Brand Finance® Journal
GLOBAL BRAND INTELLIGENCE SINCE 1996
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The Rise of Local Brands

RECORD-BREAKING BRAND VALUES FOR TOP 500 BANKS

UAE EXTRACT

Contents

Brand Finance Journal 2024 Banking 500

Brand Finance®

Dive Deeper into Brand Value and **What Drives It**

The insight in this report is derived from our proprietary brand equity research data and brand value calculations.

Much of this is available via Brandirectory, our online brand value database where we rank the world's leading brands by their values across 31 sectors and 41 countries and regions.

Brandirectory is the gateway to much deeper insight to what drives brand strength and brand value.

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Brand Equity Data

Industry and regional comparisons of brand strength from our annual global research study of over 6000 brands to inform strategic brand decisions
brandirectory.com/research

Banking Sector Value Tables

Our ranking tables of the top 500 banking brands in the world by value from 2007 to 2024
brandirectory.com/banking

Sustainability Perceptions

Our report on the contribution that perceptions of sustainability make to the values of the world's leading brands
brandirectory.com/sustainability

Brand Guardianship Index

Our measure of the contribution that CEOs make as "guardians" of the value of their brands
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Brand Value Reports

Request your own custom brand value report, providing a detailed diagnosis of brand strength and value relative to competitors with royalty rates and cost of capital calculations
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Foreword

***by David Haigh**, Editor-In-Chief, Chairman & CEO, Brand Finance*

In pursuit of higher returns, bankers have often been innovators, creating new ways of providing places to lodge wealth, transfer money and provide credit. At the same time, they have also been widely considered greedy, anti-social, and often untrustworthy - a necessary evil to keep trade and personal finance flowing.

What most customers don't appreciate is that banking is inherently risky, more so in certain environments. Markets lacking in prudence and rigorous oversight create a friendly environment for bank runs and bank failures.

In pursuit of higher returns, bankers created fractional reserve banking, paper money, trade finance, bonds, mortgages, credit cards and in more recent times cryptocurrency. All of these innovations create risks unless carefully managed, as demonstrated by the last big financial crisis in 2008.

Why the history lesson? We seem to be at an inflection point in terms of innovation, regulation, and trust.

Those swanky reassuring branch networks supported by friendly customer service personnel are rapidly disappearing, just as we enter a recessionary period where bank failure is increasingly likely. Just last year, Credit Suisse failed in Europe, as did American banks Silicon Valley Bank, Signature Bank and First Republic Bank.

Money is now substantively electronic. Bank relationships are increasingly remote and online. The customer is being disintermediated, and soon AI will mean that most banking 'relationships' won't even involve human contact.

"Why the history lesson and the reminder that banking is inherently risky? Because we seem to be at an inflection point in terms of both innovation, regulation and trust."

As a result, many bank brands are struggling to maintain their relationship with customers, particularly their retail customers. In many categories, customers genuinely love their favourite brands, but this is not usually the case for banks. Vernon Hill, the founder of Metro Bank, famously asserted that he didn't want customers, he wanted fans, although its subsequent travails rather undermined this ambition! But from a branding perspective, he had the right idea.

Banking has become one of the weakest categories for customer brand trust and love.

This creates real opportunities for challenger brands in banking and financial services. Apart from new players like Revolut and Monzo, the conditions are right for non-financial institutions to usurp traditional banking relationships. But challenger brands have struggled to make real breakthroughs and non-bank players appear reluctant to step in 'where angels fear to tread.

This is probably why we are seeing a growth in popularity for smaller regional and one-country bank brands at the expense of the big monolithic global brands that used to be in vogue.

Our research shows that strong national bank brands are filling the vacuum of customer trust. I believe we will see much more of this over the next few years as disengaged customers look for a bank partner that offers a greater feeling of affinity, security, and trust.

Introduction

by Joy Macknight, *Guest Editor, Brand Finance Journal*

When asked how banks can improve brand value, most chief marketing officers have long pointed to customer trust as one of the main pillars of a strong brand.

Today, in addition to trust, there is also a focus on articulating a sense of purpose, as well as delivering products and services when, where and how the customer wants to access them.

So while making meaningful connections with customers is the key to building a strong brand, it is crucial that a brand's promise, delivery and customer experience all intersect and are consistent.

Clearly, the biggest brands in the global banking industry continue to win the hearts and minds of customers, as illustrated by the increase in the Top 500's aggregate brand value for the third consecutive year.

However, the banking industry shouldn't be content to sit on its laurels. There are many emerging challenges for traditional brands, including gaining visibility and relevance though digital marketing. This requires investment, new skills and a shift in the mindset across the whole bank.

As such, banks are deploying emerging technology, such as artificial intelligence, to help them connect to their customers in new ways. The key to success is in seamlessly combining energised employees and cutting-edge technology to deliver relevant services and personalised experiences that actually help customers in the moments that matter.

Top 500 Banking Brands

The world's top banking brands have registered a third year of growth, which is a testament to their ability to maintain customer trust in a highly competitive environment.

***by Joy Macknight**, Guest Editor, Brand Finance Journal*

For the third year running, the Top 500 Banking Brands has registered an expansion in aggregate brand value. This year, the ranking saw a 2.3% rise, bringing the total value to a record-breaking $1.44 trillion – almost double what it was a decade ago.

"Average brand strength has improved across the sector largely due to improved brand familiarity, consideration and reputation, according to our global research," says David Haigh, chairman and CEO of Brand Finance. "Additional factors, such as higher revenues, coupled with equity analysts being more optimistic on revenue growth in the future than they were this time last year, are the main drivers of brand value improvement."

He also points to the fact that higher interest rates have boosted revenue figures in the short term, and improvements in digital capabilities have increased customer acquisition and decreased costs for banking brands.

Importantly, the Chinese banking sector (including Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau) has recovered from its aggregate brand value contraction in the previous ranking. This year it expanded by 2% to $449.8 billion.

The nation, which has topped the country table for the past eight years, now sports 74 institutions in the ranking, overtaking the US with 72 (which is 9 less than in the 2023 ranking). Almost two-thirds of the Chinese lenders in the ranking increased their brand value over the course of 2023.

"Although the Chinese economy has experienced headwinds over the past 18 months, particularly as a result of the property market downturn in the country, Chinese banking brands have strong reserves and can lean on central government support if required," says Haigh. "The economy began to recover throughout 2023, which is reflected in higher brand values for Chinese banking brands year on year."

Additionally, Chinese banks have benefited from higher interest rates leading to higher net interest income and net revenues, he adds. "The asset and wealth arms of many banking brands in China have been benefitting from a growing middle class and an affluent class in mainland China. Innovation and digitisation have resulted in improved customer experience, reflected in higher perception scores according to Brand Finance research."

The US, in second place in the country table with $332.2 billion in aggregate brand value, has seen a slight drop (1%) following two consecutive years of expansion. Thirty-one of its banks in the ranking saw decreases in brand value.

Only 11 of the top 50 countries experienced decreases in aggregate value, led by Russia (69%), Malaysia (20%) and Nigeria (14%) .

Unsurprisingly due the international sanctions imposed on Russia, the country's two largest brands – VTB and Sber – figure at the top of the fallers in brand value by percentage, with 91% and 63% plunges, respectively.

Hungary managed to increase its brand value by the greatest amount among the top 50 countries, a feat accomplished single-handedly by OTP Bank. The country's sole lender in the ranking jumped 58%, which positions it among the top 20 climbers by percentage increase. This helped the country's largest commercial bank move up 46 places in the ranking to 177th.

