

BRANDZ™

BRAND VALUATION SERIES

INCLUDING BAV
BEST COUNTRIES
STUDY

BRANDZ™ TOP
30
MOST VALUABLE
DUTCH
BRANDS 2019



BRANDZ™ TOP MOST VALUABLE 30 DUTCH BRANDS 2019

TOTAL VALUE
\$93 Billion



The Dutch Top 30 Breakdown

12 categories are represented in the 2019 Top 30.
The most influential are:



The Top 10 Most Valuable Dutch Brands

\$ = Brand Value US \$ Mil.



Leaders on Brand Contribution

Brand contribution is the proportion of overall value driven by brand equity rather than other in-market factors (such as promotions or distribution). It tends to be a key driver of business growth and is measured on scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest.



Here's to Health

The Top Healthiest Brands in the Netherlands, as measured on the BrandZ™ measure of health and vitality, called vQ. Healthy brands deliver a healthy bottom line. We measure brand vitality by monitoring five key contributors to brand wellness. The average score for all brands is 100.



#10

BEST COUNTRIES

USNEWS VMLY&R BAV Wharton

To find out more about BEST COUNTRIES visit:
<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries>

Innovation Averages

Top 30/50 brands. Average = 100

107 107 106 105

104 102 101

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A BASTION OF INGENUITY AND STABILITY



David Roth

CEO, The Store WPP, EMEA & Asia
and Chairman, BAV Group
David.Roth@wpp.com

I am delighted to introduce you to the inaugural WPP BrandZ™ Top 30 Most Valuable Dutch Brands ranking.

This groundbreaking study ranks the Netherlands' most successful brands, analyzes their strengths, and identifies the key forces that are driving growth in this market. It is the first of what will be an annual study that will track and predict changes in the Dutch brand ecosystem, and will quantify and illuminate the evolving trajectories of the Netherlands' most valuable brands.

We could not be more thrilled to bring the BrandZ™ study to the Netherlands. This is the seventh-largest economy in Europe. Long famed for its art and commerce, in recent years the Netherlands has taken its place as a bastion of success and stability on an increasingly uncertain continent. From the docks of Rotterdam to the runways of Schiphol, Dutch excellence is being exported worldwide, even as the country moves from strength to strength at home.

Though modest in area, the Netherlands has always punched above its size in the global economy, not least because of its treasury of beloved heritage brands. Many can be found in the report before you, as so many quintessential Dutch brands continue to thrive, even after decades and centuries of existence. Of special note is the beer label Brand, which can trace its history back more than 600 years, and as such now holds the title of having the oldest roots of any brand included in our Most Valuable rankings worldwide.

For all that the Netherlands honors the old, it has also embraced the new. Dutch startups Thuisbezorgd.nl (Takeaway.com) and Booking.com did not exist 25 years ago. Today, they are reshaping how Europe eats and travels.

Established titans like Philips, Shell, and Heineken are charting bold paths forward – into cutting-edge health technology, liquefied natural gas, and the booming Chinese market, respectively. Storied Dutch banks like ING and ABN AMRO are pioneering new approaches to mobile banking and payments; they have found willing partners in tech-savvy Dutch shoppers, who lead Europe in their adoption of contactless purchasing.

As Dutch brands' vision and ingenuity comes into focus, so too does the image of "Brand Netherlands" that they carry forward with them. This report contains an exclusive, in-depth look at data and analysis from the "Best Countries" research done by VMLY&R's BAV Group in partnership with US News and Wharton Business School. This work illustrates the "virtuous cycle" by which "Brand Netherlands" and Dutch brands can enhance each other's standing worldwide.

We are also pleased to provide market wisdom and expert insights from WPP companies all across the Netherlands, through extensive Thought Leadership and Best Practice essays. On page 22, Takeaways provide direct, action-oriented recommendations for brands based on our expert

analysis of the market. We have also included capsule summaries of the Netherlands' Top 30 most valuable brands. Taken together, they paint a picture of the many ways Dutch brands are navigating a changing consumer market – a story explored in much of the in-depth analysis contained in this report.

The release of this ranking comes at an exciting time for WPP in the Netherlands. We will soon cut the ribbon on a new base for our operating companies in Amsterdam. The 19,000 square meter office is sited on a green and airy redevelopment of a well-known modern landmark on the banks of the Amstel river. This new co-location will gather some 1,500 employees and 30 companies in an environment designed to encourage "horizontality" and collaboration between colleagues. It represents a strong commitment to the promise of the Netherlands and the vitality of WPP's business there.

Today, over 2,000 people work for WPP in the Netherlands, providing advertising, marketing, insight, media, digital, shopper marketing and PR expertise. It's part of our global presence in 112 countries. This horizontal network of talent, creativity, and wisdom allows us to apply global trends and insights to our clients' unique needs.

Our BrandZ™ reports serve as a cornerstone of this global perspective. They remain the world's largest, consumer-focused source of brand equity knowledge and insight, powered by our proprietary BrandZ™ brand valuation methodology. We start by examining relevant corporate financial data and stripping away everything that doesn't pertain to the branded business. Then we take the unique step of conducting ongoing, in-depth quantitative consumer research with more than 170,000 consumers annually, across more than 50 countries, to assess consumer attitudes about, and relationships with, over 100,000 brands.

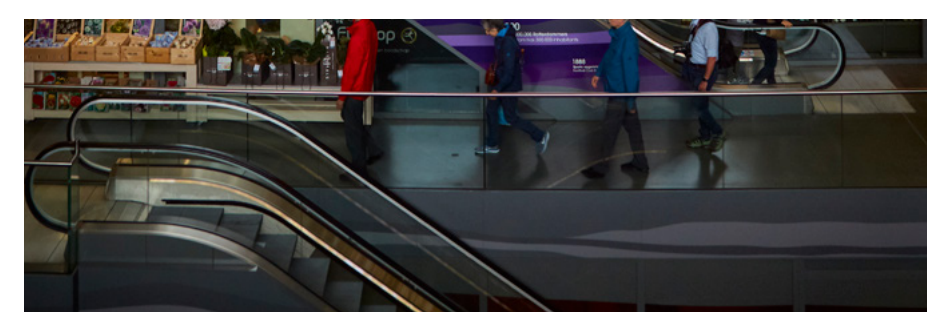
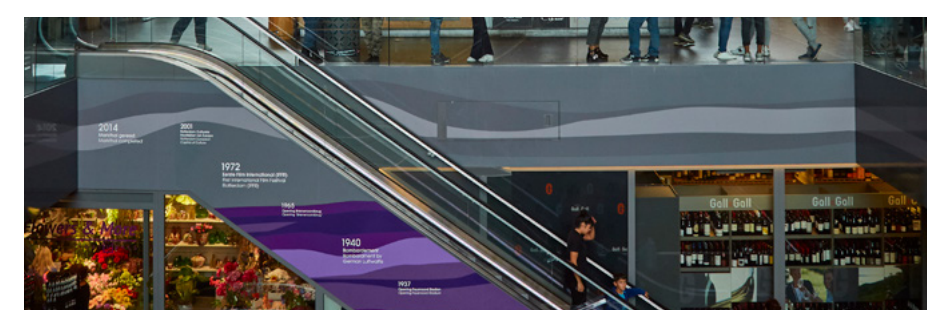
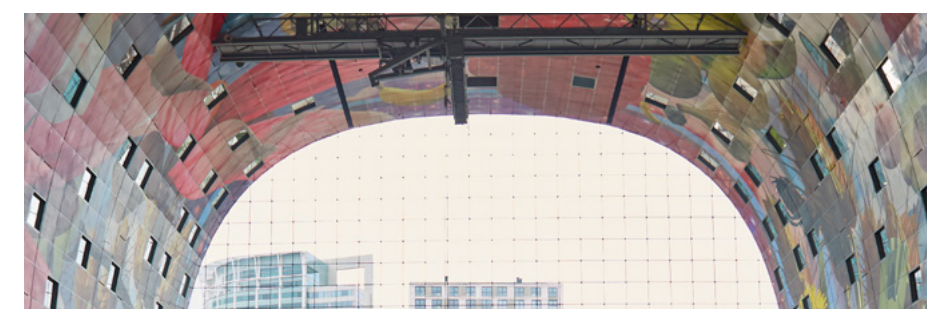
If you enjoy this report, we invite you to examine our extensive BrandZ™ library. This year, the range of publications includes inaugural rankings of the most valuable German, French, and Australian brands, among a bumper crop of exciting new entrants to the series. These titles join long-running annual studies like the BrandZ™ Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brands, BrandZ™ Top 100 Most Valuable Chinese Brands, and BrandZ™ Top 75 Most Valuable Indian Brands.

At WPP, we're passionate about using our creativity to build strong, differentiated brands that deliver lasting shareholder value. To learn more about how to apply our experience and expertise to benefit your brand, please contact any of the WPP companies that contributed expertise to this report.

Turn to page 140 for summaries of each company and the contact details of key executives. Or feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely, David Roth

David.Roth@wpp.com
Twitter: davidrothlondon
Blog: www.davidroth.com



The background of the slide is a solid pink color with a complex, abstract pattern of white, hand-drawn style lines. These lines form various swirling, circular, and wavy shapes, creating a sense of movement and depth. The lines are of varying thickness and are scattered across the entire frame.

1

INTRODUCTION

A BRIGHT LIGHT IN EUROPE

Look at the headlines - six straight years of economic growth, Europe's seventh-largest economy, near record-low unemployment - and the Netherlands seems the very picture of strength and stability: a country that has long prioritized steady results over flash and disruption. And that view isn't wrong, especially when comparing the Netherlands to many of its larger neighbors.

But at the same time, one shouldn't overlook the steps the Dutch have taken since the 2008 financial crisis to build a more innovative, diversified, and resilient society.

Those efforts are paying off handsomely. The country's GDP as of Q3 2018 had grown 3.1% year-on-year; government projections for 2019 clock in at 2.6%. Both are well above the European average. Unemployment sits at 3.9%.

Government surveys of consumer confidence in 2017 were the highest ever recorded, putting the country on par with Germany and well above European powerhouses like the UK and France.

None of this was a given as recently as 2012 and 2013, when the Netherlands experienced a "double-dip recession." But the recovery is real: wages are rising, home sales have finally picked back up, and the number of people in paid employment is higher than ever. Exports continue to outpace imports, with both sides of the trade ledger growing healthily.

Part of this recovery can be traced to advantages that the Netherlands has long enjoyed. The seaport of Rotterdam is Europe's largest, while Schiphol Airport remains a central node in the world's transportation network. Both hubs are well-served by an array of leading engineering, logistics, and manufacturing firms.

The Netherlands' population has long been one of Europe's best-educated and business-ready. Today, English is spoken proficiently by more than 70% of Dutch citizens, while institutions of higher learning like TU Eindhoven remain first-class.

However, these long-standing strengths don't fully capture what makes the Netherlands recent success unique. One big differentiator of today's Dutch economy is its relative inclusiveness. According to a recent study by CESifo and Cornell University, The Netherlands enjoys the fairest income distribution in Europe. This means that the Netherlands has managed to incentivize entrepreneurship while maintaining a social safety net that provides equality of opportunity.

Another Dutch differentiator is ease of doing business. Tweaks to the country's tax regime have lured companies like Netflix and Uber to base their European operations in Amsterdam.

Meanwhile, home-grown talent has been nurtured through programs like the government's Seed Capital arrangement and Dutch Venture Initiative. The World Economic Forum's Technology Readiness Index, which measures "the propensity for countries to exploit the opportunities offered by information and communications technology," recently ranked the Netherlands fourth out of all countries surveyed.

The Netherlands has also enjoyed a strong edge in innovation. Some Dutch startups, like Booking.com and Thuisbezorgd.nl (Takeaway.com), are well-known and long-established. Others are newer but are already standouts in their fields. These include Mosa Meat, which cultures slaughter-free beef from cattle cells; file-transferring site WeTransfer; and Additive Industries, a leader in the 3D printing space.

Many future unicorns are no doubt being hatched at this very moment in incubators like UtrechtInc and the Eindhoven BrainPort, or in co-working spaces in cities across the Netherlands.

In all, four Dutch municipalities (Amsterdam, Utrecht, Eindhoven, and The Hague) recently ranked in the top 40 of the European Commission's European Digital City Index, which describes how well different cities support digital entrepreneurs (Amsterdam came in the highest, at number six).

Many of Dutch cities are also at the forefront of green technology, with Rotterdam and Amsterdam recently winning plaudits for their pledges to become circular economies (in which waste is recycled to extract maximum value).

As Dutch upstarts continue to make their presence felt, many of the Netherlands' biggest companies are embracing surprising strategies of transformation and innovation. Starting in 2016, Shell has made big moves into liquefied natural gas through a series of takeovers and investments. Heineken Inc, meanwhile, recently signed a \$3.1 billion partnership deal with China's largest brewer, as part of an aggressive bid to become the premium beer company of choice in emerging markets.



The Netherlands' finance industry finds itself at a particularly interesting moment of transformation. Brands like Triodos and ASN have become global leaders in the realm of "sustainable finance." A series of recent settlements reached between Dutch banks and government regulators have had at least one silver lining: they have enhanced the overall reputation of "Brand Netherlands" as a country that's committed to order, transparency, and fair play.

It's no wonder, then, that the Dutch government's measures of business confidence reached their all-time high at the beginning of 2018. As many European societies struggle with unemployment, many Dutch businesses face the opposite problem: more skilled jobs than there are qualified people to take them.

The traditional solution to this situation would be immigration, which is why many in the Netherlands and Europe breathed a sigh of relief when center-right Prime Minister

Mark Rutte defended his seat in last year's parliamentary elections against challenges from more extreme nationalist politicians. Under Rutte, next year the Netherlands' budget surplus is set to rise to 1.0 percent of GDP, even as the government increases spending on education, healthcare, the military, and infrastructure.

That said, the uncertainty many felt in the run-up to the 2017 elections suggests that the Dutch "polder model" of consensus-based policy making may be transforming. A recent debate about whether to scrap a corporate "dividend tax" (which was ultimately left in place, but with proceeds directed toward economic and entrepreneurial stimulus) highlighted real disagreements in Dutch society about balancing growth with social provisioning.

Another issue up for grabs is the question of the future of the European Union. The Netherlands has become the leader of an informal group of smaller states that has resisted calls for greater integration, while at the same time

defending the existing union. Although much of the Dutch economy's recent growth has been driven by domestic demand, the country has an obvious stake in the future of Europe's trade and transit networks.

A further open puzzle is Dutch retail spending. Despite high consumer confidence, rising wages, and six years of positive GDP growth, household consumption has not seen similar acceleration in recent years. A value-added tax hike set to go into effect in 2019 should further complicate this matter.

Ultimately, the stubborn Dutch savings rate can be seen as an opportunity for brands. Dutch consumers have money to spend, and the larger story of the Dutch economy is of a country moving confidently into the future – what's more, a country where innovation is always undergirded with a larger social purpose. Successful brands are telling stories that translate this wider sense of purpose and innovation into people's daily lives.

KEY RESULTS

2

Shell's at the Top

The Netherlands is the only European country in the BrandZ™ rankings to be led by an oil and gas brand, with Shell handily taking the top spot in this inaugural BrandZ™ Top 30 Dutch Brands ranking. Shell has a brand value of US \$20.7 billion, and alone makes up 22 percent of the value of the entire Dutch Top 30. Shell is not only the most valuable Dutch brand, but also this year surpassed ExxonMobil to become the No. 1 Oil and Gas brand in the BrandZ™ Most Valuable Global Brand 2018 rankings.

4

Six Cheers for Beer

The placement of so many beer brands in the Dutch Top 30 is quite distinctive among countries analyzed by BrandZ™. There are six beer brands in the Dutch Top 30 – a number unmatched in other European nations' ranking tables – making beer the largest category in the Dutch rankings by number of brands represented. Beyond the behemoth that is Heineken (the No. 2 brand overall in the Dutch ranking) Amstel, Grolsch, Hertog Jan, Brand, and Bavaria also put in strong showings this year. Together they make up 16 percent of the Dutch Top 30.

1

Top 30 Dutch Brands worth over €80 Billion

Taken together, the BrandZ™ Top 30 Most Valuable Dutch Brands 2019 are worth \$93 billion, or more than €80 billion. This means that Dutch brands are as strong and valuable as those from larger economies like Spain, Italy, Australia, and Indonesia, which all have similar total values for their top 30 brands.

3

Top Dutch Brands are Crucial to the Netherlands' Economy

A collection of iconic heritage brands and beloved startups, it's no surprise that the BrandZ™ Top 30 Most Valuable Dutch Brands are important cornerstones of Dutch society. What's notable, however, is just how crucial they are to the Dutch economy relative to top brands in other major European economies. The total value of the Dutch Top 30 is proportionally larger, when compared to overall GDP, than the Top 30 Brands in the UK, Germany, or France.

6

Innovation is King

Brands that made the Top 30 ranking in The Netherlands are outperforming most of Europe on BrandZ™'s measure of innovation. In addition to being an important component of overall brand health and vitality, innovation has been shown to be a major driver of future growth. The average innovation score for brands in the Dutch Top 30 is higher than the innovation average for the top British, French, Spanish, and Italian brands, and is tied with German brands for the top average score in Europe.

8

Innovation and Purpose are Natural Partners

Looking at the data, many Dutch brands that score high on innovation have also embraced a strong sense of purpose. This is a combination that feels distinctively Dutch: as seen in this year's BAV Best Countries rankings, people around the world see the Netherlands not only as a country that favors business and entrepreneurs, but also as a strong defender of human rights, the environment, and equality. Consumers value a "reason why" for innovation, and this combination of innovation and purpose enables category leadership for Dutch brands.

5

Banking Still Rates

Although the share of Dutch workers employed in the banking sector has declined because of greater automation, financial institutions remain a vital part of the Netherlands' economy and brand landscape. Five banking brands are included in the inaugural Dutch Top 30, and they a diverse lot: among others, they include "sustainable finance" pioneer ASN Bank, globally prominent ING, and Rabobank, which has strong ties to the food and agriculture sector. In all, banking brands account for 20 percent of the overall value of the Dutch Top 30.

7

Technology is Driving Brand Success

The Netherlands' leading tech and online services brands – Philips, Booking.com, and Thuisbezorgd.nl – account for a quarter of the overall value of the Dutch Top 30. But many other brands in this ranking are also using technology to create new value for consumers. Taken together, the Netherlands' Top 30 Brands scored well above the global average in delivering a superior online experience for ordinary citizens. Going forward, the question won't be whether brands should embrace technology, but how they should do so to maximally improve people's lives.

THE TOP 5 LEARNINGS FOR MARKETERS

1

Innovation Leads to the Biggest Rewards

The most innovative brands in the Dutch Top 30 have three times more “Brand Power” than the least innovative. Brand Power is a BrandZ™ metric indicating a brand’s ability to predispose a consumer to buy it over category competitors, as well as to pay a premium for it – because these powerful brands are seen as significantly more meaningful, different, and memorable than their competitors. Innovative brands also thrive in the marketplace, as BrandZ™ global data shows that brands perceived as very innovative grow 7x faster than other brands.

2

Emotional Connection Deepens Brand Value

Brands that form relationships with consumers – and in particular relationships that feel reciprocal, beneficial, and above all emotional – can punch above their financial weight in the BrandZ™ rankings. Products and services can go some way to make people feel like a brand is improving their lives; but memorable communications take that extra step in making people’s relationships with brands feel like a genuine, human connection.

Advertising by meaningfully different brands doesn’t just reach the target audience – it moves them.

3

Brand Power is not just for Upstarts

It’s not just new companies that can benefit from investing in brand power. As many of the established giants of the Dutch Top 30 embark on major expansions or strategic pivots, they can amplify the financial benefit of these investments by pairing them with authentic messaging and effective advertising. Branding is not just a way to sell consumers on a company’s strategic direction – rather, it is an integral way to define, ensure, and amplify a company’s future growth.

4

Purpose Amplifies Advertising

In a mature and crowded market like the Netherlands, having a strong purpose can help a brand stand out. Consumers are looking to connect with brands that don’t just try to sell them a product, even if that product does exactly what they want it to do. Brands with purpose are those that stand for and communicate the same values people look for in their personal spheres; they work to improve people’s lives and communities, even in small ways. These brands are thus more likely to be regarded a part of the community, and invited into people’s lives and homes.

5

Heritage Gives Brands a Headstart, but won’t Win the Race

The Netherlands is blessed with a collection of brands that have a deep national heritage. Such long-standing fame immediately gives brands a leg up in salience – that is, recognizability – which is a not-insignificant component of Brand Power. However, just because a brand is memorable due to its heritage does not mean that consumers necessarily see that brand as having a meaningful or different identity compared to its competitors – especially in a country like the Netherlands where many, many brands can boast of heritage! So it’s still important for Dutch brands to invest in defining how their brand can make a meaningful difference in people’s lives today and in the future.

CROSS CATEGORY TRENDS

1

Unlocking Consumer Choice

Dutch consumer confidence has hovered near all-time highs in 2018, and citizens enjoy some of the healthiest average incomes in Europe. However, the Netherlands has yet to see commensurate growth in retail spending. Recent recessions have underscored that the world is unpredictable, and that saving is prudent. What's more, even wealthy Dutch people often approach consumption with an eye toward prudence over flash. Brands can respond by hastening the development of a new type of consumerism – based on value for money, strong ethics, and appreciation of craft and process. Dutch consumers are conscientious and sophisticated: although they don't want to waste their money on disposable thrills, they are willing to pay a premium in support of brands that speak to a purpose beyond making money. They are open to building relationships with brands that share their perspectives on labor rights, animal welfare, and environmental protection, among other cornerstones of purpose.



2

Changing Ownership

It's a truism that Dutch consumers are increasingly opting to spend their money on experiences rather than material goods. And while that's certainly a trend – and one that has benefitted Dutch brands like Booking.com – what's equally interesting are the ways that people are redefining ownership of the products they do decide to buy. For example, a subscription plan with the popular Dutch bike brand Swapfiets doesn't simply give one possession of a single bike in a preferred color – it also allows users to swipe that bike out for another one whenever they experience a flat tire or maintenance issue. In addition, as cities like Rotterdam and Amsterdam commit to developing circular economies, more Dutch will turn to brands for help in sharing, reselling, and recycling their existing possessions to give them a second life.



3

E-commerce Thrives, while Retail Pivots to Experience

Ecommerce continues to grow, with Dutch shoppers spending €22.5 billion online in 2017. Meanwhile, physical stores are redesigning to reduce many of the pain points traditionally associated with retail. Thanks to "tap to go" technology and mobile payment platforms from brands like ING and ABN AMRO, shoppers can now skip checkout-counters altogether at some Dutch stores. With the extra space gained from greater automation, retailers from bank branches to supermarkets are introducing features like cafés, to-go counters, consultation centers, and product demonstration stages to transform stores into sites of human connection and exploration.

4

New Youth, New Rules

Generation Z consumers in the Netherlands have a very different view toward advertising and brand content than their elders. According to Kantar Millward Brown AdReaction Connecting Generations, some 70 percent of Dutch Gen Z Consumers surveyed say they "skip ads whenever they can" – a number far higher than their generational predecessors. These youngest consumers also use a variety of other strategies to avoid ads, from installing ad blockers to paying for ad-free versions to physically avoiding advertisements. Those advertisements that Gen Z Dutch consumers do enjoy tend to feature humor or expressions of creativity. Additionally, they show a higher affinity for branded content, especially in video form.

5

Mastering the Premium-Accessible Mix

There's increasingly no room for middling products or services in Dutch consumers' lives; instead, brands that manage to outperform expectations both in the premium and budget spaces are being showered with love and loyalty. On the upscale side of the cost curve, a brand like Albert Heijn has remained popular while selling higher-priced groceries than its competitors – because it has established a credible track record of introducing the best gourmet food to the Netherlands; because it has invested in healthy, purposeful wellness initiatives like vegan takeaway counters; and because it has built an aspirational branded content ecosystem of recipes and lifestyle advice. At the same time, however, budget offerings from brands Jumbo, HEMA, and Telfort have won loyalty by over-delivering on price, product, experience, and design. Consumers expect thoughtfulness, personality, and excellence at high and low price points.

6

Online Thrives, but so does Traditional Media

The Netherlands is indisputably a plugged-in society, with 95.1 percent of the Dutch population age 13+ online. (Compare this, for instance, to the 81 percent of the Germany population age 10+ who are online). The average Dutch person spends 2.94 hours daily online on their PC or laptop, plus 1.81 hours browsing on mobile. At the same time, traditional media is still highly relevant: the average Dutch person spends 2.22 hours daily watching TV, and 1.81 hours listening to the radio. Add in time spent reading print news, and there's a nearly equal online / offline media split in the Netherlands. Social media and messaging is also popular, with approximately 70 percent of Dutch people using Facebook and WhatsApp across all platforms.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

1

Focus on Family

As the first country to legalize gay marriage back in 2001, the Netherlands has long been at the vanguard of the changing definition of family. Taking changing family structures into account today isn't only a matter of social policy, but also business sense: for instance, Dutch cooking ingredients brand Honig has adapted to variations in household structure by offering its meal kits in two- and eight-person size packages, in addition to the standard four. Another social trend with unmissable commercial implications is the rise of single-person households, which has quadrupled since 1971 and now stands at around 3 million. Far from living cloistered lives, single Dutch people are a visible, vital force in today's society.

2

Cash-free is King

The Netherlands is one of the most cash-free countries in Europe, with cash transactions making up only 45 percent of retail purchases – a proportion that should only fall in coming years. This stands in stark contrast to the Netherlands' neighbors in Germany, where cash still accounts for some 80 percent of retail transactions. According to the European Central Bank, Dutch people use contactless payments for one in ten retail transactions, the highest rate in Europe. Dutch banking brands are at the forefront of mobile payments technology in Europe; ABN AMRO has found success with its Tikkie app at home, while ING is a major investor in the Payconiq and Payvision platforms.



3

No-frills Fanatics

Dutch shoppers love a budget bargain, but they don't want to feel like they're sacrificing quality: instead, they want to pay less and get more. One way to satisfy this brief is to emulate of retailers like HEMA and double down on intelligent, democratic design. Home goods store Action uses another successful strategy to stand out in the bargain space, constantly refreshing its product array of incredible deals so that each new visit feels different and exciting. Dutch grocer Jumbo, meanwhile, offers some of the lowest prices in the country, but always makes sure to link these bargains to the brand's quirky, principled, and distinctive "Seven Certainties" (one of which involves gifting free groceries to shoppers who find themselves the 4th in line for a cashier).

4

Conscious Eating is in

Modern Dutch society is one of the best places to be a healthy and ethical eater; according to Oxfam's "Good Enough to Eat" report, it the best country for healthy eating, thanks to its low food prices and nutritional diversity. The next goal is to further increase plant consumption, especially in the protein space. In April 2018, the Dutch government's Council for the Environment proposed targeting a national diet in which plants make up 60% of all protein consumption by 2030; official nutrition guidelines are similarly shifting toward plants. Retailers like Albert Heijn are investing in more vegan options for their takeaway and grocery offerings. Meanwhile, Dutch startup Mosa Meat leads the world in engineering lab-grown, "slaughter-free" meat products.





7

Golden Years, Golden Opportunities

The Netherlands has an aging population: according to the most recent government statistics, the proportion of the Dutch population age 65 and up stood at 18.2 percent in 2016, up from 13.6 percent in 2000. But old age is hardly a time of dependence and diminishment for many Dutch people. Life expectancy continues to rise, and people are living independently for longer. People are seizing upon their later years as a time to try new hobbies, make new friends, and lead active and healthy lives. Nor does the perception that older people are technologically backwards hold water: in a recent government survey, 64 percent of Dutch respondents aged 65 to 74 said they had used social media in the prior three months, up from 24 percent five years before. As brands build out their e-commerce platforms and online campaigns, they would do well to keep mature audiences in mind, as they're both financially flush and online savvy.

8

The Spirit of Travel is Strong

Dutch holidaymakers are taking more and more trips abroad, with foreign holidays increasing by more than 50 percent in the past 25 years. Holidays by air have more than tripled over this same period. As the Dutch economy continues to perform, travel expenditures should only increase – with implications that extend far beyond the hospitality sphere. When people return from their trips, they'll look to continue the spirit of newness, adventure, and freedom through their purchases at home, seeking out new products and experiences to satisfy their curiosity about the world.

5

A Return to Active Living

Although the Netherlands has long had a reputation for active and healthy living, the number of moderately and severely overweight people keeps rising. According to government statistics, 43 percent of the population today is overweight, and the population percentage of obese people has doubled since 1995. Brands that empower people to regain control of their health and exercise – without seeming like they want to profit from people's unhappiness – can win new fans and deepen existing relationships. And a brand doesn't have to have an explicit "wellness" focus to play a role here; it's enough to connect with themes of fun and action and movement, as well getting away from screens and spending time outdoors.

6

A Diversifying Society

While it's still blessed with strong social bonds among citizens, the Netherlands is no longer as homogenous as it once was. In 1972, 9.5 percent of the Dutch population had one or more foreign parents; by 2016, government statistics show, that proportion had risen to one in five. Today there are people from 223 different countries living in the Netherlands, and while rising diversity can sometimes lead to social tensions, in many ways the country is doing better than most. The United Nation's 2018 Global Happiness Survey ranked the Netherlands 11th out of 117 countries surveyed for happiness of foreign-born people living in the country, placing it above peers like the UK (20th), Germany (28th), France (29th) and Italy (39th). The result of these population changes is greater diversity in spheres like cuisine, beauty, and entertainment – as well as a greater desire among many Dutch to seek out new tastes and experiences.

9

Walking the Talk on Altruism

There's more pressure than ever on brands to contribute to the greater good, from sourcing organic food and textiles to reducing waste to improving labor conditions. In the Netherlands, this trend is rooted in a sense of genuine progressivism – people are proud that their country is seen as a leader in human rights, gender equality, and environmental protection. What's more, people are committed to living out these principles in their daily lives. According to government statistics, half of the Dutch population aged 15 or older engages in volunteer work, offering plenty of opportunity for brands to work with ordinary people in making society a better place for all.

10

Renewed Energy in the Home

After a post-recession slump, the Dutch housing market is picking up, with high demand and an increasing number of home sales. At the same time, however, a tight supply of new homes is pushing up prices in both the ownership and rental spheres, causing pain for many. In the face of this crunch, brands can help people find new ways to balance comfort and independence with lower living costs (for example, finding ways to improve communal living and roommate arrangements, or supporting multigenerational households). For the concept of "home" retains a strong pull for Dutch people; for all there is talk of "Fear of Missing Out," there are also new "Joys of Staying In," as e-commerce, delivery platforms, telecommuting, and streaming entertainment make it more possible than ever to conduct one's life from the comfort of their couch.

11

Go Deep with Green

For many reasons – ranging from a longstanding love of biking to an intimate interest in rising sea levels – the Netherlands has long been a country invested in building a greener future. Environmentalism is a part of most people’s everyday lives, and people are comfortable with energy-saving lights and wind turbines. Notably, though, Dutch brands’ commitment to serving a higher environmental purpose extends beyond what’s visible to the eye. In the banking sector, for instance, brands like SNS, ABN AMRO, and Rabobank have begun to define and implement “sustainable finance” guidelines, while Triodos and ASN are world leaders in the “green investing” field. Shell, meanwhile, set up a New Energies business in 2016, and has led most of its industry in publicly discussing plans for a lower-carbon future.

