour and sentiment are evident in this index, for example the rise of the discount retailers Lidl and Aldi, and increasing concern about the rise of cancer reflected in the increasing relevance of the cancer charities. Conversely those brands toward the bottom of the relevancy list may have troubled times ahead, many indeed having already suffered fundamental business problems, including retailers HMV, Carpetright, Oddbins, Mothercare and House of Fraser.

As ever we hope you find the top line results interesting and reflective of a broad church of opinion and nationwide sentiment – undoubtedly, they will not match your own personal perceptions neatly, after all none of us is a perfect match for the mythical 'average consumer'.

	Consumer Superbrands Top 10	Business Superbrands Top 10
1	LEGO	Apple
2	Apple	Microsoft
3	Gillette	Emirates
4	Rolex	British Airways
5	British Airways	Samsung
6	Coca-Cola	PayPal
7	Andrex	BP
8	Mastercard	Mastercard
9	Visa	Google
10	Dyson	Visa

	Consumer Brands	Gaining Relevancy	Losing Relevancy	NET
1	Amazon	73%	8%	65%
2	Aldi	68%	13%	56%
3	Macmillan Cancer Support	66%	11%	55%
4	Netflix	65%	11%	53%
5	Google	64%	12%	52%
6	Lidl	66%	14%	52%
7	PayPal	66%	15%	51%
8	LEGO	63%	13%	50%
9	Samsung	63%	14%	49%
10	YouTube	61%	13%	49%
11	Visa	61%	13%	48%
12	Heathrow	59%	11%	48%
13	Purplebricks	58%	11%	47%
14	Cancer Research UK	60%	15%	45%
15	Oral-B	58%	13%	45%
16	Apple	62%	17%	44%
17	Dyson	59%	15%	44%
18	TripAdvisor	59%	16%	43%
19	Nike	57%	14%	43%
20	Disney	57%	14%	43%