

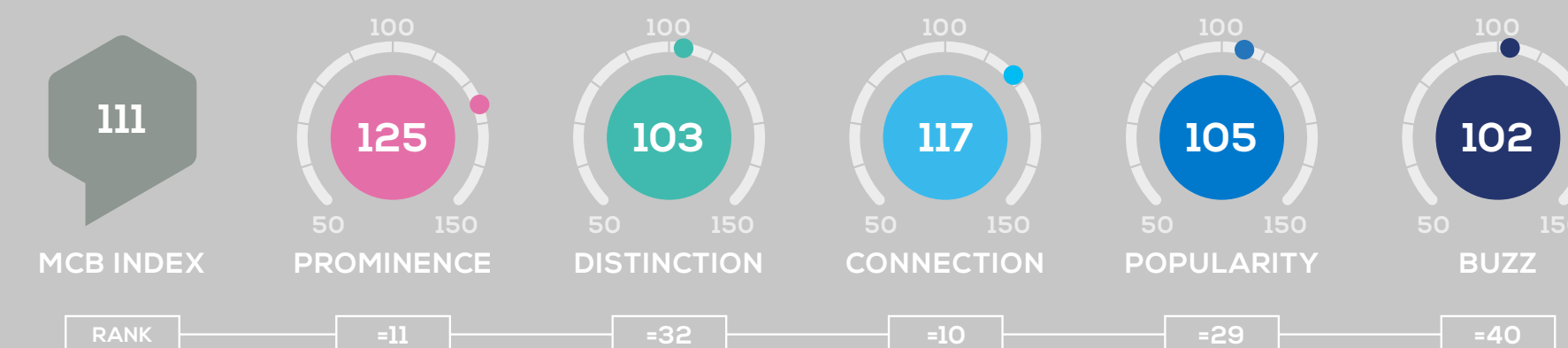


What people think,
feel and do



The Most Connected Brands 2018

Brands must continually find new
ways to connect with consumers
in order to thrive and grow



Embracing the feel good factor

Nearing 170 years old, Boots was created to offer affordable medicines to enable the poorest to help themselves. Fast forward to today and you will see the pharmacy standing strong on its medicinal foundations, but having flourished and bred an influx of beauty and wellness brands too. Home to over 2,000 brands, Boots are in brilliant danger of becoming a one-for-all having newly introduced a range of meal deals that now cater for vegans and flexitarians worldwide.

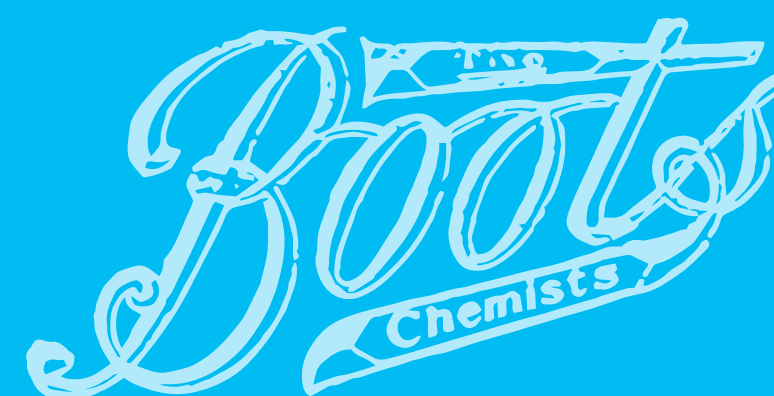
Unsurprisingly, Boots scores particularly highly on security, comfort and hope on our brand emotion metric singing true to their "feel-good" motto and ability to meet customer needs. Their latest "faceless" ad by Ogilvy effortlessly demonstrates this. It's all about championing the way you feel - the casts identities are purposefully not revealed until the end, cue voiceover "it's not just how it makes you look." The ad was perfectly echoed by an upbeat "feel

good" Mason track that's been featured in the UK Top Shazamed ads.

Helen Normoyle, marketing director of Boots UK and Ireland adds: "Our vision for this campaign was to show beauty at its best - as positive [and inclusive]. Working with a young female director, influencers, Boots colleagues and customers, we wanted our message of championing everyone's right to feel good to resonate with as many different people as possible."

With CSR in full flow, Boots UK have also smashed their carbon emissions target three years early by installing energy efficient LED lights and signed the UK Plastics Pact this year, operating as a socially responsible business. Yes it's about "lets feel good", but Boots are also staying fiercely true to their "do good" roots, and this integrity is getting them noticed.

Brand expert view – Boots



Still a pioneer?

Walking through Liverpool Street Station daily, I've witnessed the upgrade of a shabby but strategically important Boots the Chemist, into the new-look health and beauty model. It's been enlarged to accommodate a huge range of beauty, fragrance and prestige brands like: Liz Earle, NYX, Sally Hansen and Clinique.

Despite this transformation and what could be thought of as a rather late tapping into the big beauty zeitgeist, I wonder if I rate Boots as a brand?

Boots is an innovative UK heritage brand that we should be proud of. It's endured, responded to changing economic and social challenges and public health issues and consistently grown since 1849. Founder John Boot laid down its values and belief in

'affordable health', which it's delivered for nearly 200 years. Son Jesse and daughter-in-law Florence built on this, developing new health ranges and providing staff welfare. In 1911 they created the first welfare officer role, prioritising women workers. In 1913 they introduced free evening classes at their 127-acre Nottingham production facility.

Boots pioneered many health products and services we take for granted; the first 24-hr pharmacy in Piccadilly Circus in 1925; the first self-service stores in 1951; the invention of Ibuprofen in 1969; and now providing flu jabs for the NHS as well as aligning on government agendas on DIY health by offering eye, ear and dental care. And don't forget Meal Deals, Men's Grooming, Christmas Specials, mobile app and parcel pick-up services.

Boots own beauty brands No 7, 17 and Botanics are UK best sellers. Recent ads 'Summer like you're 7' and

'Let's feel good' tap into the wellbeing vibe as well as a smart nod to diversity and inclusion. Boots is now seen as a 'retail navigator' offering informed and impartial advice and has one of the highest numbers of loyalty cardholders of any retailer.

So, as a serial innovator I was expecting Boots to use the upgrade to big-scale beauty offering as an opportunity to flex its pioneer spirit. I was hoping for new thinking in the retail beauty experience, championing diversity, sustainability and accessibility. Instead, it appears to be catching up to cash in, disappointingly providing another 'vanilla' experience. Brand relevance is the most important driver of customer loyalty and must be earned and constantly re-earned.

So, yes I'm a Boots brand fan, but I'm still waiting to be wowed by a thoughtful and new way of presenting beauty in retail.

Brigid McMullen

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