

8 Insights

for Building Better Connections with HVAC and Electrical Pros

New research for successful marketing





Understanding your audience better is always better.

As a leading independent marketing and public relations agency specializing in building and construction, we're constantly on the lookout for new insights into our audiences. Through our decades of experience in this space, we've found the best way to truly understand the mind of a professional tradesperson is simply getting to know them.

Adding some more tools to our trade.

In 2024, we conducted an online survey among electrical contractors, electricians, HVAC contractors and mechanical contractors in the United States. Our goal was to gain a deeper understanding into the ways these professionals learn about new brands and products as well as their key sticking points when evaluating new brands and products.

**With this research, you'll uncover the same winning strategies we did—
and be able to better market to electrical and HVAC contractors.**

Survey stats at-a-glance

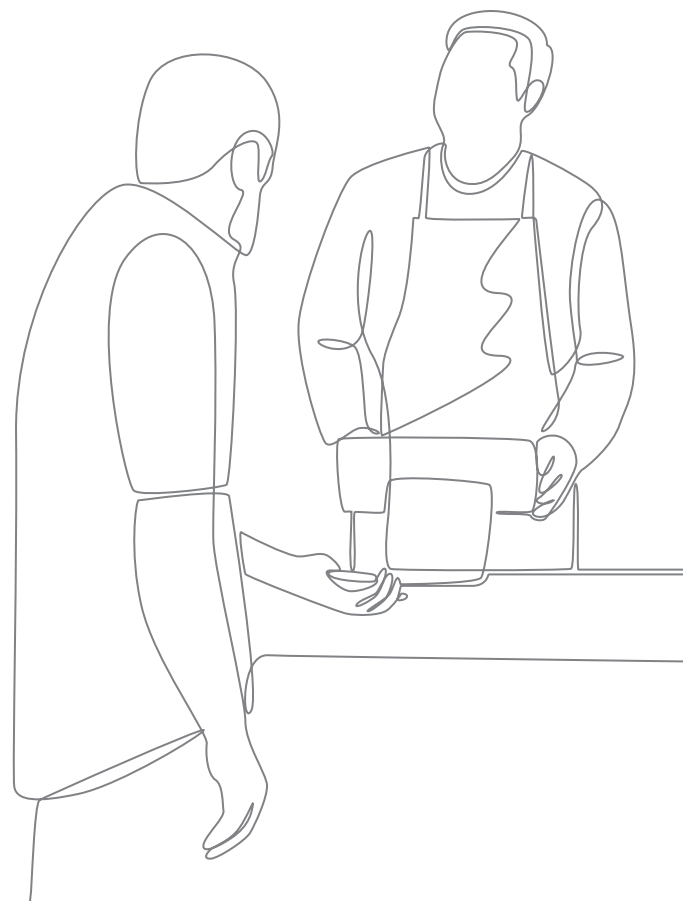
401 HVAC and electrical pros

Data collected Spring 2024 over a two-week period

Distributors rule the roost— even more than they did 5 years ago.

Electrical and HVAC professionals rely heavily on their distributors when learning about new brands/products—especially HVAC pros. And despite products being available from a wider range of sources today, over three-quarters of pros are relying on their distributor more than they were 5 years ago.

WHAT IT MEANS: While professionals have access to more information and outlets today, they remain deeply integrated with their local distributors. The distributor channel should continue to be prioritized in marketing plans given their strong influence on purchasing decisions and their value as the go-to place for pros to get the products they need.



92%

of HVAC and electrical pros rely on distributors for new product information of which 48% cite their distributors as their only source.

76%

of respondents rely on their distributor more now than they did 5 years ago to learn about new products.

Outside of distributor channels, HVAC and electrical pros go straight to the source.

While distributors remain the go-to source for HVAC and electrical pros, online content is the next best source of new product information—primarily via browser searches, visits to manufacturer websites or simply through conversations with coworkers. Of the choices we gave our respondents, expert newsletters, blogs and podcasts were selected the least.

WHAT IT MEANS: Pros want the facts—either by looking the answer up themselves or going straight to the people making the product. It's critically important to have strong SEO and media plans in place, driving these professionals to manufacturer websites to learn more about a brand's products and offerings.