12

Take Care of People

In BAV Consulting’s annual Best Countries survey, the Netherlands is recognized as a leader in human rights and gender equality – a global reputation that’s enhanced by the international courts of The Hague, as well as the Dutch state’s pioneering commitments to LGBT rights. As a result, Dutch companies have extra credibility in pursuing certain types of brand purpose – those, for instance, that involve helping people to reach their full potential, or to overcome injustice. Recent examples include ASN Bank’s recent plan to encourage the garment companies it invests in to pay all workers a living wage, as well as the campaign by Tony’s Chocolonely to stamp out slavery in the cocoa industry. More generally, there is room for brands to tell stories about how they are supporting and empowering their own workforces (especially women employees) as part of efforts to create a more equitable Dutch society.



13

Engage with the Neighborhood

Although they don’t always get enough of it, community bonding is important to many Dutch people – which is partly why coffee brand Douwe Egberts has been able to grow its “Neighbor’s Day” celebration into a major national happening since 2006. Some 85 percent of Dutch people surveyed in government data report being satisfied by their neighborhoods. Levels of social trust (that is, how much people trust their neighbors) are fairly high, and people generally look out for each other: a recent study by an American magazine found that people in Amsterdam returned lost wallets to their owners 75 percent of the time, a higher rate than in most other global cities surveyed. That said, government surveys find that people with less education also have less social trust, and there is plenty of room for companies to incorporate neighborliness and community-building into their brands’ purpose.

14

Bring Heritage Forward

The challenge of how to craft modern, forward-looking identities for heritage brands – a topic that’s relevant to many storied Dutch companies – has been especially well-met in recent years by the Netherlands’ leading beer labels. Last year Heineken drew on its brand themes of energy and fun to introduce a non-alcoholic beer for the first time in its history. Its sister brand Amstel has similarly introduced Radler and non-alcoholic varieties, and recently based its bottle redesign around a purpose-driven theme from Amstel’s 19th century origins – how the beer was founded by two friends and is “brewed in friendship.” Hertog Jan puts a forward-looking spin on its century-plus history of craft by introducing innovative, limited-edition “Grand Prestige” varieties each year.

Bavaria, meanwhile, recently launched its first non-alcoholic beer nearly 300 years into its own brand history, and did so with a humorous ad starring Diego Maradona.

15

Address the Whole Country

Although the Netherlands has a dense population, no one municipality in the country has a citizenry of over 1 million.

Unlike in many European countries, there is no single “business capital”, population center, or cultural lodestar in the Netherlands. What this means is that brands cannot, for instance, capture an “urban audience” by only targeting some archetypal Amsterdam hipster. Instead, brands would do well to ensure that their planning encompasses the scope of what it means to live in the Netherlands today – from Eindhoven to Groningen, and not overlooking the country’s many small towns and rural areas.

16

Navigate Generational Divides

There are significant differences in advertising consumption preferences between so-called “younger” generations that brands should not gloss over. As previously mentioned, Kantar Millward Brown’s AdReaction

Connecting Generations reveals that Generation Z, aged 16-19, is the hardest to prevent from skipping pure advertising, but the most receptive to branded content, especially if it’s in video form. Generation X, meanwhile, which is aged between 35 and 55, is less likely to seek out or trust branded content, and sometimes reports feeling “tricked” and annoyed when they see a piece of content and later find out that it was created by a brand. Gen Y, meanwhile, generally falls somewhere in the middle: most notably, this group, aged 20-34, is less likely than Gen Z to skip or avoid advertising at all costs.

19

Export Productivity and Purpose

The world has positive perceptions of the Netherlands, Dutch people and Dutch brands, and this can be turned into a competitive advantage. Dutch people are known for their business friendliness, high ideals, fair-mindedness, and commitment to a healthy lifestyle (think of all those bike paths!), and these are all aspects that can be used to activate a brand in global consumers' minds. BAV Consulting’s annual “Best Countries” ranking puts the Netherlands at 10th place in the world, winning recognition for its entrepreneurship, quality of life, and sense of citizenship. The Netherlands is seen as a forward-looking place that’s “open for business” and ideal for raising kids – a modern Dutch vision of the good life that goes well beyond those hoary clichés of windmills and clogs.

20

Think Long-term

BrandZ™ research over more than a decade consistently shows that the brands that invest in communicating their strengths tend to ride out the ups and downs of economic cycles far more comfortably – and recover much faster – than those that don’t. Now is the right time to invest in building relationships with consumers, even for brands and products they can’t afford or can’t afford to prioritize at the moment. Levels of disposable income are rising, and the young people who might be unemployed or short of cash right now won’t always be in this situation. Brands should foster familiarity and trust. They should plant the seeds of aspiration, and meet that aspiration with products and services that fulfill consumers’ needs as their lives change and their ability to spend increases, whether that’s for something as simple as shampoo and biscuits, or higher-end purchases like white goods, jewelry, or even cars and real estate. Talk to people now, and they’ll remember you when they can afford to buy.

17

Embrace Local Themes

With a population that’s 70 percent English-speaking and numerous trade and transit links to the rest of the world, the Netherlands might seem like a prime candidate for importing communications campaigns and brand strategies from other major markets. But Dutch people are proud of going their own way – quite literally, in the case of their unique bike lane and “woonerf” living street systems. And as one of the most economically healthy European countries, they’re in a position to reward brands that approach the Dutch market with strategies rooted in cultural insight and specificity.

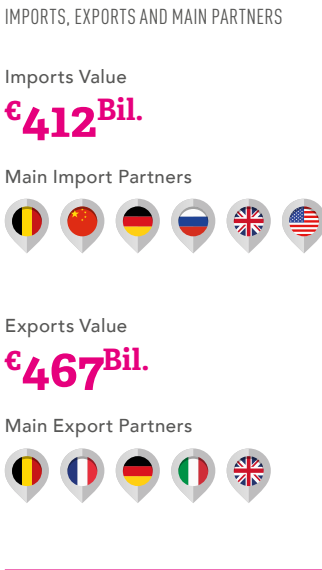
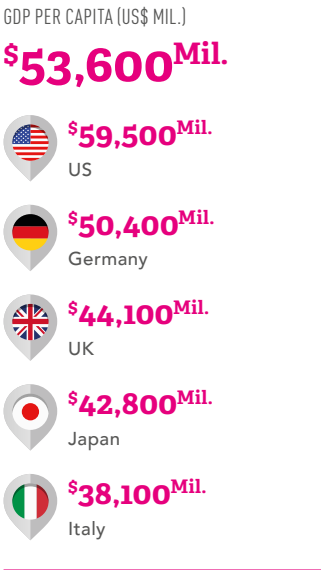
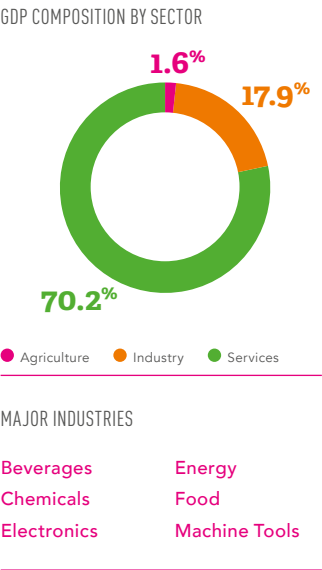
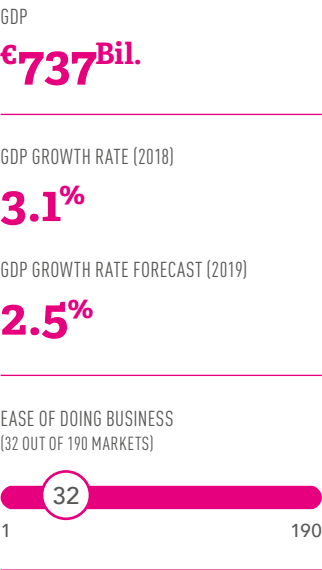
18

Spread Happiness

Optimism in marketing communications isn’t just a way to associate brands with positive emotions; it’s also an accurate reflection of the general Dutch disposition. According to official government statistics, almost nine out of ten adults in the Netherlands say they are happy. A similar proportion say they are satisfied with life in general. In the United Nations’ 2018 World Happiness Report, the Netherlands ranks sixth out of 156 countries assessed for happiness. Among Dutch brands, the more joyful aspects of happiness are well-represented in messaging from beer brands, but there’s room for all Dutch companies to reflect more everyday manifestations of happiness: moods like contentment, security, satisfaction, and pride.



Economy

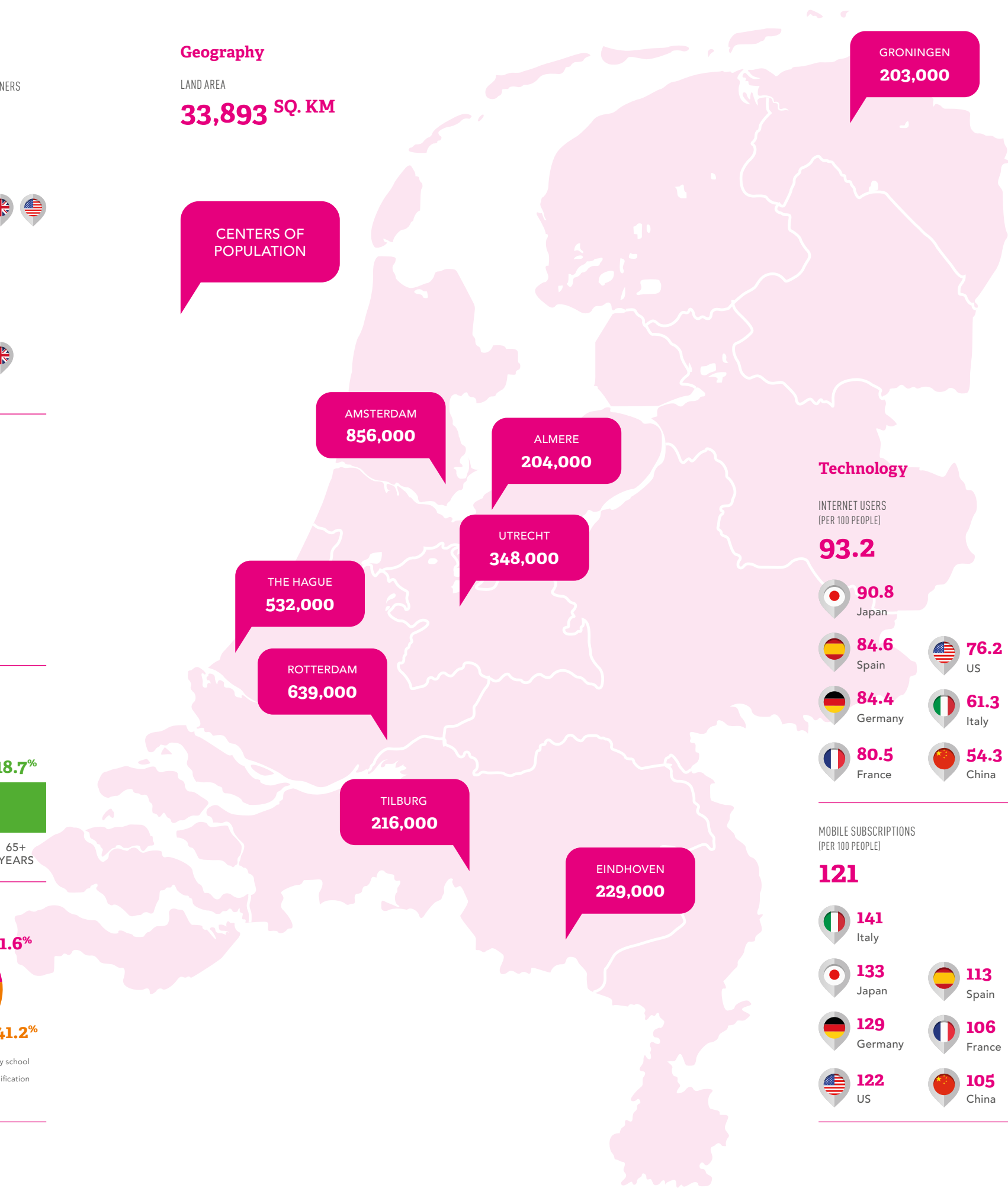


Geography

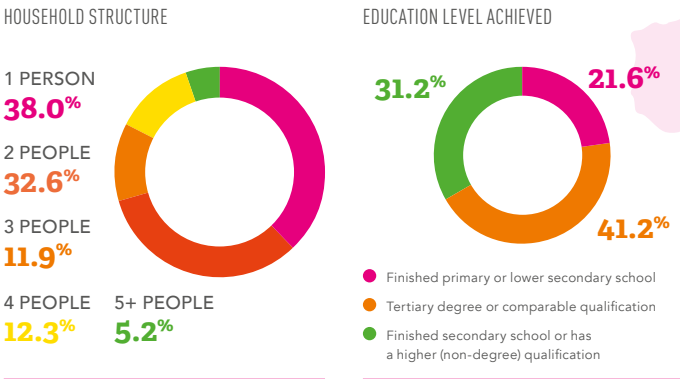
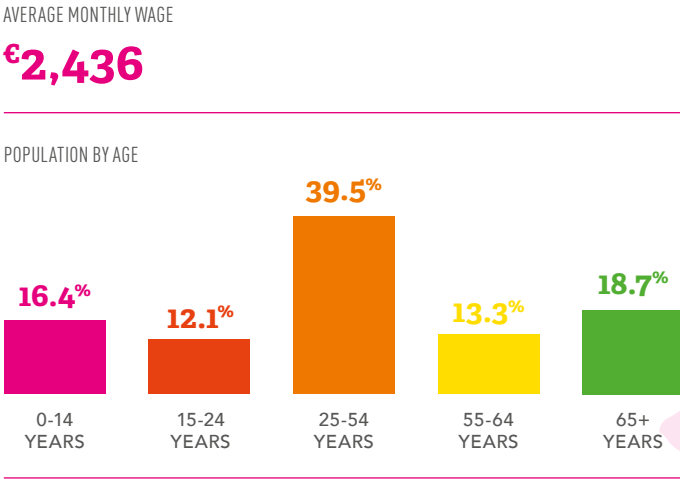
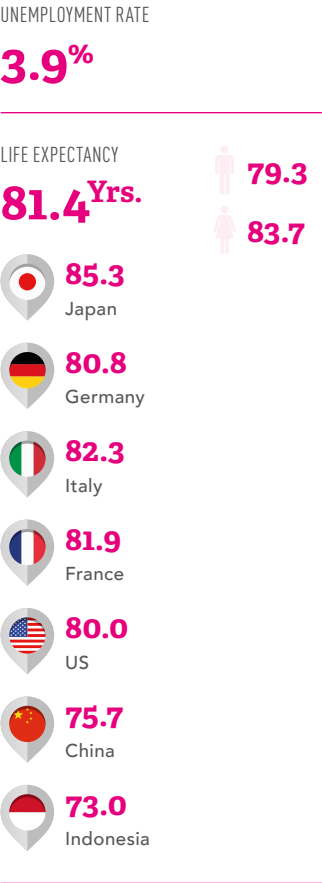
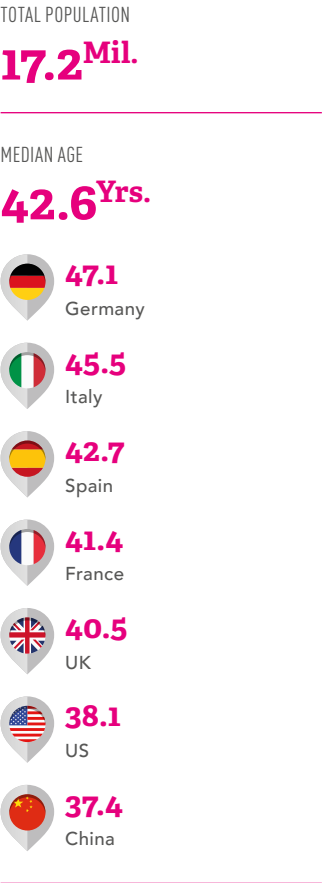
LAND AREA

33,893 SQ. KM

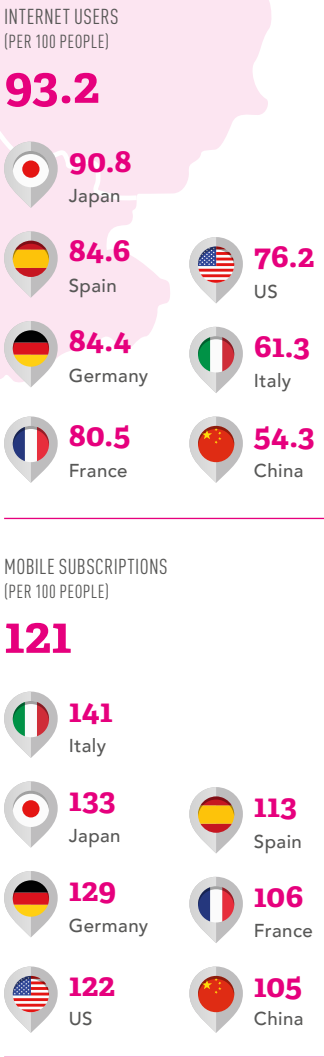
CENTERS OF POPULATION



Demographics



Technology



MOVING CONFIDENTLY INTO THE DIGITAL MEDIA FUTURE

The Netherlands is one of the most connected countries in Europe, with sky-high internet and smartphone penetration rates. So it should come as no surprise that brands in the Netherlands have moved toward digital advertising in proportions that outpace most other countries. In 2018, online's share of gross ad spend is due to reach 48.7 percent – a significant share in its own right, but even more striking when compared to a neighbor like Germany, where the share of ad spending on digital media falls at around 28.5 percent.

Given the importance of online activities to Dutch consumers and advertisers alike, it does not make sense to treat “digital” as a monolith – but rather, to look one level deeper into Dutch internet users’ browsing habits. The average Dutch person owns an average of 3.2 connected devices – meaning that many people use a phone, a PC, and a tablet. In terms of activities, 84 percent of Dutch people use online messaging weekly, 92 percent send emails weekly, 76 percent use social media weekly, 60 percent watch free video clips, and 73 percent read online articles. 61 percent of Dutch people report using social media every day.

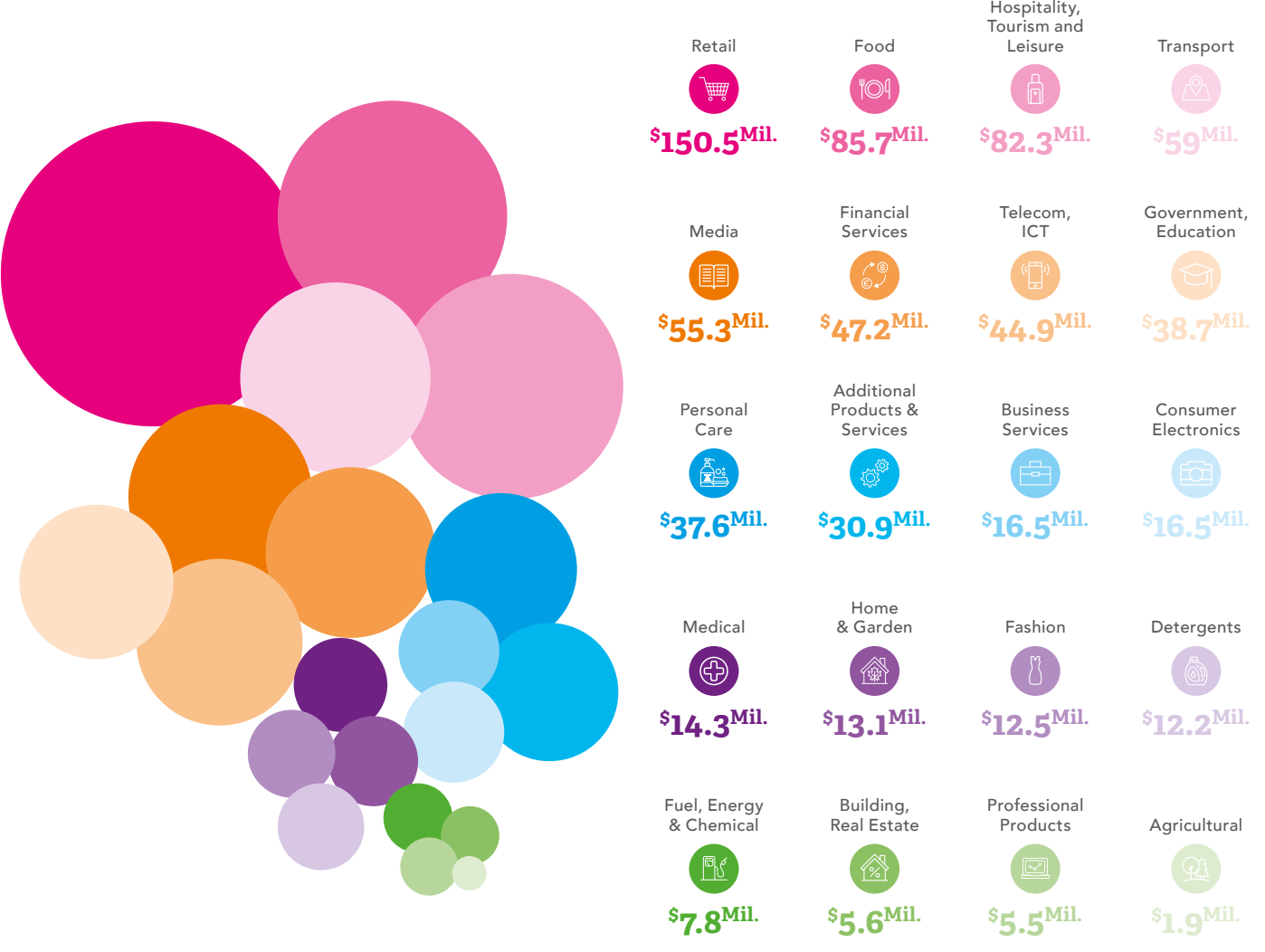
Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram are Dutch people’s favorite social apps. Mobile is the platform of choice for messaging and social media, while most Dutch people prefer PCs and tablets for reading articles, sending emails, and watching videos. Currently, ad blockers are only lightly present on mobile browsers, but are a significant and growing presence on PCs, having grown 6 percent between this year and last. 29 percent of Dutch internet users now have ad blockers installed, compared to 34 percent in Western and Northern Europe as a whole.

Encouragingly, 52 percent of Dutch people use the internet weekly to research products they might want to buy. In all, Dutch consumers spent €22.5 billion on online purchases in 2017, a number that should only grow in the future. For instance, although 4 percent of Dutch people were buying their groceries online by mid-2017, 39 percent would consider online grocery shopping in the near future.

It is important to note that while digital media is highly prominent in the Netherlands, traditional media has also retained a significant presence. People in the Netherlands spend an average of 2.22 hours daily watching television, and 1.81 hours daily listening to the radio. Text-based news consumption is nearly split between online news and print media.

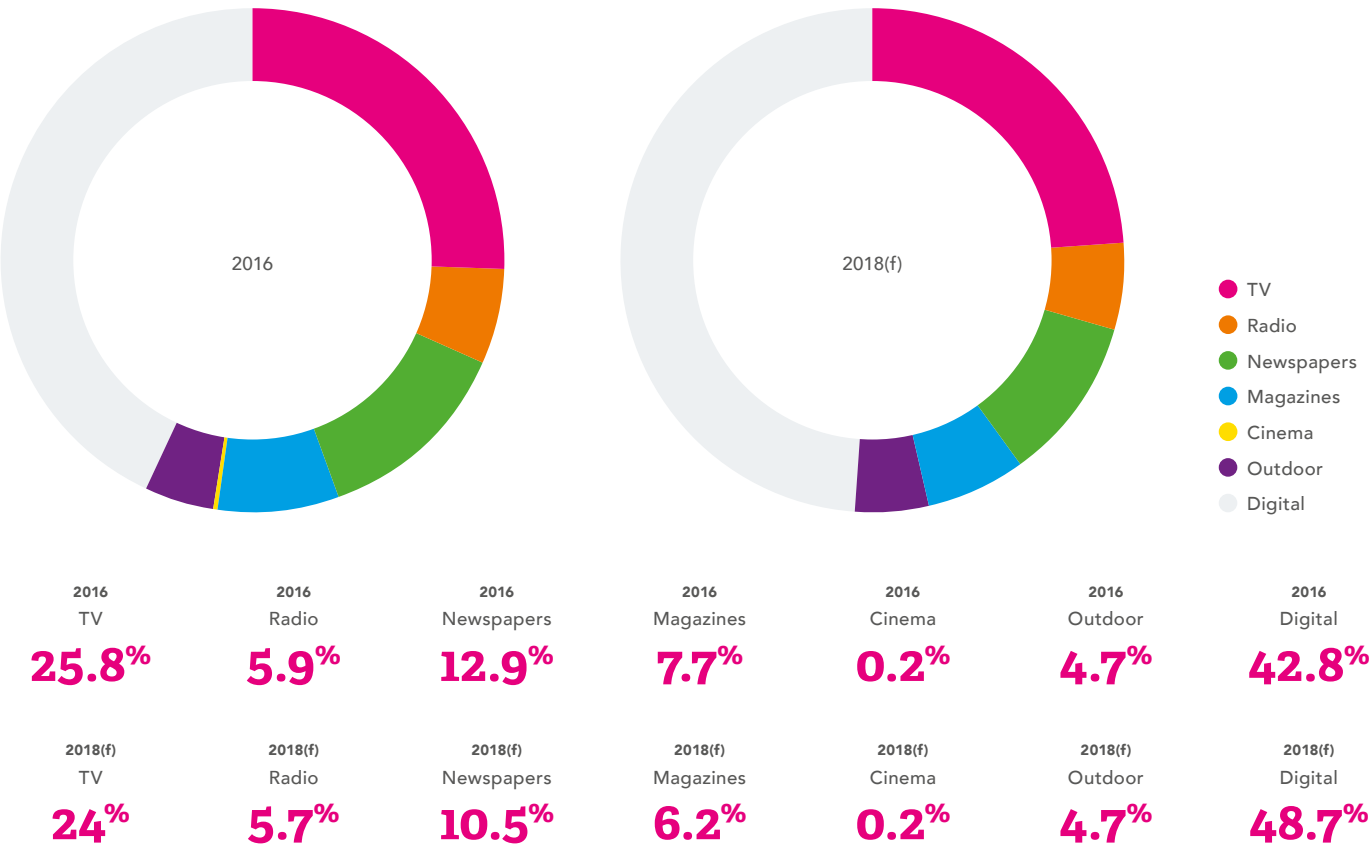
In all, the total amount spent in the Netherlands on advertising in 2018 is projected to be €3,979 million, up 3 percent from the year before. In 2019 this number is expected to rise further, to €4,079 million.

Gross Media Spendings per Category
(2017 in €Mil)



Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown

% Share of Media Spend



Source: Mindshare, September 2018

Advertising Spend

Total amount in 2018(f):

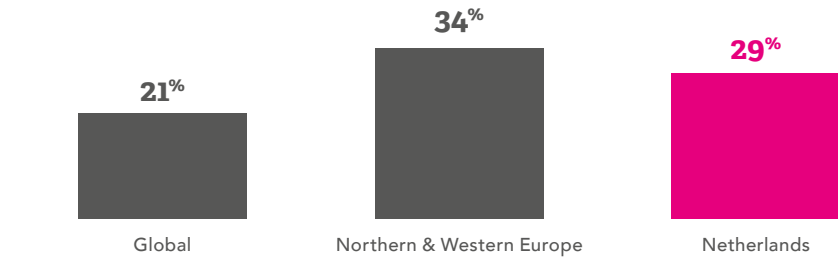
€3,979Mil.

+3% from 2017

Source: Mindshare, September 2018

Ad Blocking Rates

Weekly usage %



Source: Kantar TNS Connected Life 2017 / 2018

Fast Facts

Total spent on online purchases in 2017	Total online purchase transactions in 2017	% of Dutch population aged 13+ online	% of Dutch population with a smartphone	% of Dutch population with a tablet
€22.5Bil.	€201.7Mil.	95.1%	83%	67%

Source: : Thuiswinkel, NOM, GfK

Top Websites

Monthly reach in users 000s



Source: Nobo, Sept. 2018

Top Apps

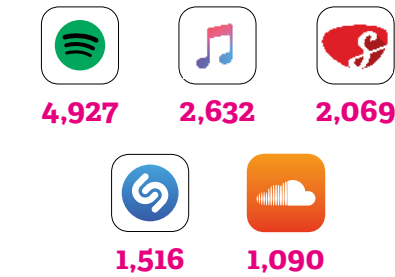
Estimated monthly users 000s



Source: Nobo, July 2018

Top 5 Audio Streaming Sites

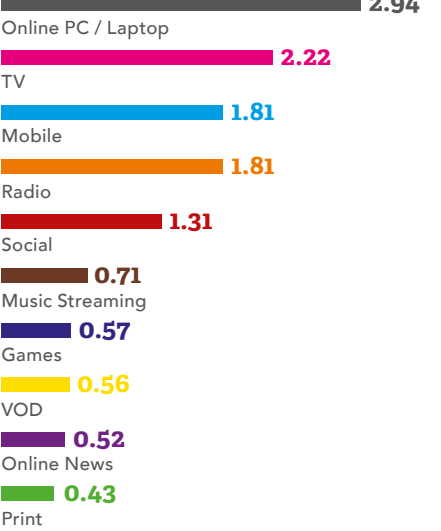
Estimated monthly users 000s



Source: Nobo, July 2018

Adult Media Usage

Daily time spent in hours



Source: GWI

TECHNOLOGY, BEER, AND BANKING BRANDS STAND OUT IN SNAPSHOT OF DAILY LIFE

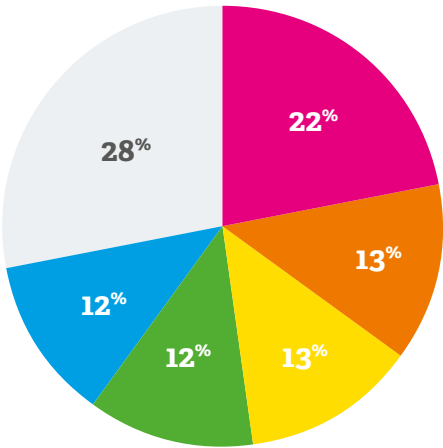
The value of the BrandZ™ Top 30 Most Valuable Dutch Brands is concentrated at the top of the ranking, with the number one brand, Shell, accounting for more than one fifth of the brand value of the entire Top 30. The top three brands in the Dutch ranking – Shell, Heineken, and Booking.com – account for nearly half of the total brand value of the Top 30.