There are 31 new entrants to the ranking, compared to 19 in the previous edition. Malaysia's CIMB Group is the highest placed new entrant, jumping into the ranking at 134th place.

ICBC'S REIGN CONTINUES

China's 'big four' remain well ahead of their US counterparts, with Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) comfortably keeping the title as the world's biggest banking brand for the eighth consecutive year, with a 3% increase to $71.8 billion.

According to an ICBC spokesperson, during the past year the bank focused its efforts on promoting high-quality development, with the "strong, excellent and large" development pattern beginning to take shape. In addition, awareness of the well-established brand "By Your Side and as Your Trust" was further enhanced.

As such, the group's assets and the balance of deposits and loans hit record highs. "With solid efforts, the images and connotations of strategic brands such as D-ICBC, Green Bank, mobile banking and inclusive finance were made known to more people," says the spokesperson. "In 2023, ICBC was also involved, as the exclusive bank sponsor, in the Asian Games and the World University Games, continuously deepening the public welfare brand of the group and empowering its business development."

Its compatriots China Construction Bank, Agricultural Bank of China and Bank of China – in second, third and fourth place, respectively – also increased their brand value by single-digit percentages. China Merchants Bank, in 10th position overall, saw the biggest rise out of the five Chinese banks in the top 10 and almost broke into double-digits with a 9% increase.

Cathay United Bank saw biggest leap (90%) in brand value among this cohort, which allowed it to move up 116 positions to 253rd spot. It topped the table for climbers by rank and came in fourth in terms of percentage increase.

Global 10 by Brand Value

	Brand	Country	Brand Value 2024	Brand Value 2023
1	ICBC	China	$71,828	$69,545
2	China Construction Bank	China	$65,604	$62,681
3	Agricultural Bank Of China	China	$60,398	$57,691
4	Bank of China	China	$50,469	$47,336
5	Bank of America	United States	$37,256	$38,647
6	Wells Fargo	United States	$35,807	$32,970
7	Chase	United States	$35,807	$31,332
8	Citi	United States	$31,401	$30,551
9	J.P. Morgan	United States	$30,762	$31,807
10	China Merchants Bank	China	$26,644	$24,536

Global 10 by Brand Strength Index

	Brand	Country	BSI 2024	BSI 2023
1	BCA	Indonesia	93.8	92.9
2	Equity Bank	Kenya	92.5	92.4
3	Banca Transilvania	Romania	92.3	90.2
4	First National Bank	South Africa	92.3	93.0
5	Kenya Commercial Bank	Kenya	91.5	90.4
6	ICBC	China	89.8	86.4
7	Capitec Bank	South Africa	89.1	93.0
8	Vietcombank	Vietnam	89.1	90.8
9	Bank of China	China	88.9	86.8
10	CTBC Bank	China (Taiwan)	88.8	83.1

The brand strength and value figures referred to in this article, along with our annual rankings from 2007 to 2024 are available via ***brandirectory.com/banking***

Climbers by Percentage Change 2024

	Brand	Country	Brand Value Change
1	Charles Schwab	United States	+135.9%
2	First Citizens	United States	+115.5%
3	Landesbank Baden Wurttemberg	Germany	+112.8%
4	Cathay United Bank	China (Taiwan)	+90.4%
5	MCB Group	Mauritius	+86.6%
6	Old National Bank	United States	+80.2%
7	Umpqua Bank	United States	+79.0%
8	NH Bank	South Korea	+76.7%
9	Attijariwafa Bank	Morocco	+70.9%
10	Srisawad	Thailand	+66.4%
11	Indian Bank	India	+63.2%
12	Banco del Estado de Chile	Chile	+63.2%
13	OTP Bank	Hungary	+57.9%
14	77 Bank	Japan	+54.8%
15	BEKB | BCBE	Switzerland	+53.8%
16	IndusInd Bank	India	+53.2%
17	VIB	Vietnam	+51.1%
18	Bank Sinopac	China (Taiwan)	+49.3%
19	Caixa Geral de Depositos	Portugal	+47.9%
20	Union Bank of India	India	+47.8%

Climbers by Rank 2024

	Brand	Country	Change in Rank
1	Equitable Group	Canada	+319
2	Cathay United Bank	China (Taiwan)	+116
3	Landesbank Baden Wurttemberg	Germany	+111
4	Old National Bank	United States	+106
5	Umpqua Bank	United States	+90
6	Indian Bank	India	+84
7	MCB Group	Mauritius	+84
8	Attijariwafa Bank	Morocco	+79
9	Coventry Building Society	United Kingdom	+71
10	BEKB | BCBE	Switzerland	+71
11	Srisawad	Thailand	+70
12	First Citizens	United States	+68
13	VIB	Vietnam	+66
14	TSB	United Kingdom	+65
15	Maritime Commercial Bank	Vietnam	+65
16	Chiba Bank	Japan	+59
17	QIIB	Qatar	+59
18	77 Bank	Japan	+58
19	Banco del Estado de Chile	Chile	+56
20	Halyk Bank	Kazakhstan	+56

BOFA STAYS THE COURSE

Despite a slight drop (4%) in brand value, Bank of America (BofA) maintains its fifth-placed spot overall and remains the premier US banking brand for the fourth year running, with a value of $37.3 billion. However, Wells Fargo – in sixth place overall – is closing the gap on its compatriot, with a 9% increase to record a brand value of $35.8 billion.

Chase attains the largest rise (14%) in brand value among the top five US lenders. This boost allowed it to move up one place to seventh. Chase is followed by Citi, in eighth place, while J.P. Morgan dropped two positions to ninth with a 3% decrease in brand value.

But it's Charles Schwab that tops the percentage increase table, with a 136% jump in brand value, reaching a total of $12.1 billion. This allowed it to move up 37 positions to 24th spot, entering the top 25 for the first time.

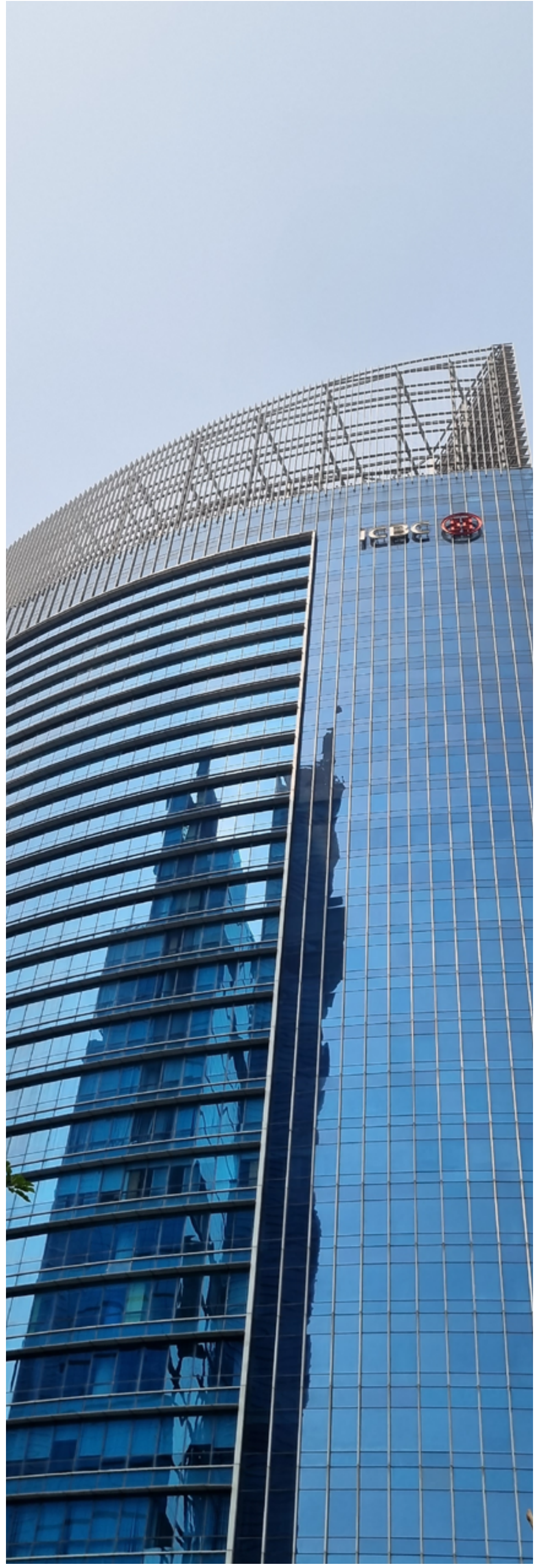
Schwab, which provides a full range of brokerage, banking and financial advisory services, celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2023 by launching several targeted initiatives, including an online innovation, a brand activation in partnership with Ford and PGA, and a client survey.