Top sources outside of distribution channels for new product information

- #1** Web browser searches (45%)
- #2** Manufacturer websites (41%)
- #3** Coworkers and peers (35%)

Least cited sources for new product information:

- Podcasts (19%)
- Expert newsletters or blogs (20%)

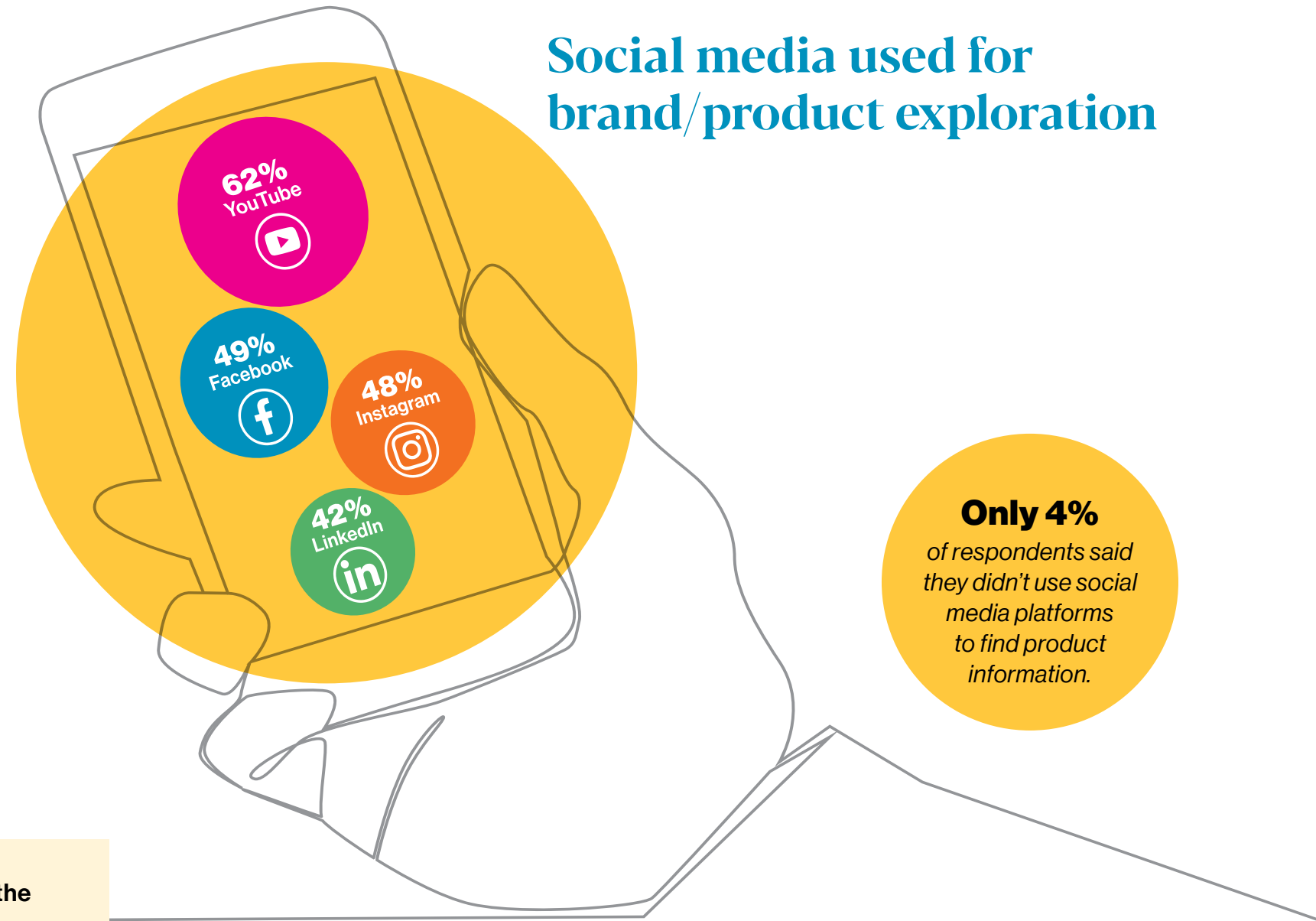
Insight 3

When it comes to social media content, video is top dog.

YouTube is the top social media channel used by these pros to consume content or find information about brands and products. Other channels, like Facebook and Instagram, also see higher engagement with videos in general.

WHAT IT MEANS: High-quality video content isn't always the cheapest or the fastest to produce compared to other marketing opportunities, but the engagement can be worth it.

Social media used for brand/product exploration



Trade shows are still great places to reach them.

Despite the pandemic's temporary impact on in-person events, trade shows are as popular as ever — led by NECA and ACCA — and most HVAC and electrical pros we surveyed indicate they plan to attend at least one of these shows in the future.

