The ROI of Brand

How Real Marketing Leaders Invest in Brand, Measure Success and Ensure Compliance

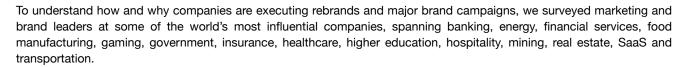# Contents

Executive Summary

To understand how and why companies are executing rebrands and major brand campaigns, we surveyed marketing and brand leaders at some of the world's most influential companies, spanning banking, energy, financial services, food manufacturing, gaming, government, insurance, healthcare, higher education, hospitality, mining, real estate, SaaS and transportation.

The result was a set of extremely detailed responses by more than 50 leaders who had recently completed successful rebrands, brand updates, brand campaigns or created brand portals to help with brand compliance. To get a sense of what contributed to their success, we asked them about:

- **Brand impact and measurement**

- **Business objectives**

- **Brand challenges**

- **Brand compliance**

With a combined valuation of over $500 billion among the surveyed organizations, the responses from these marketing and brand leaders add up to a playbook worthy of consideration by any marketing leader looking to differentiate in the market and measure the impact of their work. In many cases, the respondents were incredibly candid about the exact outcomes of their brand initiatives, and as such, we have anonymized and amalgamated their responses in order to deliver the fullest possible understanding of contemporary brand tactics.

Whether you're looking to make a case for a major brand campaign, rebrand or brand update – or simply be inspired – you'll find plenty of wisdom in this report.

Can Brand Investments Help Grow Revenue & Lower Customer Acquisition Costs?

As our research demonstrated, well-executed brand investments can help companies establish a strong, recognizable identity that differentiates a company in a crowded marketplace. A well-developed brand creates an emotional connection with consumers, fostering loyalty and trust that translates into long-term customer retention. This emotional bond can drive customer preference and influence purchasing decisions, even in competitive environments.

Depending on the market, brands can help companies command a price premium, as customers are often willing to pay more for products and services they perceive as higher quality or more reliable. This premium not only boosts profitability, but also provides a buffer against market volatility and economic downturns. Furthermore, a well-established brand attracts top talent, fosters partnerships, and opens doors to new opportunities, enhancing overall business growth.

A strong brand also communicates values and promises, creating a consistent experience that reinforces customer expectations and enhances overall satisfaction. And better still, when brand salience is high, your media spend can become more efficient. A well-known brand that resonates well with buyers can lower acquisition cost.

In essence, investing in brand identity is an investment in the future, laying a foundation for sustainable success and a resilient market presence.

How Are Brand Leaders Measuring the Impact of Their Brand Campaigns?

Brand leaders are increasingly focused on quantifying the impact of their work with precision and clarity. Leveraging a wealth of data and sophisticated analytics tools, marketing and brand leaders are uncovering actionable insights that drive strategic decision-making and demonstrate the tangible value of brand investments.

Measuring Rebrands and Brand Updates

The desire for data-driven measurement is a pervasive theme throughout the survey. Results vary depending on the industry and level of work, ranging from a completely new name and identity to a significant overhaul in style or a change in market position.

It's important to note that most respondents were careful not to point to the rebrand or brand update as the sole cause for metric-based improvements, but rather as a likely correlating factor. The list showcases how top marketers are not only justifying their brand budgets, but also optimizing their efforts to achieve both immediate and long-term business objectives.

Common data points measured across sectors – as well as qualitative feedback – are represented in the following table. As a side note, because our survey allowed for completely open-ended questions, instead of strict multiple choice, the table offers estimates vs strict percentages in measuring ubiquity among survey respondents.

HOW BRANDS MEASURE REBRAND/BRAND UPDATE OUTCOMES		
Growth Measurement	**Pervasiveness Among Survey Respondents**	**Measurement Examples**
Web traffic	Extremely common	Overall increases in site visitor time, decrease in bounce rates and improvements in website conversions.
Social media engagement	Extremely common	Overall trends in social engagement and reach during the post-rebrand or brand update period.
Qualitative feedback	Extremely common	Specific feedback recorded by key stakeholders, partners or significant customers.
Tier-based growth	Somewhat common	Growth in enterprise customers in the quarter or quarters post-rebrand; product inquiries or uptake.
Overall revenue	Somewhat common	Revenue growth during the quarter of the rebrand vs the quarter prior.
Customer acquisition	Somewhat common	Net increases in total customer acquisition in the quarter or months post-rebrand.
Awareness	Somewhat common	Often measured by "aided awareness" and "unaided awareness." Aided brand awareness is intended to demonstrate how well a brand is recognized by users when asked, while unaided awareness shows how well a brand is known with no prompting.
Customer or stakeholder survey	Somewhat common	Surveys designed to measure brand likability and differentiation pre-and-post rebrand.