In a November 2023 statement, Schwab's CEO and co-chairman Walt Bettinger said: "Technology has removed nearly all barriers to investing, and the next logical step is to provide true personalisation to every single investor. That said, technology will never eclipse the human touch. For half a century, our dedicated Schwab professionals have put the interests of our clients first and foremost, and I'm confident our culture of service will continue to set us apart over the next 50 years."

EUROPE: REASON FOR OPTIMISM

The largest banking brand in Europe remains HSBC, with a brand value of $20 million. A 1% increase in brand value was enough to allow the UK-headquartered bank to overtake Canada's TD and regain the 11th spot globally, following two years in 12th position.

The HSBC brand received a boost following the £1 acquisition of the UK subsidiary of the failed Silicon Valley Bank in March 2023. Three months later, it rebranded Silicon Valley Bank UK as HSBC Innovation Banking and set out plans to grow the rebranded entity – which serves the start-up community – in the US, UK, Middle East and Asia.



While the Europe banking industry has been stuck in the doldrums the past few years, this year saw many countries experience robust brand growth, with an aggregate improvement of 3.2% for the region. For example, the larger markets of France, the Netherlands and Spain have expanded their brand value by around 10% each.

SANTANDER'S STRENGTH

Recording the biggest rank increase among the top 20 banking brands globally, Spain's Banco Santander has moved up four places to 13th. The lender saw a 12% increase in its brand value, to $18.9 billion.

According to Juan Manuel Cendoya, global head of communications, corporate marketing and research at Banco Santander, the bank has modified its brand strategy from being flexible with local branding and campaigns towards a global brand strategy to accompany the operational and business strategy, and act as a lever for transformation.

"To do this, we are simplifying our brand portfolio and defining a truly global and consistent positioning for the brand," he explains. "This transformation implies a very significant change and will have an impact on both internal and external stakeholders. It has been led by top management: Ana Botín, executive chair, and Hector Grisi, CEO, who are the leaders and main sponsors of the group's strategic communication, brand positioning and reputational initiatives."

Reflecting on Santander's most successful brand campaign in 2023, Cendoya highlights a few at the global level that are helping the bank leverage its global positioning. "Within sponsorships, we worked on key assets such as Ferrari and F1 with 'Santander Lap Zero', as well as League of Legends competitions under the 'Level up your dreams' programme," he says.

GERMANY'S DOUBLE-DIGIT GROWTH

Germany's aggregate brand value jumped up 21%, allowing it to move up two places to 18th in the country table. Its three biggest brands – Deutsche Bank, Commerzbank and DZ Bank – saw jumps of 24%, 36% and 19%, respectively.

But it is Landesbank Baden-Württemberg (LBBW), a mid-sized universal bank which serves companies, retail and institutional customers, and savings banks, that has made the biggest improvement among the German – as well as European – lenders. It increased its brand value by 113% and leapt 111 positions in the

overall ranking to reach the 209th spot, earning it a place in both the percentage and rank climbers' tables.

According to Angela Brötel, head of corporate communications, marketing and board of management of LBBW, the biggest challenge over the past year was – and continues to be –supporting its customers as a reliable partner in their sustainable transformation. "However, this is also our greatest opportunity," she adds. "We know our customers and their industries and have long-term owners at our side. This means we have all the prerequisites to accompany the changes in the best possible way."

In 2023, LBBW repositioned itself as a modern workplace for existing and potential employees with the largest employer branding campaign in its history. "This requires the best talent in the country, as the bank is tackling the major transformation issues of our time," says Brötel. "At the same time, LBBW is a workplace where employees can feel comfortable, as it emphasises the importance of human interaction."

To attract additional attention, the bank reactivated a special influencer from its history using artificial intelligence (AI). Brötel explains: "Over 200 years ago, Katharina von Württemberg was brave enough to launch a bank in response to a famine.

Since autumn 2023, Katharina has also been sharing her thoughts on LinkedIn, thanks to LBBW and AI technology. As a virtual influencer, Katharina provides insights into the bank's work and successfully addresses the issues that move professionals and young professionals alike."

THE YEAR AHEAD

Haigh sees diverse challenges for banking brands in the next 12 months. For players in developed economies, increased competition from traditional industry players and non-traditional players, regulatory changes, and lower net interest margins, all point to a potential convergence in the industry.

For those in developing markets, there is more opportunity for growth among the unbanked, but different challenges exist in the form of a lack of financial inclusion or literacy, assessing credit risk effectively, and a lack of banking infrastructure.

He also points to the useful deployment of data analytics. "Navigating legacy systems, privacy controls and other barriers to effective use of data analytics will be a challenge that banking brands must overcome if they are to successfully personalise products and services to customers and provide the best user experience possible," Haigh says.

Navigating the road ahead will necessitate a bank to remain true to its core purpose. According to LBBW's Brötel, the bank's goal for 2024 is "to continue to establish itself as the preferred banking partner for business customers, even in an increasingly challenging economic environment. To achieve this, an image campaign is planned for 2024 that addresses the needs of our target groups and proves that LBBW is the right partner."

ICBC, in honour of its 40th anniversary, plans to remain committed to the "financial development path with Chinese characteristic." and push forward reform and development in the new journey, according to the spokesperson.

"ICBC will continue to support, through brand building, the whole bank in developing technology finance, green finance, inclusive finance, pension finance and digital finance, and continue to strengthen its brand value creation ability, to build confidence in and gather strength for the high-quality development of the bank," explains the spokesperson.

According to Cendoya, Santander's brand value will be strongly linked to its ability to deliver on the strategy it has defined for both the business and the brand.

"The key to increasing our brand value will be to implement a global operating model for marketing, to implement common positioning, and to identify the right assets and experiences to make it tangible," he says. "Nathalie Picquot, head of corporate marketing, brand engagement and digital experience, is leading on this, and I am convinced it will be a success, leading not only to higher brand value but also to a stronger brand."

Top Bank CEOs: Brand Finance 2024 Brand Guardianship Index

In 2024, some CEOs are scrutinised like celebrities. The Brand Guardianship Index celebrates CEOs who balance the needs of commercial success, long-term brand building and personal reputation management.