64%

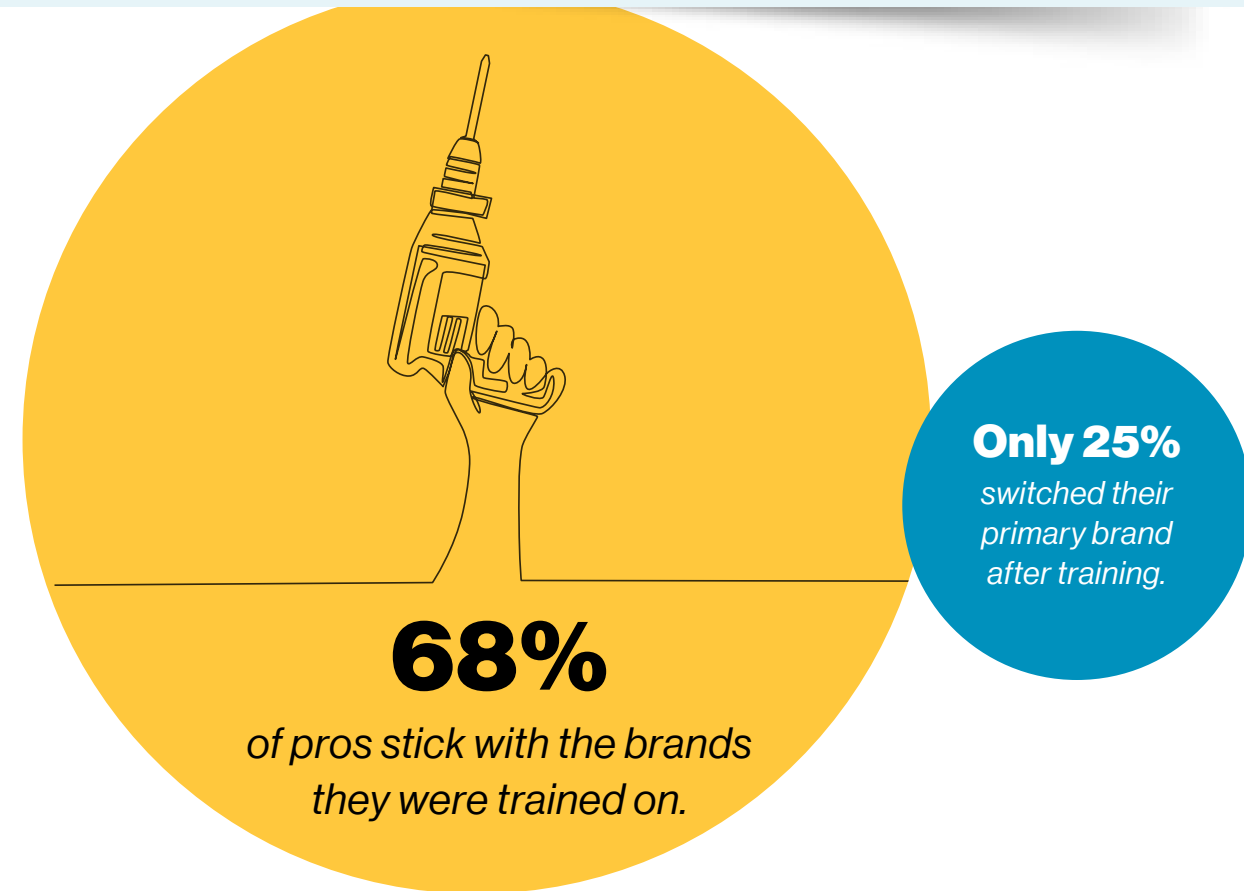
WHAT IT MEANS: Trade shows are a prime opportunity to show off the quality and the durability of your products and make a great first impression on a pro. Brands should consider providing more in-person demos at trade shows, as these can be highly influential when considering new brands or products to try.



The brands they start with are the brands they stick with.

While HVAC and electrical pros are willing to seek out and try new products, the majority were introduced to brands during their initial education and training—and they've been using them ever since.

WHAT IT MEANS: Partnering with training programs may be more valuable than you realize. Besides investing in the future, you're getting your product into the hands of those who may just turn into customers for life.



They're still open to trying something else—if it's worth it.

Despite their brand loyalty, the vast majority of HVAC and electrical pros are always on the lookout for, or often consider, new brands for the tools, equipment, parts or materials they use—especially if it can make installs easier or faster.

73%
of HVAC and electrical pros are always on the lookout for or often considering new brands.

WHAT IT MEANS: As a true professional, the desire to do better work ultimately outweighs brand loyalty. If HVAC and electrical pros have a problem, they'll seek out a solution. If you tell them what the problem is, they're probably willing to listen. And while cost is important, it's not one of the top factors when considering a switch.



Highly likely to consider....

