

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Trump brand bounces back from toxicity with election win

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Trump Hotel in Las Vegas

By STAFF REPORTS

Donald Trump's unexpected victory in the U.S. presidential race will help his brand regain positioning after losing ground during his campaign.

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Brand Keys has been tracking consumer perception of the Trump brand across product categories for 20 years, and found that as recently as a month ago, the now president-elect's lewd comments found on tape had damaged the added value of his merchandise and services. Following his success at the polls on Nov. 8, the perceived added value of Mr. Trump's brand across seven categories were trending up significantly, with some reaching their highest levels ever.

Value added

In October, Brand Keys compared two consumer surveys from before and after the businessman launched his bid for office, which asked consumers about whether the Trump name positively or negatively affected their opinion of an unbranded product or service. While Trump branded hospitality and entertainment improved, other categories such as apparel and watches declined ([see story](#)).



Donald Trump

"Mr. Trump has been one of the most powerful brands we've ever tracked," said Robert Passikoff, Brand Keys founder and president, in a statement.

"You could add his name to anything from ties to buildings and the increased perceived value of the products fell into the 20 percent to 37 percent range, which was very high, enviable by any category or brand standards, and what a brand is supposed to do," he said. "Now, I suppose, he literally qualifies as the most powerful brand in the world."

After a videotape showing Mr. Trump making lewd remarks about women was released, Brand Keys polled consumers again.

This survey found that in 100 percent of the categories studied, including hospitality and apparel, Mr. Trump's comments hurt the perceived value of products or services. Coming as reports surface of lowered bookings at his hotels, this brand erosion was expected to cause consumers to avoid Trump products ([see story](#)).

"In becoming a candidate Mr. Trump changed both the brand paradigm regarding consumer expectations and values surrounding the Trump brand and also blurred the traditional lines regarding where the Trump brand was expected to compete," Mr. Passikoff said. "These shifts changed how the Trump brand was perceived by consumers.

"And an oft-contentious campaign didn't help foster consumer emotional engagement and brand loyalty levels," he said.

Now that the election is over, things appear to have taken a turn upwards for this human brand. An overnight survey after polls closed showed that these negatively affected categories have all bounced back, with added-value particularly high in country and golf clubs, real estate and suits.



Image courtesy of Trump National Doral in Miami

For instance, golf clubs had an added value of 35 percent in 2015, which rose to 40 percent during his candidacy and then dropped to 34 percent after the vulgar footage surfaced. Today, it is higher than it was pre-candidacy, at 42 percent.

Mr. Passikoff noted that this upswing is likely attributed to the cachet of the brand "Commander in Chief." For instance, a presidential suite at a hotel now holds more meaning and golf tee times may also benefit from perceived power associations.

"Human Brands don't generally get a second chance to breath real life back into their brands or rekindle the desire in the hearts and souls of consumers," Mr. Passikoff said. "Not at their former brand strength, added-value levels, at least. These shifts are incredibly strong.

"A brand that was once deemed toxic by many consumers is now seen as not only a safe option, but an emotionally desirable option," he said. "Especially given the new set of values that the brand has created around itself: victory, self-confidence and determination, a sense of the visionary, and ultimately greatness. We'll have to factor those into our next presidential model."

I thought on "Trump brand bounces back from toxicity with election win"

1. chris snyder says:

November 10, 2016 at 7:21 pm

May be true but I won't support the business of a guy who brags about groping women on the street or who stiffes off so many Americans. We'll see if he/the GOP can lead the country as well as they can whine and finger-point. I hope they do good for the sake of the country, but I haven't forgotten how it was with Cheney/Bush.

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