In the Brand Finance Brand Guardianship Index 2024 (BGI), 10 out of the world's top 100 CEOs – or brand guardians – hail from the banking sector. The BGI recognises CEOs who are sustainably building business value by balancing the needs of all stakeholders: employees, investors, and society.

Many of this year's top banking brand guardians demonstrate stability, focusing on steadfast leadership and long-term tenures.

Another trend is that many of the sector's CEOs are also longstanding stakeholders, a testament to their commitment to their brands' growth and prosperity.

Banking brand guardianship is not just about steadfastness, though. Digitisation and tranformation factor prominently among this year's CEOs, a vital priority as consumers increasingly seek convenience without sacrificing simplicity and accessibility.

No.1 Sashi Jagdishan

HDFC Bank, CEO

After climbing 48 ranks in the Brand Finance Brand Guardianship Index (BGI) 2024, HDFC Bank CEO Sashi Jagdishan has become banking's top-ranked CEO. Jagdishan has been part of HDFC Bank since 1996, positioning himself as an integral part of HDFC Bank's culture. Having entered the role of CEO in 2020, he was reappointed in 2023 for another three years, showcasing his critical role in HDFC Bank's path to growth. With ambitions for robust growth in the upcoming years, his focus will be on shifts from sales management to relationship management.

No.2 Dinesh Kumar Khara

State Bank of India, CEO/Chairman

The ascent of Dinesh Kumar Khara, CEO/Chairman of State Bank of India, in the ranks has been notable, with a climb of 1 position, now ranked second within the banking industry. This achievement follows the confirmation of his extended tenure at State Bank of India. In August 2023, it was announced that Khara's tenure would continue for another year, aligning with the bank's current policy that permits chairpersons to serve until the age of 63, considering Khara's current age of 62.

No.3 Piyush Gupta

DBS, CEO

DBS's CEO, Piyush Gupta, has seen a decline in his ranking this year, dropping from first in the Brand Guardianship Index banking sector to third. Under Gupta's leadership, the Singaporean bank has been addressing challenges stemming from a turbulent 2023 marked by digital disruptions caused by software glitches in third-party vendor systems and errors by the bank's personnel. Despite this, DBS has recorded a 5% increase in brand value this year to $11.0 billion and has jumped up four spots in the Banking 500 ranking to claim 25th position.

No.4 Vincent Delie

First National Bank, CEO

As a new entrant in Brand Guardian Index (BGI) 2024, Vincent Delie has made significant progress in entering the BGI banking ranks. However, the ascent is not reflected in the bank's overall brand value, which has declined 10% year-on-year. Delie underscores the pivotal role of investing in his team as an investment in the company's future. His commitment to fostering professional growth and development is evident in the comprehensive support provided to employees, including leadership development programmes, diverse learning opportunities, and networking events.

No.5 Matt Comyn

Commonwealth Bank, CEO

Australia's Commonwealth Bank CEO, Matt Comyn has made a significant leap in the ranking up from 15th to fifth. The ascent is not reflected in the bank's overall brand value, which has declined 12% year-on-year to $6.8 billion, simultaneously dropping from 49th to 43rd in the Banking 500 ranking. The bank recently fell short of analyst expectations despite reporting a hefty A$5 billion cash profit, which Comyn attributed to the economy's exposure to downside risks, noting that cash-strapped consumers are scaling back their spending habits.

No.6 Ala'a Eraiqat

ADCB, CEO

ADCB's CEO Ala'a Eraiqat, maintained the same ranking among banking peers this year. The bank's brand value also increased by 8.7% to $2.9 billion. Under Eraiqat's leadership, as the ADCB Group CEO and Al Hilal Bank Chairman, strategic partnerships and digital initiatives have propelled ADCB's growth and improved customer experience. Through the innovative collaboration with Nomo, a subsidiary of Boubyan Bank, ADCB now offers Shari'ah-compliant digital banking solutions to UAE residents. This partnership facilitates seamless access to UK-based multi-currency accounts and home financing through smartphone applications.

No.7 Brian Moynihan

Bank of America, CEO

Assuming leadership in 2010 in the aftermath of the global financial crisis, Bank of America's CEO Brian Moynihan has successfully navigated the bank through both the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent tumult in the US banking sector, marked by the failure of several regional lenders. Leader of the world's fifth most valuable bank and the most valuable bank outside of China, Moynihan has cited the investment banking arm of Bank of America as an area of importance in the coming year, noting a robust pipeline of activity.

No.8 Carlo Messina

Intesa Sanpaolo, CEO

Intesa Sanpaolo's CEO Carlo Messina has seen a rise in the rankings, jumping 34 spots to secure the eighth position. Taking over as CEO in 2013, Messina has stressed his long-term commitment and highlighted the importance of technological innovation in Intesa Sanpaolo's growth strategy. This includes initiatives like deploying a new cloud-based core banking platform, isytech; launching the group's digital bank; and investing in artificial intelligence. He has also mentioned the bank's aim to strengthen its wealth management sector to maintain profitability, especially with anticipated interest rate decreases.

No.9 Milton Maluhy Filho

Itaú, CEO

Assuming the helm as CEO of Brazilian bank Itaú in February 2021, Milton Maluhy Filho brings with him nearly two decades of experience within the institution, having held various roles since 2002. Maluhy Filho ascended to partner status in 2011 at just 35 years old. Since taking charge, he has been dedicated to advancing the bank's digital services and expanding its appeal to Gen Z customers. As the foremost financial institution in Latin America, Itaú has thrived under his leadership, consistently delivering robust financial performances, and maintaining its prominence across the region.

No.10 Sim Tshabalala

Standard Bank, CEO

Sim Tshabalala, CEO of Standard Bank Group, has led the lender to champion gender equality and women's empowerment. Under his leadership, Standard Bank has become an invaluable partner in supporting initiatives such as the Top Women Conference, which celebrates the achievements of women leaders and organisations that empower them. Additionally, he has led the bank to embrace digital transformation and innovate in response to evolving customer needs. Under his leadership, Standard Bank Group has entered into extended agreements with technology partners like Salesforce to enhance its digital capabilities and deliver personalised solutions to clients.

More information on our CEO study, the "Brand Guardianship Index" can be found via ***brandirectory.com/brand-guardianship***

Local Brands Prove Stronger than Global Brands

Being a national champion allows for more efficient brand management, and can also lead to higher levels of familiarity and comfort among a local audience when selecting a bank from available brands.

***by Joy Macknight,** Guest Editor, Brand Finance Journal*

A common tip to increasing brand strength is to stay close to the customer to better understand their needs. As such, it should come as no surprise that local and regional banks are performing as well as – and, in many cases, outperforming – global banks in terms of positioning their brand in the hearts and minds of customers.

According to Brand Finance research, the significant differences in brand strength across continents and regions is largely attributable to the fact that many banks with very high brand strengths only operate in one market and are, therefore, much more attuned to national trends.

David Haigh, chairman and CEO, Brand Finance, says: "Strong brands often exist in single markets where they are dominant and the competition is limited.

On the contrary, expanding a brand into multiple markets will add brand value but may risk diluting brand strength with exposure to more competitors in the different local markets, as well as to the challenges of multi-market brand management."

UK CHAMPION

Following the 2008 global financial crisis, Lloyds Banking Group made a strategic decision to concentrate on its home market, which allows it to be more closely tuned into the changing needs of UK customers.