One category stands out as capturing an especially significant share of the Netherlands' brand value. Tech and online services brands – Philips, Booking.com, and Thuisbezorgd.nl – account for a quarter of the overall value Dutch Top 30, although they are by no means a homogenous group. Indeed, they find their power in humanity and specificity, with Philips honing its focus on health and wellness technology, while Booking.com and Thuisbezorgd.nl focus on how technology can improve the vital human rituals of dining and travel.

Beer, with six brands represented in the Top 30, and banking, with five, have also established themselves as vital players in the Dutch brand landscape. And again, within the categories there is a diversity of identity and approach – there is no one way to be a bank, or a brewer, (or, for that matter, a brand) in the Netherlands. In all, brands from 12 product and services categories make the inaugural Dutch Top 30 (10 if you unite Philips, Booking.com, and Thuisbezorgd.nl under the wider umbrella of "tech and online services"). The list presents a snapshot of what drives the Dutch economy and what Dutch consumers are passionate about, from breaking bread with family and enjoying a beer with friends, to building the future of the energy, health, and travel industries.

Many of these brands have been part of Dutch life for more than 150 years – or, in the case of Brand beer, for more than 600 years! – while the youngest, Thuisbezorgd.nl, is less than 20 years old. Age is neither a strong help nor a hindrance when it comes to building a strong brand. The Top 5 in the ranking, for instance, have launch dates ranging from 1864 to 1996.

Top 5 Brands % of BrandZ™ Top 30 Most Valuable Dutch Brands 2018



Brand	% of the Top 30 Brands
#1 	22%
#2 	13%
#3 	13%
#4 	12%
#5 	12%
The remaining Top 30 Dutch Brands	28%

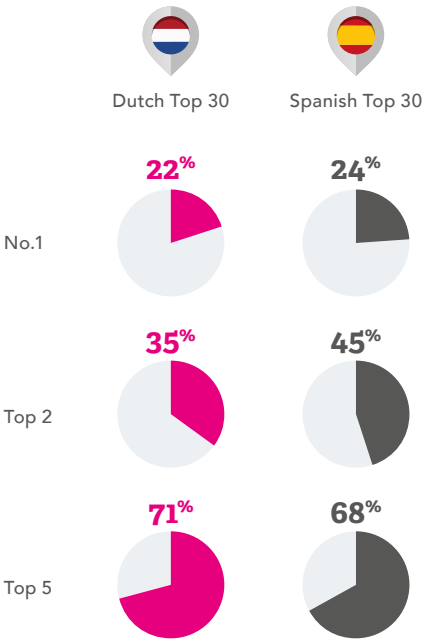
Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown

High Fliers

The number one brand in the Netherlands is worth 196 times the number 30 brand. Globally, the number one brand is worth nine times the number 30 brand.

A good comparison to the Netherlands' distribution of brand value is Spain, which has a similar total value for its Top 30, and for which value is similarly concentrated at the very top.

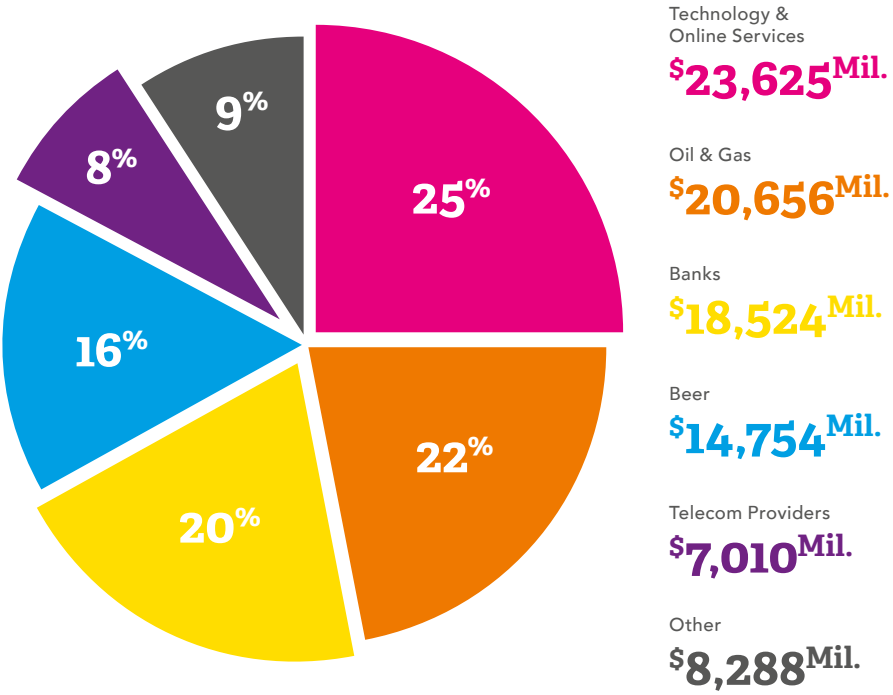
Proportion of the Top 30 Brands 2018



Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown

Dutch Top 30 Breakdown

Technology, energy, and bank brands contribute the greatest share of value to the Top 30.



Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown

Categories and Brands

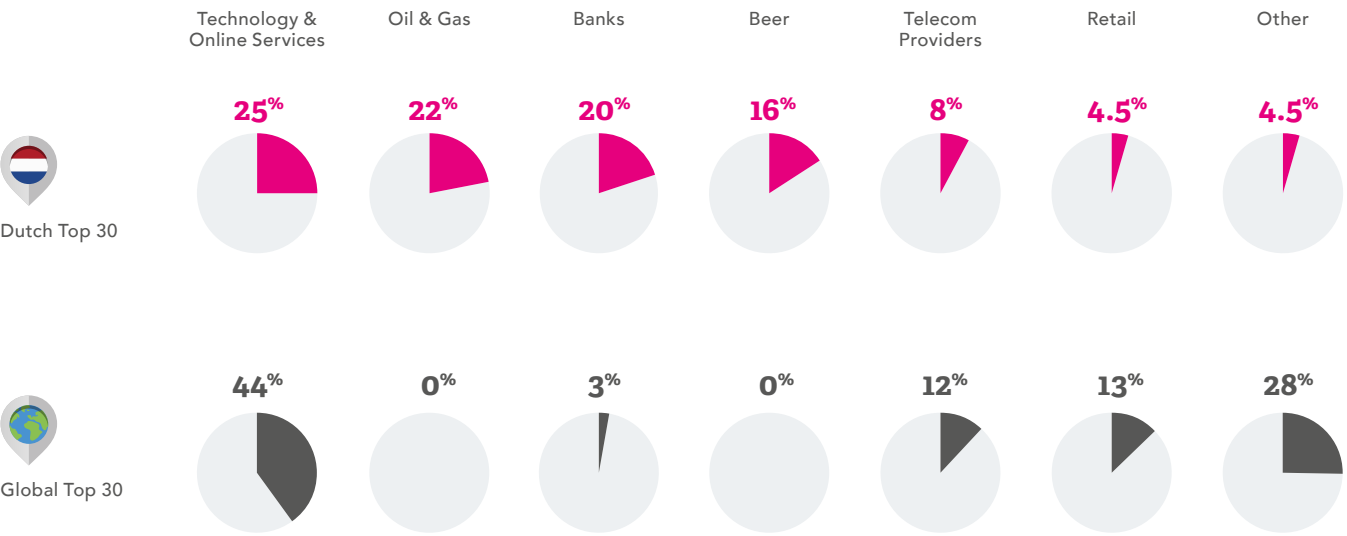
As mentioned, technology, gas, banking, and beer brands were especially well represented in the Dutch Top 30. The next most valuable category was communications and telecom providers, as represented by KPN (6th), Ziggo (9th), and Telfort (28th). Beyond them, a number of brands that predominantly operate in the physical world performed well in the Dutch ranking, despite the rapid growth of e-commerce. These included the grocery chains Spar (10th), Albert Heijn

(14th), and Jumbo (18th), as well as the home retailers Action (17th) and HEMA (22nd).

In addition to beer labels, the beverage world was represented by the sister coffee brands Senseo (16th) and Douwe Egberts (19th); food and cooking brands, meanwhile, made an appearance in the form of Honig (27th). In the financial services realm, bank brands were joined by three insurance brands, Nationale Nederlanden (13th), Aegon (15th), and a.s.r. (23rd).

Unlike many other countries, the Netherlands did not place any apparel or luxury goods brands in its top brand rankings. Beloved Dutch brand KLM (20th), is the sole airline on the list, as the proliferation of budget airlines found in other countries hasn't spread to the Netherlands to the same degree. Finally, although the Netherlands has a number of strong e-commerce brands and tech startups, the search, storage, and social media spaces are dominated by global behemoths like WhatsApp, Google, Facebook, and Twitter.

Proportion of the Dutch Top 30's Value Compared with BrandZ™ Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brands 2018



Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown

WAYS TO WIN



Globally, we know that brands perceived as high on innovation grow their brand value seven times faster than other brands. One way for brands to unlock new innovation is to look for partnerships outside of their categories – a strategy that brands in the Dutch Top 30 know well.

For instance, in recent years ABN AMRO has partnered with Spar to bring its Tikkie mobile payments app to the stores that Spar operates on university campuses. It's a natural collaboration because students make up some of Tikkie's most enthusiastic users; the partnership allows these users to make cashless, one-tap payments for a variety of essential goods at Spar's university stores.

Another notable cross-category partnership has even made its way onto the Dutch brand rankings. Although it is now known as a coffee brand in its own right, Senseo began as a collaboration between Douwe Egberts and Philips to develop a new kind of single-service coffee brewer. The resulting pad-based coffee maker soon found its way into households across the Netherlands and Europe – a platform of innovation upon which Senseo has since built abundant brand love.

BRAND BOOSTS THE BOTTOM LINE

Strong brands do far more than win industry awards and climb rankings such as these. The value of a brand has a clear, measurable link with the share price of the company behind it.

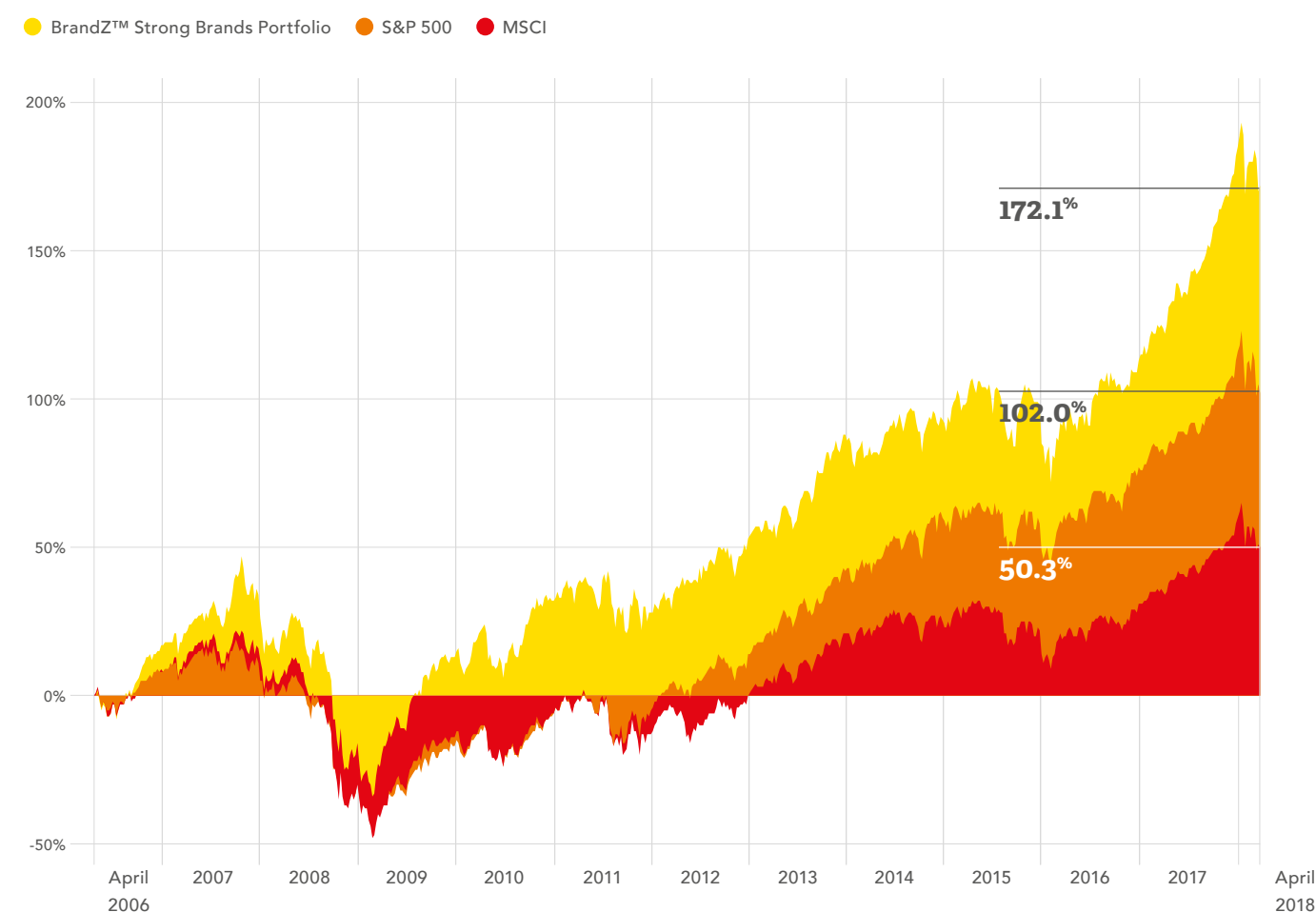
Over the 12 years in which we have been tracking the BrandZ™ Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brands, the companies behind the top-ranking brands have far outperformed stock market benchmarks. The value of the BrandZ™ Strong Brands Portfolio increased 172.1 percent between April 2006 and April 2018, outperforming both the S&P 500 and the MSCI World Index. (The MSCI World Index is a weighted index of global stocks.)

In concrete terms, \$100 invested in 2006 would be worth \$150 today based on the MSCI World Index growth rate, and \$202 based on the S&P 500 growth rate. But that \$100 invested in the BrandZ™ Strong Brand Portfolio would have far more than doubled in value, to \$272.

In difficult economic times, having a strong brand does not make a business immune to a change of fortune, but it can help soften the blow. In 2008-2009, the most valuable brands in the world took a hit due the global economic downturn, but their value was somewhat protected. Their value did not fall by the same extent as other brands, and their recovery came more quickly as conditions improved.

BrandZ™ Portfolios vs. the S&P and MSCI World Index

The value of the BrandZ™ Strong Brands Portfolio increased 172.1 percent between April 2006 and April 2018, outperforming both the S&P 500 and the MSCI World Index.



Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown (including data from Bloomberg)
The BrandZ™ Strong Brands Portfolio is a subset of the BrandZ™ Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brands.

INVESTING IN BRAND SUPERCHARGES VALUE



There are some brands that punch well above their financial weight in the BrandZ™ rankings by building strong brand equity. Brand equity serves as a sort of “rocket fuel” that adds real pep to the influence and value of brands, and we measure it through Brand Contribution.

Brand Contribution is scored on a scale of one to five, and it is a measure of the influence of brand equity relative to other in-market aspects (such as promotions or distribution) in driving consumer choice. Value can of course come from in-market activity, but value derived from brand equity is particularly hard for competitors to replicate. This score is what helps make BrandZ™ a distinct and important ranking; BrandZ™ is the only brand valuation methodology that includes the customer view obtained through in-depth consumer research – conversations with the people who know and buy these brands.

Businesses that focus on brand development can supercharge their performance in the rankings. For example, Thuisbezorgd.nl and Nationale Nederlanden have very similar brand values, and rank 12th and 13th in the Dutch Top 30. Nationale Nederlanden is a bigger corporation than Thuisbezorgd.nl, with more financial value, but it has a Brand Contribution score of two out of five. Thuisbezorgd.nl, meanwhile, makes up for its comparative lack of financial size with a Brand Contribution score of four – the second largest possible – and this powers it to a place just ahead of Nationale Nederlanden.

Unusually, the brands with the highest Brand Contribution scores in the Dutch Top 30 all hail from the realms of food and drink, with all six beer brands and both coffee brands present in the rankings earning Brand Contribution scores of four or five. Online food delivery service Thuisbezorgd.nl rounds out the top 10. That said, this list also shows that a brand does not, as a rule, need premium positioning to earn a high Brand Contribution score; price point is no barrier to building a strong brand.

Top 10 by Brand Contribution

Rank	Brand	Brand Contribution	Category	Brand Value 2018 US\$ Mil.	Top 30 Rank
#1		5	Beer	372	21
#2		5	Beer	296	24
#3		5	Beer	11,883	2
#4		5	Soft Drinks	482	19
#5		5	Soft Drinks	702	16
#6		5	Beer	120	29
#7		5	Beer	1,888	11
#8		4	Beer	194	26
#9		4	Retail	916	14
#10		4	Food & Dairy	192	27

Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown (including data from Bloomberg)
Brand Contribution Index = Brand contribution measures the influence of brand alone on earnings, on a 1-to-5 scale, 5 being highest.

BUILD MEANINGFUL DIFFERENCE

Brand Power tracks consumers' predisposition to choose one brand over others in their category, as well as a brand's ability to charge a premium. Brand power is rooted in three factors: How meaningful consumers perceive the brand to be, how different it is from its competitors, and how salient (i.e., recognizable and top-of-mind) it is. The average score for brand power across all brands is 100.

Many top Dutch brands excel in this Brand Power metric. The average Brand Power score for the Top 30 Dutch Brands is 202 – compared, for instance, to an average of 156 for the most recent survey of Top 30 Spanish Brands.

Top 10 Dutch Brands by Brand Power

Rank	Brand	Brand Power Score
#1		420
#2	 Thuisbezorgd.nl	418
#3		395
#4		349
#5		328
#6	 ING	300
#7	 kpn	273
#8	 Rabobank	266
#9	 JUMBO	249
#10	 HEINEKEN	242

Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown

WAYS TO WIN



Thuisbezorgd.nl

Albert Heijn and Thuisbezorgd.nl are the two most successful Dutch brands on the Brand Power metric. And despite their very different profiles – Albert Heijn is a legacy grocery brand founded in 1887, while Thuisbezorgd.nl is an online food delivery platform that dates only to the year 2000 – they have both found a way to win in the market through consistent, purposeful disruption that improves people's lives.

Albert Heijn was the first grocery store in the Netherlands to offer customers "self-service" rather than having clerks to fill orders; it also introduced many foreign foods to the Netherlands and pioneered online grocery shopping. Thuisbezorgd.nl, meanwhile, completely changed the way people ordered takeaway and delivery – allowing them to easily compare menus across multiple restaurants, securely place orders, and track the progress of their food.

FIVE WAYS TO BUILD HEALTHY DUTCH BRANDS

Just as there are many contributors to human wellbeing, there are multiple factors that go toward building a healthy brand.

BrandZ™ analysis has identified five key attributes shared by strong and valuable brands. Brands that score highly on all five aspects are the most successful: they are “healthy” brands. The five aspects are:

- 1 A strong sense of brand purpose, meaning that the brand makes people’s lives better.
- 2 Innovation, defined as a brand being seen as a leader and change agent in their sector.
- 3 Strong communications, with creative, powerful, and memorable advertising.
- 4 A great brand experience that meets consumers’ needs, and is available when and where consumers need it.
- 5 A sense of brand love that’s built with consumers over time, and that helps to sustain the brand until the next innovation.

These five key indicators can be combined into a single score we call a brand’s Vitality Quotient, or its vQ. The average score of all brands is a vQ of 100. Those with a score over 110 – making them at least 10 percent above average – are those we regard as especially healthy.

Brands can look at how they perform on individual components of vQ when they are seeking clues to improving their overall brand health. When one or more of the vital signs is lacking, general brand health can be suboptimal.

Nurturing brand vitality makes good business sense. A strong vQ score means a brand is meaningfully different, and this can drive growth in brand value. In fact, global data shows that brands with a vQ score of 110 or more have a brand value almost 70 percent higher than brands with a low vQ score. Some of the best-known and most valuable brands globally are those with high vQ scores: names like Google and Ikea.



The Healthiest Brands in the Dutch Top 30

(Average vQ of all brands is 100)

Brand	vQ Score
 Thuisbezorgd.nl	153
	136
	129
	125
	121
	117
	117
	112
	112
	111
	111
	110
	110
	110

Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown

What’s the Prognosis?

The healthiest brands in the Top 30 Most Valuable Dutch Brands ranking are those that score well on all five of the key health indicators: purpose, innovation, communications, experience, and love. They generate a Vitality Quotient (vQ) significantly higher than the 100 average.

Healthy brands tend to develop a personality type that further reflects well on them. Those brands with a high vQ score are more likely to be described as trustworthy, “in control,” desirable, creative, and friendly. They under-index on negative brand personality traits, such as being uncaring or arrogant.

Brands with a high vQ are more strongly positioned for future value growth.

How Dutch Brands Measure Up

Brands that make the BrandZ™ Dutch Top 30 ranking this year are significantly healthier than average brands in the country. This is to be expected, and underlines the role of brand vitality in driving higher brand value.

The average vQ score of the BrandZ™ Dutch Top 30 is 117, compared to the score of 102 found by averaging the vQ scores of all the Dutch brands analyzed by BrandZ™. Leading Dutch brands also compare well on Brand Health when held against their peers in other countries. The brands in the Dutch Top 30 have a higher average vQ than those in the BrandZ™ USA Top 50 (114), Italy Top 30 (111), UK Top 30 (108), and Spain Top 30 (106).

THE PATH TO BRAND VITALITY

1

Brand Purpose

Brand purpose is what a brand sets out to achieve beyond making money. It is the way a brand makes people’s lives better – not just the practical, literal things that a product or service delivers. Having a strong sense of purpose is increasingly important in the Netherlands, as consumers seek brands that don’t simply do a good job at a fair price, but also do something positive for the community or the environment. Brands with purpose make consumers feel good.

Over 12 years, the brands in the Global Top 100 with high scores for purpose have grown in value by 175 percent, while those with the lowest have grown by just 70 percent.

The average brand purpose score across all companies is 100. The average brand purpose score of the BrandZ™ Dutch Top 30 is 113, which is well within the “healthy” zone and comparable to top brands in other leading European countries like Germany and Italy.

Leading Brands in the Dutch Top 30 for Brand Purpose

Brand	vQ Score
 Thuisbezorgd.nl	162
	139
	131
asn  bank	128
	123

Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown

Brand Purpose in Action

Brand purpose and innovation are an especially powerful, and typically Dutch, combination. Albert Heijn has embraced the cause of healthier living by introducing category-leading vegan takeaway and grocery options – moves that also underscore the brand’s innovative history of introducing new food trends to the Netherlands. Jumbo, meanwhile, links its innovative quest to continually lower grocery prices to its famous “Seven Certainties” brand principles.



2

Innovation

Innovation is not just the preserve of technology brands. Any brand that is seen as doing something new, or setting trends for their category, will get talked about and tried. When trial goes well, brands can build a longer-term relationship and, ultimately, love, which correlates strongly with innovation.

Innovation creates a predisposition for sales. Innovation can sometimes mean developing a product that does something different, providing an entirely new service, or delving into a new category. It can even mean creating a new brand.

But boosting a brand’s innovation halo can also mean investing more in advertising to communicate what is already unique and exciting about an existing brand. Innovation doesn’t have to mean disruption (although of course it can include this). Innovation can also mean increasing flexibility and nimbleness – by finding new ways to deliver existing products in convenient formats, or for radically better prices.

Brands that have high innovation scores in the Global Top 100 have risen in value by 276 percent in 12 years, compared to just 15 percent growth for the slowest innovators. The average innovation score of 107 for brands in the Dutch Top 30 is higher than the innovation average for the top British, French, Spanish, and Italian brands. The Netherlands’ top brands are tied with Germany’s for the highest average innovation score in Europe.

Leading Brands in the Dutch Top 30 for Innovation

Brand	vQ Score
 Thuisbezorgd.nl	138
	122
	120
	117
	116

Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown

Innovation in Action

Home retailer Action has won itself a high innovation score not by inventing new types of technology, but through its obsessive, rigorous mission to sell high-value products for the lowest possible prices. This mission is supported by a unique retail strategy of selling limited-supply lots of doorbusting deals – an innovative format that encourages shopper excitement and repeat visits.



3

Communication

Strong communication has two key elements to it, and neither one alone will be effective. At its most basic level, brands need to be doing sufficient advertising in the right places to be visible and recognizable to the people they're trying to reach. But being vocal and announcing a brand's presence is not enough on its own; brands also need something genuinely engaging to shout about. Brands therefore need to do great things, and then tell people they're doing them. One without the other means wasted resources, but strong communication and share of voice put a brand at a clear advantage.

Brands from the Global Top 100 that have high communication scores have surged in brand value 191 percent over 12 years, while those that perform poorly on this measure have only grown by 55 percent. The average communication score for brands in the Dutch Top 30 is 109.

Leading Brands in the Dutch Top 30 for Communication

Brand	vQ Score
 Thuisbezorgd.nl	145
 HEINEKEN	145
 an	144
 JUMBO	140
 KLM	130

Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown

Communication in Action

Heineken recently took the bold step of eliminating taglines from most of its branding communications. Its bet is that its visual storytelling, energetic house codes, premium brand love, and high-profile partnerships can communicate the essence of Heineken better than a tagline (especially considering that taglines might not translate well across the many, many cultures in which the brand operates). It's a great example of how there's more to communication than the standard advertising template.



4

Brand Experience

A brand not only has to deliver a great experience at every point of interaction, and help consumers at every step, it also has to remind consumers, through effective communications, that it is focused on doing this well. Experience starts long before a person considers buying a product, and lasts well beyond the moment of purchase and even the moment of consumption. It includes every exposure to an ad, every experience on a brand's web site, and every minute they spend waiting for help at a counter or on the phone. Providing a great brand experience cements the relationship between consumers and brands.

Those brands in the Global Top 100 that deliver the strongest experiences have grown in brand value by 188 percent in 12 years. Those brands with low experience scores have only increased their value by 18 percent in that time. The average experience score for brands in the Dutch Top 30 is 109.

Leading Brands in the Dutch Top 30 for Brand Experience

Brand	vQ Score
 Thuisbezorgd.nl	160
 an	142
 KLM	132
 JUMBO	120
 Shell	118

Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown

Brand Experience in Action

KLM's commitment to personal, premium service is best exemplified by the iconic Delft Blue houses that KLM gifts to its World Business Class passengers. But the brand has also found ways to win on experience in more everyday aspects of its business: the brand's social media customer service platforms, for instance, are best in class, with personal responses to passenger queries arriving promptly within the hour.



5

Love

Some of the most loved brands in the world are also the most innovative – brands like Nike and Apple, for instance. Love in this context is the emotional affinity people feel for a brand, and it’s something that can’t be bought or manufactured. However, the conditions in which love can flourish can be created.

If brands take the time and care to invest in promoting a higher purpose, innovating, and delivering a consistently great experience, then love tends to happen naturally. In the times between innovation, love is often what sustains the consumer relationship with a brand.

Among the most-loved brands in the BrandZ™ Global Top 100, brand value has risen an average of 191 percent over 12 years, while those with poor love scores are up just 32 percent. The average love score for brands in the Dutch Top 30 is 111, the highest among European countries analyzed by BrandZ™.

Leading Brands in the Dutch Top 30 for Love

Brand	vQ Score
 Thuisbezorgd.nl	162
	139
	129
	127
	124

Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown

Love in Action

Douwe Egberts’ loyalty system is the longest-running saving system in the Netherlands; for more than 80 years, people have been exchanging the brand’s coffee seals for products in DE shops. Almost 70 percent of all Dutch households save the brand’s seals, and more than 2.5 million gifts are claimed each year. The company was also one of the first Dutch brands to advertise on television, and has been spreading its message of solidarity and how coffee brings people together for many decades.





2

**THOUGHT
LEADERSHIP**

NETHERLANDS: THE PERFECT STARTUP DELTA

This summer I read “Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind,” the bestselling book from Yuval Harari that – among its many insights – happens to explain why the Netherlands became so wealthy in the 17th century. During that time, a radical shift happened: mankind started to believe in a better future, leading to the extension of credit, rising levels of investment, and fast economic growth.

And guess what: the Netherlands was a very good place to invest your money. Give your money to a Spanish king, and he would go to war and your money would be gone. Give it to a Dutch trader, and your money would be invested in a piece of land somewhere and your money would come back with interest. The result was massive investment in the Netherlands, a so-called Dutch “Golden Century,” and the establishment of the Dutch East India company, the world’s first multinational company.

Kantar Millward Brown specializes in advertising, marketing communications, media and brand equity research. With offices in 55 countries, Kantar Millward Brown focuses on building brand strategies.

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KANTAR MILLWARD BROWN

Times have certainly changed since, but I think the Netherlands is still in a good position to stay relevant and competitive. I see our politics, our economy, our educational system, and above all our culture, as catalysts for a startup-oriented, sustainable future.

Politics

Unlike the USA and UK, the Netherlands has a parliament consisting of many diverse political parties, all with their own backgrounds and policy programs. To pass a law we need a majority; to get this majority our parties need to find consensus. That leads to a predictable, stable, and reliable political climate, which is good for entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurial climate is further supported by government innovation policies that offer tax incentives for companies that invest in R&D; by financial support for innovative companies through government programs like the Seed Capital Arrangement and the Dutch Venture Initiative; and by extensive public, private, and academic collaboration.

Economy

Innovation-friendly government policies have helped the Netherlands achieve a fourth-place ranking on the World Economic Forum’s global competitiveness index. Unemployment is very low, and consumer consumption is up year after year.

And while this all happens, we have stayed true to our roots of being a country of traders, open to different cultures and visions. We are a magnet for expats. This openness has enabled companies like Takeaway.com and Booking.com to rapidly grow beyond Dutch borders. And it makes companies like AkzoNobel, Unilever, and other non-Dutch multinationals want to base their regional offices here – often near Schiphol, one of Europe’s largest airports.

Educational System

Dutch children begin receiving English instruction starting at age four; this makes Dutchies great English speakers who are able to communicate with the whole world.

When it comes to education and choosing a profession, Dutch citizens can be who they want to be. The whole educational system in the Netherlands is centered around this principle. University is largely accessible for all, and is heavily subsidized by the government.

Taken together, Dutch universities rank among the top 2% of all 17,000 universities worldwide. We have produced Nobel laureates in econometrics, chemistry, and biology, and our technical universities win the World Solar Challenge (an electric vehicle race through the Australian desert) year after year. The education sector is also defined by close collaboration with industry. A couple of miles from the first Philips factory, the high-tech campus of Eindhoven University of Technology connects students to innovators from Philips, ASML Semiconductors, and other leading tech companies where smart young scientists are inventing the next big thing.