New tools	74%
New primary install equipment/materials	72%
New repair parts	70%

Top reasons to switch brands

Easier/faster to install	49%
Better brand reputation	44%
Quality issues with their current brand	42%

The easiest way to win them over is by making a good product.

Pros want to use quality products, so they rely heavily on factors like brand reputation, seeing it for themselves through product demonstrations or their own online research. Out of the choices we gave, product placements and sponsorships were cited as the least influential.



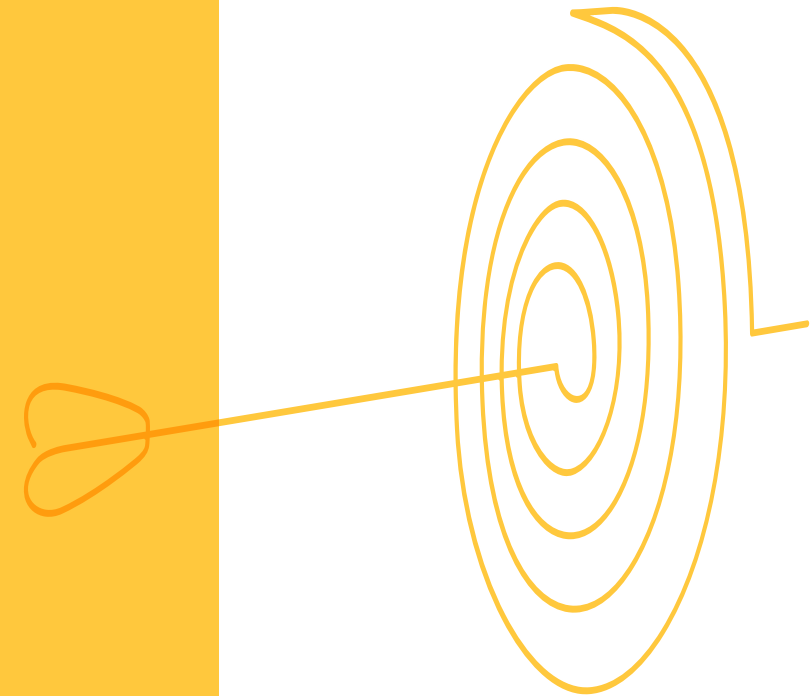
Most influential:

- #1 Brand reputation
- #2 Product demos



Least influential:

- #1 Product placement
- #2 Distributor recommendation

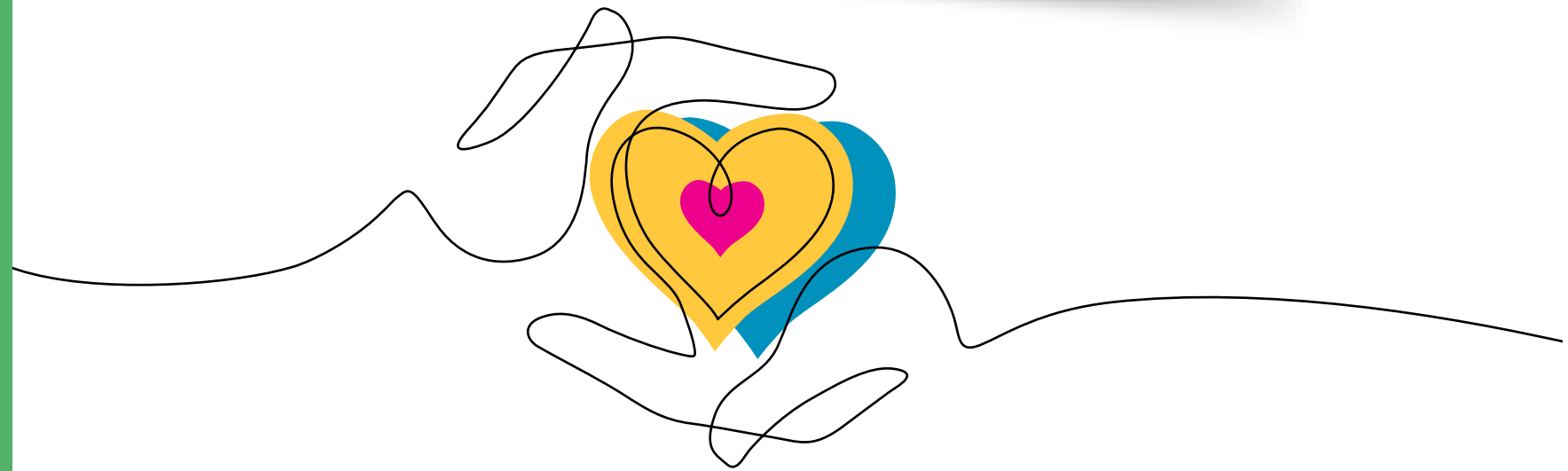


WHAT IT MEANS: Electrical and HVAC pros crave authenticity. They want to know a product will work like it says, and they aren't as trusting of something that's overtly promotional. Brands should ensure they aren't overpromising or being too salesy when communicating with potential customers.

