



Onesixtyfourth's CultureQ Research Shows Why Brands Are Like 'Friends'

Young consumers want relationships with brands they can touch and interact with in their lives

New York, February 19, 2013 – Who's your best brand friend? [CultureQ](#), branding consultancy [Onesixtyfourth LLC](#)'s ongoing research initiative with Millennials in the U.S. and the UK, finds an emerging trend of young consumers having fewer – but more meaningful – brand relationships. The result translates into Millennials demanding greater versatility from brands and building an inner circle made up of complementary brand friends.

For example, recent CultureQ research shows that, on average, Millennials are deeply committed to just 12 brands. Almost 75% of Millennials in the UK and 69% of Gen Y'ers in the U.S. find cheating on their favorite brands “*unimaginable*.”

The brands they classify as favorites include such segment-dominant brands as Apple, Amazon, Coca-Cola, Google, Nike and Microsoft as well as more niche names like J. Crew's Madewell retail brand; Supreme, the cultish street-wear retailer; and Trader Joe's, among others – but not necessarily because of big marketing budgets, notes Anne Bahr Thompson, Founding Partner of Onesixtyfourth.

“Big ad spends are not enough to sustain the relationship,” she adds. “Having a trusted inner circle of a few go-to brands is becoming the norm for Millennials. Increasingly, they feel ‘burdened with choice,’ so much so even big brand activity can fail to register. As in real life, the acid test of a satisfying, loyal brand friendship is rooted not in the occasional grand gesture, or in constant talking and not listening, but in thoughtful, empathic actions, and the many small, meaningful gestures that both enrich and improve Millennials' lives.”

According to Ms. Bahr Thompson, some motivational states of Millennials to consider in your branding include:

- **Treat them as a valued friend, not a consumer** – Curate individualized experiences based on what you know about their interests.
- **Mirror their personal values** – Millennials have the strongest connections with brands that mirror their personal values and interests.
- **Make them proud** – Being accepted by the group is a more natural state for Millennials than being the lone promoter.
- **Make their life less complicated** – Millennials see their favorite brands as essential hubs through which they manage their daily routine.

- **Deliver what you promise** – Trust is based in consistency and Millennials become disconnected from brands when the delivery doesn't match with them.

CultureQ reports are available individually or as a subscription service with opportunities for customization. For more information about *CultureQ*, visit www.onesixtyfourth.com.

About Onesixtyfourth

Onesixtyfourth is a trend-based, brand and communications strategy boutique that connects brand values with people's values. Onesixtyfourth specializes in insight, foresight, strategy, and innovation and focuses on making it easier for brands to reach, communicate, and interact with customers.

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