Hugo Schurink

Director Strategic Growth
Kantar Millward Brown
Hugo.Schurink@kantarmillwardbrown.com

Dutch Mentality and Culture

The saying goes that God created heaven and Earth, but the Dutch created the Netherlands. Our biggest achievement is that we live in a country snatched from the sea. And if we can solve that engineering problem, we can tackle anything. The history of business in the Netherlands is full of Dutch entrepreneurs solving everyday problems in straightforward, pragmatic ways:

- **Philips:** *We want to have light everywhere in our house; Let’s start a bulb factory!*
- **Boskalis:** *We have successfully managed water; Let’s help others as well!*
- **Bloomon:** *Consumers get really old flowers; Let’s deliver direct from farm to consumer!*
- **Swapfiets:** *We ride lots of bikes, but fixing a bike is annoying; Let’s make a subscription service!*

So, what does the future look like? With 17 million inhabitants on a little piece of engineered land, we need to collaborate to stay competitive. Our biggest challenge is never forgetting that we became a leading country through trading, accepting other cultures, and learning from others. Even in an age of rising nativism, it is more vital than ever to work together.



TRUST BY TRUTH

There's an old expression that always rings true: "Honesty is the best policy." For people, brands, and companies, trust is determined by truth and honesty.

In 2006, when I organized Dutch Prime Minister Jan Peter Balkenende's election campaign against the hugely popular challenger Wouter Bos (whose party had recently won 60 seats in the local elections), it seemed I was faced with an impossible task. Yet, Prime Minister Balkenende won. Was he flashier, hipper or warmer? No, it came down to one key question: "Who seems more honest and trustworthy?"

But that was 2006. A lot has changed since then, not least in our profession. However, it is still my conviction that reputational damage and attacks on one's image can best be countered by using honesty and facts. Today, the real challenges lie in how to reach people with these facts, now that algorithms are increasingly determining what people hear and get to read.

The stakes surrounding this challenges are high, for countries no less than for corporations. If the Netherlands' working classes lose confidence in the political establishment's ability to provide prosperity and security, we will not be able to rein in the more dangerous excesses of populism. All certainties of the past have disappeared – in politics, business, and everywhere in between.



Jack de Vries

Board Director
Hill+Knowlton Strategies
Jack.deVries@hkstrategies.com

To understand where the concept of trust is headed, we must first understand how it has come to evolve in the Netherlands over time. If we map what are traditionally the most important elements of Dutch society – church, government, business, and the citizens themselves – in four quadrants based on power and authority, we can see how the balance has shifted.

Once upon a time, the church found itself as the strongest segment of power and authority. However, in the 1960s and 1970s we saw shifts toward government power through secularization and emancipation. We began thinking of the Netherlands in terms of "the makeable society." These were years in which much good was realized in areas such as social security, education, and health care.

Then, in the 1980s, 1990s, and beyond, the business community captured an ever-larger share of power and trust. No-nonsense policies, liberalization, market forces, and outsourcing became the themes of the day. The business community felt it could do everything much better, and people were willing to play along until well into the early 2000s. That changed after the 2008 financial crisis, when people discovered

that some banks and insurers themselves could not be trusted; and so trust in the wider business community was lost.

The citizen himself then assumed authority as the strongest segment of Dutch society. Thanks to the internet and social media, average citizens gained additional resources to gather information and shake their fists. In this way, people learned to trust themselves and other individuals.

This is the reason that communications professionals have started to work more with influencers and endorsers. If brands are not trusted themselves, who can they collaborate with who still have that trust? Vloggers and bloggers with large followings are the new reality in marketing – not principally because they are young, or flashy, or cost-effective, but rather because they are trusted. In the realm of corporate communications and public affairs, we are also looking for credible advocates who can inspire more trust among government and consumer decision makers.

Add to these trust-related challenges the reality of a swiftly evolving media landscape. We all know the different channels of our communications output: earned, shared, owned and paid. The first of these, earned, now poses a

particularly big challenge. What is newsworthy? How do we create free publicity? The media themselves are under considerable pressure to remain financially viable. Subscriber numbers are in decline and advertising revenues are shrinking. More than ever, the most important news criteria are conflict and human interest, because these are what sells. The media are behaving more like activists and are increasingly arguing for one position over another.

We even see that bodies of formal authority, such as public prosecutors and regulators, are increasingly pursuing an activist media agenda. As a result, reputational damage is becoming just as perilous for our customers as any conviction or penalty. All of this means that our challenges as communication professionals are growing every day. How do we ensure that our clients retain trust – directly or indirectly? How do we prevent reputational damage given the reality of activist media and regulators? How do we reach people when they are increasingly trapped in their own news bubbles?

This assessment may sound bleak, but I see it as something very motivating. As representatives of commercial companies, we have a clear purpose and social relevance. We are tasked with using facts to battle against attacks on the images of our clients, and to build trust both in them and for society as whole. We can – and must – be critical of our clients and be bold in our advice. It's important that we be selective in what we want to do. The quality of a society stands or falls with its checks and balances. We have a role to play as communications professionals. Trust by truth.

Hill+Knowlton Strategies, Inc. is a global public relations and integrated communications agency.

www.hkstrategies.com



WHY MARKETERS SHOULD REMAP THE WORLD ACCORDING TO CULTURE



Jasper Bronner
Research Director
MediaCom
Jasper.Bronner@mediacom.com

Take a look at a random evening in your everyday life, and it's clear: whether it's the soft drink in your hand, the music you listen to on Spotify, or the car you drive home, global brands are all around us.

The key challenge for any of these global brands lies in generating strong and effective multicountry campaigns. Unfortunately, I have bad news: they are far from successful in doing this.

The reality is that where effectiveness is concerned, local beats global every time. A recent study by Kantar Millward Brown found that excellent performance by a campaign in its initial market was no a guarantee for that campaign's success in other markets. In fact, it was four times likelier to perform "below average" (i.e., worse) in these additional markets than it was likely to perform "equally as well."

This should come as no surprise: Pushing the right cultural buttons is precise work, requiring thorough understanding of a local market and its beliefs. For one of our automotive clients, we found that locally produced content was 50% more "likeable" and delivered 15% more impact on their brand's key performance indicators. And it's not just us: across the board, local creative agencies are better able to find that sweet spot where advertising seriously cuts through.

Why this matters is it puts local brands in a big advantage versus global brands, which is one of the reasons why we currently see local brands are flourishing. Indeed, they are growing almost twice as fast as global brands – an average of 6.2% versus 3.4%, according to a recent Kantar Worldpanel study. What's more, 66% of global brands are actually stagnating or declining. Relevance and authenticity are king in today's marketing world, and local brands are best in leveraging these factors.

For global brands, the way forward seems clear. A deeper understanding of what drives consumers in local markets is needed to create powerful brand messages. At the same time, however,

global brands can't always spend the time or money drilling down into the dozens of individual markets around the world. This is where cultural analysis comes into play. The importance of understanding cultural differences has long been undervalued in marketing, whereas it already has proven to be very effective in other workfields like HR, change consultancy, and regional management. The foundation for successful cultural (and cross-cultural) analysis been laid by non-marketing experts like behavioral psychologist Geert Hofstede, who was one of the first academics to quantify cultural differences across the world. MediaCom has therefore joined up with Hofstede Insights to build the first cultural dimension model fully focused on marketing and consumer decision making.

To develop this Cultural Connections model, we interviewed 60,000 consumers in 63 countries, which led to nine cultural dimensions that identify cultural differences. (add graphic from supporting slide #4 if there's room) We found that countries can be oceans apart but have more in common with each other than with their neighbors. Remapping the world according to culture leads to radical new categorizations that allow you to optimize your marketing, content, and branding strategies way more effectively as compared to a strictly geographical approach.

Examples of Cultural Insights in Practice

1

Forecasting Video Engagement Scores:

We know that emotional triggers can differ strongly from country to country. Content that evokes warmth, humor, or pride India might play very differently in the Netherlands. Given this, Unruly recently joined up with MediaCom to use the Cultural Connections model to predict video engagement scores across markets. A specially developed content optimization algorithm revealed a reliable connection between emotional response and culture; based on that connection, the algorithm could then forecast the emotional responses a given piece of content would evoke across markets. From there, the algorithm was able to optimize programmatic video campaigns to ensure that content only reached the most receptive cultural audiences.

2

Pretesting in Different Cultural Regions:

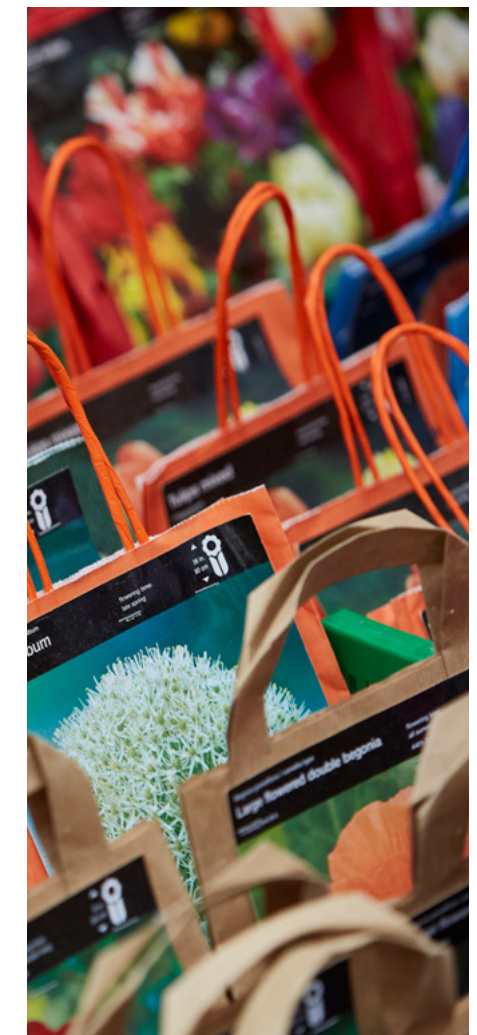
Another benefit to culture mapping lies in the realm of pretesting content – a practice with benefits we all recognize, but also one that tends to be limited to testing in larger markets. A more optimized approach would involve testing across as many different cultural clusters as possible. For instance, according to Cultural Connections model analysis it turns out that the Netherlands is much more culturally congruent with Scandinavian countries than it is with closer European neighbors like Belgium. By testing to ensure coverage of many different cultural clusters – rather than simply crossing off the biggest few markets in pre-testing – you can significantly grow your chance of building strong multimarket campaigns.

So, what do you need to do differently from tomorrow onwards? Stop thinking in geography, and start thinking in culture!

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I CAN'T GET NO SATISFACTION



Eric Kramer

Country Manager
WPP & CEO GroupM
Eric.Kramer@groupm.com

The first US Number One hit by the Rolling Stones is known by all. What hardly anybody realizes is that it is a protest song – specifically, a protest song against marketing communications:

*When I'm watchin' my tv
and a man comes on and tell me
How white my shirts can be
But, he can't be a man 'cause
he doesn't smoke
The same cigarettes as me
I can't get no, oh, no, no, no,
hey, hey, hey
That's what I say*

You'd hope that Mick Jagger is an exception, because people should be in love with our marketing. Marketers are driven by customer needs, and by designing great products and great services based on these needs. People have to be satisfied with our work if

we do it right. To get it right, we push production, we push the CFO, we push IT to deliver on those customer needs.

However, when it comes to marketing communications – which is a very large part of marketing – we have people like Mick Jagger protesting. Let's try to unravel his train of thought. No one likes a movie on Friday night interrupted by commercials, again and again. No one likes an annoying display ad. In marketing communications, we forgot about customer needs, because we felt at the time was more efficient, or because it felt like there was no other way to build brands. Or whatever the reason was.

What's changed? The Mick Jagger of today isn't singing a protest song anymore. He just installed an ad blocker.

People will move away from unwelcomed interruptions when they can. They always have, they always will. What's changed is that technology gives them more opportunity to do so. We can try to beat them in that game, but they are winning. So why not do things differently? To do so, we need a new view on how to build brands differently. And to do that, let's start with where marketing should always start: with consumers.

Human

With technological changes, we see massive changes in human behavior. This does not imply that humanity itself is fundamentally changing. Technology is only facilitating people to exhibit more of their preferred human behavior.

Over time, media has evolved, spurred on in large part by technological developments: from black and white stills in the first newspapers, to black and white movies in theaters, to small screens in our living rooms, to growing screens with color, to a screen in our hands, to Google Homes in our living rooms that can talk back to us. To summarize: we went from frozen to moving, from silence to audio, from black and white to color, from distance to close by, from passive to interactive. Which means that media is becoming more human.

Give a toddler an iPad and what you see is a happy and skillful user. How can that be? How did we get here? Our toddler is such a skillful user because the user interface is more intuitive, accessible, more human. Why are consumers moving away from linear viewing towards non-linear so quickly? Just think about summertime, lying on nice bed next to a pool with thriller: if the story is engaging enough, you'd rather keep reading the next chapter than take a dive into the water. Binge viewing is not a complete new behavior; it's simply the digital equivalent of binge reading. Netflix has certainly made binge viewing easier. But the desire to immerse oneself in an exciting story is something more universally human.



CEX

It is not so strange that consumers are struggling with all the communication possibilities available to them. It is in many cases great for them, but at times it can be a burden as well: "I see 'blue ticks' next to my texts, so I know you've read them, so why are you not responding?..."

Top marketers recognize that something has to change in marketing communication. Marc Mathieu said this when he was Unilever's global senior vice president of marketing: "Consumers no longer welcome untimely interruptions from brands, but now have the control to 'pull' [brands] into their lives as and when they wish. It's about recognizing that people don't want to be interrupted, yet choose to interrupt themselves." Brad Jakeman, when he was President of PepsiCo's global beverage group: "You only have to watch this crap for another 10 seconds and then you are going to get to the content that you really wanted to see. That is a model of polluting content that is not sustainable."

Why are we fighting with consumers? Why are we just disrupting? In marketing communication, we seem to be bullying consumers. When instead, as marketers it should be about satisfying customer needs. We need a new philosophy for marketing communication. It's interesting to see how many brands have successfully adopted "customer-experience thinking" – that is, thinking about the customer journey and all the experiences the customer has with the brand. Instead of interrupting, why not put the customer experience at the heart of marketing communications as well? We should aim to design the experience of interacting with a brand message in a way that consumer welcome and value.

Trying to beat consumers with interruptions is an efficiency play. I am not saying we should never do that – however, it will not make brands win. To win, we should place consumer needs first in marketing communications. Mick Jagger is getting old. He shouldn't have to sing his protest song anymore.

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AI & AUTOMATION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) & automation are trending topics in most industries these days, and marketing is no exception. Both terms are being hyped in nearly every marketing story or presentation. We are overloaded with articles suggesting that nearly every agency should use AI, and that machines are currently taking over all of our jobs.

Although I surely won't deny the global trend and huge potential of AI and automation, I would like to provide a more nuanced interpretation of how media and marketing companies should implement AI and automation. The terms "artificial intelligence" and "automation" are often used interchangeably. These terms are used to describe tasks executed by "robots" and other machines that allow us to operate more efficiently and effectively. However, there are some pretty big differences between automated systems and AI machines.

Chiefly: Automation is software that follows pre-programmed "rules," while artificial intelligence is designed to simulate human thinking.



Pieter van Geel

Head of Analytics,
Conversion & Data Science
Greenhouse Group
Pieter.van.Geel@greenhousegroup.com

Data

Despite these differences, both AI and automation start with data. Data, of course, is an essential part of the strategy of most companies these days, and most organizations are rightly convinced of the potential of data for their business.

So how should a company begin? In order to exploit AI & automation, data needs to be organized and available, preferably in a central place within an organization; call it a Data Lake or Data Warehouse. To fill the Data Lake, fully-automated data ingestion and transfer processes should be in place in your organization. Unfortunately, this can be easier said than done, and many companies struggle with the development of creating a complete Data Lake, leading to some of the first hiccups a company might experience when seeking to exploit AI and automation.

Digital marketing data is rather easy to ingest into a Data Lake, but when it comes to traditional media or client data, it becomes rather more difficult. However, in order to get a full overview of marketing performance, clients expect a single point of truth for all data. Unfortunately, there's currently no one turnkey solution available to connect all of a company's data sources, as market demand exceeds the current speed of development that organizations need order to become fully data driven.

Despite of these development challenges, a Data Lake is still crucial for any organization, especially since GDPR became effective as of May 2018. In order for organizations to become GDPR compliant, a Data Lake should be in place to be able to properly manage large sets of data, especially personal information.

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Automation

The next step beyond data is automation. As automation follows a pre-programmed set of rules, it is advised to first automate everything possible before moving towards more advanced tasks like AI. All recurring tasks should be considered when setting the scope for automation to increase efficiency. Dashboarding and reporting tasks are especially ripe targets for automation in marketing organizations.

Organizations need to set up a team to manage the following tasks on the road to automation: data storage & data quality; accessibility and infrastructure; maintenance; roadmap and prioritization; and finally, visualization. Make sure to build flexibility into these teams and structures: in order to develop in automation, experimentation is key to developing new insights and innovating quickly.

Regarding dashboarding and reporting, we advise the follow the following steps: First, start with descriptive dashboards based on historical data. Then, once these dashboards are operational, move toward building predictive dashboards. Once these are in place and used, follow with prescriptive dashboards. These will be the foundation for your automation efforts.

AI

As artificial intelligence is designed to simulate human thinking, it should be the driver to make current tasks smarter and even disrupt our current business to increase effectiveness. In order for a machine to act as a human, it needs to be trained properly with the correct data.

The quality of the training data set needs to be complete and unbiased to create an algorithm that is capable of simulating a human task. For example, in order for an algorithm to identify the gender of a person on a photo, it needs sufficient input and data from photos from both males and females.

For more complex algorithms, it is important to define clear objectives. As humans are able to make complex decisions taking multiple objectives into account, algorithms needs clear KPI's to optimize toward, or else they won't deliver logical results on easy tasks.

Therefore, most organization should start with AI in a predefined part of the business, and with algorithms generated in silos. Currently, humans combine the results of these algorithms in order to exceed the insights generated by any single channels, and to get a holistic view of the business.

A final note: algorithms need to be transparent. As algorithms will take over our current tasks, we need to make sure that the quality of this task performance is equal or preferably better than the current manual results. Therefore, it is important to verify the results of the algorithms continuously over time.

Summarizing the above, AI & automation definitely have huge potential and might in the future take over (certain aspects of) our jobs. In the current stage of the development, however, they will create more work and more jobs to do! So we should not fear AI & automation, but rather embrace them in order to unlock their huge potential to make our lives more interesting and easy in the future.

BECOME A SURVIVOR BRAND: IT'S NOW OR NEVER

Brands have evolved for centuries. But now there's something radical happening, something we can compare to the big meteorite impact that killed the dinosaurs 65 million years ago. The big difference between now and then is that brands can see their threat coming – and can act to avoid demise.

We all know that only the fittest species survive: that is, those animals and organisms who are able to adapt to a changing environment, and who even learn how to thrive in new situations. Does the same apply to brands? Well, yes. And we are heading for a big change.

Data and algorithms have been changing our lives for the last two decades or so. It has been a struggle for most brands to keep up with the rapid changes. Do they go for the clicks or stay with the bricks – or do they find a way to mix? Some brands have adapted, some have not. Dinosaur brands like the defunct department store chain V&D now only live on in the memory of an aging generation – despite efforts to bring some of them back to life in the digital world, as with Kijkshop and Dixons. On the other hand, the ravaged brand landscape has led to the rise of new players like booking.com, Zalando and Coolblue.



Edgar Molenaars

CEO
Ogilvy, Netherlands
Edgar.Molenaars@ogilvy.com

Now, an even bigger disruption is on the horizon: voice-enabled search. But when will it hit us? Maybe not right away. The Dutch are famous for building dikes to keep the water out, and it seems we are similarly good at keeping drastic business changes at bay as long as possible. Online players like Amazon that have otherwise conquered the planet are still waiting to make their move here in the Netherlands. And while the world is rapidly embracing voice assistants like Alexa and Google Home, we Dutch are reluctant to take the plunge. Nevertheless, voice is getting bigger and will inevitably impact the Dutch market in a big way – and sooner rather than later.

But why worry? Voice, you might say, just an easier way to search for stuff: that isn't such a big deal for brands, is it? Actually, it is. Voice is making finding products and services easier than ever. On top of that, our new voice assistants not only suggest what they deem to be the best option; they can also act right away and order the recommended product, or make a reservation. This puts the steering wheel in the hands of the assistant instead rather than the consumer. Which is a big deal. Because to our new speech-controlled aids, there are no emotional strings attached to brands. Their choices, based on queries, profiles, and who knows what, will make consumers switch brands in a jiffy. It's human nature: evolution has ensured that we almost always opt for the easier choice, even if that choice is not the brand we are used to buying. The upside is that we really could be facing a world where brands don't matter that much anymore.

Ogilvy is an award-winning integrated creative network that makes brands matter businesses across 131 offices in 83 countries.

www.ogilvy.com

Ogilvy



How to outlive this new and hostile environment? You know the answer: adapt. But in practice, getting your brand in the survivor-mode isn't that easy. Even if you are a digital whiz kid who knows how to crack the secret code and prosper with data, you can't do it on your own.

Agile brands have always flourished thanks to fertile partnerships. And as recent research has shown, the longer these partnerships last, the better. In this fragmented and unpredictable world, it pays to team up with expert partners who can help you seize those opportunities that give your brand meaning, coherence, and shape. By doing, you'll ensure that your brand is fit enough to survive.

Fitter brands make sure they stay healthy on three levels: the far, the

near, and the now. They are consistent in expressing their purpose. Because if you won't stay loyal to your own core beliefs, how can you expect that your customers will? Fitter brands also find effective ways to make new products and services get noticed, creating meaningful communications and experiences around them. And last but not least: they are present at all relevant moments that occur, keeping pace with the moment.

It's how your brand behaves on these levels that protects your brand's value to customers – that ensures they will keep on looking for you. And how your brand behaves on these levels can even sway an algorithmic-driven assistant to select your brand instead of any other competitor. Because you grow loyalty. You get noticed. And you stay relevant.

In order to do so, you have to truly connect with consumers. That's why Ogilvy not only specializes in brands, but also in understanding people and what matters to them. This knowledge, combined with sharp insights, innovative tools, agile processes, and creative minds, enables us to give brands purpose, gain trust, build connections, and stand out in meaningful ways. We put the power of ideas to work to deliver business effectiveness. Because it's still creativity that makes a species survive – especially in the coming age of voice.

So yes, the meteorites are heading for the Dutch marketplace. There's no hiding from it. Instead, it's vital to be agile, creative, and collected. To do what survivor brands have always done: make your brand matter.

3

**BRANDZ™
DUTCH
TOP 30**

BRANDZ™ TOP 30 MOST VALUABLE DUTCH BRANDS 2019

#1



Oil & Gas

Brand Value

\$20,656

Brand Contribution Index

1

#2



Beer

Brand Value

\$11,883

Brand Contribution Index

5

#3



Travel Agency

Brand Value

\$11,866

Brand Contribution Index

2

#4



Banks

Brand Value

\$10,727

Brand Contribution Index

3

#5



Technology

Brand Value

\$10,714

Brand Contribution Index

3

#6



Telecom Providers

Brand Value

\$4,121

Brand Contribution Index

3

#7



Banks

Brand Value

\$4,099

Brand Contribution Index

3

#8



Banks

Brand Value

\$3,394

Brand Contribution Index

3

#9



Telecom Providers

Brand Value

\$2,714

Brand Contribution Index

3

#10



Retail

Brand Value

\$1,911

Brand Contribution Index

3

#11



Beer

Brand Value

\$1,888

Brand Contribution Index

5

#12



Online Food Delivery

Brand Value

\$1,046

Brand Contribution Index

4

#13



Insurance

Brand Value

\$995

Brand Contribution Index

2

#14



Retail

Brand Value

\$916

Brand Contribution Index

4

#15



Insurance

Brand Value

\$909

Brand Contribution Index

2

#16



Soft Drinks

Brand Value

\$702

Brand Contribution Index

5

#17



Retail

Brand Value

\$505

Brand Contribution Index

1

#18



Retail

Brand Value

\$486

Brand Contribution Index

3

#19



Soft Drinks

Brand Value

\$482

Brand Contribution Index

5

#20



Airlines

Brand Value

\$462

Brand Contribution Index

2

#21



Beer

Brand Value

\$372

Brand Contribution Index

5

#22



Retail

Brand Value

\$371

Brand Contribution Index

2

#23



Insurance

Brand Value

\$357

Brand Contribution Index

2

#24



Beer

Brand Value

\$296

Brand Contribution Index

5

#25



Banks

Brand Value

\$199

Brand Contribution Index

2

#26



Beer

Brand Value

\$194

Brand Contribution Index

4

#27



Food & Dairy

Brand Value

\$192

Brand Contribution Index

4

#28



Telecom Providers

Brand Value

\$175

Brand Contribution Index

2

#29



Beer

Brand Value

\$120

Brand Contribution Index

5

#30



Banks

Brand Value

\$106

Brand Contribution Index

3

Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown (including data from Bloomberg)
Brand Contribution Index = Brand contribution measures the influence of brand alone on earnings, on a 1-to-5 scale, 5 being highest.



Parent Company
Royal Dutch Shell PLC

Brand Value
\$20,656Mil.

Headquarter City
The Hague

Category
Oil & Gas

Year Formed
1907

#1

From humble beginnings as a family-run shop selling exotic seashells, Royal Dutch Shell has become the world’s largest fuels retailer – operating filling stations that serve some 30 million people daily. In the late 1800s, the sons of London shopkeeper Marcus Samuel launched a fleet of steamers to carry oil through the Suez Canal; they called this venture Shell Transport and Trading Company. At the same, the Royal Dutch Petroleum Company was developing an oil field in Sumatra, Indonesia. The two companies joined in 1907 to become the Royal Dutch Shell Group, which was represented from the start by a scallop-shell logo. Though best known for its convenience-focused refueling stations, Shell’s vast reach also encompasses marine, aviation, chemical, gas, and low-carbon fuel operations. The company employs some 86,000 people across more than 70 countries. The company is publicly preparing for a transition to lower-carbon energy, and recently published a scenario detailing how society could meet the requirements of the Paris climate change agreement by 2070. Recent Shell communications have focused on its “Make The Future” campaign highlighting energy innovation, as supported by figures like Pele and DJ Steve Aoki; sponsorships encompass a wide range of motorsport activity. Royal Dutch Shell is listed on the London Stock Exchange, Euronext Amsterdam, and the New York Stock Exchange.



Parent Company
Heineken N.V.

Brand Value
\$11,883Mil.

Headquarter City
Amsterdam

Category
Beer

Year Formed
1864

#2

From a single brewery in Amsterdam 150 years ago, Heineken has grown into the world’s most international brewer. Heineken is the number one brewer in Europe and the number two brewer in the world. They have over 80,000 employees and operate breweries, cider plants, and other production facilities in more than 70 countries. In the last decade, Heineken has significantly increased its exposure to emerging markets like China. Led by the Heineken brand, the Group now has a portfolio of more than 300 international, regional, local, and specialty beverages. Their premium beer and cider brands include Birra Moretti, Red Stripe and Tiger beers. Heineken’s instantly recognizable star logo dates back to 1884 and was adapted from the medieval sign for beer; the brand’s green colorway also helps the brand stand out in stores and restaurants. In recognition of the Heineken brand’s vast global reach – and of the difficulty in translating a single message across many cultures -- Heineken has dropped the use of a tagline in its most recent advertisements, focusing instead on visual expressions of its core brand themes of sociality, energy, and fun. These themes are also represented in Heineken’s sponsorships of the UEFA Champion’s League, Formula 1, and the James Bond franchise.



Parent Company
Booking Holdings Inc.

Brand Value
\$11,866Mil.

Headquarter City
Amsterdam

Category
Travel Agency

Year Formed
1996

#3

Established in 1996 in Amsterdam, Booking.com has grown from a small Dutch start-up to one of the largest travel e-commerce companies in the world. Today, it’s more than just a hotel site: with a mission to empower people to experience the world, Booking.com invests in digital technology that helps take the friction out of travel. At Booking.com, you can book any kind of accommodation, including apartments, family-run B&Bs, luxury resorts, tree houses, and igloos. In other words, and as their slogan puts it: “Booking.com: hotels, homes and everything in between.” The company employs more than 17,000 employees across 198 offices in 70 countries worldwide; each day, more than 1,550,000 room nights are reserved on the platform, all with a price-match guarantee. The company’s marketing focus has long been focused on driving performance (especially through search engine advertising, online displays, and partnerships). Recently, however, the brand has started doing more extensive TV and video advertising in the Netherlands and beyond — most notably its authentic, emotional One Mission spot, which was shot by Booking.com’s own employees on their trips around the world. Booking.com’s parent company, Booking Holdings Inc. (formerly The Priceline Group Inc.) is listed on Nasdaq.



Parent Company
ING Groep N.V.

Brand Value
\$10,727Mil.

Headquarter City
Amsterdam

Category
Banks

Year Formed
1881

#4

ING is a Dutch banking group – the Netherlands’ largest – that has long been heralded for its agile embrace of technology. ING is present in over 40 countries and offers banking services to more than 37 million retail and wholesale banking customers worldwide. ING is a brand with a clear purpose: “Empowering people to stay a step ahead in life and in business.” ING has embraced digital disruption by focusing on user experience across all channels, including an early push toward online banking at home and abroad. Anchoring these changes is the brand’s orange lion logo, which underlines ING’s strong Dutch roots in the country’s postal savings system. ING employs more than 13,000 Dutch workers, and more than 3 million Dutch people use ING’s mobile app. The Netherlands is also the incubator for a new type of ING branch that’s modeled on a home, where people can get personal banking advice, have a coffee, and hold community meetings. ING sponsors the Rijksmuseum, the Royal Dutch Football Federation, and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. In the first half of 2018 ING announced its plans to return to distributing online insurance, and touted its innovations in the blockchain space; the company also paid government settlements related to its anti-money-laundering protections. ING’s stock is listed on Euronext Amsterdam and the New York Stock Exchange.



Parent Company
Koninklijke Philips N.V.
Brand Value
\$10,714Mil.
Headquarter City
Amsterdam
Category
Technology
Year Formed
1891

#5

Koninklijke (Royal) Philips N.V. is a Dutch multinational technology company headquartered in Amsterdam. Philips was founded in Eindhoven in 1891 by Gerard Philips and his father Frederik. Their plan? To bring cost-effective light bulbs to the masses. A string of iconic Philips inventions followed in the coming decades, including cassette tapes, boomboxes, electric razors, home video recorders, televisions, and more. As Philips grew, it segmented into three columns: Philips Consumer Lifestyle, Philips Healthcare, and Philips Lighting. For many Dutch, Philips’s success is proof that the Netherlands can compete in the global technology realm. In recent years, the company has sharpened its focus on health technology, acquiring firms in the medical imaging, monitoring, and treatment spheres, and spinning off its lighting business. Philips has over 73,000 employees and recorded €17.8 billion in revenue in 2017. Just as significantly, Philips estimated that its products, many of them green, touched 2.2 billion people’s lives last year. The company’s “Innovation and You” slogan signals that even amidst a strategic refocusing, Philips will always be dedicated to harnessing innovation to improve people’s time on the planet. In the Netherlands, Philips’ sponsorships include the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam Pride, and PSV Eindhoven. Shares of Philips are listed on Euronext Amsterdam and the New York Stock Exchange.