"Brands aren't valuable or useful if they aren't relevant to their customers," emphasises Suresh Balaji, the group's chief marketing officer (CMO).

"Being UK-focussed lets our brands have a more meaningful and relevant presence for our customers to see, whether that is helping small business and startups, helping under-represented groups get into entrepreneurship, helping people save for, buy and protect their belongings, or by campaigning to end homelessness and increase social housing. We can do all of these things deeply and well by being committed to one market."

He continues: "Our deep knowledge of the UK also enables our multi-brand portfolio which lets us create relevant products and services tailored to various customer segments. So in short: being local makes us relevant which allows us to build meaningful relationships with our customers and adds value to our brands."

Balaji adds that that brands are not built through advertising alone but are the sum-total of all experiences that a customer has with the bank. "Building strong brands through great experience is only possible if our culture makes us strive to create the best experience for customers all of the time. If we do this then our brands can stand out to people, mean something positive, and be the first port of call for money advice, help and support through the ups and downs of life."

AFRICAN EXPERTISE

There are some banks that manage to operate in several countries and still create a tailored approach. For example, Absa Group is a successful regional player, operating in its home market of South Africa as well as 11 other African countries. The group's CMO & CAO, Sydney N Mbhele, agrees that making meaningful connections that resonates with customers is the "heart and soul" of building a strong brand.

"We have now injected a seamless experience, underpinned by strong empathy into our offering. Our new brand promise is a declaration of our intent that our customers are much more than mere account numbers, they matter to us and so do the stories behind the individuals. Gaining this context will allow Absa to serve them in a more meaningful manner," explains Mbhele.

"The building of a solid brand is not a marketing exercise of function – it should be a company-wide affirmation of the inherent promise that is being made to the market," he adds. "From an Absa point, our journey to a more human-centred approach to banking entailed taking the entire company towards this renewed vision. This journey is also an ongoing conversation with our customers about their experiences and their needs."

Last year Absa updated its internal corporate purpose to 'Empowering Africa's tomorrow, together one story at a time', and Mbhele says that it was important that the bank's brand reflect this internal shift.

"The reimagining of the brand follows a detailed review of customer insights, feedback and research. Our research pointed to the fact that customers wanted to experience more human-centred empathy, and to have seamless experiences in every transaction, and in the moments that matter," he explains. "What this meant is that we had to adapt to the changing needs and preferences of our customers, so that we can provide personalised and relevant banking experiences to support their life stage, goals, and preferences."

To this end, storytelling and meaningful connections are the "name of the game" in 2024, Mbhele adds. "Absa is making a step-change throughout the organisation; one that will involve enhancing the value of our products, improving our levels of customer service, and vastly improving our capacity to deliver banking solutions that will be timely and relevant to our customers throughout their lives. In doing this we hope to become an inseparable, integrated and seamless part of their lives," he says.

REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

While brand value is a direct measurement of the monetary value of the asset that is called the brand, Brand Finance uses brand strength as a measurement of the overall health of a brand, reflecting where the brand sits in the hearts and minds of customers and the wider market using relevant emotional and rational key performance indicators.

Overall, African and Asian banking brands, on average, have the strongest brand strengths in the Brand Finance study. "This is largely due to both continents having many strong national players in each respective national market," says Haigh.

There are four African brands – Equity Bank, First National Bank, Kenya Commercial Bank and Capitec Bank – among the top seven strongest banking brands. On average, the Brand Strength Index (BSI) of the 19 African brands that appear in the Top 500 Banking Brands 2024 ranking is stronger than any other continent.

But looking at the top 20 brands by BSI per continent, Asia's banking brand average comes out ahead of Africa.

The Asian cohort is led by Bank Central Asia (BCA), which is the strongest brand among the Top 500 Banking Brands, with a BSI score of 93.8 and an AAA+ rating. The lender provides commercial banking and other financial services in Indonesia.

The world's most valuable brand, ICBC, is the second strongest brand in the region and operates primarily in the Chinese market, while Vietnam's Vietcombank ranks third. Bank of China, State Bank of India, HDFC Bank and VietinBank are some of the other strong Asian national players in the ranking.

In contrast, North America and Europe exhibited a lower average BSI when compared to the other regions, according to Brand Finance research.

Haigh explains: "Many banks in these regions conduct operations across multiple countries beyond their domestic markets. Most of the global banks from both of these regions have a lower brand strength in some of the international markets in which they operate, pushing down the overall BSI score achieved."

For example, a global bank like Barclays, which is a dominant bank in the UK, would have to show the same dominance in other markets if it is to maintain the same brand strength outside the home market, he explains.

However, a local bank would be able to maintain a stronger BSI due to its concentrated presence in the home market, while being able to manage the brand in one market successfully due to the deep knowledge regarding the nation and its people.

Home Advantage: An Analysis of Banking Brand Strength and Value by Region

Brand Finance has analysed banking brands' internationality to better understand their positioning and performance in an increasingly globalised market. This comprehensive investigation hinges on a modified Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI) to gauge the international footprint of banking brands.

A score of 0% on this modified HHI signifies that a brand is operating solely within a single market, while a figure approaching 100% suggests a brand's revenue is evenly dispersed across numerous markets and regions. This metric helps to provide a useful tool to evaluate how banking brands perform and compete on the global stage.

The analysis reveals a significant variation in average brand internationality across different regions, with Europe, North America, and Africa the leaders in terms of number of bank brands which cross national boundaries. This variation is not merely a reflection of the number of markets these brands operate in but also highlights the nature of their operations.

In many instances, a brand's internationality is a by-product of robust business-to-business operations that lay the groundwork for potential retail ventures. Specifically, in Africa, internationality, though comparatively modest, is buoyed by strong revenue streams from home markets complemented by burgeoning brand activities across multiple other regional markets.

In North America, a strong correlation exists between brand strength and internationality: the biggest (by revenue) and strongest (by Brand Strength Index score) North American banks are regional or global operators. This relationship, however, does not uniformly apply across all regions. In Europe and Africa, a vast international footprint does not necessarily equate to strong brand strength.

This discrepancy is particularly evident in Africa, where seven out of the top 10 brands are regional players boasting extensive footprints. Yet, their brand strength predominantly hinges on their strength and performance in home markets despite operating in multiple jurisdictions.

When examining the global arena, the dominance of brands from the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region and Africa among the top 10 strongest banking brands is striking. These brands are typically the leading national brands within their home markets, with some maintaining a modest regional presence in additional markets. This dominance underscores the significance of robust national performance as a cornerstone for brand strength, even in the context of international expansion.

Brand Finance research has found that banks in different regions have very different brand strength ratings. Understanding how customers perceive bank brands in different regions is useful to strategic leaders who want to grow their banking brands sustainably and effectively.

