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***For Immediate Release ***

BrandSpark International announces America's Most Trusted Retail Brands

Shoppers named their most trusted retail brands in a national study, including a detailed analysis of the drivers of trust at grocery in collaboration with newly-launched Grocery Business Magazine.

CHICAGO, IL (November 30th, 2017) – Market research firm BrandSpark International, in conjunction with the newly-launched Grocery Business Magazine, announced the 2017 BrandSpark Most Trusted Award winners for major Retail. The BrandSpark Most Trusted Awards serves to recognize the consumer and retail brands that consumers trust the most, with winners exclusively determined by the unaided responses of thousands of shoppers. The 2017 Most Trusted Retailers survey included a deep analysis of the reasons for trust in supermarket banners from coast-to-coast.

What Drives Brand Trust?

“American’s trust in a brand is anchored in personal experience, but is greatly increased by transparency, fair pricing and the endorsement of other consumers,” says Robert Levy, President of BrandSpark International.

The BrandSpark trust study shows that it is important for a brand to respond quickly to serious issues, with 95% saying it increases their trust. Transparency is also key to building trust with 93% agreeing that brands who provide consumers with detailed information about their product or service earn their trust, and 88% say their trust in the brand increases when they see unfiltered customer reviews online. Positive endorsement in the form of awards is also very impactful, with 84% of American shoppers saying their trust in a brand increases if it has won awards based on consumer feedback. Finally, pricing influences trust as much as product or service quality, with brands that offer consistent and competitive pricing more likely to be perceived as fair and respectful of their customers.

“While major product issues reveal brands to be fallible, Americans can be willing to forgive and give brands a second chance. It is crucial for brands to rebuild at these times by taking responsibility, addressing the problem, and reminding shoppers of the trust earned in the past and how the brand will work to preserve it.”

Americans increasingly trust brands they perceive as values-based, fair and ethical. Day-to-day, this often means a reasonable price for the brand’s products. Honest support of social causes can also elevate trust in a brand. “The strongest instances of cause-marketing happen when a brand takes a position that entails some risk, suggesting to like-minded consumers that the brand’s position is authentic,” said Levy.

A Deeper Look at Grocery Retail

The grocery study in collaboration with Grocery Business reveals that more than anything else shoppers want great value, great fresh produce and meat, and an extensive selection that lets them get the most out of their trip. Quality private label products can play a big role in delivering value, and are important for leading retailers like Aldi, Walmart, and Trader Joe’s. “Americans also love their deli, and a great deli-counter emerges as a distinguishing element of many satisfying grocery shopping trips, especially as more Americans seek the convenience of ready-to-eat foods,” says Levy.

For the full report of findings from the grocery retail study, see the November 2017 issue of Grocery Business Magazine:

http://digitalmag.groceryheadquarters.com/groceryheadquarters/november_2017?pg=33#pg33

2017 BrandSpark Most Trusted Winners - Retail

The following is the full list of BrandSpark Most Trusted winners for Major Retail in the United States:

Category	Retailer
Auto Parts & Accessories	AutoZone
Beauty & Cosmetics	Ulta
Clothing / Fashion	Kohl's
Department Store	Walmart
Discount Store	Dollar Tree / Walmart (tie)
Electronics	Best Buy
Furniture	Ashley Furniture HomeStore
Gas Station	Shell
Hardware Store	Ace / The Home Depot (tie)
Health / Pharmacy	CVS
Home Décor	Homegoods
Home Improvement	The Home Depot
Housewares / Kitchenware	Walmart
Major Appliance	Sears
Mattress Retailer	Mattress Firm
Personal Care	Walmart
Sporting Goods	Dick's Sporting Goods
Supermarket / Grocery	Walmart
Toys & Games	Toys'R' Us

Brands are Communicating their Most Trusted Award Wins

The BrandSpark Most Trusted Awards winner logo allows brands to clearly communicate the significant trust connection they have built with shoppers. Important American brands, such as Tide and Eggland's Best, have used their BrandSpark Most Trusted Award wins in their PR and marketing communication (on packaging, in TV advertising, in print, on social media, and across other online channels including e-commerce) because they recognize that the credential sets expectations about quality and value, and makes it more likely for a shopper to trust a brand and buy a product.

The appeal of leveraging the win is explained by David Holdsworth, Vice-President Marketing at Eggland's Best: "Eggland's Best is very proud to be recognized as America's Most Trusted egg brand – for 3 years in a row! We let consumers know by including the BrandSpark Most Trusted purple logo on millions of our egg cartons nationally."

The logo reminds shoppers of the trust earned by America's top brands. Shoppers report that the logo positively influences them toward purchase of a product. "Only 1 in 6 shoppers will choose the absolute lowest price product regardless of brand. Most care about the brand name. So brand trust is a key factor in the purchasing decision," added Levy. "Brand trust is especially important when trying new products, with 7 in 10 Americans saying they try new products from the brands they trust most."

How Winners are Determined

2,488 American shoppers determined the 2017 BrandSpark Most Trusted Awards retail winners through their top-of-mind responses for categories in which they shop. BrandSpark researchers analyzed the unaided responses and the reasons given for trusting the retailer. Retailers were ranked based on the greatest volume of mentions, and if the difference between retailers nationally was less than three percent, a tie was declared.

About BrandSpark International

BrandSpark International uniquely combines real world consumer insight with marketing credentials and services. BrandSpark Insight gets at the heart of WHAT consumers think, WHY they act the way they do, and HOW marketers need to respond to successfully grow their business. BrandSpark Marketing Services runs major CPG awards programs Best New Product Awards, BrandSpark Most Trusted Awards and consumer product trial and amplification platform, Shopper Army.

Information

For more information on BrandSpark visit: www.BrandSpark.com

For more information on the BrandSpark Most Trusted Awards visit: www.BrandSparkMostTrusted.com

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