

RETAIL

## BMW, Nordstrom score big on customer intimacy index

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MBLM's Brand Intimacy Index ranks brands based on their ingratiation into customers' lives. Image credit: MBLM

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Apple, Amazon, BMW and Nordstrom are among the top-ranked brands for brand intimacy with affluent consumers, according to MBLM's Brand Intimacy Report.

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The report looked at the ways brands connect with customers on a deeper level, usually through digital means, and determined which brands are doing this better than others. When filtered for highest income, luxury brands such as BMW or Nordstrom are popular, but well-off consumers still love more mass brands such as Apple and Amazon.

"Our collective need to escape, cocoon and be entertained is growing, particularly with those 35 and under," stated Mario Natarelli, managing partner of **MBLM**.

Brand intimacy

MLBM defined brand intimacy as how closely integrated a brand is into the deep and personal parts of a consumer's life.

For example, a customer who has a deep relationship with a brand, who buys its products regularly, has downloaded its mobile app, follows it on social media and is personally invested in the brand has a much higher intimacy quotient than a customer who is aware of a brand and might buy from it occasionally but never really thinks about it.

### Top Filtered Rankings

Rank	Plot	List
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10

*Top 10 brands filtered by highest income. Image credit: MBLM*

Unsurprisingly, Apple is the number one brand in this spot for the third year in a row. Customers keep their iPhones near them at all times, people tune in by the millions to watch Apple's keynote addresses and each new iPhone release is an event in itself.

When filtering for the highest income, Apple and Amazon take the top two spots, showing that even the wealthiest consumers are not immune to the near-ubiquitous allure of these two behemoths.

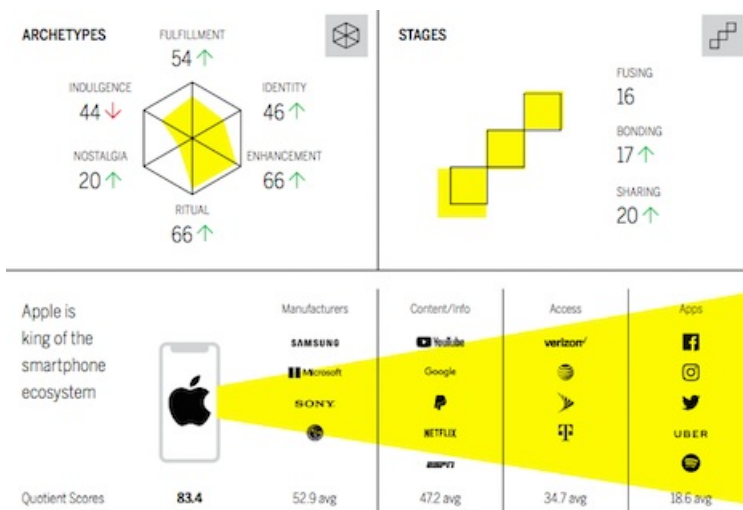
Outside of the top two however, the top 10 intimate brands for affluent individuals differ considerably from those of mass consumers. In the top 10 list, BMW appears at number five and Nordstrom is number 10.

### Apple's lead

The popularity of Apple among the most well-off consumers should not come as a surprise to most. While the iPhone is not the most exclusive product in the world, its high quality and varying price levels have given it appeal to the casual phone owners and the ultra wealthy.

Luxury brands have recognized this and have pursued partnerships with Apple accordingly, such as when French fashion label Chanel intertwined two artistic outlets to extend the reach of its fashion show.

The house partnered with Apple Music to launch an official playlist. Through this, fans of Chanel can now surround themselves with the feeling of its fashion shows outside of the runway through music ([see story](#)).



*Apple distinguished itself in every income bracket category. Image credit: MBLM*

Nordstrom has also been taking advantage of its status as one of the most popular physical retailers for luxury brands and consumers with a host of new technology initiatives.

Nordstrom is furthering its mission to provide innovative methods of purchasing and connecting to consumers with two big investments.

The retailer has invested in two innovative ecommerce platforms, BevyUp and MessageYes, that are changing the way consumers interact with retailers.

BevyUp is a tech tool that helps apparel brands and retailers better connect to their customers through a personalized multichannel journey, an indication of why Nordstrom is placed so highly on the brand intimacy index ([see story](#)).

"Brands that are optimizing content for our preferences dominated in 2017 by creating strong bonds and powerful connections," Mr. Natarelli said. "We expect this trend to continue in 2018."