Growth Measurement	Pervasiveness Among Survey Respondents	Measurement Examples
Brand equity	Select responses only	A combination of metrics typically involving brand mentions in media or social media, surveys and other data.
Customer retention	Select respondents only	Decreases in customer churn in the period after the rebrand.
Event attendance	Select respondents only	Year-over-year attendance for annual conferences.
Relevance	Select respondents only	Brand relevance measures the influence the brand has on the customers' buying decision. It typically involves a blended data set involving surveys as well as digital metrics.
Future Intent	Select respondents only	Typically measured through surveys, but can be paired with search data for commercial terms associated with brand terms.
Customer acquisition costs	Select respondents only	Ad-based metrics such as cost-per-click and CPM versus established benchmarks.
Enrollment	Higher education brands only	Increases in student enrollment in the period after the rebrand.

Measuring Brand Campaigns

It should come as no surprise that, compared with measuring rebrands, quantifying the effectiveness of brand campaigns proved to be far more straightforward, with fewer outliers. Measuring the outcomes of brand campaigns involves a multifaceted approach that includes quantitative metrics such as audience reach, engagement rates, web traffic, and sales impact, as well as qualitative feedback from stakeholders and customers.

By utilizing these methods, companies can effectively assess the success of their campaigns, refine their strategies, and ensure their marketing efforts drive meaningful business results. The following table lists the most prevalent measurement tactics used by the surveyed brands.

HOW BRAND MEASURE CAMPAIGN EFFECTIVENESS		
Growth Measurement	**Pervasiveness Among Survey Respondents**	**Measurement Examples**
Digital Engagement	Extremely common	• Ad impressions and clicks • Social impressions and engagement across Instagram, TikTok and LinkedIn • Video views on YouTube and relevant social channels • Partner and Internal Slack interactions as a result of the campaign • Webinar and event engagement by targeted audiences
Website Metrics	Extremely common	• Content dwell time, watch time, net traffic growth and decrease in bounce rate.

Growth Measurement	Pervasiveness Among Survey Respondents	Measurement Examples
Qualitative Data Collection	Extremely common	• Surveys showing increased reputation scores and advocacy willingness, indicating improved public perception and support for the brand. • Customer feedback indicating enhanced understanding of key products and services.
Media and Press Coverage	Extremely common	• Media placement by tier • Brand mentions • Share of voice vs known competitors
Sales Impact	Somewhat common	• Pipeline influence metrics • Direct product and services sales • Subscriber growth
Content Adoption	Somewhat common	• Content utilization metrics by internal team members and partners
Advocacy Scores & Community Engagement	Isolated instances	• Net Promoter Scores (NPS), including both customer and internal employees • Community participation in digital channels

What Business Objectives are Driving Rebrands and Brand Updates?

Our research showed that most significant brand updates or rebrands were triggered by a minimum of three or more business objectives, many of which are weighted in equal importance. Rebranding allows a company to refresh its image, align with current market dynamics, and appeal to a new generation of customers. This strategic move can rejuvenate the brand's perception, making it more contemporary and attractive. It also helps in differentiating the product from competitors, especially in saturated markets where standing out is crucial for capturing consumer attention and loyalty.

A company may decide to rebrand their product to stay relevant in a rapidly evolving market. Consumer preferences and trends shift constantly, and what resonated with audiences a few years ago may no longer be effective. Additionally, rebranding can be a powerful tool for signaling a change or new direction within the company. Whether it's a shift in business strategy, entering new markets, or launching innovative product features, a rebrand can effectively communicate these transformations to stakeholders. It creates an opportunity to tell a new brand story, emphasizing the company's evolution and future aspirations.

The following table represents the most common themes, as well as anonymized quotes from some of the survey respondents.

Business Objective	Pervasiveness Among Survey Respondents	Brand Leader Commentary
Evolve the brand after significant upgrades in market presence, growth or product capabilities.	Extremely common	"The existing brand felt outdated and lacking in maturity — our product is used by the world's biggest global brands to build modern, intelligent applications, but our brand didn't quite reflect that." "There was a need to shift perceptions to acknowledge recent innovations, industry accomplishments, and transformation." "We have grown from a startup to a leader in our space." "Elevating the app icon to be our primary logo lockup allowed for us to shift the reputation from being a legacy company to an innovative disruptor, pushing our app presence first and foremost."