Parent Company
Koninklijke KPN N.V.
Brand Value
\$4,121Mil.
Headquarter City
Rotterdam
Category
Telecom Providers
Year Formed
1989

#6

KPN as a brand was founded in 1989, but its legacy traces back to 1881 and the Netherlands’ first government-run telegraph service, which was soon combined with postal and telephone services to create a state-run communications powerhouse. By the 2000s KPN had privatized and spun off its postal business, leaving a core focus on fixed and mobile telecom networks as well as data, home internet, and television services. The client base of KPN is enormous, with 5.5 million Dutch consumers using at least one KPN product. As the industry changed and voice became just one part of KPN’s telecom offerings, the company communicated that its true goal was to live “at the heart of society” by connecting the whole country in myriad ways. As such, technological innovation has once again become a prominent part of the brand’s identity and communications – with ads often showing the emotional, societal, and sustainability benefits of greater connectivity. KPN sponsors the Dutch skating team, the Eredivisie football league, and the Rijksmuseum. Recently, the company’s innovation lab has also gained much media attention by testing out an autonomous drone taxi in Amsterdam.



Parent Company
Coöperatieve Rabobank U.A.
Brand Value
\$4,099Mil.
Headquarter City
Utrecht
Category
Banks
Year Formed
1972

#7

Rabobank is an international financial cooperative with deep roots in The Netherlands. The bank’s history goes back to the late 19th century, when small agricultural cooperative banks were founded by Dutch farmers and horticulturists around the country. Rabobank as we know it today was created in 2016 through the merger of 106 local cooperative Rabobanks and the central Rabobank Nederland. Nowadays, Rabobank is the Netherlands’ second-largest bank, serving more than 6.7 million retail and 800,000 business customers with a comprehensive range of financial products and services. True to its roots, Rabobank is also active internationally as a financial services provider in the Food & Agricultural and Sustainability sectors. Rabobank operates in 40 countries worldwide and services approximately 10 million customers. A series of rate-fixing and money-laundering scandals starting in 2013 damaged Rabobank’s corporate image, though trust in the bank’s retail operations has remained more resilient. Rabobank holds a spot on the “The World Safest Banks 2017” list, and the bank was also a winner of the 2017 “Environmental Finance Green Bond Award.” It’s advertisements and CSR initiatives often focus on reducing hunger and food waste, and promoting a more circular economy. Rabobank’s sponsorships include the Lowlands festival, the Dutch Olympics team, and the Dutch national hockey leagues.



Parent Company
ABN AMRO Group N.V.
Brand Value
\$3,394Mil.
Headquarter City
Amsterdam
Category
Banks
Year Formed
1765

#8

Although parts of ABN AMRO date back to 1765, its ledger of mergers and acquisitions means that the bank encompasses many histories: banks for overseas Dutchmen, banks serving the cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, and the Netherlands’ first nonprofit savings bank are just some of the firms that have combined to make up modern ABN AMRO. Today the bank is the Netherlands’ third largest: a modern, full-service institution with more than 19,000 employees and €390 billion in assets. True to its diverse background, ABN AMRO serves retail, private, and corporate banking clients, with a primary focus on the Netherlands and selective operations internationally. The core of ABN AMRO’S strategy is to be a “relationship-driven bank” that also stays on the technological cutting edge, especially in the area of mobile banking. ABN AMRO used to be one the biggest advertisers in the Netherlands, but in recent years media spend has increasingly focused on digital and radio. Many of its advertisements feature a character named Vincent and tout how sustainable investment efforts can lead to “Gains on all fronts,” and that “Finance the future.” Although briefly nationalized during the global financial crisis, ABN AMRO was re-listed on Euronext Amsterdam in 2015.



Parent Company
VodafoneZiggo Group Holding B.V.

Brand Value
\$2,714Mil.

Headquarter City
Utrecht

Category
Telecom Providers

Year Formed
2008

#9

Ziggo has benefitted from - and often led - the trend of consolidation among Dutch entertainment service providers and telecom companies. Ziggo formed as the result of a merger between Multikabel, @Home Network, and Casema, and grew larger following a subsequent merger with UPC Nederland in 2015. In 2017, Ziggo completed a joint venture with Vodafone Nederland, further extending the brand’s reach. Nowadays, Ziggo has 9.7 million customers with nearly 4 million television, over 3 million internet, and 2.5 million fixed and mobile telephone subscribers. On the entertainment side, Ziggo is the biggest TV provider in the Netherlands with some 52% market share. It stands out from its competitors by holding the exclusive Dutch license to content like HBO series and Formula 1 Racing. (Ziggo and its competitor KPN have become so dominant, in fact, that some are wondering whether the Dutch government intervene to prevent a duopoly.) Besides advertising for its entertainment and voice bundles, Ziggo serves as the shirt sponsor of the football club Ajax, and also lends its name to the Ziggo Dome, a massive indoor arena that has hosted artists like Ariana Grande and Katy Perry. Ziggo is partly owned by Nasdaq-listed Liberty Global, and partly by London- and Nasdaq-listed Vodafone.



Parent Company
Spar International

Brand Value
\$1,911Mil.

Headquarter City
Amsterdam

Category
Retail

Year Formed
1932

#10

SPAR is an international group of groceries and convenience stores offering a high quality, high value shopping experience — a focus on thrift that is echoed in its name, which recalls the Dutch word for “save.” The first SPAR store opened in the Netherlands in 1932; today the brand counts more than 12,770 stores in 48 countries. In 2017 SPAR had €34.5 billion in global sales and served 13.5 million customers each day. While SPAR’s franchise model means that owners can tailor their store’s offerings based on their local context, the brand’s outposts are united by their green fir tree logo, a focus on price and quality, and a wide array of SPAR Own Brand Products. SPAR Netherlands in particular has been a fount of innovation for the brand, recently expanding its to-go offerings and convenience store formats, as well as offering checkout-less mobile payment through its SPAR University app. The brand’s Responsible Retailing initiative has led to more local sourcing as well as support for community wellness initiatives; Spar is also known for its sports sponsorships, most notably of European Athletics. Spar is partly owned by the Euronext Amsterdam-listed Sligro Food Group, and partly by privately-held Sperwer Holding B.V.



Parent Company
Heineken NV

Brand Value
\$1,888Mil.

Headquarter City
Zoeterwoude

Category
Beer

Year Formed
1870

#11

Amstel is an international beer brand that remains intimately tied to its Dutch heritage. Indeed, the brand’s name comes from the Amstel river, and its origins involve two friends coming together near the riverside to establish a brewery. Today Amstel is sold in over 100 countries worldwide and is especially known abroad for its light offerings. At home, the brand offers a full array of lager, pilsner, non-alcoholic, and radler varieties at an accessible price; its flagship pilsner is known for its golden, full taste. The brand enjoys a strong market position behind Heineken, and in fact Heineken N.V. Has owned Amstel since 1968. Amstel is well known for sponsoring the UEFA Europa league, the Amstel Goal bike race, and the Friends of Amstel Live concert. Amstel recently debuted a new bottle that underscores how the brand is “brewed out of friendship,” with brand communications reinforcing this theme. Amstel’s parent company Heineken N.V. trades on Euronext Amsterdam and in New York.



Parent Company
Thuisbezorgd.nl (Takeaway.com)

Brand Value
\$1,046Mil.

Headquarter City
Amsterdam

Category
Online Food Delivery

Year Formed
2000

#12

Thuisbezorgd.nl is beloved in the Netherlands as a quirky national success story. It’s also, not incidentally, the leading online food delivery marketplace in continental Europe, connecting consumers and restaurants through its platform in 10 European countries, Vietnam, and Israel. Its beginnings are now the stuff of legend: Jitse Groen founded the site in 2000 when he was still a student, after discovering how difficult it was to order food online. Today the company has 1,000 employees and processes upwards of 78 million orders annually; in the Netherlands alone, the company processed 15.7 million orders in the first six months of 2018, up 21% from the year prior. The company protects its brand awareness with extensive advertising , often around the theme of “Time for Takeaway.com”; the message is that with Takeaway.com, food arrives “on time” so you can have a “great time.” These efforts have been bolstered by media interest in Groen’s rising fortunes following Thuisbezorgd.nl’s Euronext Amsterdam IPO in 2016.

**Gerben Boot**

Senior Client & Innovation Director
Kantar TNS
Gerben.Boot@kantar.com

KANTAR

2019 will bring a new ecosystem challenge for Dutch brands: voice. The first baby steps of voice's development in the Netherlands emerged in 2018, as Google rolled out Dutch-language capabilities for their voice assistant, and consumers increasingly use voice commands to control apps like Spotify on their phones.

2019 will be the year that we see the average Dutch citizen truly embrace voice devices and services. In turn, we will soon be able to see voice's true impact on consumption patterns – as well as determine which brands are

poised to “win” this new ecosystem by developing the most valuable voice services.

Already, brands such as Albert Heijn, PostNL, Unilever, and ING have been rolling out their first voice apps in 2018. Of course, a brand's mere presence on voice platforms isn't enough. A key focus for brands must be how to become top of mind at the time of voice invocation. For example, when people ask their voice assistant, “Hey Google, ask [Brand X] what to do about the ketchup stain I have on my shirt,” how can you ensure your brand will be the brand queried? As with any successful new innovation, it's not the technology itself that will determine who wins voice commerce. Rather, the victors will be those brands that demonstrate the best understanding of how and why people benefit from this new phenomenon in their daily lives.

The truth is that most Dutch people can't cook and hate spending hours in the kitchen. For years, this was good news for manufacturers of shelf-stable food ingredients and prepackaged meal solutions. Today, however, these brands are under pressure.

Why? First, there is the trend of “assisted” scratch cooking through delivery boxes like Hello Fresh, as well as through fresh-food cooking bundles at supermarkets like Albert Heijn. People believe that cooking with pure natural ingredients will help them live more healthily – and further believe that these bundled offerings can turn them into fast, skilled home chefs.

Another big reason why consumers are turning away from classic solutions kits from Knorr and Honig is that consumers have lost trust in legacy food manufacturers. Ask the average shopper about products from these legacy brands and she'll say they are “processed in factories” – which in her mind, means they're bad for you. Food manufacturers struggle to explain that their ingredients are natural – only dried – and that the added substances used as E numbers are often natural as well (after all, a tomato is full of many of these same E number substances).

What should brands do? Transparency is key. There may be a time when Dutch shoppers grow weary of the meal box trend; those fresh kits can be more time-consuming to prepare than they seem. Shoppers will then reexamine the brands they know best. When that happens, brands should be ready with innovative offerings and evocative, transparent messaging about how they turn natural ingredients into truly convenient meals.

**Erzsi Eleveld**

Client Director
Kantar Millward Brown
Erzsi.Eleveld@kantarmillwardbrown.com

KANTAR MILLWARD BROWN

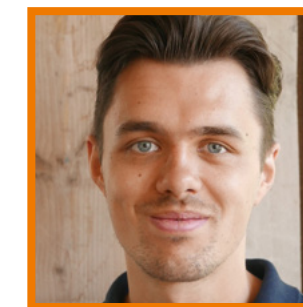
We live in a time in which people more and more prefer experiences over possessing material goods. In light of this, brands should think of ways how to make possession smarter – more flexible, less burdensome, and less permanent.

In 2014, two Dutch students from Delft University of Technology successfully showcased this “new possession” thinking when they founded Swapfiets (literally, “Swap-bicycle”). Swapfiets pioneered a new way to “possess” a bicycle. Since then, tens of thousands of Swapfiets bikes, with their distinctive blue front-tires, have become an undeniable part of Dutch cityscapes.

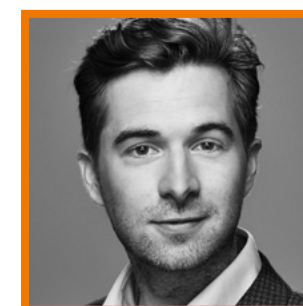
Swapfiets' brilliant idea? Make bicycle possession smarter. For a monthly subscription, you get a well-working bike (in the color of your choice) that is yours for the time being. If something breaks, you can easily request a same-day repair, or you can swap your bike for a new one through the user-friendly smartphone app.

The upside is that Swapfiets' usually young customers never need to worry about the expense and maintenance hassles that used to come with owning a bike. Swapfiets ownership means that users will never end up in possession of wrecked or hobbled vehicles.

In short, Swapfiets has done for Dutch bikes what Spotify has done for music: you pay for access to a great service from month to month, rather than for permanent ownership of a static product. Bike possession in the Netherlands will never be the same. And who knows? Maybe soon we'll be seeing those iconic blue tires all over Europe.

**Sam Goos**

Research Consultant
Kantar Millward Brown
Sam.Goos@kantarmillwardbrown.com

KANTAR MILLWARD BROWN**Daan Horbach**

Senior Account Executive
Hill+Knowlton Strategies
Daan.Horbach@hkstrategies.com



Content isn't king, relevance is. The world around us is changing: customer brand loyalty is shifting, partly due to the influence of social media, which can demolish reputations within a day. Brands are struggling, and in response, they are trying to stay relevant and visible by creating even more content for the masses.

From this consumer's perspective, chasing mass visibility is a real old school tactic. More content just means more noise, especially when that content is geared toward some vague, idealized notion of a “general audience.” In reality, a few funny movies or guerilla stunts won't make a lasting

difference for a brand's reputation, because content that is meant to be relevant to everyone isn't actually relevant to anyone. Brands should stop chasing viral videos and should instead develop purpose-driven, long-term messaging strategies rooted in intentionality and specificity.

The ideal strategies – and certainly the ones I focus on in my own work – involve producing relevant content that resonates with specific communities forming around brands. This content should address things consumers really care about: things like customer intimacy, larger purpose, brand values, social responsibility, financial results, and innovation in products and services. By refocusing on these essential components to relevance – rather than chasing empty viral content – brands can lastingly improve their reputations in today's digital world.

#13



Parent Company
NN Group N.V.
Brand Value
\$995Mil.
Headquarter City
The Hague
Category
Insurance
Year Formed
1845

With over 5 million private and business customers, Nationale-Nederlanden is one of the largest financial service providers in the Netherlands. It offers a wide range of financial services such as insurance, mortgages, pensions, savings, and investments. The brand’s parent company, NN Group, split from ING Group in 2013, and operates in 18 countries. Since the split, Nationale-Nederlanden’s communications have emphasized the individual focus of its services; its latest campaign slogan emphasizes that, “There is only one Dutch person like you.” The brand’s sponsorships focus on the individual sport of running, with support ranging from the establishment of a professional team in partnership with Nike down to helping amateur racers. In collaboration with Douwe Egberts, there is also a Nationale-Nederlanden Café in Rotterdam that offers workshops on themes ranging from retirement planning to barista skills. Shares of National Nederlanden’s parent company NN Group N.V. are listed in Amsterdam and New York.

#14



Parent Company
Koninklijke Ahold Delhaize N.V.
Brand Value
\$916Mil.
Headquarter City
Zaandam
Category
Retail
Year Formed
1887

Albert Heijn Sr. founded his eponymous grocery in 1887 in a tiny storefront; nowadays, Albert Heijn is the largest food retailer in the Netherlands, with some 950 stores and a market share of around 35%. Albert Heijn is known for its focus on gourmet products and innovation, which allows Albert Heijn to charge more premium prices than its competition. The chain has long driven food trends in the Netherlands: it was the first grocery to offer “self-service” shopping in 1952, and popularized products such as wine and refrigerators. Albert Heijn was the first Dutch supermarket to offer online grocery shopping, and this year opened up dedicated counters for vegan take-away prepared food. Albert Heijn also mastered “branded content” before that was a term of art; the chain’s food magazine, Allerhande, is the Netherlands’ best-read magazine. Last year the chain furthered its cultural reach with the launch of YouTube channel Appie Today, which shares daily food videos with Dutch netizens. Shares of parent company Koninklijke Ahold Delhaize N.V. are primarily traded on Euronext Amsterdam.

#15



Parent Company
Aegon N.V.
Brand Value
\$909Mil.
Headquarter City
The Hague
Category
Insurance
Year Formed
1983

Aegon is a multinational life insurance, pensions, and asset management brand with a rich history and international reach. The brand’s heritage dates back nearly two centuries, to the Dutch insurance organizations that provided modest funds for people to arrange burials. In 2015, Aegon became one of the top 10 largest insurance companies in the world, with some 26 million customers in over 20 countries. The company’s slogan is “Transform Tomorrow,” a directive they’ve encouraged by sponsoring hackathons worldwide. Fittingly, Aegon has also pursued social responsibility work centered around longevity, retirement, and aging; it has established a research center around these subjects and raised funds to combat dementia. The company also supports Dutch dance troupes, Amsterdam Pride, and a number of professional golfers. Aegon has been in the news lately for mulling potential acquisitions and for its efforts to narrow the gender pay gap; the company is listed on Euronext Amsterdam and the New York Stock Exchange.

#16



Parent Company
Jacobs Douwe Egberts B.V.
Brand Value
\$702Mil.
Headquarter City
Amsterdam
Category
Soft Drinks
Year Formed
2001

Senseo is the name for a coffee brand system developed by Jacobs Douwe Egberts, in a technical partnership with Phillips. The coffee system is known for the pads it uses to brew single-serve cups of coffee. The Senseo machine has become very popular (with tens of millions of machines sold globally) because of its modern design, convenience, speed, and lower price compared to some competitors. The Senseo system is the number single-serve coffee system in the Netherlands and several other European countries. Going forward, Senseo wants to be loved just as much for its coffee as for its appliances – to be a coffee brand that that wakes people up to embrace life, follow their senses, and enjoy being in the now. An international advertising campaign has been developed to support this idea. Jacobs Douwe Egberts B.V. is controlled by family-owned JAB Holding Company



Parent Company
3i Group PLC
Brand Value
\$505Mil.
Headquarter City
Zwaagdijk
Category
Retail
Year Formed
1993

#17

Established in 1993, Action is the leading non-food discount retailer in Europe. Action started as a small retail store in Enkhuizen, the Netherlands; today, there are 1,100 stores across six countries, with a combined revenue of €3.4 billion in revenue. The core product assortment of Action includes household goods, office supplies, cosmetics, personal care, snacks, and toys. Notably, however, only 35 percent of the store’s product range is fixed, which encourages shoppers to return again and again, and leads to very high conversion rates for stores. Action has won “European Retailer of the Year” award for four consecutive years, and its focus on extreme value has spared it from pressures facing other department stores. Although Action does not have a webshop, they have a large online presence, including nearly 1.5 million Facebook followers. In 2011, British private equity firm 3i Group PLC acquired Action, though it may sell its stake or bring the company public in the coming years.



Parent Company
Jumbo Supermarkten B.V.
Brand Value
\$486Mil.
Headquarter City
Veghel
Category
Retail
Year Formed
1979

#18

Jumbo is a privately held supermarket chain in the Netherlands that, after a string of acquisitions, has become a strong Dutch number two with 585 stores and over €7 billion in revenue. Unusually, Jumbo remains family-owned and adheres to an idiosyncratic manifesto of “Seven Certainties.” These include “lowest price,” “widest assortment,” and giving free groceries to those who are fourth in line in a checkout row. Jumbo has often won prizes for being the best retail chain, the best supermarket chain, and the most client-friendly company. Jumbo recently bought restaurant chain LaPlace as part of its goal to master all three ways people interact with food in a grocery store: “Make it, Take it, and Eat it.” Investments in online and mobile retail are aimed at turning Jumbo into a service provider in addition to a store operator. Jumbo has a long-running advertising campaign centered around Dutch actor Frank Lammers as a funny family patriarch, and also sponsors Formula 1 and cycling teams.



Parent Company
Jacobs Douwe Egberts B.V.
Brand Value
\$482Mil.
Headquarter City
Amsterdam
Category
Soft Drinks
Year Formed
1753

#19

Douwe Egberts – also known as DE – is a Dutch coffee brand with heritage tracing back to 1753. Today their range encompasses ground roasts, instant coffee, coffee pads, and more. They’ve adapted to modern tastes by offering drinks like cappuccino and espresso at home and at Douwe Egberts cafés. A strong theme in DE’s history is loyalty: In 1924, the company become one of the first consumer goods brands to introduce a rewards system. Eighty years later, DE’s is the oldest still active saving system in the Netherlands; almost 70% of all households have saved their Douwe Egberts coffee seals. DE is also created one of the most successful ongoing campaigns in Dutch history: “Neighbors’ Day,” which since 2006 has been celebrated as a time for neighbors to get to know each other. Nowadays, 97% of Dutch municipalities organize Neighbors’ Day activities, with over 1 million participants. Germany’s family-owned JAB Holding Company holds a majority stake in DE; Nasdaq-listed Mondelez is the second-largest shareholder.



Parent Company
Air France-KLM S.A.
Brand Value
\$462Mil.
Headquarter City
Amstelveen
Category
Airlines
Year Formed
1919

#20

KLM is the Netherlands’ official flag carrier, and is the oldest airline in the world still operating under its original name. A merger with Air France in 2004 hasn’t lessened the loyalty many Dutch feel for their airline, nor its national importance: today the company has some 35,000 employees and flies to more than 150 destinations. KLM is known for personal, premium service. This is exemplified by the iconic Delft Blue houses that KLM gifts to World Business Class passengers – but also by the company’s swift and innovative use of social media, which allows them to respond to customer communications “within the hour.” The company received a media boost when the King of Holland recently revealed he’d been piloting KLM flights for the past 21 years. Recent advertisements have focused on the theme of “Journeys of Inspiration”; the company also sponsors the KLM Open golf tournament and the Amsterdam Dance Event. Its parent company Air France – KLM is listed in Paris, Amsterdam, and New York.

#21



Parent Company
Asahi Group Holdings Ltd.

Brand Value
\$372Mil.

Headquarter City
Enschede

Category
Beer

Year Formed
1615

Grolsch was founded in 1615, and is one of the oldest companies in the Netherlands. It earned the prefix “Royal” in 1995 in recognition of its contributions to Dutch heritage. Indeed, for all its international expansion — Grolsch is available in 70 countries – Grolsch remains one of the Netherlands’ most loved premium beers, instantly recognizable for its swing-top bottle. Brand communications focus on the love of brewers and connoisseurs: taglines like “Craftmanship is mastery,” “Beer-experts ask for Grolsch,” and “One day you will stop drinking beer and start drinking Grolsch,” underscore its premium position. In April 2016, Grolsch was sold to the Asahi Group by SABMiller, which had bought the brand some ten years earlier. The move has enabled Grolsch to expand abroad, and to share its messaging about craft, passion, and creativity — as exemplified by its sponsorships of the Toronto International Film Festival and FC Twente. Shares in parent company Asahi Group Holdings Ltd. are traded on the Tokyo Stock Exchange.

#22



Parent Company
HEMA B.V.

Brand Value
\$371Mil.

Headquarter City
Amsterdam

Category
Retail

Year Formed
1926

HEMA is a Dutch department store focused on design and value. From the beginning, HEMA has been a department store for “ordinary people,” focusing on a “democratic design” approach for shoppers of all income levels. Products are arrayed in different in-store “worlds” ranging food to home to fashion to beauty – all packaged in optimistic, clear, and typically Dutch ways. HEMA is the first and largest franchising organization in the Netherlands; today, HEMA has more than 750 stores across 9 countries. With a combined social-media reach of 1 million, HEMA commands a sizable online presence for its online and mobile stores; its loyalty app is also one of the Netherlands’ most popular. The company recently won media attention for its gender-neutral children’s line. HEMA’s budget offerings have insulated it from some of the pressures facing other department stores, and HEMA continues to expand abroad. Ramphastos Investments, owned by Dutch billionaire Marcel Boekhoorn, recently bought HEMA from Lion Capital LLC.

#23



Parent Company
a.s.r. Nederland N.V.

Brand Value
\$357Mil.

Headquarter City
Utrecht

Category
Insurance

Year Formed
1720

a.s.r. is one of the largest insurance organizations in the Netherlands, and can trace its history back to the 1720 establishment of the Stad Rotterdam Verzekeringen company. Today’s a.s.r. was formed through series of mergers in early 2000s, followed by a period of nationalization and privatization that culminated in a.s.r.’s listing on Euronext Amsterdam in 2016. The company now has 3,365 employees and revenue of more than €4 billion. Its insurance offerings and sub-brands fall into three streams: Non-Life (through brands like a.s.r., De Amersfoortse, and Ditz); Life; and Funeral Expenses. Many of a.s.r.’s offerings in spaces like health and occupational disability rank among the Netherlands’ top three providers in their categories. a.s.r. has also recently begun to offer a variety of banking and asset management services, and is an active player in acquiring new assets. For the past several years a.s.r. has employed the Dutch rapper Sticks to tell “The Other Story” about the company’s social responsibility programs and insurance offerings.

#24



Parent Company
Anheuser-Busch InBev S.A./N.V.

Brand Value
\$296Mil.

Headquarter City
Arcen

Category
Beer

Year Formed
1915

Hertog Jan’s focus on premium beers has helped it retain loyal drinkers even as customers’ palates grow more sophisticated. The brand is eager to compete on taste and quality, as it is widely seen as a brewer with a meaningful edge in crafting delicious beer. Every year Hertog Jan’s limited edition “Grand Prestige” releases burnish the label by showcasing new types of craft technique (for instance, aging in oak barrels); many of these varieties have won international prizes. Hertog Jan’s brewers are a star focus of brand communications, and can be met during brewery tours. A recent, effective campaign featured employees at the brand’s Arcen Brewery working tirelessly to the tune of “It’s got to be perfect.” The brand’s credibility in operating “Out of the love for beer,” has recently allowed them to expand their range into non-alcoholic and radler categories. Hertog Jan’s parent company AB InBev is traded in Brussels, New York, Johannesburg, and Mexico City.

To read the news, it seems like blockchain technology could be the solution for many of society's problems, from fake news to unsustainable sugar production. The interest in blockchain is no longer the domain of geeks and nerds: business leaders of many industries are anxious to find out what blockchain can do for business.

Our industry is no exception, and may be on the threshold of major transformations brought about by this distributed ledger technology. Blockchain is particularly suitable for marketing's challenges in the areas of efficiency, transparency, data ownership and governance.

A primer published in July 2018 by the Interactive Advertising Bureau's Tech Lab outlines some of blockchain's likeliest applications for marketers and brands. Its impact may become apparent first and foremost in reducing fraud and in finally leading to measurement consensus in audience delivery.

Blockchain's transparent, reliable data organization methods may also change the way that consumer data is traded and paid for. We all have a hunger for knowledge about how people watch, click, buy, and use a brand's ads and products. Decentralized ledger technology could make it easier for ordinary internet users themselves to track and profit off how their data is used.

The media industry is catching up, and all of us working in it should do the same and make sure we understand how blockchain may transform the work we do.



Jikke Romijn

Head of Business Intelligence
Mindshare
Jikke.Romijn@mindshareworld.com



Wally Tas

Client Director
Kantar TNS
Wally.Tas@kantartns.com

KANTAR TNS

The Netherlands' history has always been intimately connected to the sea. So it makes sense that Dutch companies have taken the lead in corporate efforts to combat ocean pollution, with a particular focus on reducing ocean plastics in particular.

In 2014, G-Star RAW, in collaboration with Pharrell Williams, was one of the first global fashion brands to address the problem of plastic waste entering the world's oceans and producing "garbage soup" in areas like the notorious Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Together with Parley For The Oceans and Bionic Yarn, G-Star RAW launched their Raw For The Oceans collection, with most items constructed from

fibers made out of recycled plastic. In many ways, G-Star RAW's efforts to slow plastics' entry into the environment was ahead of the curve; it wasn't until 2016, for instance, that a Dutch ban on free plastic bags went into effect in stores nationwide.

Today, more and more Dutch companies are joining the plastics fight – and for good reason. To name one example, The Ocean Cleanup, founded in 2012 by 18 year old Boyan Slat, aims to rid the world's oceans of plastic waste; it's backed by leading Dutch brands like Akzo Nobel, Brabantia, DSM, and TU Delft. The worldwide fight to save the environment can often feel vast and overwhelming, but by focusing in on one evocative manifestation – here, the fight against "plastic garbage soup" – Dutch brands can stand out while doing more than a bit of good.



Reg van Steen

Senior Client Director
Kantar TNS
Reg.van.Steen@kantar.com

KANTAR

To say the Dutch retail banking sector is concentrated is an understatement. Almost every Dutch person banks with at least one of the four high street banks: ING, Rabobank, ABN AMRO, and SNS Bank. Moreover, churn rates (i.e., the yearly rate at which customers defect from a bank to its competitors) are less than one percent.

Does this mean that the retail banking sector is set in concrete? Not quite. In the past decade, Triodos and ASN – two banks with a pure ESG (environmental, social, and governance) positioning – have made inroads among certain groups of citizens. Meanwhile, two mobile-oriented challenger brands, Knab and Bunq, are currently trying

to disrupt retail banking. However, in an industry where trust is of the essence, it takes a long time to build a strong brand with sufficient mass-market appeal.

That being said, in certain financial categories upstart brands have already succeeded in obtaining substantial market share. Today, BinckBank and DEGIRO have come to dominate the Execution Only market for retail investors. And in the savings market, brands like Leaseplan Bank, NIBC Direct, and Moneyou have been similarly disruptive.

Moneyou is actually an ABN AMRO brand, which just goes to show that high-street banks are not sitting on their hands, either. High street banks will surely build more competitive brands in the coming years – as will scrappy startups. The Dutch retail banking market may be concentrated, but it's far from boring.





Parent Company
De Volksbank N.V.

Brand Value
\$199Mil.

Headquarter City
Utrecht

Category
Banks

Year Formed
1817

#25

SNS Bank is the fourth-largest bank in the Netherlands in terms of total assets. In 2013, SNS was nationalized by the Dutch government; In 2017, it was merged into state-owned de Volksbank. Moving away from the property investments that led to nationalization, SNS aims to be a bank for regular Dutch savers – a course that fits with the bank’s roots as the Netherlands’ first savings bank. Today, this “social” bank aims to stand out by offering “perfectly normal” services with a “human touch” across 197 branches. To underscore this focus, SNS offers slightly higher interest rates on savings accounts than its major competitors, aims to go climate-neutral, and recently pledged that it would no longer work with debt collection agencies. In 2017, SNS’s total customer base rose 1 percent to 1.5 million. Going forward, SNS has the ambition to be a larger, visible player in the mortgage and payments markets, while also navigating a possible privatization effort.



Parent Company
Swinkels Family Breweries N.V.

Brand Value
\$194Mil.

Headquarter City
Lieshout

Category
Beer

Year Formed
1719

#26

On the eve of its 300th anniversary, Bavaria finds itself thriving at the intersection of heritage and value. Its name refers to the “Bavarian” method of bottom-fermenting beer — it was the first beer made this way in the Netherlands — while its price positioning places Bavaria between private label and the big mainstream brands. The company saw record revenue in 2017 and nowadays exports to 130 countries worldwide. Their introduction this decade of non-alcoholic beers has fueled expansion into the Middle East while also serving as the centerpiece of a Diego Maradona-fronted campaign at home. These traditional ad campaigns are supplemented by well-known, humorous “ambush” marketing tactics. At a time when consumers are increasingly interested in sourcing stories, Bavaria also has the benefit of producing their own malt and owning their own water spring. The brand is privately owned by Swinkels Family Brewers (which was known until this year as Bavaria N.V.).