The BSI is for assessing banking brands' market impact and consumer perception. Notably, the surveyed banking brands from APAC, Africa, and Europe emerge as leaders, boasting average BSI scores of 89,

Top 50 by Total BV by Country 2024

	Country	Brand Value 2024	Brand Value Change
1	China	$449,840	+2.1%
2	United States	$332,167	-1.4%
3	Canada	$71,360	-2.2%
4	United Kingdom	$66,911	+2.0%
6	France	$38,387	+9.6%
7	India	$37,163	+21.4%
8	Spain	$35,244	+11.4%
5	Japan	$34,098	+7.7%
9	Australia	$26,583	-1.4%
13	Brazil	$24,760	+2.9%
11	South Korea	$22,618	+14.2%
14	Singapore	$21,647	+0.9%
12	Netherlands	$20,987	+10.1%
10	Switzerland	$20,742	-8.0%
15	Italy	$18,952	+18.2%
21	Saudi Arabia	$17,423	+4.8%
18	UAE	$17,328	+10.3%
20	Germany	$16,251	+20.9%
19	Indonesia	$15,592	+12.5%
25	Vietnam	$13,370	+18.8%
17	Sweden	$13,172	+5.0%
23	Qatar	$11,347	+9.9%
24	Thailand	$9,253	+3.0%
22	Malaysia	$9,228	-20.0%
27	Austria	$8,361	+22.0%
28	Belgium	$7,589	+13.1%
26	South Africa	$7,515	-2.7%
29	Philippines	$7,316	+14.8%
31	Israel	$7,094	+12.6%
30	Poland	$5,593	+3.3%
16	Russia	$5,335	-68.9%
32	Denmark	$4,638	+13.8%
36	Turkey	$4,053	+13.8%
37	Kuwait	$3,745	+18.2%
33	Norway	$3,710	-5.4%
34	Colombia	$3,460	+25.0%
38	Chile	$3,444	+25.5%
35	Ireland	$2,619	-4.6%
39	Mexico	$2,618	+15.0%
40	Portugal	$2,306	+25.8%
43	Egypt	$1,372	+12.3%
41	Nigeria	$1,350	-14.4%
44	New Zealand	$1,350	+4.1%
47	Hungary	$1,348	+57.9%
45	Czech Republic	$1,289	+15.4%
42	Morocco	$1,256	+16.7%
48	Peru	$1,162	+31.4%
NEW	Romania	$1,133	+22.5%
NEW	Iran	$893	+17.7%
50	Kenya	$794	+7.5%

87, and 84, respectively.

These figures underscore the robust brand equity and consumer attitude to banks within these territories. Conversely, the Middle East and North America present lower BSI scores of 79 and 77. There are a number of possible explanations for the scores, for instance the very long tail of smaller bank brands vying for customer attention in the USA versus in the UK.

However, North America distinguishes itself through exceptionally high consumer loyalty levels (8.3) compared to the Middle East (4.9), indicating a deeper brand-consumer connection. This offers opportunities for bankers to use differing loyalties to manage consumer deposits in a changing interest rate environment.

Africa shines in the realm of brand investment, particularly regarding people, with a score of 9.8 in perceptions of 'Ease of Dealing' and 'Customer Service'. These dimensions are crucial drivers of brand consideration in the region, highlighting the importance of human-centric service and operational excellence.

However, African brands grapple with the lowest analyst recommendations, suggesting a perception of higher risk for investors. Nonetheless, for leading brands like Equity and KCB of Kenya, there lies a potential goldmine, given their strong BSI and burgeoning analyst endorsement, indicating promising growth and investment returns.

Across the banking sector, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) efforts have sometimes surprising impacts, as indicated by drivers of brand reputation. Certainly, ESG is a key driver of overall reputation, but a brand's ESG efforts are not a major driver of consumer retail banking choices.

Banks in the African, APAC, and Middle East regions rate higher than Europe and North America in ESG, reflecting their critical role in driving financial inclusion and supporting social development in emerging economies. This aligns with the broader expectation for the corporate sector, especially banks, to act as pivotal agents of social and environmental progress.

This analysis underscores the intricate dynamics shaping banking brands' performance across different global regions. The interplay of BSI, consumer loyalty, brand equity, and ESG efforts paints a complex picture of challenges and opportunities.

North America 10

	Brand	Brand Value 2024	Brand Value 2023
1	Bank of America	$37,256	$38,647
2	Wells Fargo	$35,807	$32,970
3	Chase	$35,807	$31,332
4	Citi	$31,401	$30,551
5	J.P. Morgan	$30,762	$31,807
6	TD	$18,961	$20,404
7	Goldman Sachs	$17,833	$18,603
8	Capital One	$16,974	$18,348
9	RBC	$16,420	$14,742
10	Morgan Stanley	$13,306	$14,215

LatAm 10

	Brand	Brand Value 2024	Brand Value 2023
1	Itaú	$8,334	$8,717
2	Banco do Brasil	$5,454	$4,904
3	Bradesco	$5,014	$5,092
4	Caixa	$2,862	$3,090
5	Banorte	$1,864	$1,495
6	Bancolombia	$1,800	$1,394
7	Banco del Estado de Chile	$1,488	$912
8	Banco de Chile	$1,412	$1,331
9	Nubank	$1,354	$1,042
10	BCP	$789	$573

Africa 10

	Brand	Brand Value 2024	Brand Value 2023
1	Standard Bank	$1,966	$1,748
2	First National Bank	$1,391	$1,540
3	Absa	$1,376	$1,492
4	Investec	$1,041	$992
5	Nedbank	$858	$1,021
6	Attijariwafa Bank	$834	$488
7	National Bank of Egypt	$655	$478
8	Capitec Bank	$539	$620
9	Access Bank	$475	$392
10	Equity Bank	$450	$428

While APAC, Africa, and Europe lead in brand strength, the nuances of consumer loyalty, brand investment, and ESG performance across all regions highlight the need for tailored strategies that resonate with local market demands and global sustainability goals.

The more markets a brand operates in, the more difficult it is to ensure consistent brand positioning, messaging, and delivery in a way that resonates with all customers. Banking brands aiming to fortify their market position through expansion into new markets must have a nuanced understanding of the regions where they operate, but even armed with that knowledge, it is still challenging to gain market share outside of brand's home market when competing with local banks.

A notable variability in brand strength, as measured by standard deviations among the top 10 brands, is observed in South America and Africa. This suggests that while multiple brands are recognised as strong within these regions, there remains substantial room for growth in terms of brand equity and market share.

For instance, Attijariwafa Bank in Morocco and Absa in South Africa are examples of brands with significant strength yet relatively small market shares. This variability reflects a vibrant competitive landscape where strategic initiatives can lead to considerable shifts in market position.

In South America, there is a pronounced variability in product offerings, encompassing both quality and variety. This indicates a market where consumer needs and preferences are diverse, and banks are continuously innovating to meet these demands. Such variability underscores the importance of a differentiated product strategy, one that caters to a broad spectrum of consumer needs to capture and retain market share.

North America exhibits considerable variability in the strategic placement of ATMs and branches, alongside the availability and functionality of websites and apps.

This suggests that top brands adopt varied approaches to ensure convenience and accessibility, reflecting the diverse consumer expectations and the importance of an omnichannel presence in maintaining competitive advantage.

Loyalty emerges as the measure with the greatest variance across all BSI metrics, indicating fickleness among consumers regarding their banking choices. This variability is especially pronounced in the Middle East, Europe, and APAC, posing a significant challenge to achieving market primacy.

In contrast, African consumers demonstrate higher presumed loyalty, attributed to the integration of traditional banking with fintech solutions that cater to a wide range of financial needs, thereby reducing the inclination to switch banks.

In Africa, the banking sector emerges as a bastion of consumer trust and reliance, ranking as the third highest industry by brand strength, when comparing the average brand strength of brands from different sectors. This remarkable positioning underscores the pivotal role that banking plays in the everyday lives of African consumers and highlights the robustness of local banking brands.

Compared to other locally developed brands in sectors such as retail, telecommunications, and consumer goods, banking brands hold significant sway over consumer preferences and loyalty.

