



A marketer's guide

Friends Fierce

for turning brands into friends

MOWER

A woman with short blonde hair, wearing a black blazer, is holding a large, intricate wooden maze. She is looking upwards and to the left with a thoughtful expression. The background is a soft, out-of-focus indoor setting with warm lighting.

Every marketer needs a friend

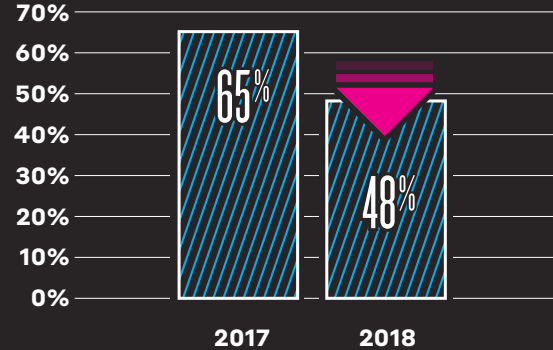
From CMOs to marketing managers, the world of mass marketing can feel like a lonely place. Just take a look behind the doors of any marketing department and you'll find teams attempting to uphold unbounded expectations, cope with dwindling budgets and keep up with an ever-changing marketplace filled with a dizzying array of media options. It's no wonder "chief marketing officer" has become synonymous with "high turnover." And it's why every marketer needs more than a friend. They need a fierce ally to help navigate the constantly evolving obstacles that stand in the way of marketing success.

Trust issues

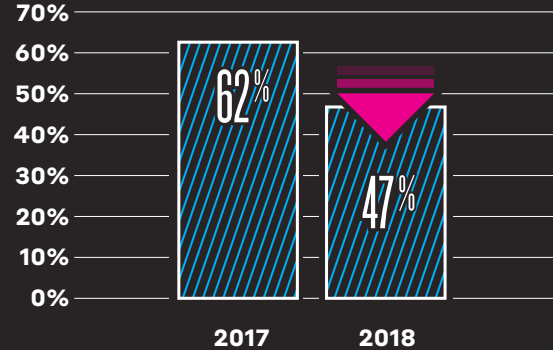
According to a May 2018 Deloitte Millennial survey, trust in business and its leaders is declining among Millennials and Gen Z. This is putting brands' revenue at risk as Millennials find other places to spend their money. And, it's making it harder for companies to recruit and retain the workforce of the future.

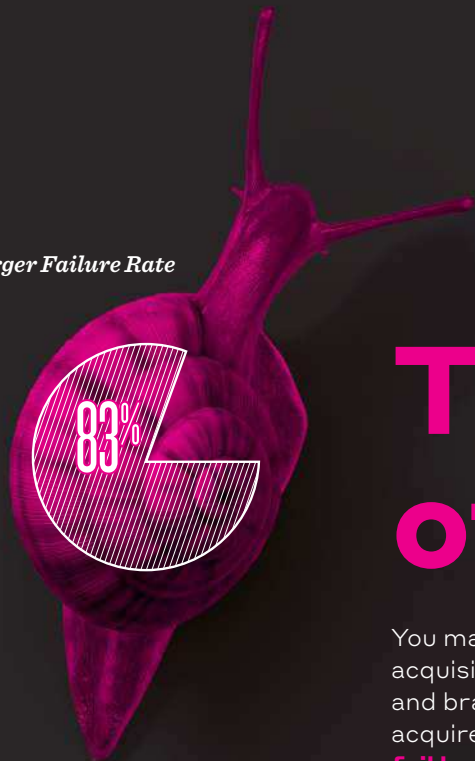
More and more Millennials are losing trust in brands.

Do businesses behave ethically?



Are business leaders committed to helping improve society?



Merger Failure Rate

The sluggish pace of mergers

You may be grappling with many difficult and challenging branding issues on a daily basis. Mergers and acquisitions pose a particular challenge, especially if brand hierarchies, product naming conventions and brand standards are poorly conceived and/or executed. What kind of brand equity does the acquired brand retain and how long should any transitions take? According to Forbes, **83% of mergers fail because they take too long***. You have to be nice, be understanding and be friends. But more than anything, you must be fierce. There's great value in creating and nurturing new friendships, but moving quickly to a unified front takes some relentless understanding.

*83% of Mergers Fail—Leverage a 100-Day Action Plan for Success Instead, Forbes, January 27, 2015

Defending your reputation

Another trial is managing the reputation of your brands and company. On a regular basis you are not only facing mergers and acquisitions, but also a host of other potential crises that could **impact your brand**. How many times have we seen a major product recall, labor issue or poor behavior by someone in a company lead to a major shakeup?