Parent Company
The Kraft Heinz Company

Brand Value
\$192Mil.

Headquarter City
Zeist

Category
Food & Dairy

Year Formed
1867

#27

Though it’s been owned by Kraft Heinz since 2001, Honig is an iconic Dutch brand, known nationwide for its orange packaging and advertisements featuring multicultural Dutch families. At the heart of the brand’s message is an imperative shout: “Aan tafel!” which means “Come to the table – it’s dinner time!” For over 150 years, the purpose of Honig has been to help families eat dinner together, mostly through manufacturing dry meal ingredients like pastas, soups, sauces, meal kits, and baking ingredients. In recent years, the brand has been challenged by increasing consumer preference for scratch cooking, coupled with distrust of packaged foods. In response, the company reduced salt and MSG usage in 2016, and this year launched a “365 Days Honig” digital campaign that features influencers combining Honig ingredients with fresh ingredients to create healthful meals. The company has also adapted to changing Dutch family dynamics by introducing packaging for two- and eight-person households. Shares of Honig’s parent company Kraft Heinz are listed on Nasdaq.



Parent Company
Koninklijke KPN N.V.

Brand Value
\$175Mil.

Headquarter City
Rotterdam

Category
Telecom Providers

Year Formed
1996

#28

Telfort exists to deliver quality, reliable, and simple telecom services for a low price. The brand started as a collaboration between British Telecom and Dutch Railways, which was looking for ways to monetize the fibre-optic network along its tracks. At the beginning of the century, Telfort shuffled owners and was briefly renamed O2; it was clear, however, that the Telfort name retained strong equity, and the brand was reintroduced in 2003. In 2005, telecom conglomerate KPN wholly acquired Telfort. The brand has since expanded its consumer offerings while also making inroads among business clients, always with a focus on cheerful savings without compromise. Since 2011, Telfort’s advertising has featured a character called “Hans the fallen millionaire,” who demonstrates how to enjoy life with less income — while of course maintaining the same speed and quality of telecom products. Shares in Telfort parent company KPN are traded in Amsterdam.



Parent Company
Heineken NV

Brand Value
\$120Mil.

Headquarter City
Wijlre

Category
Beer

Year Formed
1871

#29

Brand is the Netherlands' oldest beer brand, tracing its heritage back to 1340 and the small town of Wijlre. Brand was given its current name in 1871; today, Royal Brand's Beer Brewery N.V. is fully owned by Heineken. Brand's brewery creates 14 different varieties of premium beer, which are primarily sold in the Netherlands with some distribution throughout Europe and in the USA. Brand's core offering, a pilsner, is brewed with "more hops" than the competition, giving it a "unique, powerful," fully malted taste. Another offering, the Imperator, was the Netherlands' first specialty beer. The brand's latest offering, a cloudy unfiltered pilsner, debuted last year. In 2014, Brand debuted redesigned bottles that married traditional blackletter font with a transparent, "label-less" body. This combination of modernity and tradition continues through Brand's sponsorship of Pinkpop, one of the Netherlands' largest music festivals. Brand's parent company, Heineken N.V., is listed on the Euronext Amsterdam as well as in New York.

asn  bank

Parent Company
de Volksbank N.V.

Brand Value
\$106Mil.

Headquarter City
The Hague

Category
Banks

Year Formed
1960

#30

ASN Bank is the Netherlands first and largest bank to specialize in sustainable investing and saving. ASN's focus on social responsibility dates to its original identity as the savings bank of Dutch trade union members; the bank later became a sub-brand of SNS REAAL and then de Volksbank. Today, ASN's 175 employees work on behalf of nearly 670,000 banking and credit card customers – an increase of 3.4% from the year prior. As the wider banking world has begun adapting to sustainable investment strategies, ASN has had to innovate to stay ahead of the pack. The bank recently announced that by 2030 its investments will have a positive net effect on climate and biodiversity, and that it will encourage garment companies to pay workers a living wage. Last year ASN also unveiled a new slogan – "Money can buy happiness" – which it supports with online and TV advertisements featuring cheerful animals. ASN's parent company de Volksbank is owned by the Dutch state.





4

**BRAND
NETHERLANDS**

BEST COUNTRIES: SPOTLIGHT ON THE NETHERLANDS



BEST COUNTRIES

U.S. News & WORLD REPORT



VMLY&R



BAV



Wharton
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

IT IS POSSIBLE NOT ONLY TO MEASURE THE VALUE OF DUTCH BRANDS, BUT ALSO TO ASSESS THE STRENGTH OF BRAND NETHERLANDS ITSELF.



The Best Countries ranking does exactly that, comparing perceptions of countries around the world held by a broad spectrum of consumers. There is a close relationship between how people feel about a country, and their attitudes towards the brands they associate with that country. Strong countries fuel strong brands, and vice versa.

Developed by WPP's VMLY&R BAV Group, the annual Best Countries ranking was first launched in 2016 at the World Economic Forum's meeting in Davos, the world's largest gathering of global leaders and heads of industry and influence. It is now in its fourth wave.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP, OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY AT THE HEART OF COUNTRY'S GLOBAL IMAGE

The Netherlands has a unique combination of strengths that sets it apart on the global stage, allowing it to “punch above its weight” as a medium-sized European country.

What the Netherlands has in its favor is a strong reputation for openness, fairness, and quality of life - it is seen as a progressive place where people can live a happy and prosperous life regardless of their gender or creed. The Netherlands is seen an entrepreneurial, forward-looking, and transparent environment that provides a high standard of living and good public education. It's also seen as one of the best countries for women.

How a country is viewed around the world is of huge importance to brands. The words “Made in ...” can instantly lend credibility and trust to a product or brand that a consumer hasn't previously encountered. That can be enough to convince someone to buy, and, beyond that, convince them to pay a premium. Likewise, “Made in ...” can prove an instant turn-off if a consumer associates the country of origin with poor safety standards, or sees it as being behind the times on social issues or workers' rights.

The perceptions and performance of brands abroad feed back into the development of the country itself. Willingness to invest is closely linked to the strength of a country's brand, and as local brands and businesses succeed, they generate economic growth as well as lending further positive associations to their country's brand.

The annual Best Countries ranking measures global perceptions of countries against a series of characteristics – impressions that have the potential to drive trade, travel, and investment, and directly affect brands. It was developed by WPP's VMLY&R BAV Group, and The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, with US News & World Report.

The ranking is based on a large global survey, which asks a range of people about how they perceive different countries against a range of key attributes.

In the 2018 Best Countries ranking, The Netherlands ranks 10th out of 80 major markets around the world across all measures. It has moved up one position in the past 12 months, taking the place of Norway in the global top ten.

THE VIRTUOUS CYCLE EVERY BRAND HOPES FOR

The Netherlands has come to represent the quality, reliability, entrepreneurship and responsibility that brands like Booking.Com, Shell, ING, and Heineken have shown the world that the Netherlands can deliver.

The relationship between country brands and the products and services those countries produce is complex and changes over time. When a country and its brands represent consistent qualities and values, they lend one another credibility, and there is a multiplier effect for both.

Think of France and Chanel; both represent elegance, glamor and prestige. Chanel is intrinsically French, and France is synonymous with Chanel. The same could be said of Italy and Ferrari, or Japan and Sony. In each case, the brand and the country are part of a virtuous cycle, a symbiotic relationship. In the Netherlands, brands like Heineken, Shell, Philips, and Booking.com have shown the world that the Dutch can innovate and deliver while upholding their social responsibilities for a fair and equitable society.

Brands can both shape and be shaped by perceptions of their country of origin. Japan in the 1970s was known as a cheap manufacturing base, but is now respected as a world leader for quality electronics and technology thanks largely to brands like Sony and Toyota. South Korea has taken a similar path, with Samsung and Hyundai demonstrating to the world what modern South Korea is and, in doing so, creating a consumer predisposition in international markets to favor other Korean brands.

In a relatively short time, China, too, has shifted perceptions from being seen as the world's toy factory, to a place of entrepreneurship and innovation, particularly in digital technology. This is partly because of government strategy and a rebalancing of the Chinese economy, but also due to the ambassadorial role of some of China's leading export brands, such as Haier, Huawei, and Alibaba.



HOW TO MEASURE A COUNTRY

The Best Countries 2018 ranking incorporates the views of more than 21,000 individuals surveyed in 36 countries in four regions: the Americas, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East and Africa.

These people include a high proportion of “informed elites” – college-educated people who keep up with current affairs – along with business decision makers and members of the general public.

Respondents are asked about the 80 countries that feature in the 2018 ranking; between them, these countries account for about 95 percent of global Gross Domestic Product, and represent more than 80 percent of the world’s population.

People surveyed for Best Countries are asked how closely they associate 65 attributes with a range of countries. These attributes are then grouped into eight categories, which are used to calculate the Best Countries ranking:

The 8 Elements of a Country’s Brand



Adventure

A country is seen as friendly, fun, has a pleasant climate, and is scenic or sexy.



Citizenship

It cares about human rights, the environment, gender equality, is progressive, has religious freedom, respects property rights, is trustworthy, and political power is well distributed.



Cultural Influence

It is culturally significant in terms of entertainment, its people are fashionable and happy, it has an influential culture, is modern, prestigious and trendy.



Entrepreneurship

It is connected to the rest of the world, has an educated population, is entrepreneurial, innovative, and provides easy access to capital. There is a skilled labour force, technological expertise, transparent business practices, well-developed infrastructure, and a well-developed legal framework.



Heritage

The country is culturally accessible, has a rich history, has great food, and many cultural attractions.



Open For Business

Manufacturing is inexpensive, there’s a lack of corruption, the country has a favourable tax environment, and transparent government practices.



Power

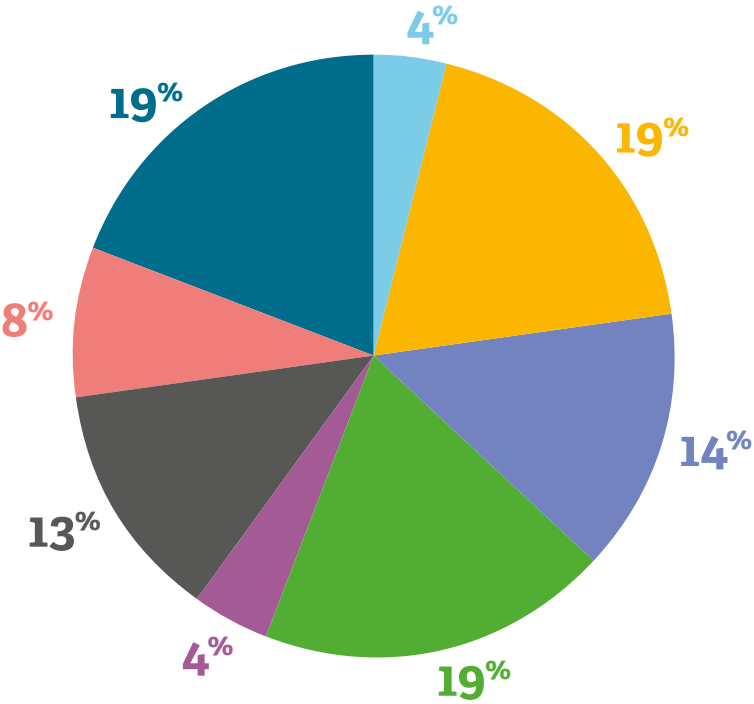
It is a leader, is economically and politically influential, has strong international alliances and a strong military.



Quality of life

There’s a good job market, affordable living costs, it’s economically and politically stable, family-friendly, safe, has good income equality and well-developed public education and health systems.

Each of the eight measures is given a weighting in its contribution to the total score for each country, as follows:



The weight of each category in the final index is determined by the strength of its correlation to per capita GDP (at purchasing power parity). As seen in the table above, a nation focused on providing great quality of life for its people, which cares about rights and equality, and has a focus on entrepreneurship, is seen as having the most powerful nation brand. This reflects how the world has changed; no longer is it just tanks and banks that give a country influence around the world. Hard power is making way for softer power that comes about as a result of entrepreneurship and cultural exports.

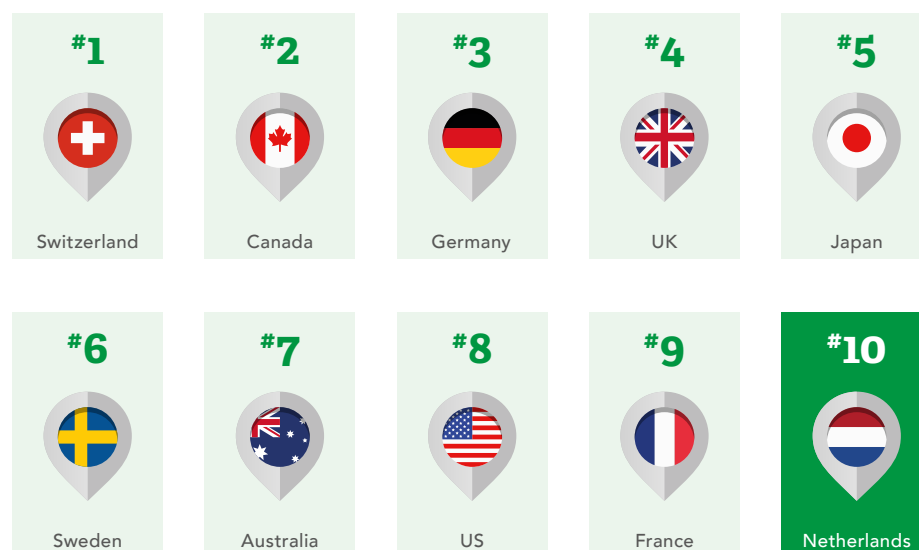
In addition to the eight categories above, a momentum metric called “Movers” represents 10 percent of the index, measuring how different, distinctive, dynamic and unique a country is seen to be.

To see the full Best Countries methodology, visit: <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/articles/methodology>

THE BEST OF THE BEST

Switzerland tops the ranking as it is highly regarded for its citizenship, being open for business, for having an environment that encourages entrepreneurship, offering its citizens a high quality of life, and for being culturally influential.

All of the other countries in the top five also score highly across all of these measures. Canada is especially strong on the citizenship measure and tops the ranking for quality of life. Germany has a similar Best Countries profile to the UK, though Germany is stronger on entrepreneurship and is seen as offering a better quality of life. Japan's greatest strength is also entrepreneurship, but it also scores highly across all the other measures.



Ranking out of 80 countries





A CLOSER LOOK AT BRAND NETHERLANDS

In the past year the Netherlands moved up one position, from eleventh to tenth, taking the place of Norway and returning the country to the global top ten.

The number one spot is claimed by Switzerland for the second year running, and Canada has retained its grip on second place.



State of a Nation - Netherlands



Source: Best Countries 2018

Rank out of 80 Countries	Rank out of 80 Countries
#3 For caring about human rights	#6 For raising a kid
#3 For religious freedom	#9 For trustworthy
#4 For politically stable	#9 For economically stable
#5 For being progressive	#9 For having an educated population

BEST COUNTRIES FOR...

Entrepreneurship



1	Germany
2	Japan
3	US
4	UK
5	Switzerland
6	Sweden
7	Canada
8	Singapore
9	Netherlands
10	Norway

Cultural Influence



1	Italy
2	France
3	US
4	Spain
5	UK
6	Japan
7	Switzerland
8	Brazil
9	Australia
10	Sweden

Headquartering a Corporation



1	Switzerland
2	Canada
3	Luxembourg
4	Australia
5	Denmark
6	Sweden
7	Netherlands
8	Austria
9	New Zealand
10	Germany

Transparency



1	Norway
2	Canada
3	Switzerland
4	Finland
5	Sweden
6	Denmark
7	Netherlands
8	Germany
9	UK
10	Austria

Being 'Open for Business'



1	Luxembourg
2	Switzerland
3	Panama
4	Denmark
5	Sweden
6	Finland
7	Canada
8	Norway
9	Netherlands
10	New Zealand

Quality of Life



1	Canada
2	Denmark
3	Sweden
4	Norway
5	Australia
6	Switzerland
7	Finland
8	Netherlands
9	New Zealand
10	Germany

Women



1	Denmark
2	Sweden
3	Norway
4	Netherlands
5	Finland
6	Canada
7	Switzerland
8	Australia
9	New Zealand
10	Germany



12	Netherlands
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KEEPING UP WITH THE NEIGHBORS?

The Netherlands' attributes correlate most strongly with those of Denmark – their profiles are 96 percent the same – followed by Sweden 95 percent, then Norway, Austria and Canada. These markets are all distinct, but they are also all forward-looking, well-educated medium-sized economies with a strong sense of cultural and national identity.

The Best Countries in Europe

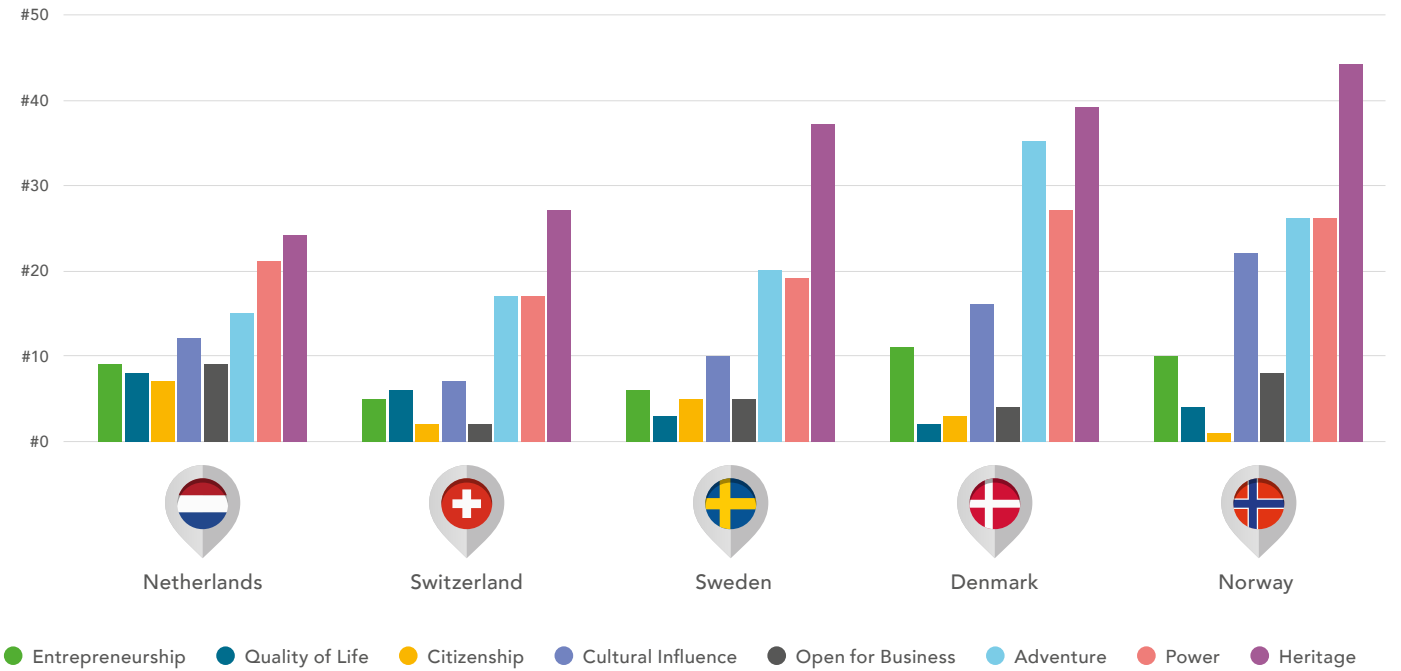


The Netherlands is among the top ten countries in the world for women, entrepreneurship, transparency, being “open for business,” raising a child, and being “forward-looking.” This all adds up to a country that’s seen as stable, reliable, welcoming, and humane. In short, the Netherlands is perceived as an ideal place to invest both one’s money and one’s time. It’s the kind of solid, dependable reputation that one would expect from one of the world’s major banking, trade, and transport hubs – although this strong-but-sober economic profile also goes some way towards explaining why the Netherlands isn’t seen as particularly dynamic, sexy, or adventurous. There is room to tell a stronger story about the Netherlands’ recent entrepreneurial successes, as well as to highlight the dynamism inherent in the country’s rich cultural history. Despite the country’s numerous cultural landmarks – ranging from The Girl With A Pearl Earring to the scintillating theatrical productions of director Ivo van Hove – the country could stand to score higher in perceptions of heritage, innovation, distinctiveness, and uniqueness.

THE NETHERLANDS SHARES A COMMON PERCEPTUAL CORE WITH COUNTRIES SUCH AS DENMARK, SWEDEN, NORWAY, AUSTRIA, AND CANADA

Compared to Other World Powers

= Rank out of 80 countries



Source: Best Countries 2018



CHALLENGES FOR DUTCH BRANDS

People believe what they do about a country because they gradually accumulate snippets of information that either reinforce or challenge what they think.

Experiences with brands can provide those snippets, and leading brands don't just represent themselves, they represent their country of origin.

People's perceptions of brands evolve gradually over time. China, Singapore, Japan, and Korea have shown how international perceptions of what their country represents can deliver a change in perceptions relatively quickly. When there is a concerted and sustained branding effort by government bodies in collaboration with the private sector, change can happen fast.

Brands can use their country of origin to greatest effect when they align with values and positive attributes already associated with that country. This often means walking a fine line between using accepted wisdom to benefit a brand, and perpetuating stereotypes. Striking the right balance is a matter of utmost importance for each brand and will depend on their category and the market they are entering. For some brands, the reputation of their country will help fill the gaps in what consumers know about an individual brand.

The following rules of thumb apply to most Dutch brands:

- The Netherlands is seen as a happy, progressive, educated, and forward-looking place, though not particularly dynamic or culturally rich. This is generally true despite the Netherlands' cutting-edge theater scene, Northern Renaissance heritage, and star designers like Piet Hein Eek. As such, consumers around the world perceive the Netherlands more as a place for banking and beer than as a place for innovation and design – a perception that's ripe for change as brands showcase the best in Dutch ingenuity.
- There's an association in people's minds between the Netherlands and beer, something that's underscored every time someone buys a Heineken in each of the 192 countries in which it's available. Brands – beer or otherwise – can tap into the Netherlands' reputation for quality and reliability to tell stories about craft, excellence, and innovation that hit all the right cultural buttons.
- Many Dutch brands have turned to the passion and power of sport as a way to publicize their brands. Brands could do well to engage with the country's unique underdog appeal in this area: in terms of medals per capita, and despite its smaller size, the Netherlands is one of the most successful countries ever to compete at the Olympics.
- Thanks to international institutions centered around The Hague, as well as the Dutch government's own history of consensus and progress (for instance, being an early adopter of gay marriage), people see The Netherlands as an exceptionally safe and stable place that upholds gender equality, religious freedoms, and human rights. Brands that reflect this progressive perception by developing their own industry-leading social purposes will place themselves in sync with Brand Netherlands. They will thus reap extra benefits by seeming authentic and in tune with the best aspects of what it means to be Dutch.

							
	Canada	China	France	Netherlands	Germany	Russia	Denmark
Friendly	#7	#56	#35	#10	#51	#78	#15
Well-developed infrastructure	#4	#24	#7	#6	#2	#27	#10
Modern	#4	#24	#5	#9	#6	#26	#11
Health conscious	#6	#41	#14	#9	#11	#31	#3
Culturally accessible	#15	#35	#4	#6	#23	#44	#20
Gender equality	#6	#68	#8	#1	#12	#37	#2
Educated population	#10	#32	#11	#9	#4	#24	#7

Source: BAV Best Countries

AMBASSADOR BRANDS

China, Singapore, Japan and Korea have shown how international perceptions of what their country represents can be transformed, and relatively quickly. When there is a concerted and sustained effort by government bodies in collaboration with the private sector, change can happen fast.

People believe what they do about a country because they gradually accumulate snippets of information that either reinforce or challenge what they think. Experiences with brands can provide those snippets, and leading brands don't just represent themselves, they represent their country.

There are several strong ambassador brands for the Netherlands.

Much as Philips showed decades earlier that small but mighty Netherlands could compete with world powers in designing electronics, today Booking.com and Thuisbezorgd.nl (Takeaway.com) are leading the way in showcasing the Netherlands as a destination to build world-conquering startups. It's notable that these are two platforms with straightforward and transparent missions to improve people's everyday lives – whether they're arranging travel or ordering dinner – as opposed to being online companies in which

monetization is “hidden” in the form of data collection and consumer targeting. Booking and Takeaway's success reinforces the Netherlands' reputation as a country of straightforward, pragmatic problem-solvers.

In this same vein, retailers HEMA and Action have used this focus on practicality and transparency to sell their extraordinarily fair-priced home and personal goods in many hundreds of stores across Europe; Action does so by constantly engineering its product array to bring in new, budget-priced essentials, while HEMA highlights on the quirkier side of Dutch identity by focusing on cheerful democratic design.

And then, of course, there's Heineken, which is not only the world's second-largest beer conglomerate, but also a brand that serves as many a global beer drinker's first encounter with premium (yet approachable) imported beer. 25 million Heinekens are served daily across 192 countries, all with the kind of consistently balanced taste that is itself a kind of feat of Dutch engineering, ingenuity, and reliability. More than that, though, Heineken shares Netherlands' energy and celebratory spirit with the world through its partnerships with Formula 1, the UEFA Champions League, and James Bond, among other leaders in sport and culture. It's no surprise, then, that the brand's Heineken experience museum is Amsterdam's most-visited attraction.

ABOUT CULTURAL RANKINGS

The BrandAsset® Valuator (BAV) is a study of consumer brand perceptions, measuring brands on imagery and equity dimensions in a category-agnostic fashion. By understanding and exploring a brand against the broader dynamics of culture, BAV can uniquely provide insight into a brand's larger role in the evolving cultural marketplace, and provide actionable insights that drive both brand growth, and the brand's impact on culture.

BAV has been collecting cultural ranks of brands for 24 years to date, having spoken to over 1.2 million consumers globally. In the Netherlands, BAV has been tracking 75 brand associations, including 48 imagery dimensions, since 1993. The evolution of the brandscape in the Netherlands has been meticulously measured and studied by BAV and reflects the culture of the times and consumer attitudes.

BAV's “Cultural Rankings” tool captures a snapshot of consumers' mindset and market conditions measuring key brand dimensions that matter, from trust and innovation to social responsibility. When combined with other market-specific brand associations, the tool helps contextualize a brand's cultural role, guiding marketplace positioning.

For more information about BAV and its Cultural Rankings, please contact:

Michael Sussman
CEO, BAV Group
Michael.Sussman@yr.com

Anna Blender
SVP, BAV Group
ablender@bavconsulting.com

Lauren Hayden
Senior Brand Analyst, BAV Group
Lauren.hayden@yr.com



5

**BRAND
BUILDING BEST
PRACTICES**

BRAND BUILDING IS KEY TO SUCCEED IN A DIGITAL AGE

The rise of artificial intelligence (AI), voice assistants, chatbots, and on-demand delivery will revolutionize how Dutch people make their daily buying decisions.

Dutch shoppers' fast embrace of technology is already shaking up once-staid industries: today, for instance, some three in ten Dutch consumers buy their groceries online. As this trend continues, Dutch consumers will transition to "passive selection" and stick with what they know, with most of the brands in their online shopping baskets remaining unchanged for months.

What do these technological shifts mean for brands? In fact, we expect that brands will be just as important as ever in creating a competitive advantage and driving growth for businesses. Global findings from BrandZ™ clearly demonstrate the value that strong brands create. Year after year, we see that brands in the Global Top 100 significantly outperform the field in their returns to shareholders – and, just as crucially, they recover shareholder value much faster during tough and disruptive economic times. Investing in building brands will remain important to succeed in this digital, AI-enabled future, and the essential principles of building strong brands will still hold true.

Brand Building Principles to Survive and Thrive in a Digital Age

As marketers venture into a fast-changing digital environment, they need to maintain the fundamentals of brand building for long-term success. From our years of working with BrandZ™, the largest brand equity platform in the world, we have identified principles to help brands survive and thrive.

These principles are true for any market in the world, but three among these seem especially vital for success in the Netherlands. Those Dutch brands that are growing faster than others:

- **Have a defined purpose and are perceived as making people's lives better**
- **Are backed by relevant innovation and are perceived to be setting technological trends**
- **Remain human-centric and focused on relationships**



Erzsi Eleveld

Client Director
Erzsi.Eleveld@kantarmillwardbrown.com
Kantar Millward Brown

KANTAR MILLWARD BROWN

BRAND BUILDING PRINCIPLES

1

Have a defined purpose and are perceived as making people's lives better

BrandZ™ data shows that strong brands are those that have a clear purpose in making people's lives better, in ways both large and small. Globally, the most purposeful brands grow their brand value at three times the rate of the least purposeful.

Take, for example, Dutch brand Tony's Chocolonely, which takes its mission statement, "Crazy about chocolate, serious about people," very seriously indeed. It produces chocolate that closely follows fair trade practices, which means that the brand is strongly opposed to slavery and buys cocoa directly from farmers in Africa. Consumers see Tony's Chocolonely as offering something very different to other brands, with a social purpose at the heart of everything it does – while also, of course, offering great-tasting chocolate. Tony's also stands for continual innovation, most notably in the form of the three limited edition flavors the brand introduces each year (the best of which are then added to the brand's permanent collection.)

Of course, purpose alone will not drive success; brands must also meet the performance demands of the market. So, while it's great, for example, that Amsterdam based start-up Fairphone is developing smartphones designed and produced with minimal environmental impact, that's only part of the story. The brand's purpose of creating a phone using fair labor conditions and conflict-free minerals will surely encourage many people to check out its phones – but ultimately it will need more positive product reviews across tech journals and blogs, as well good performance and processing specs, to convince shoppers to switch.

2

Are backed by relevant innovation and are perceived to be setting technological trends

Innovation can propel brand growth by creating a positive predisposition in people's minds. Sure enough, BrandZ™'s surveys show that value growth is more than 7 times faster for brands perceived as high on innovation. That said, only those innovations which consumers recognize and endorse can drive brand value.

Online supermarket Picnic, which raised 100 million Euros last year, is a disruptive player in the grocery retail space. They have instituted many operational cost savings behind the scenes to keep their business profitable. But most important from a consumer perspective are those innovations that are easy to see. These include free deliveries, more precise delivery timeframes, and the company's fleet of electric delivery vehicles.

Another example: While Heineken wasn't, in fact, the first mover to respond to growing demand for alcohol-free beer, the splashy way it went about launching its 0.0 product made Heineken big news – meaning consumers perceived it to be the one setting the trends. Heineken's partnership with Formula 1 at the Spanish Grand Prix, coupled with an integrated campaign including TV, digital, and experiential activations, gave the product a highly visible launch platform and an innovative sheen.

3

Remain human-centric and focused on relationships

Brands that deliver a great experience across all touchpoints and interactions grow their value most strongly. Standout brands cement their relationship with consumers by creating a holistic ecosystem that fully satisfies people's needs.