The variability in brand strength, particularly in South America and Africa, reveals a landscape of intense competition and diverse consumer expectations. In South America, the focus on product quality and variety signifies a market driven by tangible value and innovation.

Conversely, Africa's variability in price points, including fair rates and value for money, alongside strategies targeting both mass consumers and premium segments, illustrates the complex balancing act required to cater to a broad consumer base where levels of financial influence vary widely.

This dichotomy between volume and value players underscores the unique challenges and opportunities within developing market economies, necessitating a dual system that promotes financial inclusion while catering to the financial services needs of the elite and formal business communities.

The contrast becomes starker when banking brand strength is juxtaposed with other sectors in Europe and North America.

European consumers exhibit a pronounced preference for brands in the apparel, automotive, and cosmetics industries, relegating banking brands to a lower echelon of consumer esteem.

Similarly, North American consumers display a strong affinity for domestically produced electronics and food brands, further diminishing the relative brand strength of banking entities.

This divergence highlights a critical challenge for banking brands in these regions: the need to reinvent and reposition themselves in the face of shifting consumer priorities and the rising prominence of other sectors.

APAC 10

	Brand	Brand Value 2024	Brand Value 2023
1	ICBC	$71,828	$69,545
2	China Construction Bank	$65,604	$62,681
3	Agricultural Bank Of China	$60,398	$57,691
4	Bank of China	$50,469	$47,336
5	China Merchants Bank	$26,644	$24,536
6	Postal Savings Bank	$18,276	$17,039
7	Bank of Communications	$18,255	$18,947
8	China CITIC Bank	$13,325	$12,621
9	DBS	$11,031	$10,509
10	Ping An Bank	$10,762	$12,448

MENA 10

	Brand	Brand Value 2024	Brand Value 2023
1	QNB	$8,404	$7,666
2	Al-Rajhi Bank	$6,401	$5,658
3	SNB	$4,425	$4,326
4	Emirates NBD	$3,870	$3,899
5	FAB	$3,846	$3,943
6	ADCB	$2,855	$2,627
7	Dubai Islamic Bank	$2,285	$1,908
8	Riyad Bank	$2,061	$1,755
9	Mashreq	$1,449	$1,008
10	NBK	$1,428	$1,296

Europe 10

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	Brand	Brand Value 2024	Brand Value 2023
1	HSBC	$20,047	$19,851
2	Santander	$18,908	$16,924
3	Barclays	$13,286	$12,383
4	BNP Paribas	$12,266	$11,207
5	UBS	$12,222	$9,769
6	ING	$10,017	$9,712
7	Standard Chartered	$8,038	$8,582
8	Intesa Sanpaolo	$7,986	$6,664
9	NatWest	$7,296	$7,670
10	BBVA	$7,206	$6,631

Islamic 10

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	Brand	Brand Value 2024	Brand Value 2023
1	Al-Rajhi Bank	$36,123	$34,087
2	Dubai Islamic Bank	$30,269	$26,844
3	Kuwait Finance House	$23,654	$23,359
4	Masraf Al Rayan	$21,312	$17,333
5	Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank	$11,233	$12,492
6	Emirates Islamic Bank	$8,882	$8,694
7	Bank Mandiri	$7,674	$10,329
8	Boubyan	$7,211	$6,350
9	QIIB	$7,163	$6,274
10	Qatar Islamic Bank	$7,004	$5,471

Top 10 by Investment Banking

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	Brand	Brand Value 2024	Brand Value 2023
1	J.P. Morgan	$16,358	$16,700
2	Citi	$16,217	$15,788
3	Goldman Sachs	$14,194	$12,334
4	Morgan Stanley	$11,604	$10,764
5	Wells Fargo	$8,507	$8,006
6	Bank of America	$7,979	$10,387
7	UBS	$7,628	$2,972
8	ICBC	$7,093	$8,396
9	Bank of China	$7,049	$8,764
10	Barclays	$6,734	$5,816

Top 10 by Commercial Banking

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	Brand	Brand Value 2024	Brand Value 2023
1	ICBC	$36,123	$34,087
2	China Construction Bank	$30,269	$26,844
3	Agricultural Bank Of China	$23,654	$23,359
4	Bank of China	$21,312	$17,333
5	Bank of America	$11,233	$12,492
6	Bank of Communications	$8,882	$8,694
7	Scotiabank	$7,674	$10,329
8	China CITIC Bank	$7,211	$6,350
9	HSBC	$7,163	$6,274
10	Wells Fargo	$7,004	$5,471

Top 10 by Retail Banking

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	Brand	Brand Value 2024	Brand Value 2023
1	Agricultural Bank Of China	$33,869	$27,752
2	China Construction Bank	$31,043	$27,310
3	ICBC	$28,214	$26,723
4	Chase	$27,868	$23,312
5	Bank of China	$19,083	$17,134
6	Wells Fargo	$16,207	$15,364
7	Bank of America	$16,063	$14,828
8	Santander	$15,772	$14,438
9	China Merchants Bank	$15,421	$15,119
10	Postal Savings Bank	$12,776	$12,464

Top 10 by Credit Cards

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	Brand	Brand Value 2024	Brand Value 2023
1	Capital One	$10,632	$11,588
2	Citi	$9,216	$10,213
3	Discover	$6,692	$6,835
4	Chase	$2,237	$1,078
5	Woori Bank	$1,832	$269
6	KB Financial Group	$277	$420
7	Hana Financial Group	$260	$336
8	E.SUN Bank	$245	$273
9	NH Bank	$237	$225
10	Hua Xia Bank	$209	$192

The brand strength and value figures referred to in this article, along with our annual rankings from 2007 to 2024 are available via ***brandirectory.com/banking***

Fallers by Percentage Change 2024

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	Brand	Country	Brand Value Change
1	VTB Bank	Russia	-91.3%
2	Sber	Russia	-63.4%
3	Norinchukin Bank	Japan	-48.6%
4	PacWest	United States	-42.6%
5	Shizuoka Bank	Japan	-39.3%
6	Guangzhou Rural Commercial Bank	China	-32.1%
7	Bank AlJazira	Saudi Arabia	-31.7%
8	RBS	United Kingdom	-29.6%
9	Union Bank of Taiwan	China (Taiwan)	-26.7%
10	CITIC Securities	China	-26.6%
11	Alpha Bank	Greece	-26.5%
12	Natixis	France	-25.6%
13	Merrill	United States	-24.6%
14	Bank of Yokohama	Japan	-22.2%
15	KeyBank	United States	-21.8%
16	Comerica	United States	-21.7%
17	Bank Albilad	Saudi Arabia	-21.4%
18	Arab Bank	Jordan	-21.2%
19	Inbursa	Mexico	-21.0%
20	City National Bank of Florida	United States	-20.3%

Fallers by Rank 2024

© Brand Finance Plc 2024

	Brand	Country	Change in Rank
1	VTB Bank	Russia	-314
2	Norinchukin Bank	Japan	-118
3	PacWest	United States	-95
4	Shizuoka Bank	Japan	-82
5	Bank AlJazira	Saudi Arabia	-75
6	RBS	United Kingdom	-70
7	Union Bank of Taiwan	China (Taiwan)	-62
8	Alpha Bank	Greece	-62
9	Bank Albilad	Saudi Arabia	-56
10	Sber	Russia	-53
11	Bank of Yokohama	Japan	-51
12	Guangzhou Rural Commercial Bank	China	-50
13	First National bank	United States	-49
14	Inbursa	Mexico	-48
15	City National Bank of Florida	United States	-45
16	Bank Islam	Malaysia	-45
17	Banco de Bogotá	Colombia	-42
18	Arab Bank	Jordan	-42
19	Home Bancshares	United States	-41
20	Natixis	France	-39

Brand Building through Sponsorship: Considerations for Banking Brands

*by **Hugo Hensley**, Head of Sports Services, Brand Finance*

WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF SPONSORSHIP?