Business Objective	Pervasiveness Among Survey Respondents	Brand Leader Commentary
Engage a New Audience	Extremely common	"We aimed to connect with a more forward-thinking audience who values innovation." "In making a concerted effort to welcome new customers into the category, it was important not to alienate our loyalists." "In order to retain our leader status and move upmarket, we needed a strong, consistent brand." "The new brand needed to quickly establish and amplify a unique brand position as a globally-significant and sustainable key industry player among multiple key audiences." "We wanted to break the preconception that the space is dominated by middle-aged Caucasian males. We used a mix of ethnicities and accurately represented the general population with female leads in 50% of the creative."
Change visual identity to shift brand perceptions or invoke new emotional reactions.	Extremely common	"Our color palette, moving away from harsh, bright, almost elementary colors to a more neutral color palette that didn't sacrifice our recognizable identity." "The campaign utilizes a modern style, playing off of geometric patterns, strong use of our primary color and the use of photography, but through a camera angle that creates interest and energy." "Establish a tone of voice and other audio elements (such as video music choice) that position the company as bold, dynamic and punchy." "Create a striking look and feel through bold color choice, simple, clean design, modern iconography and imagery that reflects our biggest asset, our people, and the natural environments where we operate." "Our written communications were often bogged down in technical jargon and lacked a sense of personality and relatability. If we wanted to speak directly to everyday customers, we needed to invest in developing a new brand tone of voice. This would allow for us to continue developing this emotional connection across all of our communications and customer touch points, not just in large-format headline creative."
Establish differentiation in a crowded marketplace	Somewhat common	"We had the opportunity to differentiate and position our brand as experienced and tested, allowing us to stand out from our competitors in the market."
Bring sharper focus to a brand with broad capabilities	Somewhat common	"Over time, due to a variety of factors, the brand became fragmented and unrefined… This resulted in a disconnection with our customer base, who lost sight of our identity and the value we provide."
Content Adoption	Somewhat common	"To position the company as an agile and shrewd business that is willing to take calculated risk to grow our company, so as to position ourselves for future deal-making opportunities."

What Are Common Challenges Associated with Rebrands and Brand Updates?

Rebranding and brand updates are critical strategies for companies seeking to remain competitive and relevant in dynamic markets. However, these initiatives come with a unique set of challenges that can significantly impact their success. These were the most common themes and challenges reflected in the survey.

Tight Timelines and Resource Constraints

One prevalent challenge is the pressure to complete extensive rebranding efforts within short timeframes. For example, a global company rebrand involving the integration of three former brands had to be executed within just two months. This rapid timeline required simultaneous updates to websites, social media channels, office signage, merchandise, and templates, alongside a global media outreach campaign.

Global Coordination and Time Zone Differences

Rebranding efforts for global companies often involve coordinating activities across different regions and time zones. For example, managing a rebrand from Australia for a project in Canada, with no existing media relationships in the latter, highlights the complexity of maintaining consistent communication and project management. Additionally, aligning with headquarters or other regional offices, such as ensuring the rebrand aligns with markets in various global locations, can be challenging due to differing local market dynamics and cultural nuances.

Stakeholder Alignment and Buy-In

Securing buy-in from diverse stakeholders, including executive leadership, employees, and external partners, is critical for rebrand success. Merging companies with different cultures, or decentralizing from a parent company, requires extensive engagement to unify and motivate the workforce. Ensuring cross-functional alignment across departments, such as product design, marketing, and executive leadership, is essential for cohesive implementation. Continuous engagement and clear communication with stakeholders at every phase of the rebrand help build consensus and facilitate smooth transitions.

Establishing a Distinctive and Sustainable Brand Identity

■ Creating a unique, compelling brand identity that resonates with a broad audience is another significant challenge. For instance, developing a "sustainable and environmentally-responsible" brand position for a global energy company requires overcoming negative perceptions associated with the industry. Similarly, a tech company needed to ensure its brand refresh was engaging for a diverse range of stakeholders while being agile enough to adapt to future growth. Crafting a unified brand message that effectively communicates the company's vision and values, while appealing to different customer segments, requires careful strategy and extensive market research.