Electronic goods e-commerce player Coolblue is completely based around the combination of great service and low price. Their efforts in the pre-purchase, fulfillment, delivery, and return phases are all geared toward achieving a smile. Coolblue empowers its employees by offering them flexibility in what they're allowed to offer during customer-service interactions. The result is a can-do mentality among staff, as well as pleasantly surprised customers. Coolblue staffers are always available for pre-purchase consultation via a variety of platforms, including phone, email, Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp chats.

Similarly, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines has built a very strong digital platform to not only handle complaints and queries, but also to pro-actively inform passengers about their flight status. KLM has also built an integrated, holistic approach to check-in, allowing passengers to flexibly receive their boarding passes via WhatsApp and Facebook messenger in addition to more traditional channels.



BRAND BUILDING, NEW TECH AND FOMO

These days new technologies seem to pop up faster than ever before. As brand building professionals, we're hardly worth our pay if we don't scrutinize each of these for their applicability to marketing in general and brand building specifically.

And to be sure, there's a lot of good that can come from applying new technologies to marketing: the marketer of two decades ago would be agog at what's now possible in the realms of segmentation, targeting, and measurement alone. New technology can offer marketers paths to greater opportunity, it can also present numerous speed bumps – or worse, dead ends. So, let me offer a few words of advice to prevent any new tech project from ending up in disappointment or disaster.

For starters, it is extremely important to take a realistic assessment of a technology's capabilities. This can be difficult, especially if the technology in question is hyped, with lots of brands claiming to have already achieved great results. FOMO (fear of missing out) is forever lurking around the corner, and must be guarded against.

Take chat bots as just one example. Now, to be fair, chat bots have already featured prominently in a number of successful marketing campaigns. They can help tremendously with improving customer experience, a domain where a lot of brands struggle to find a cost-efficient solution. However, a chatbot based customer service portal will still need lots of properly organized human backup, as current bots are still rather limited in their capabilities.

Chat bots, you see, simply work with tables of questions and answers. They provide the answer that is written down in a table next to the relevant question. If the question is not written down in the table, they won't be able to provide the correct answer – or any answer at all. They can be rather inflexible beasts, chat bots. In order for bots to even provide acceptable levels of performance, their required



Marcus Birke

Regional Manager
AxiCom
Marcus.Birke@axicom.com

A X I C O M

Q&A tables will need to be really extensive and constantly updated. Even then, handover to next-level human support will be a frequent occurrence, and needs to run smoothly in order to prevent customer dissatisfaction. You can see the danger here: that brands could – and indeed have – set up shiny new consumer-facing bots without managing the trickier, less glamorous business of safeguarding against their limitations.

Apart from a realistic assessment of an emerging technology's capabilities, the other important thing is to always ladder back to a brand's core purposes. Maybe this point seems self-evident. My experience, though, tells me otherwise. With every new technology or communications platform, there is a tendency for brands to want to join in simply because they can or they feel they must. I have seen a lot of brands trying to jump on more bandwagons than is really wise for them. Anybody remember Second Life?

It's here again that the dangers of FOMO appear. What makes FOMO an even more powerful force for marketers (versus your average professional who wants to stay on top of the latest developments) is that in the short term, simply adopting the latest technologies can help position the marketer's brand as innovative. The decision, for instance, to accept bitcoins as payment means that for a time, your brand will be perceived as the kind of brand that accepts bitcoin payments - which is to say, one that stays on top of current developments.

But that new-tech halo can easily fade without a considered long-term plan. It is of the utmost important that the adoption of a new technology is not perceived as a goal in itself but as a means to an end. For example, the question of whether artificial intelligence (AI) is the right means to achieve a specific goal will very much vary from case to case, and from (hopefully) well-defined goal to well-defined goal. Again, a realistic assessment of the technology's capabilities and potential is crucial. According to the Dutch AI specialist BrainCreators, many of its potential clients (from within and without the marketing industry) want to try to solve their most challenging problems with the help of AI – particularly those problems that their own experts have not been able to solve for years. The catch, in most cases, is that AI does not (yet) provide this kind of superhuman capability. Instead, AI is good at automating relatively complex repetitive tasks that otherwise ask for a lot of human effort. AI is also good with pattern recognition and, when properly trained, can be used to classify huge sets of data, make predictions, and detect anomalies. The savviest brands, then, are turning to AI to improve processes they already have in place – not to work miracles.

The lesson to take away is that brands looking to apply new technologies should focus on those areas that make the most business sense, not those that make for the splashiest headline. The best opportunity areas will, in most cases, not involve a brand's most demanding business functions, but rather those functions where there's room to deliver a lot of savings. In sum: when it comes to the adoption of emerging technologies, go for profitable, not sexy!



TAKING THE PLUNGE INTO DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER? DIVE IN BRAND-FIRST

With the success of direct to consumer (DTC) brands like Ace & Tate and Boldking, more and more Dutch brands are considering a move into this rapidly expanding channel.

And for good reason. It's well documented that going DTC offers advantages in "cutting out the middleman," data collection, customer satisfaction, expanding product offerings, and the ability to control pricing and margins.

To achieve these advantages, a checklist of best practices within the industry has developed over time:

- **Create a seamless user experience.**
- **Focus on mobile platforms.**
- **Offer thoughtful customer service.**
- **Leverage customer data to build loyalty.**



Mike Flynn

Strategy Director
Design Bridge

Mike.Flynn@designbridge.com

While these certainly are must-haves in getting the DTC experience right, they're no longer quite as novel: simplicity, speed, and exceptional experiences have become table stakes for customers; they're simply the price of entry for brands entering the online retail space. For example, Amazon has made free shipping so ubiquitous that consumers now recoil at the thought of paying for postage.

As we've also seen in the long-established retail channel, what will ultimately win the DTC battle is the value added through brands.

Therefore, as companies move into the DTC space, brand stewards would be wise to focus on the true advantage that this type of commerce presents: The ability to fully control brand expression and story across all aspects of the DTC experience.

In other words, the opportunity lies not in creating a strong relationship between consumer and channel, but rather in creating an exceptionally strong relationship between consumer and brand.

Taking a look at a few of the key points along the DTC consumer journey, here are some recommendations and examples of how to ensure this kind of brand-led experience:

User Experience

Challenge your user interface and user experience designers to bake brand purpose in your design language across all stages of customer experience.

A good example of this is bike brand VanMoof, which builds the idea of worry-free travel into simplicity of their web interface and the functionality of their app. The VanMoof app lets you unlock your bike, check its battery levels, and remember where you parked it, all from your phone.

Customer Service

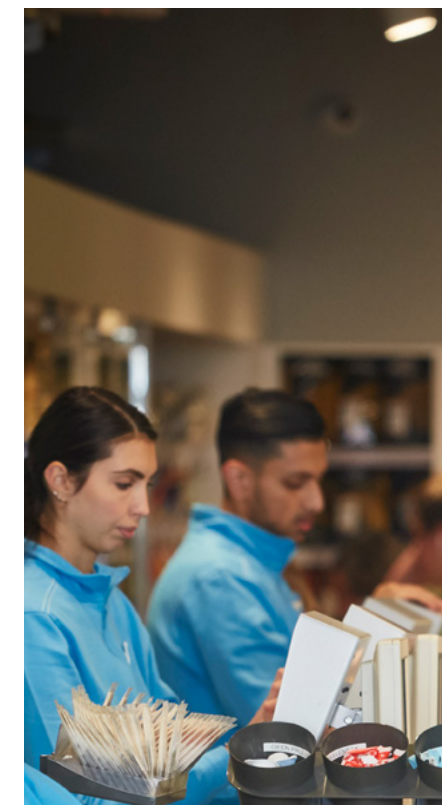
Unlike retail, DTC provides the opportunity to showcase and optimize the "human" side of your brand in a more controlled way. Think about how tone of voice can create surprise and delight across all stages of a user's experience.

For instance, the Ace & Tate eyeglasses brand delivers its service of "Home Try-On" using playful packaging and communications, making the transaction feel as easy as one-two-three.

E-Commerce

The digital shelf does not need to play by the rules of retail. Consider removing traditional shots of packaging and using your brand's other visual and verbal assets to "package" your products in a way that optimizes communication of the brand idea and proposition.

Dutch undergarment brand Amigo has built its products and brand around the idea of "keeping cool." Throughout their user experience they present models with digitized Panda heads, reinforcing the calmness that their underwear and t-shirts bring.

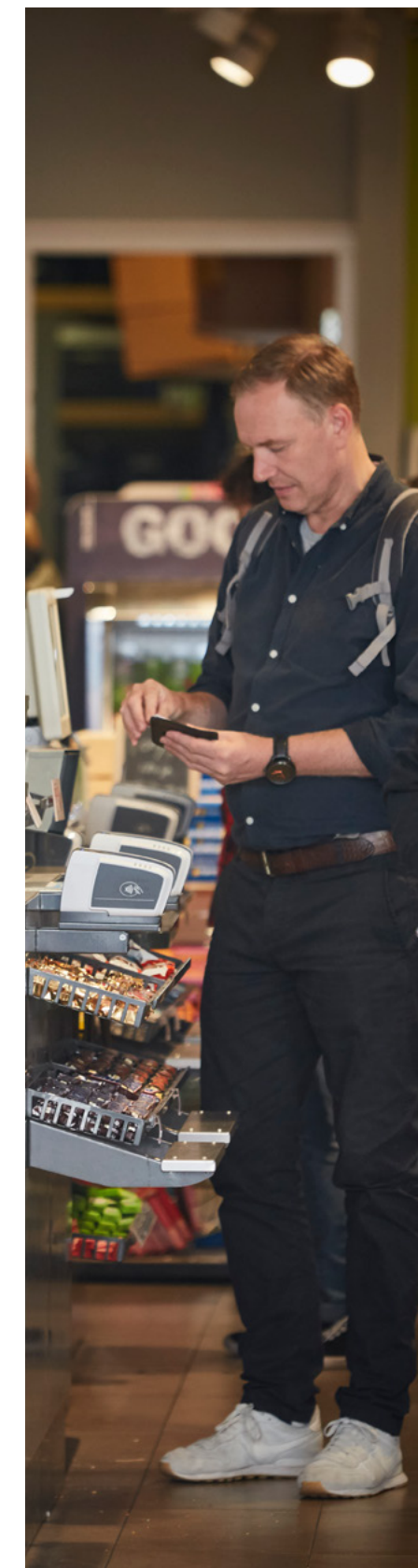


Delivery / Unboxing

In the DTC world, a new "moment of truth" is created when the package arrives at consumers' homes. Use this as your brand's stand-out moment, leveraging visual assets and tone-of-voice in ways that create excitement and word of mouth.

Online retailer Coolblue's purpose is to do "Everything for a smile." Utilizing the real estate of their delivery boxes, the brand brings out smiles in a variety of clever ways, including icons that warn not to open the box with things like carrots or axes; contests for "creative box make-overs"; and label inserts to thank neighbors for accepting the package.

While the digital world of DTC may seem like it requires a whole new approach to marketing your brand, we believe looking at this channel "brand-first" will provide a clear path forward. It's the one asset you have that will continue to reap rewards long past the next new tech trick.



CONSUMERS ARE AT THE HEART OF MANY BRANDS, BUT LET'S ALSO PROTECT THE HEART OF OUR BRANDS



What an amazing collection of great brands we have in The Netherlands. Whilst the average lifecycle of brands gets shorter and shorter, it's great to see so many Dutch brands build upon their strong heritage. At the same time, it's also great to see how some of the brands in this Top 30 have emerged only in the last few years.

Some of the fastest emerging new businesses are those companies that have built services based on technology and platforms. Besides Takeaway.com, the most prominent example of this practice is Booking.com, which completely changed the way we travel by meeting one simple consumer need – namely, how to easily find and book a hotel room.

It's not just about technology. Across the board, Dutch brands are frontrunners in adopting agile ways of working. Ultimately, all of these top Dutch brands have one thing in common: they are open to change and put consumer needs at the center of service innovation. Yes, great brands are built upon great consumer insights.



Bram van Schaik

CEO
Kantar Insights
Bram.van.Schaik@kantar.com

KANTAR

Agile Organizations Thrive on Consumer Insights

What does an agile approach look like? Take Booking.com as an example. Every day Booking combs through their data in search of any small consumer insight might make their service easier for their customers. And Booking tests these insights! In the Netherlands, they are known to be the kings of A/B testing (or should I say A/B/C/D/E/F/G/H/I/J/K/L/M testing?). I think this is even better because they are really known for testing everything!

Many of the traditional brands in this Dutch top 30 have adopted elements of this way of agile working. Small teams have been built out to work on improving "user experience" based on consumer insights, and Customer Journey Managers put the customer at the center of every business decision. As a result of these developments, we've seen amazing growth in the use of consumer data in decision-making processes. Customer feedback leads to a lot of process and product innovations. As a result, the speed of innovation has multiplied in the last few years.

Being agile is, I believe, one of the main reasons why Dutch brands recovered so well from the financial crisis. This applies particularly to Dutch banks. It's no accident that ING, ABN AMRO, and Rabobank are all in the top 10 of our rankings. All of them continue to introduce innovations: ING was the first large established bank to have a mobile app, ABN Amro introduced the Tikkie payments app, and Rabobank builds check-points into their apps to help consumers avoid making payments to the wrong account.

Of course, one innovation alone can't elevate a banking brand. Whilst it is clear that consumers appreciate the above innovations, many of these can easily be copied and indeed that's what's happened in the banking sector. What's needed, then, is innovation as a continuous process, not a one-time push.

To return to Booking.com, they have also found out by now that breakthrough (functional) innovations are harder to achieve once you are an established brand – hence their recent campaigns geared toward building emotion and brand love as opposed to simply touting low costs. Booking.com has now defined their purpose as being to "empower people to experience the world." This gives them the opportunity to bring their brand to a more aspirational level, while staying true to the original reason for being: to create a platform that enables an easy and convenient booking process. Research shows that a well-defined purpose, if built on the right consumer insights and delivered in the right way, can make a big difference in establishing a brand.

Consistency, however, is rapidly becoming the biggest challenge for brand builders. Traditional companies – especially companies like Heineken

in the fast-moving consumer goods space – are famous for building iconic brands. Such organizations used to have very strict brand guidelines that were carefully monitored, literally by the book. This way of working is under huge pressure nowadays in the new agile organization models. On the one hand there are more products, variations, and extensions to develop and improve than ever before. And on the other hand, there are more touchpoints than ever before.

All this is managed by different teams, organized around projects. Every project has its own Customer Journey Manager making sure that the consumer experience is looked after at all times. Very often however, there is no one to protect the brand. As a result, sensational innovations are developed rapidly, taking the customer relationship into account but not what the brand stands for. Carefully built-up brand assets are no longer used or replaced, and brands are increasingly sending out mixed messages, leaving their consumers confused.

It is clear what benefits the technology-centered approach to organizational models is bringing our great traditional brands – fast innovation, customer centricity – but we also have to consider how much effort has been made in building those brands. Consistency is much needed if a brand wants to grow. So, let's keep the Customer Journey Manager – but can someone else please protect the identity of our famous brands?

PURPOSE 2020 - IGNITING PURPOSE LED GROWTH



Robert-Jan Dhond

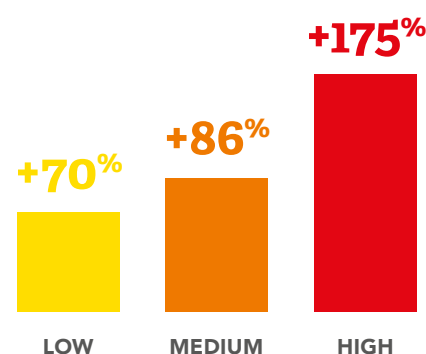
Global Leader, Business Purpose Practice
Kantar Consulting
RobertJan.Dhond@kantarconsulting.com

KANTAR CONSULTING

Being a purpose-led business is no longer an option. Research and experience show that purpose is required to sustain an enduring competitive edge in consumer preference, talent acquisition and business growth.

The WPP / Kantar Millward Brown BrandZ™ brands perceived as having a high positive impact on people's lives have grown brand value 2.5 times more than brands with low perceived impact.

12 Years Brand Value Growth
(Perceived positive impact)



Source: BrandZ™ / Kantar Millward Brown

Notwithstanding such strong evidence, purpose is often criticized. Not because it is unimportant or irrelevant, but because it is misunderstood. Purpose is confused with corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities to protect the world rather than recognized to be initiatives that positively impact the world. Or it is thought to be some sort of doubletalk like greenwashing. It is easy for companies to fall into these confusions, though, so it is vital to follow a proven path to get purpose right.

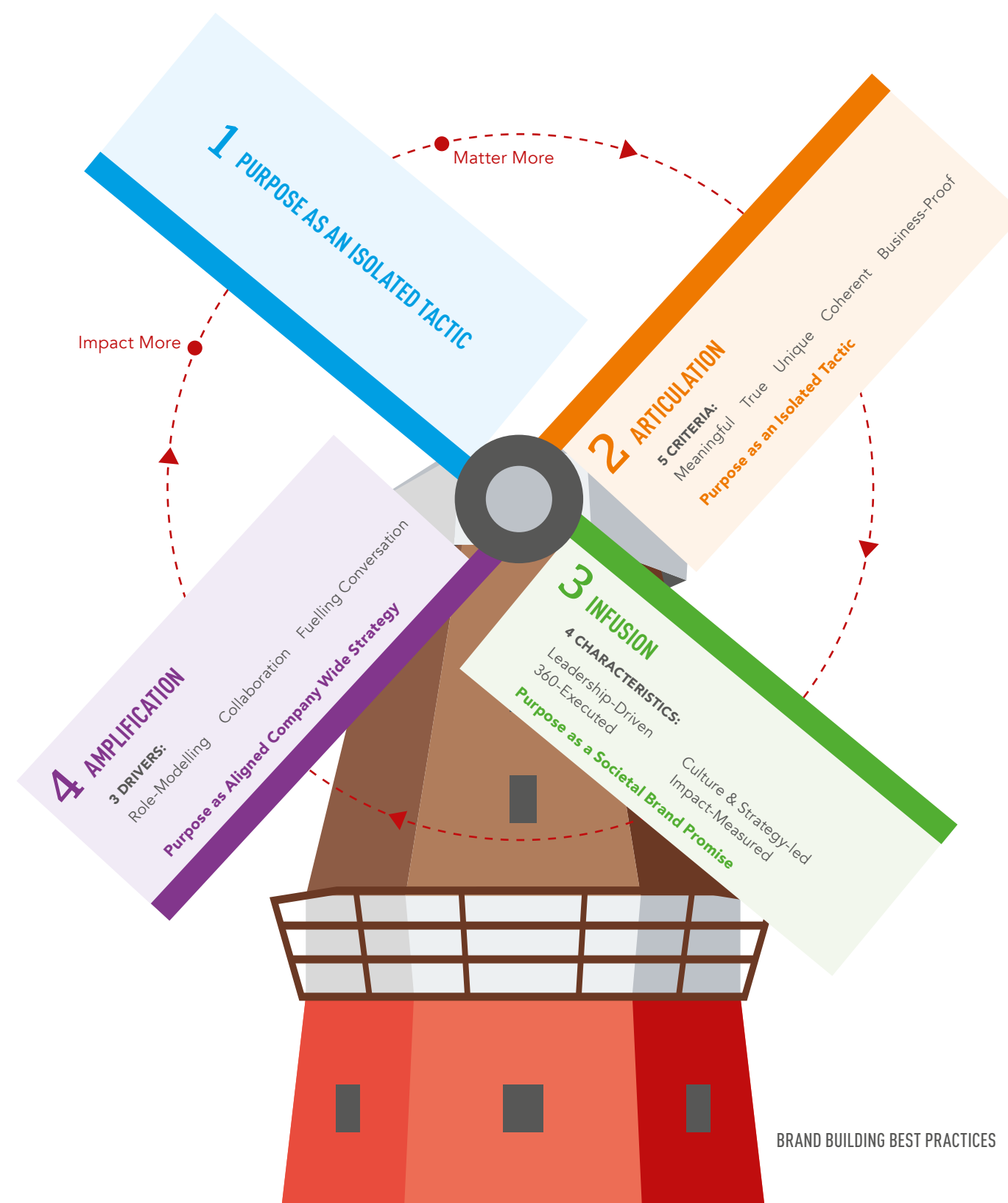
Becoming Purpose Led is a Journey

Purpose moves from a starting point to "matter more" to an end point to "impact more." Purpose often begins as an isolated tactic that, properly shepherded, grows into a promise or longer-term societal commitment that cuts across marketing functions and aims to build a brand's reputation. Next stage is for it become a company-wide strategy - a guiding principle for growth around the entire organization. Only then can it move onto the final stage, a purpose-led movement, creating positive social impact beyond the company itself.

Brands and companies begin at different stages in this journey. Some, like Patagonia, are born out of purpose. Others, such as Lego, are halfway down the path, while others, such as Nestlé, are just starting out.

There are three big steps in the journey; articulation, infusion and finally, amplification that get a brand from strategy to movement. These steps and their criteria constitute the Kantar Consulting Purpose 2020 framework.

The journey towards purpose-led growth has four stages



1

Articulation – Take a stand

Purpose is not vision or mission. Purpose is the reason a brand exists – it is the positive impact a brand makes in people's lives and the world they live in. Purpose articulates which direction a company is headed and what it does to get there. This is more than what a company sells, and thus, purpose is a challenging task.

Five criteria to move from tactics to promise:

- 1 **Meaningful:** purpose must have a strong, relevant meaning if it is to resonate. It does so by tapping into a societal tension that is bigger than functional and emotional benefits.
- 2 **True:** purpose must be true to a brand's character by moving only into territories where a brand has the credibility to do so. and being careful not to trivialize serious issues or over-commercialize social problems.
- 3 **Unique:** purpose must be connected to something that is distinctive about a brand in its category.
- 4 **Coherent:** must be aligned not only with the brand but with the wider company, through all elements including communications, product or even external suppliers.
- 5 **Business Proof:** must be integrated with business goals, not ancillary to the core commercial focus of a company.

2

Infusion – Involve everyone!

Infusing purpose means inspiring everyone, every time and everywhere. It is not one function like marketing, but all functions, all propositions and all decisions. In Marketing 2020, 80 percent of over-performing companies said they linked everything they did to purpose, compared to only 32 percent of under-performing companies.

Four characteristics that transition a promise to a strategy:

- 1 **Leadership-Driven:** senior leadership must embrace purpose and commit to it in an explicit way.
- 2 **Culture and Strategy-led:** purpose should engage both the heart and the mind. 91 percent of over-performing companies in Marketing 2020 said purpose was shared throughout the organization, versus 61 percent of underperforming companies.
- 3 **360-Executed:** purpose must be brought to life in everything - communication, product, service and retail should combine in an integrated way.
- 4 **Impact-Measured:** this means going beyond traditional KPIs to include societal KPIs such as measures of impact on attitudes, values and behaviors.

3

Amplification – Spark a Movement

Once purpose is articulated and infused, it must be advanced beyond the company itself. This means sparking a movement and stimulating others to join the cause.

Three key ways to spark a movement:

- 1 **Role-Modeling:** inspiring others through actions and decisions. A company must set the bar high and then live up to those standards.
- 2 **Collaboration:** working with others to accomplish a purpose. For example, Tony's Chocolonely is willing to work with anyone, even direct competitors, to fight for their purpose of slave-free cocoa.
- 3 **Cultural Conversation:** keeping the movement alive by constantly refueling and revitalizing the conversation about a company's purpose.

Driving purpose led growth

The path to purpose is one of aiming high to find a meaning beyond the category while navigating the terrain at ground level without stumbling. It entails finding a long-term societal tension that is relevant but unique while staying true to the brand and company.





6

RESOURCES

BRANDZ™ BRAND VALUATION METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

The brands that appear in this report are the Most Valuable brands in the Netherlands.

They were selected for inclusion in the BrandZ™ Top 30 Most Valuable Dutch Brands 2019 based on the unique and objective BrandZ™ brand valuation methodology that combines extensive and on-going consumer insights with rigorous financial analysis.

The BrandZ™ valuation methodology can be uniquely distinguished from its competitors by the way we use consumer viewpoints to assess brand equity, as we strongly believe that how consumers perceive and feel about a brand determines its success and failure. We conduct worldwide, on-going, in-depth quantitative consumer research, and build up a global picture of brands on a category-by-category and market-by-market basis.

Globally, our research covers 3.6 million consumers and more than 120,000 different brands in over 50 markets. This intensive, in-market consumer research differentiates the BrandZ™ methodology from competitors that rely only on a panel of “experts”, or purely on financial and market desktop research.

Before reviewing the details of this methodology, consider these three fundamental questions: why is brand important; why is brand valuation important; and what makes BrandZ™ the definitive brand valuation tool?

Importance of Brand

Brands embody a core promise of values and benefits consistently delivered. Brands provide clarity and guidance for choices made by companies, consumers, investors and others stakeholders. Brands provide the signposts we need to navigate the consumer and B2B landscapes.

At the heart of a brand's value is its ability to appeal to relevant customers and potential customers. BrandZ™ uniquely measures this appeal and validates it against actual sales performance. Brands that succeed in creating the greatest attraction power are those that are:

Meaningful

In any category, these brands appeal more, generate greater “love” and meet the individual's expectations and needs.

Different

These brands are unique in a positive way and “set the trends”, staying ahead of the curve for the benefit of the consumer.

Salient

They come spontaneously to mind as the brand of choice for key needs.

Importance of Brand Valuation

Brand valuation is a metric that quantifies the worth of these powerful but intangible corporate assets. It enables brand owners, the investment community and others to evaluate and compare brands and make faster and better-informed decisions. Brand valuation also enables marketing professionals to quantify their achievements in driving business growth with brands, and to celebrate these achievements in the boardroom.

Distinction of BrandZ™

BrandZ™ is the only brand valuation tool that peels away all of the financial and other components of brand value and gets to the core – how much brand alone contributes to corporate value. This core, what we call Brand Contribution, differentiates BrandZ™.

THE VALUATION PROCESS

Step 1: Calculating Financial Value

Part A

We start with the corporation. In some cases, a corporation owns only one brand. All Corporate Earnings come from that brand. In other cases, a corporation owns many brands, and we need to apportion the earnings of the corporation across a portfolio of brands.

To make sure we attribute the correct portion of Corporate Earnings to each brand, we analyze financial information from annual reports and other sources, including Kantar Consulting. This analysis yields a metric we call the Attribution Rate.

We multiply Corporate Earnings by the Attribution Rate to arrive at Branded Earnings, the amount of Corporate Earnings attributed to a particular brand. If the Attribution Rate of a brand is 50 percent, for example, then half the Corporate Earnings are identified as coming from that brand.

Part B

What happened in the past – or even what's happening today – is less important than prospects for future earnings. Predicting future earnings requires adding another component to our BrandZ™ formula. This component assesses future earnings prospects as a multiple of current earnings. We call this component the Brand Multiple. It's similar to the calculation used by financial analysts to determine the market value of stocks (Example: 6X earnings or 12X earnings). Information supplied by Bloomberg data helps us calculate a Brand Multiple. We take the Branded Earnings and multiply that number by the Brand Multiple to arrive at what we call Financial Value.

Step 2: Calculating Brand Contribution

So now we have got from the total value of the corporation to the part that is the branded value of the business. But this branded business value is still not quite the core that we are after. To arrive at Brand Value, we need to peel away a few more layers, such as the in-market and logistical factors that influence the value of the branded business, for example: price, availability and distribution.

What we are after is the value of the intangible asset of the brand itself that exists in the minds of consumers. That means we have to assess the ability of brand associations in consumers' minds to deliver sales by predisposing consumers to choose the brand or pay more for it.

We focus on the three aspects of brands that we know make people buy more and pay more for brands: being Meaningful (a combination of emotional and rational affinity), being Different (or at least feeling that way to consumers), and being Salient (coming to mind quickly and easily as the answer when people are making category purchases). We identify the purchase volume and any extra price premium delivered by these brand associations. We call this unique role played by brand, Brand Contribution.

Step 3: Calculating Brand Value

Now we take the Financial Value and multiply it by Brand Contribution, which is expressed as a percentage of Financial Value. The result is Brand Value. Brand Value is the dollar amount a brand contributes to the overall value of a corporation. Isolating and measuring this intangible asset reveals an additional source of shareholder value that otherwise would not be measured.

Eligibility Criteria

Each of the brands included in the BrandZ™ Top 30 Most Valuable Dutch Brands 2019 must meet the following criteria:

- **The brand originated in the Netherlands.**
- **And is owned by a publicly listed company traded on a credible stock exchange, or its financials are available in the public domain.**

WHY BRANDZ™ IS THE DEFINITIVE BRAND VALUATION METHODOLOGY

All brand valuation methodologies are similar – up to a point.

All methodologies use financial research and sophisticated mathematical formulas to calculate current and future earnings that can be attributed directly to a brand rather than to the corporation. This exercise produces an important but incomplete picture.

What's missing? The picture of the brand at this point lacks input from the people whose opinions are most important – the consumer. This is where the BrandZ™ methodology and the methodologies of our competitors part company.

How does the competition determine the consumer view?

Interbrand derives the consumer point of view from panels of experts who contribute their opinions. The Brand Finance methodology employs a complicated accounting method called Royalty Relief Valuation.

Why is the BrandZ™ methodology superior?

BrandZ™ goes much further and is more relevant. Once we have the important, but incomplete, financial picture of the brand, we communicate with consumers, people who are actually paying for brands every day, constantly. Our on-going, in-depth quantitative research includes over three and a half million consumers and more than 120,000 brands in over 50 markets worldwide.

What's the BrandZ™ benefit?

The BrandZ™ methodology produces important benefits for two broad audiences.

- **Members of the financial community, including analysts, shareholders, investors and C-suite, depend on BrandZ™ for the most reliable and accurate brand value information available.**
- **Brand owners turn to BrandZ™ to more deeply understand the causal links between brand strength, sales and profits, and to translate those insights into strategies for building brand equity and fuelling business growth.**



One of humanity’s greatest recent achievements was successfully sequencing our own genome in 2003, revealing the key building blocks of what makes us each unique.