Because at the end of the day, they need a brand they can trust.

It's no surprise that quality, reliability and durability—factors that tie directly into a brand's reputation—are top of mind for HVAC and electrical pros when considering trustworthy brand attributes. They are also twice as likely to cite quality/durability issues as things brands can improve upon compared to any other choice given.

WHAT IT MEANS: Give pros reasons to have faith in your product and your name. Ensure you are talking about the features they really resonate with and address their needs in your marketing efforts. And don't just communicate the high quality of your products. Stand behind them with warranties that meet or exceed competitors, too.

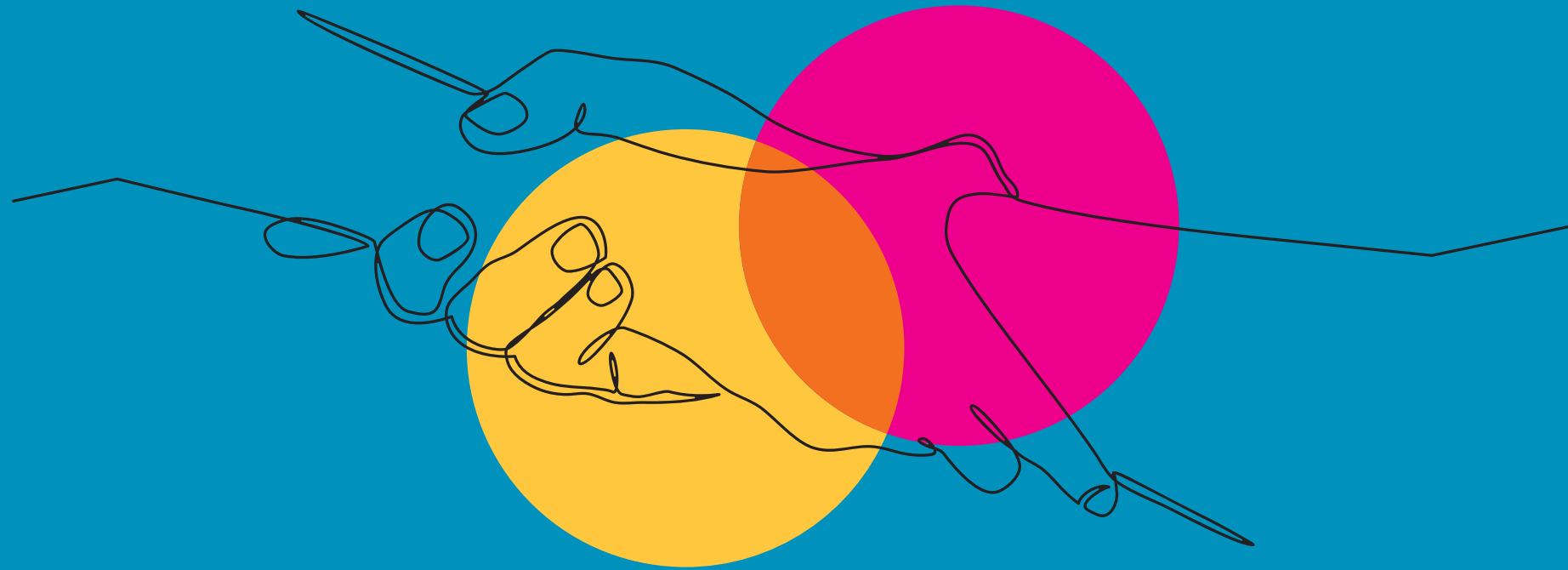


What makes a trustworthy brand?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| #1 Quality products | 55% |
| #2 Reliable/durable products | 49% |
| #3 Good warranty | 40% |

Where do current brands miss the mark?

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Quality/durability issues | 21% |
| Poor performance | 10% |
| Cost | 8% |



Connections are our specialty.

At Mower, we're more than a full-service advertising, marketing and public relations agency with expertise in Building & Construction. We specialize in **Making Fierce Friends™** — our proprietary approach for helping brands establish deeper, more meaningful connections with their customers.

Want the full report—or just want to chat?

Reach out to Geoff Thomas,
our Building & Construction specialty lead:
gthomas@mower.com

mower.com

MOWER