

Interbrand Releases First Annual Best German Brands Report

Mercedes-Benz leads on Interbrand's inaugural report of the 50 most valuable German brands; Deutsche Telekom and Bayer rank among the top 10

Berlin/Hamburg/Cologne (6 June 2014) – Interbrand, the world's leading brand consultancy today released its first annual Best German Brands report, a ranking of Germany's 50 most valuable brands.

The report looks specifically at the German market, providing deep insights into the development of these 50 leading brands. In addition to structuring the German brand landscape for CEOs and brand managers, it yields specific findings on the latest trends and developments of the top ranked brands.

German brand managers have invested in establishing and managing their brands for many years. This is especially true in the country's world-leading automotive brands, which have performed well in the history of Interbrand's [Best Global Brands](#) report, Interbrand's annual report that identifies and examines the top 100 most valuable global brands. It is with little surprise that within the Top 10 Best German Brands that a total of four are automotive brands.

The number one brand is Mercedes-Benz, with a brand value of 25.54 billion euros. The Stuttgart-based automaker has an excellent reputation for making the best cars in terms of technology, safety and dynamic design, all strong factors that have contributed to it securing the top position. Competitor BMW falls behind at number two. The Munich-based brand, with its "EfficientDynamics" approach to engineering is valued at 25.49 billion in brand value.

Volkswagen (8.9 billion euros), the undisputed European market leader is synonymous with comfort, reliability and German engineering ingenuity is ranked fifth. The Audi premium brand is ranked eighth with a brand value of 6.2 billion euros.

"Automotive brands performed well above average overall – they make up over 40% of the total brand value in the entire ranking," said J Justus Schneider, CEO of Interbrand Central and Eastern Europe. "Long-term brand strategies, like the introduction of the "i" models at BMW and Mercedes' consistent alignment with new target audiences and digital channels, have proven extremely effective. No one can rest on their accomplishments."

SAP is ranked third, with a brand value of 13.4 billion euros. In fourth place is Deutsche Telekom, with a brand value of 12.3 billion euros. Deutsche Telekom turned its philosophy of "brand-driven change" into a paradigm of brand management, demonstrating that brands are subject to constant transformation and need to be flexible in responding to their dynamic surroundings. For over 20 years, Deutsche Telekom has been consistently evolving their brand and their offerings. Anticipating the changes of the marketplace and meeting the changing needs of their customers has been a vital part of their long-standing success.

Other brands in the Top 10 include Siemens, BASF, adidas and Bayer. Europe's largest technology company, Siemens is ranked sixth with a brand value of 6.8 billion euros. Adidas takes ninth place with a brand value of 6 billion euros. Bayer, the pharmaceutical giant, constantly works to overcome the challenges and demands of today's environment and is finding new, innovative ways to improve people's quality of life. Bayer relies strongly on value-based branding, and enters the report at number 10 with a brand value of 5.6 billion euros.

“Germany has a long and rich history in brand development and brand management,” said Nina Oswald, Managing Director of Interbrand Germany. “This is reflected by the many German brands represented in the Best Global Brands report each year. Around 30 percent of these leading German brands have brand values that far exceeds 1 billion euros.”

Retail brands

German retailers are heavily represented in the ranking of the 50 most valuable German brands, making up a total of 13 brands. This reveals a number of major trends. One of these is the rise of private label brands, products manufactured and produced exclusively by the retailer. For example, the supermarket giant EDEKA, ranked at 27th with a brand value of 1.15 billion, makes its own soy-based pasta brand, called SoYes, and also owns in-store bakeries that appeal to a more exclusive clientele.

Another trend can be described as “going where the customers are.” In other words, retail brands are positioning themselves in areas in which their customers actually live, work and shop, including inner cities, airports and gas stations. For example, REWE is investing heavily in “to go” shops as well as REWE City and REWE Center concept stores. Cologne-based REWE is ranked at number 41 with a brand value of 385 million euros.

Lastly, creating a “seamless customer experience” has become a vital part of the brand experience within the German retail sector, as creating a continuous and uninterrupted customer experience both online offline can considerably increase brand value.

Douglas, the cosmetics store brand, for example communicates its value consistently across all touch points. It has a very strong customer loyalty bonus program with its Douglas Card, used by 8 million people across Europe. The brand also manages a very successful online shop and boasts one of the most popular retail Facebook pages, which helped to earn the 46th place on the ranking with a brand value of 156 million euros.

B2B Brands

Classic B2B brands are another significant group in the German ranking. In Germany especially, these brands represent excellence in development and entrepreneurship. Companies like BASF (7th place), Linde (19th place) and Evonik (22nd place) enjoy strong brand awareness in their native country. By increasing the strength of their brands, these brands can also help to boost the value of their respective companies. B2B companies have observed the ways of the B2C industry and are now applying them to their own business – and with outstanding results.

Surprises in the ranking

Due to a clear and distinctive brand idea, as well as a focused customer communication strategy, congstar made it into the Top 50. The mobile telecommunications provider is ranked 45th with a brand value of 222 million euros.

It is also worth noting that Deutsche Bank trailed behind other established brands, such as Deutsche Telekom, Siemens and Allianz. The financial services provider ended up in 15th place with a brand value of nearly 3 billion euros. The image inside the company is dominated by a dramatic change in culture. Overall, there is a lack of clarity and commitment to the brand by the organization. The bank has also failed to find a clear positioning towards the public since the financial crisis. As a result and looking to the future, the opportunity is great for Deutsche Bank to increase the value of its brand.

Interbrand's complete Best German Brands 2014 report, including additional articles and executive interviews are available at www.bestgermanbrands2014.de

About Interbrand

Founded in 1974, Interbrand is the world's leading brand consultancy. With nearly 40 offices in 27 countries, Interbrand's combination of rigorous strategy, analytics, and world-class design enables it to assist clients in creating and managing brand value effectively, across all touchpoints, in all market dynamics. Interbrand is widely recognized for its annual Best Global Brands report, the definitive guide to the world's most valuable brands, as well as its Best Global Green Brands report, which identifies the gap between customer perception and a brand's performance relative to sustainability. It is also known for having created brandchannel.com, a Webby-award winning resource about brand marketing and branding. For more information on Interbrand, visit interbrand.com.

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