Internal and External Communication Channels

■ During a rebrand, establishing and maintaining effective communication channels is crucial. This includes launching new websites, social media channels, and other digital platforms that align with the new brand identity. Additionally, rebranding efforts must involve comprehensive media outreach and stakeholder engagement to ensure the new brand message reaches and resonates with the target audience. The need to develop multiple resources and provide ongoing coaching and support for seamless adoption of the new brand further adds to the complexity.

Limited budgets and internal resources

■ Despite the fact that many of the companies were truly large organizations with hundreds or thousands of employees, several reported that rebrand budgets were limited given the scope of what they needed to accomplish.

What Business Objectives are Driving Brand Campaigns?

Our research shows that brand campaigns are meticulously crafted with specific business objectives in mind, aimed at enhancing brand visibility, engagement, and overall performance. Analyzing the provided campaign details reveals several common business objectives cited by marketing and brand leaders. These objectives not only guide the campaign strategies but also serve as key performance indicators to measure success.

The most common themes were as follows:

1. Increase Brand Awareness

Raising the profile of the brand in the target market was the most common business objective in the survey. It's easy to see why this was so common: while clearly a "brand" initiative, it's by far the easiest metric to measure.

2. Educating the Target Audience

In some cases, innovations are so cutting edge that market demand does not yet exist. In such cases, brands set out to inform and educate potential customers about specific products or services. Others set out to specifically address misconceptions in the market that would favor their products or services.

3. Enhance Brand Image and Reputation.

The third-most common objective was to shape public perception and build a positive brand image. For example, a public university set out to spark enrollment growth by positioning the school as a progressive, student-centric institution.

4. Increase Market Share and Sales

Nearly every campaign sought to expand market presence and drive sales growth as a secondary business objective. This is a key difference from "performance campaigns," which would seek to do that without any of the brand-related associates or benefits listed above. B2B companies surveyed specifically set out to influence the sales pipeline, generating substantial leads and accelerating deal closures.

5. Foster Community and Customer Loyalty

Some brands sought to improve local loyal customer base by launching campaigns that emphasized local community ties. For example, a team set out to specifically shape key attitudes about its brand by focusing on local lore and stories that emphasized local service and service-oriented culture.

How is Software Used to Improve Brand Compliance?

Brand and marketing leaders consistently described the need to ensure consistency when it comes to brand presence. Common pain points included ensuring consistency related to brand guidelines, including messaging, brand colors, product nomenclature and asset version control.

In nearly all survey responses, teams rolling out rebrands or brand updates developed a robust set of brand guidelines and sought to ensure partners and internal stakeholders used approved assets. This included everything from icons to typography and messaging.

Our research found that brand portals are increasingly essential to help companies ensure brand compliance across company and partner initiatives. These are the top reasons why the brand and marketing leaders in our survey adopted brand portals. Other brand leaders emphasized the need for increased productivity as well, which was accomplished by enabling self-service for all stakeholders as a way to reduce repetitive, time-wasting requests.

1. Centralization of Assets

- **Need:** To manage multiple brands or extensive digital assets efficiently.
- **Outcome:** Simplified access to approved assets, streamlined content management.
- **Example:** Centralizing assets for various brands, making it easy to find and manage creative, PR, social assets, and internal documentation.

2. Efficiency and Time Savings

- **Need:** Reduce administrative burden and streamline workflows.
- **Outcome:** Decreased time spent on asset searches, reduced email traffic, quicker approvals.
- **Example:** A major transportation hub reduced time spent searching and sharing brand-approved images by centralizing all brand assets.

3. Consistency and Compliance

- **Need:** Ensure brand consistency and meet regulatory requirements.
- **Outcome:** Improved brand governance, easier compliance reporting, consistent use of brand assets.
- **Example:** A national bank facilitates compliance and operational needs while maintaining brand consistency.

4. Enhanced Collaboration

- **Need:** Improve coordination among internal and external stakeholders.
- **Outcome:** Smoother collaboration, reduced back-and-forth communication.
- **Example:** Allowing seamless information transfer and collaboration without the friction of constant emailing.

5. Support for Brand Expansion and Growth

- **Need:** Manage the increasing volume of assets due to brand expansion.
- **Outcome:** Scalable asset management, support for brand growth initiatives.
- **Example:** A major healthcare provider used a brand portal to manage print and digital collateral efficiently during a brand unification process.

"

I love our BrandHub so much. Everything is there in a centralized system. Nothing's getting lost in email. When you're in Brandhub to upload artwork, you can check it against the guidelines then and there.

Lani Evans | Head of Brand

AUSTRALIAN
GRAND PRIX
CORPORATION

intelligencebank

Thank you