NOW BRANDZ™ GIVES YOU THE ABILITY TO DO THE SAME FOR YOUR BRAND OF CHOICE

BRAND EQUITY

BRAND EQUITY BUILDING BLOCKS

BRAND STORIES

DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

BRAND VALUATIONS

BEST COUNTRY RANKINGS

POWERED BY BRANDZ

25

Gl

GLOBAL
(100)

BRANDZ™ Genome Product Number

BRANDZ™ Genome Symbol

Name

Number of Brands Ranked

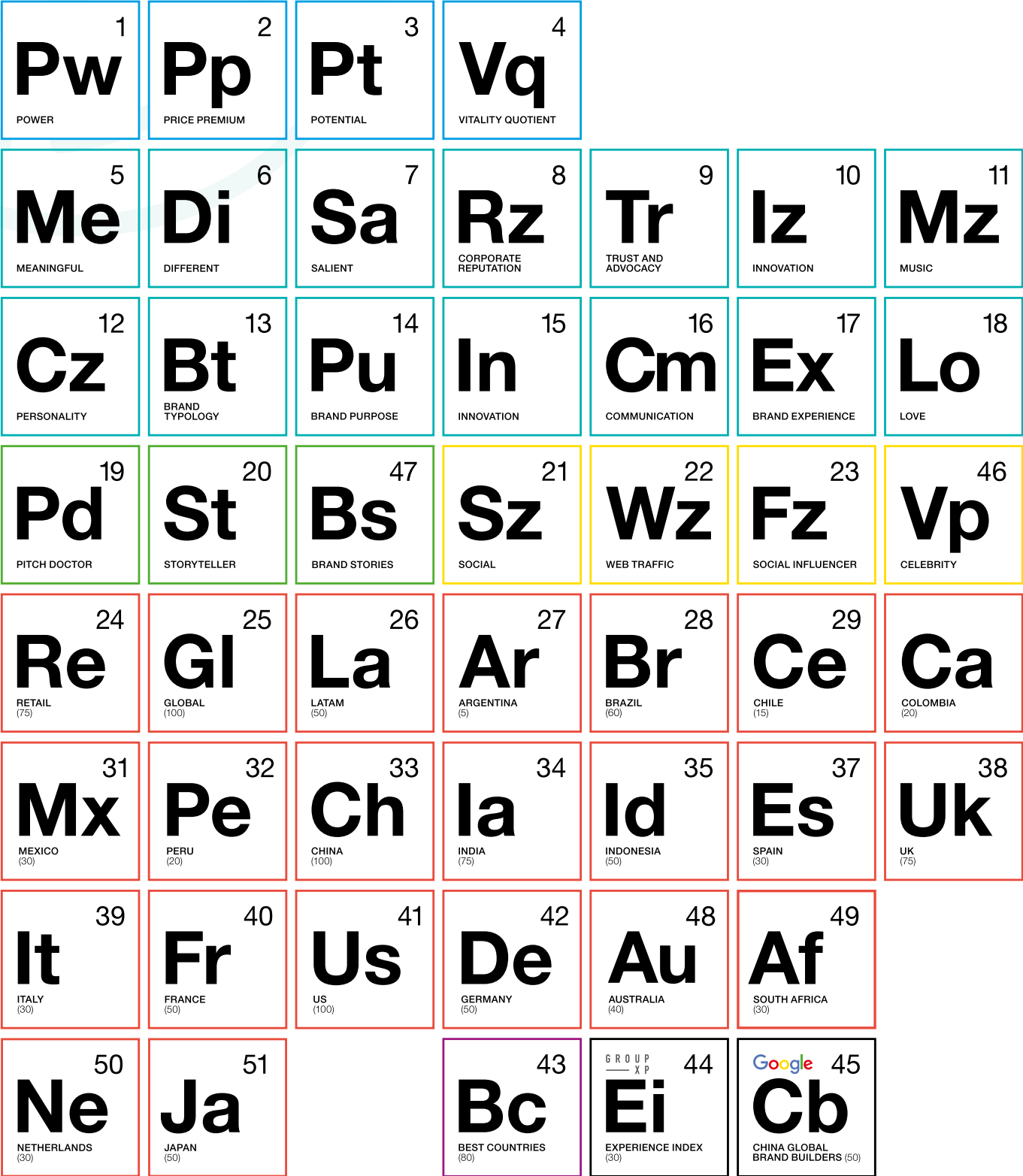
The BrandZ™ Brand Genome visualises your brand’s “genome” on a page, with all the genome sequence measures providing an instant overview of your brand.

The ultimate tool for a new business pitch and a lot more

Brand Genome is a unique BrandZ™ tool, exclusive to WPP. It’s free, available 24/7 and takes just seconds to create.

Visit <http://genome-measures.wppbrandz.com/> where you will be able to find out about each of the BrandZ™ measures, what they are, how they are calculated and how you can access a report which contains the measure.

To download a sample genome map visit: <http://wppwrap.com/bg.pdf>



BRANDZ™ BRAND BUILDING TOOLS AND PERSONALIZED PUBLICATIONS

Only available via your WPP Agency

Tr⁹
TRUST AND
ADVOCACY



TrustR

Engaging consumers in the post-recession world.

Rz⁸
CORPORATE
REPUTATION



RepZ

Maximising brand and corporate integrity.

GOING GLOBAL?

WE WROTE THE BOOK

BrandZ™ Country Reports: Essential Travel Guides For Global Brand Building

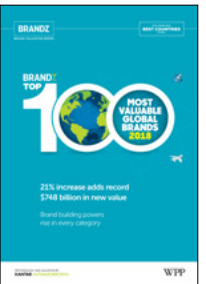
Our BrandZ™ country reports contain unparalleled market knowledge, insights, and thought leadership about the world's most exciting markets. You'll find, in one place, the wisdom of WPP brand building experts from all regions, plus the unique consumer insights derived from our proprietary BrandZ™ database.

Re²⁴
RETAIL
(75)



BrandZ™ Top 75 Most Valuable Global Retail Brands 2018

Gl²⁵
GLOBAL
(100)



BrandZ™ Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brands 2018

brandz.com/region/global

Vq⁴
VITALITY QUOTIENT



Pu¹⁴ **In**¹⁵ **Cm**¹⁶ **Ex**¹⁷ **Lo**¹⁸

Vitality Quotient (vQ)

vQ introduces a new framework to effectively diagnose a brand's health.

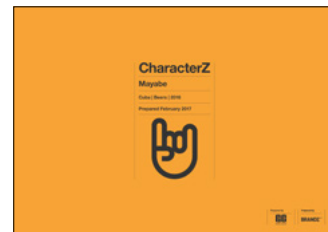
Iz¹⁰
INNOVATION



InnovationZ

Discover real-time innovation and startup ideas sourced via the exclusive Springwise global network of 20,000 spotters.

Cz¹²
PERSONALITY



CharacterZ

Brand personality analysis deepens brand understanding.

Pd¹⁹
PITCH DOCTOR



PitchDoctor

Everything you need to know about your brand, on one page.

La²⁶
LATAM
(50)



BrandZ™ Top 50 Most Valuable Latin American Brands 2018

brandz.com/report/latin-america/2017

Ar²⁷
ARGENTINA

Br²⁸
BRAZIL



la³⁴
INDIA
(75)



BrandZ™ Top 75 Most Valuable Indian Brands 2018

brandz.com/report/india/2018

Id³⁵
INDONESIA
(50)



BrandZ™ Top 50 Most Valuable Indonesian Brands 2018

brandz.com/report/indonesian/2018

Es³⁷
SPAIN
(30)



BrandZ™ Top 30 Most Valuable Spanish Brands 2017

brandz.com/region/spain

St²⁰
STORYTELLER



StoryTeller

An interactive data visualisation tool to allow anyone to build story-led insights.

Sz²¹
SOCIAL



SocialZ

See the real-time social landscape of brands, instantly.

Wz²²
WEB TRAFFIC



WebZ

A web traffic story for your brand.

Vp⁴⁶
CELEBRITY



CelebrityZ

Text needs to go in here for the CelebrityZ report.

Uk³⁸
UK
(75)



BrandZ™ Top 75 Most Valuable UK Brands 2018

brandz.com/region/uk

It³⁹
ITALY
(50)



BrandZ™ Top 30 Most Valuable Italian Brands 2018

brandz.com/region/italy

Fr⁴⁰
FRANCE
(50)



BrandZ™ Top 50 Most Valuable French Brands 2018

brandz.com/region/france

Us⁴¹
US
(100)



BrandZ™ Top 100 Most Valuable US Brands 2019

brandz.com/region/us

42
De
GERMANY
(50)



**BrandZ™ Top 50
Most Valuable German
Brands 2018**

brandz.com/region/germany

48
Au
AUSTRALIA
(20)



**BrandZ™ Top 40
Most Valuable
Australian Brands 2018**

brandz.com/region/australia

49
Af
SOUTH AFRICA
(30)



**BrandZ™ Top 30 Most
Valuable South African
Brands 2018**

brandz.com/region/south-africa

50
Ne
NETHERLANDS
(30)



**BrandZ™ Top 30
Most Valuable Dutch
Brands 2019**

LOOKING EAST

IN-DEPTH BRAND-BUILDING INTELLIGENCE ABOUT TODAY'S CHINA

The opportunity to build brands in China is greater than ever. But so are the challenges.

The fastest growth is happening deep in the country, in less well-known cities and towns. Consumers are more sophisticated and expect brands to deliver high-quality products and services that show real understanding of local market needs.

WPP has been in China for over 40 years. We know the Chinese market in all its diversity and complexity. This experience has gone into our series of BrandZ™ China reports. They will help you avoid mistakes and benefit from the examples of successful brand builders.

33
Ch
CHINA
(100)



**BrandZ™ Top 100
Most Valuable
Chinese Brands 2018**

brandz.com/region/china

45
Cb
CHINA GLOBAL
BRAND BUILDERS (50)



**BrandZ™ Top 50
Chinese Global Brand
Builders 2018**

brandz.com/article/chinese-global-brand-builders-2018-2549

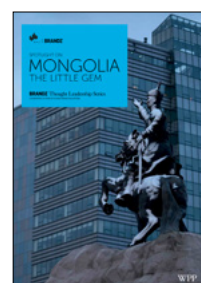
SPOTLIGHT ON...



Spotlight on Cuba

Cuba is a market unparalleled both in the Caribbean region and the world. Brand awareness among Cubans is high, but gaining access to them uniquely challenging. Now is the time to plan your Cuba strategy.

brandz.com/article/spotlight-on-cuba



Spotlight on Mongolia

Mongolia's GDP has grown at rates as high as 17 percent in recent years, encouraging a growing number of international brands to gravitate toward this fast-growth market and make a beeline for one of Asia's hidden gems.

brandz.com/article/spotlight-on-mongolia



**Unmasking the Individual
Chinese Investor**

brandz.com/article/unmasking-the-individual-chinese-investor-report



**The Power and Potential
of the Chinese Dream**

brandz.com/article/chinese-dream-report



**The Chinese Golden Weeks
in Fast Growth Cities**

brandz.com/article/chinese-golden-weeks-report



**The Chinese New Year
in Next Growth cities**

brandz.com/article/chinese-new-year-report

AXI COM

AxiCom delivers PR campaigns for the world's most innovative technology companies. The agency works with clients in the Enterprise Computing, Telecoms, Consumer, FinTech, Media Technology and Business Applications sectors. With offices across France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the US and UK, and more than 160 employees, AxiCom designs, builds and delivers ground-breaking and thought-provoking campaigns worldwide. AxiCom offers clients analyst and influencer relations, content, digital marketing, media relations, internal communications and research and insights services. Being part of the global communications group BCW Group and the wider WPP Group provides AxiCom with unparalleled global reach and access to a vast range of additional marketing competencies.

www.axicom.com

Marcus Birke
Regional Manager
Marcus.Birke@axicom.com



BAV Group is a global consultancy with expertise in consumer insights and brand marketing strategy. Using BrandAsset® Valuator, a proprietary brand management tool and global database of consumer perceptions of brands, BAV informs strategic and creative solutions that drive business results. Over 25 years, BAV has captured data and consumer insights on more than 60,000 brands in 50 countries around the world, evaluating 75 brand image and equity dimensions that matter. BAV Group is a unit of VMLY&R.

www.bavgroup.com

Annelies Termot
BAV Director
Annelies@vmlyr.nl



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Marion Koopman
CEO, Netherlands
Marion.Koopman@greenhousegroup.com



GroupM is the world's leading media investment company responsible for more than \$113B in annual media investment through agencies including Mindshare, MediaCom, Wavemaker, Essence and m/SIX, as well as the outcomes-driven programmatic audience company, Xaxis. GroupM creates competitive advantage for advertisers via its worldwide organization of media experts who deliver powerful insights on consumers and media platforms, trading expertise, market-leading brand-safe media, technology solutions, addressable TV, content, sports and more.

www.groupm.com

Eric Kramer
CEO, GroupM & Country Manager, WPP
Eric.Kramer@groupm.com



BCW is one of the world's largest full-service global communications agencies. Founded by the merger of Burson-Marsteller and Cohn & Wolfe, BCW delivers digitally and data-driven creative content and integrated communications programs grounded in earned media and scaled across all channels for clients in the B2B, consumer, corporate, crisis management, CSR, healthcare, public affairs and technology sectors. BCW is a part of WPP (NYSE: WPP), the world's leader in communications services.

www.bcw-global.com

Barbara Mulder
CEO, Netherlands
Barbara.Mulder@bm.com



Design Bridge is a multicultural, multidisciplinary team of creative entrepreneurs – a destination agency for clients and talent in London, Amsterdam, Singapore, New York and Shanghai. In our 30+ years, we've picked up international awards including D&AD, Pentawards, FAB Awards, New York Festivals and DBA Design Effectiveness. We combine intuition and intelligence to bring brands to life through ideas that engage and connect. Our clients believe in the power of design to keep their businesses at the forefront of industry. We know size doesn't matter - it's impact that counts. Mediocrity is the enemy: it's a moment of Truth and Dare.

www.designbridge.com

Frank Nas
Managing Director, Netherlands
Frank.Nas@designbridge.com



When it really matters. That's when businesses and their management turn to Hill+Knowlton Strategies for advice. We protect their reputations. And we also build brand reputations. Fostering acceptance of and support for the management and the company among its main stakeholders is crucial. At Hill+Knowlton, we specialize in a multi-stakeholder approach. Analyzing, informing and keeping stakeholders engaged in an innovative, effective and efficient manner. As the leader in our field. Hill+Knowlton is at its best when our clients face increasingly complex risks. We solve problems. And we assist businesses and their management when they are at their most vulnerable.

www.hkstrategies.com

Jack de Vries,
Board Director, Netherlands
Jack.deVries@hkstrategies.com



J. Walter Thompson Amsterdam is an industry leading agency, offering high-level strategic consultancy alongside award-winning creative solutions. We're on a continuous quest to give our clients the advantage they need in the current state of flux. We always try to answer the question "what's next?" We believe in going beyond the brief by using fundamental ideas and pioneering solutions to solve our clients' problems. Be that by creating a new Rembrandt out of data, making a new currency to buy your car with, or opening a school in India - their campaigns go beyond advertising.

www.jwtamsterdam.nl

Ralph Wisbrun
Founding Partner, Netherlands
Ralph.Wisbrun@jwtamsterdam.nl

MEDIACOM

MediaCom: “The Content + Connections Agency”, working for clients to leverage their brands’ entire system of communications across paid, owned and earned channels delivering a step change in their business outcomes. A world leading media communications specialist, with billings of US\$33 billion, employing 7,000 people across 105 countries. Clients include Adidas, Coca-Cola, Dell, Mars, NBCUniversal, P&G, PSA, Richemont, Shell and Sony. In June 2018 MediaCom was named Cannes Lions Media Agency Network of the Year. The first time any agency network has held all six major Agency network of the year titles at once (AdWeek, Campaign, FOM Global, Gunn Media100, M&M Global).

www.mediacom.com

Maiko Valentijn
CEO, Netherlands
Maiko.Valentijn@mediacom.com

MINDSHARE

We were born in Asia in 1997, a start up with a desire to change the media world. Now we are a global agency with 116 offices in 86 countries and billings of \$35bn (source: RECMA). We aim to be our clients’ lead business partner, to grow their business and drive profitability through adaptive and inventive marketing. We do this through speed, teamwork and provocation because in today’s world everything begins and ends in media. We create new things and have fun doing it. Mindshare is part of GroupM, the media investment management arm of WPP, the world’s leading communications services group.

www.mindshareworld.com

Atva van Zanten,
Managing Director, Netherlands
Atva.van.Zanten@mindshareworld.com

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Wavemaker is a next generation agency that sits at the intersection of media, content and technology. We are obsessed with the customer’s purchase journey and this is what connects our mission directly to our client’s business challenges. We invented WM Momentum, the world’s most comprehensive study into how people make purchase decisions and have conducted over 500,000 surveys in 40 markets and across more than 80 categories. We are a business that is powered by the creativity and curiosity of our 8,500 people in 90 countries, united by our PACED values. We are a part of GroupM, WPP’s global media investment management company.

www.wavemakerglobal.com

Isabelle Dacz
Chief Commerce Officer
Isabelle.Dacz@wmglobal.com

WUNDERMAN

Wunderman is a global digital agency whose mission is to inspire people to take action. It is Creatively Driven. Data Inspired. In 2015, industry analysts named Wunderman a leader in marketing database operations as well as a strong performer in customer engagement strategy and its creative work has won numerous awards globally. Headquartered in New York, the agency brings together 9,200 creatives, data scientists, strategists, and technologists in 200 offices in 70 markets. Wunderman is a WPP company (NASDAQ: WPPGY).

www.wunderman.com

Gio Canini
CEO, Benelux
Gio.Canini@wunderman.com

Ogilvy

Ogilvy has produced iconic, culture-changing marketing campaigns since the day its founder David Ogilvy opened up shop in 1948. Today, Ogilvy is an award-winning integrated creative network that makes brands matter for Fortune Global 500 companies and local businesses across 131 offices in 83 countries. The company creates experiences, design and communications that shape every aspect of a brand’s needs through six core capabilities: Brand Strategy, Advertising, Customer Engagement and Commerce, PR and Influence, Digital Transformation, and Partnerships. Ogilvy is a WPP company (NASDAQ: WWPGY).

www.ogilvy.com

Edgar Molenaars
CEO, Netherlands
Edgar.Molenaars@ogilvy.com



The Store is a global retail practice of WPP, specializing in providing expertise, support and added value to client initiatives in retail dynamics. The Store is a knowledge hub, built to help clients navigate through insights for consumers, retailing, marketing and sales activation, and technology. The Store is also a host of global workshops that bring together retailing and branding experts to share their vision and expertise for future growth.

www.thestore.wpp.com

David Roth
CEO, EMEA & Asia
David.Roth@wpp.com

VMLY&R

VMLY&R is a global marketing agency with more than 7,000 employees worldwide with principal offices in Kansas City, London, New York, São Paulo, Shanghai, Singapore and Sydney. VMLY&R works with client partners including Colgate-Palmolive, Danone, Dell, Ford, Office Depot, PepsiCo, Pfizer and Wendy’s.

Jon Cook
CEO
Jon.Cook@vml.com

KANTAR IN THE NETHERLANDS

Kantar is the world's leading marketing data, insight and consultancy company. We know more about how people live, feel, shop, vote, watch and post worldwide than any other company. Working across the entire sales and marketing lifecycle, we help brands uncover growth in an extraordinary world. Kantar is part of WPP and its services are employed by over half of the Fortune 500 companies in 100 countries.

In the Netherlands, more than 400 experts offer excellent service to clients through specialized brands Kantar Media, Kantar Public, as well as Insights and consultancies Kantar Millward Brown, Kantar TNS and Kantar Consulting. With main offices in Amsterdam, we also have an extensive operations network throughout the country, meaning we can handle all your market research needs from project management to data processing.

To learn more about how to obtain valuable insights applicable to all business areas contact:

Bram van Schaik

CEO
Kantar Insights
Bram.van.Schaik@kantar.com

Hugo Schurink

Director Strategic Growth
Kantar Millward Brown
Hugo.Schurink@kantarmillwardbrown.com

You can also keep updated on the latest news and studies from the Kantar network in the Netherlands through the Kantar portal:

kantar.com or twitter.com/kantar

KANTAR CONSULTING

Kantar Consulting is driven to switch on growth. With over 1,000 analysts, thought leaders, software developers, and expert consultants, we help clients develop and execute brand, marketing, retail, sales, and shopper strategies to deliver growth. Kantar Consulting owns market-leading assets, including PoweRanking®; GrowthFinder; Global Monitor; Retail IQ; RichMix; XTEL; and Marketing, Insights, and Purpose 2020. We track 1,300 retailers globally; have purchase data on over 200 million shoppers; and forecast social, cultural, and consumer trends across the world.

www.kantarconsulting.com

Frank van den Driest
Chief Solutions Officer
Frank@kantarconsulting.com

KANTAR MILLWARD BROWN

Kantar Millward Brown specializes in advertising, marketing communications, media, digital and brand equity research, and works with 90 percent of the world's leading brands. The key area of the company's focus is brand strategy, creative development, channel optimization and brand performance. With offices in 55 countries, Kantar Millward Brown understands the importance of both a global and local focus – and understands consumers. We know brands that are meaningfully different capture more volume share, command premiums and grow their value.

www.millwardbrown.com

Devang Bhatt
Director-Brand, Insights Division
Devang.Bhatt@kantarmillwardbrown.com

Hugo Schurink
Director Strategic Growth
Hugo.Schurink@kantarmillwardbrown.com

KANTAR TNS

Kantar TNS advises clients on specific growth strategies around new market entry, innovation, brand, communication and customer strategies, based on long-established expertise and market-leading solutions. With a presence in over 80 countries, Kantar TNS has more conversations with the world's consumers than anyone else and understands individual human behaviours and attitudes across every cultural, economic and political region of the world.

www.tnsglobal.com

Bram van Schaik
CEO, Insights
Bram.van.Schaik@kantar.com

LIGHTSPEED

Lightspeed is a leading digital data collection specialist, on a mission to help clients discover truth through data. Our 700 employees in 14 countries are passionate about boldly challenging the status quo to find faster, more creative ways of connecting brands and consumers. From modernizing surveys via our Programmatic Gravity Network and LifePoints mobile app, to amplifying the voice of the millennial through VICE Voices, or leveraging our first party panel relationships and patented Honesty Detector Service to find the quality in the quantity of data out there, we deliver the 'buy and why' insights that power today's marketing decisions.

www.lightspeedresearch.com

Caroline Frankum
CEO
Caroline.Frankum@lightspeedresearch.com

WPP

IN THE NETHERLANDS

WE HELP BUILD VALUABLE BRANDS

WPP is the world leader in communications services. A global powerhouse of creative talent, we help clients understand and reach audiences, build brands, sell products and services, grow their businesses and prepare for the future.

WPP is the world leader in communications services. The company provides a comprehensive range of services including digital, e-commerce & shopper marketing; advertising & media investment management; data investment management; public relations & public affairs; brand consulting; health & wellness communications; and specialist communications.

The company employs over 130,000 people (including associates and investments) in 112 countries. WPP has billings of over US\$71.7 billion, revenues of almost \$20 billion. In the Netherlands, the company has revenues of approximately €300 million and employs around 2000 people.

WPP was named Most Creative Group at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity 2011-2017, and Most Effective Holding Company in the 2017 Effie Global Effectiveness Index 2012-2018.

Eric Kramer

Country Manager, WPP & CEO, GroupM
Eric.Kramer@groupm.com

Niken Wresniwiro

Head of Communications, WPP EMEA
Niken.Wresniwiro@wpp.com

For further information about WPP companies worldwide, please visit:
www.wpp.com

or contact:

David Roth

CEO The Store, WPP EMEA and Asia
David.Roth@wpp.com



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Gerben Boot
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Jasper Bronner
MediaCom



Robert-Jan Dhond
Kantar Consulting



Erzsi Eleveld
Kantar Millward Brown



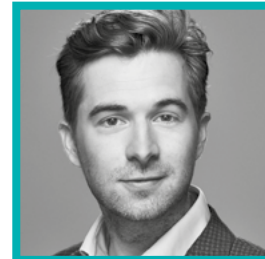
Mike Flynn
Design Bridge



Pieter van Geel
Greenhouse Group



Sam Goos
Kantar Millward Brown



Daan Horbach
Hill+Knowlton Strategies



Eric Kramer
GroupM



Edgar Molenaars
Ogilvy



Jikke Romijn
Mindshare



Bram van Schaik
Kantar



Reg van Steen
Kantar TNS



Wally Tas
Kantar TNS



Jack de Vries
Hill+Knowlton Strategies

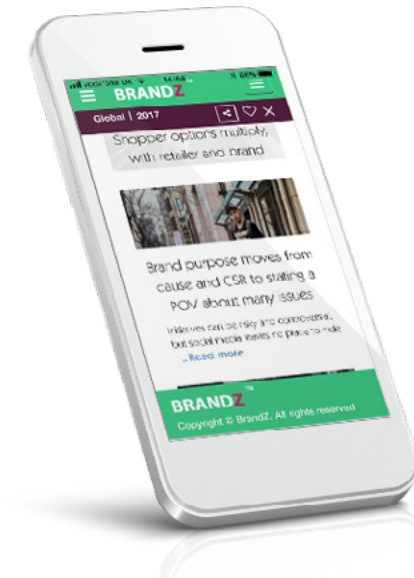
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BRANDZ™ NETHERLANDS TEAM

THESE INDIVIDUALS CREATED THE REPORT, PROVIDING RESEARCH, VALUATIONS, ANALYSIS AND INSIGHT, EDITORIAL, PHOTOGRAPHY, PRODUCTION, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS



Monique van Breda

Monique van Breda is a Marketing & Communications Manager for Kantar in the Netherlands. She is responsible for the marketing and communications of the Dutch edition of the BrandZ™ ranking, and organization of the launch event.



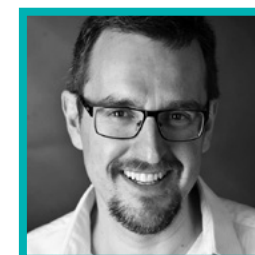
Elsbeth Cheung

Elsbeth Cheung is the Global BrandZ™ Valuation Director for Kantar Millward Brown. She is responsible for valuation, analysis, client management and external communication for the BrandZ™ rankings and other ad hoc brand valuation projects.



Priyadarshini Dean

Priyadarshini Dean is BrandZ™ Valuation Manager for Kantar Millward Brown. She is involved in managing the valuations process for BrandZ™ projects.



Graham Staplehurst

Graham Staplehurst is a senior director with over 30 years' research experience in Kantar, specializing in brand & communications strategy. Graham is Global Director for Strategy on BrandZ™.



Raam Tarat

Raam Tarat is the Global Project Manager for BrandZ™ at Kantar Millward Brown. He led the production of the BrandZ™ Top 30 Most Valuable Dutch Brands 2019 report, as well as marketing communications for other BrandZ™ projects.



Lucy Edgar

Lucy Edgar is the Global Marketing Manager at Kantar Millward Brown where she is responsible for the PR, marketing and communications on the BrandZ™ projects.



Martin Guerrieria

Martin Guerrieria is Global BrandZ™ Research Director at Kantar Millward Brown and heads the consumer research component of BrandZ™. He is involved in delivering the full suite of BrandZ™ research tools.



Paul Reiffer

Paul is a multi-award winning British photographer, who has travelled the world capturing people, commercial images and limited edition fine art landscape photography www.paulreiffer.com



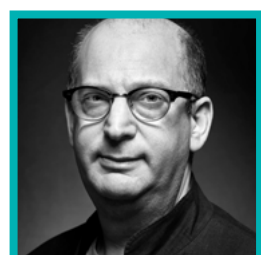
Igor Tolkachev

Igor Tolkachev is a part of The Store WPP's EMEA and Asia team and coordinates BrandZ™ worldwide projects and partnerships.



David C Walter

D.C. Walter is a writer and editor in New York, and oversaw the editing of the BrandZ™ Top 30 Dutch Brands 2019 report.



David Roth

David Roth is the CEO of the Store WPP for Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia, and leads the BrandZ™ worldwide project. Prior to joining WPP David was main Board Director of the international retailer, B&Q.



Hugo Schurink

Hugo is schooled as a media psychologist and oversees the business of Kantar Millward Brown in the Netherlands. If you want to know how BrandZ™ can help your brand grow, contact Hugo.



Doreen Wang

Doreen Wang is the Global Head of BrandZ™ at Kantar Millward Brown, and a seasoned executive with over 18 years experience in providing outstanding market research and strategic consulting for senior executives in Fortune 500 companies in both the US and China.

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THE BRANDZ™ BRAND VALUATION CONTACTS

The brand valuations in the BrandZ™ Top 30 Most Valuable Dutch Brands 2019 are produced by Kantar Millward Brown using market data from Kantar Consulting and Bloomberg.

The consumer viewpoint is derived from the BrandZ™ database. Established in 1998 and constantly updated, this database of brand analytics and equity is the world's largest, containing over three million consumer interviews about more than 120,000 different brands in over 50 markets.

For further information about BrandZ™ contact any WPP Group company or:

Doreen Wang

Global Head of BrandZ™
Kantar Millward Brown
+1 212 548 7231
Doreen.Wang@kantarmillwardbrown.com

Elsbeth Cheung

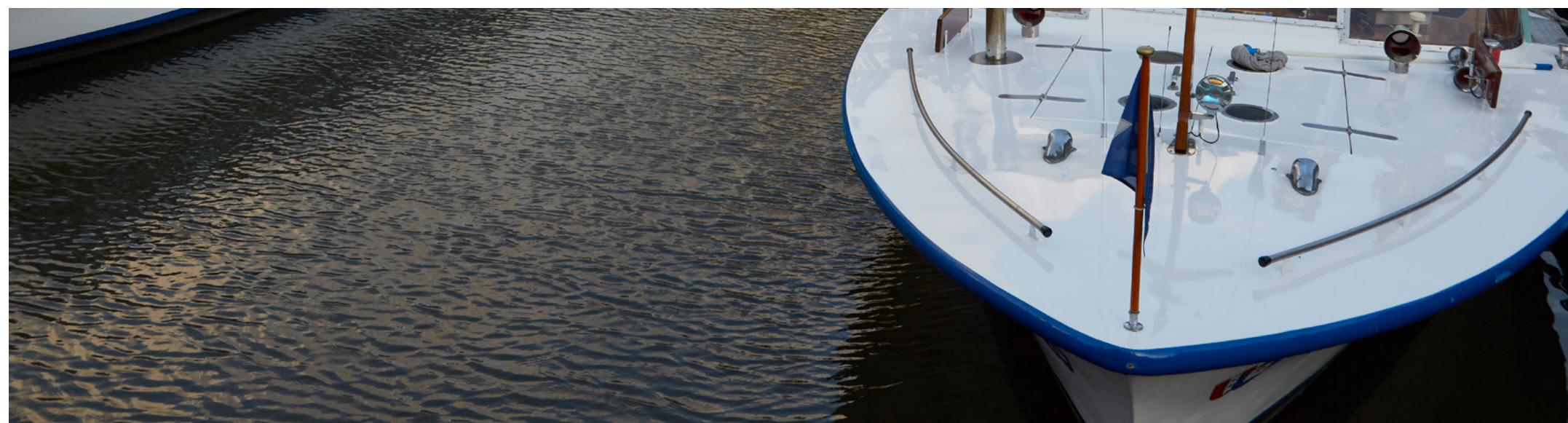
Global BrandZ™ Valuation Director
Kantar Millward Brown
+44 (0) 207 126 5174
Elsbeth.Cheung@kantarmillwardbrown.com

Martin Guerrieria

Global BrandZ™ Research Director
Kantar Millward Brown
+44 (0) 207 126 5073
Martin.Guerrieria@kantarmillwardbrown.com

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Design: **Kimberley Jane Fitzsimmons**
Photography: **Paul Reiffer**
Writing: **David C Walter**

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