“Bad news travels fast” is an understatement in today’s digital world. Our internet-driven society spreads information—especially the negative or controversial—at near instantaneous speeds 24/7/365. With risks like these, you have to defend your reputation and have friends who are willing to defend it for you.



CHANCE
THAT A COMPANY WILL FACE
A CRISIS THAT NEGATIVELY
IMPACTS ITS PROFITS BY
20-30%
IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.*

House of brands? Branded house? A little of both?

CMOs regularly struggle with brand hierarchies and product naming conventions. How do you assess the brand equity? Do your product names seem completely random and confuse all but the most knowledgeable of your customers? If you're asking yourself these questions, **you're not alone.**



Facing a host of new challenges and with precious little time to impact their brand, how can marketers develop a brand strategy and evaluation criteria to propel them forward? →

→ By turning brands into friends, and friends into

spurred **Fierce** **Friends**

Today, surviving means offering better products and services.
But thriving hinges on your ability to create intense loyalty,
passionate champions and inseparable allies.

You need defenders of your cause who are intensely aligned with
what you are doing and willing to cultivate personal relationships.

But how do you do that?

Dial it up.

Crafting the right mix of affection, relevance and trust is the key to finding your fiercest friends. We have a unique perspective called Brand as Friend[®] that's grounded in years of brand research and social science, and that uses these measures and the nine drivers of friendship to help you make friends at the highest level.



AFFECTION



RELEVANCE



TRUST

Caring. Listening. Surprise.

When you develop an affection for a friend it's because there's something about them that you like. Maybe it's their passion for helping you or others in need. Maybe it's their uncanny knack for listening and reacting accordingly. Or maybe it's the way they always manage to surprise you with something fun, exciting or entertaining.

Brands that know how to build this kind of appeal connect with people on a deeper level. They're the brands that people spend time with, advocate for and stay loyal to.

Cr

CARING

Ls

LISTENING

Sp

SURPRISE



RELEVANCE

Story. Style. Connecting.

Some friends are bold and adventurous. Others are warm and compassionate. And some are fun and quirky—the kind that always make us smile. Every friend has a distinct personality, a story to tell, a unique way of telling it and a style that we appreciate or relate to in some way. It's why we're attracted to some people more than others.

The same holds true for brands. There are some brands that people feel a connection with, and many more that just don't click. The brands that people feel most attracted to are those that complement their lifestyle—and their compatibility is clear. As a result, they're magnetically drawn to each other. Brands that build upon this magnetism will enjoy a deeper relationship with their targets while distancing themselves from other brands in their category.

St

STORY

Sy

STYLE

Cn

CONNECTING

mower

TRUST

Honesty. Advising. Loyalty.

Friends are never fake or deceptive. They're authentic and real. They admit when they make a mistake, and as a result, we forgive them. When they give us advice, we trust their judgment. Simply put, friends always have our best interests at heart. That's why we're loyal to them and they're loyal to us.

People look to brands the same way. When your brand proves you can guide customers to the most thoughtful and intelligent choices, you become a thought leader—someone they can truly trust. And in a world where 70% of people are more likely to listen to the opinions of a stranger online than believe what a brand has to say*, trust is everything.

**EMA Proprietary Consumer Survey, June 2013*

Hn

HONESTY

Av

ADVISING

Ly

LOYALTY

3 steps to create Fierce Friends

1. WORKSHOP

A two- to three-hour session where we'll explore your brand on each of the nine drivers of friendship. We find that it works best when we include people from marketing, sales, customer service and other disciplines who all have a stake in successfully creating friendships with customers. This allows us to gather important details about how the brand delivers on each driver today and brainstorm ideas to improve performance for the future.



2. SELF-ASSESSMENT

Next, we ask Brand as Friend Workshop participants to take a quick, 20-question online survey. Each question asks them to consider how they themselves view and value the brand experience. Scores are calculated for each driver, indicating how well our clients think they perform, as well as providing an overall Friendship Score that paints a picture of how our clients think their brand stacks up.



3. INDEX

Next, we look at how customers themselves feel about our client's brand. Using the same key questions, we ask customers to rate the client and two of its top competitors. The Brand as Friend Index compares brands side by side with a simple, color-coded graph that shows us precisely how all brands performed against the drivers of friendship. We use this to show our clients their points of differentiation, both where they are the strongest and where they must improve.



Mower

Every day, we help brands like yours build more affection, relevance and trust. To learn more about what Mower and Brand as Friend® can do for you, contact one of our fiercest friends:



John Leibrick

jleibrick@mower.com

315.413.4260