The underlying objective of sponsorship is to create positive perceptions and behaviours among stakeholders in a more effective and efficient way than would be possible with normal marketing tools. Generally this is achieved by accessing a targeted audience and aligning with the existing attributes of the rights-holder.

Exactly how this functions varies considerably depending on the brand, industry, sport/category, rights-holder, and activations. Ultimately any partnership should deliver a return on investment, which is usually considered in terms of short-term sales boost and long-term brand building benefits.

Standard Chartered Brand Funnel (Figure 1)

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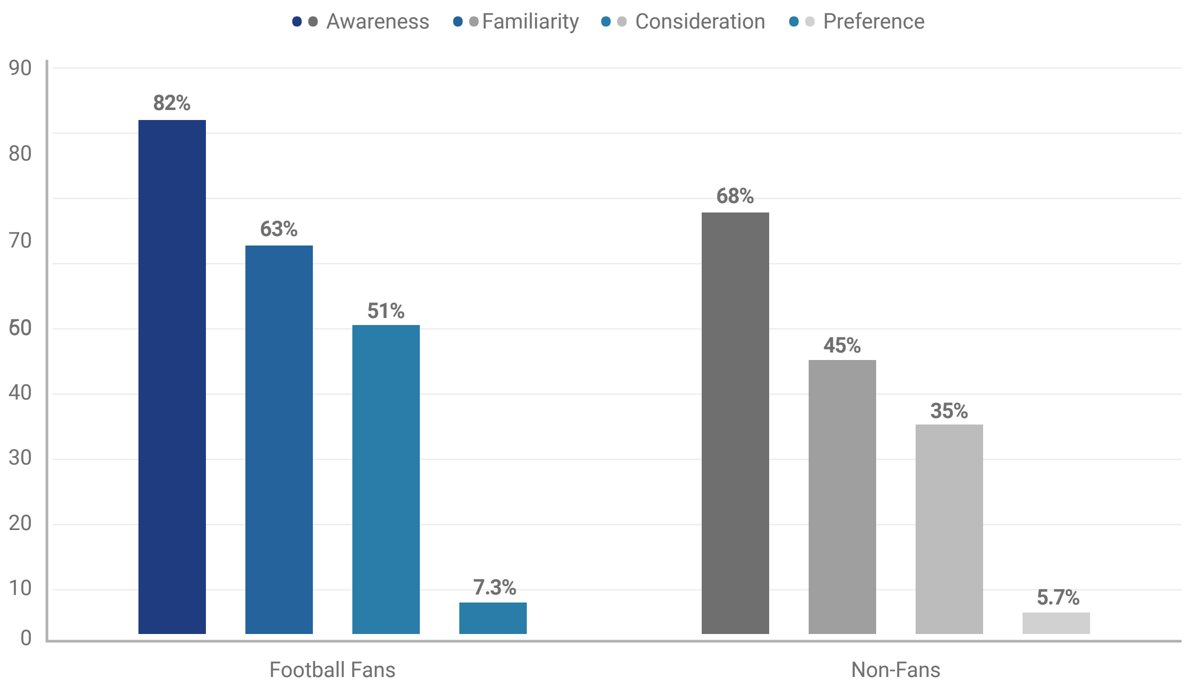

THE EFFECT OF PARTNERSHIP ACTIVATIONS

When measuring partnerships, it's important to remember that the focus leans more towards brand building and delivering long-term benefits. Standard Chartered's partnership with Liverpool Football Club stands as one of the longest-running collaborations in the English Premier League.

The partnership commenced in 2010, and in the years since Liverpool FC have won trophies in all of the competitions they have competed in. The collaboration between Standard Chartered and Liverpool FC extended beyond mere branding on jerseys to encompass various collaborative initiatives, including community programmes, charity events, and digital campaigns.

The first objective of the partnership will be to use the massive exposure of the football club to boost awareness and familiarity in key markets. According to Brand Finance's 2024 Global Brand Equity Monitor study, followers of football are considerably more familiar with and more likely to consider the Standard Chartered brand compared to non-followers. (Figure 1)

This market research does not exclusively target respondents who have reported being exposed to or engaged with specific partnerships. Instead, it assumes exposure among followers of the sport in general. While this approach provides a conservative view of the impact, it is evident that the partnerships are delivering benefits to the brand.

The Brand Finance research covers 42 markets, over 100,000 respondents and 5,000 brands, and so is unique in its breadth of coverage, allowing a unique view into brand strength, and by extension sponsorships, around the world.

Standard Chartered x Liverpool FC Partnership: Impact on Reputation (Figure 2)

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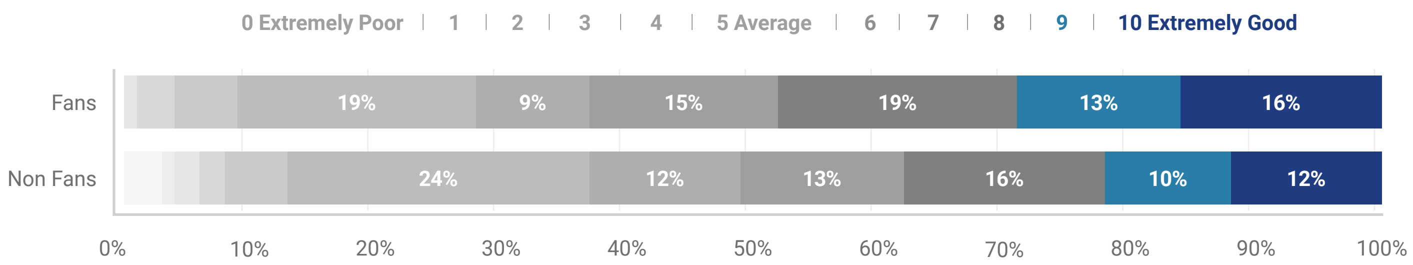

As well as benefiting the sponsor's brand funnel, the partnership between Standard Chartered and Liverpool FC has significantly enhanced their overall reputation. Among football fans, 16% rated the partnership a 10 for reputation, compared to only 12% among non-fans. Additionally, a smaller proportion of fans (28%) rated it a 5 or below, in contrast to 37% among non-fans. (Figure 2)

Both emotional and functional brand attributes metrics see improvements among the football followers. Even attributes that are not directly communicated through the partnership can see strong benefits in the perceptions of those likely to have been exposed to the partnership, such as 'data security', 'excellent website & apps', and 'offers fair rates & fees'. (Figure 3)

Combining this with analysis of the channels which sports fans have used to engage with the sport can also allow tactical recommendations into how to optimise effectiveness.

For example, Brand Finance's research shows that Chinese sports fans are significantly more likely than UK fans to engage with teams and players on social media, and buy brands associated with the sport. (Figure 4)

The next stage of measuring effectiveness is to connect these brand benefits to financial advantages for the sponsors – delivered through higher customer acquisition and retention, market share or price premiums.

Brand Finance uses this methodology to calculate the financial return on investment for partners operating in any industry and engaging with rights-holders from a wide range of categorie.

Standard Chartered Image Attributes: Fans vs Non Fans (Figure 3)

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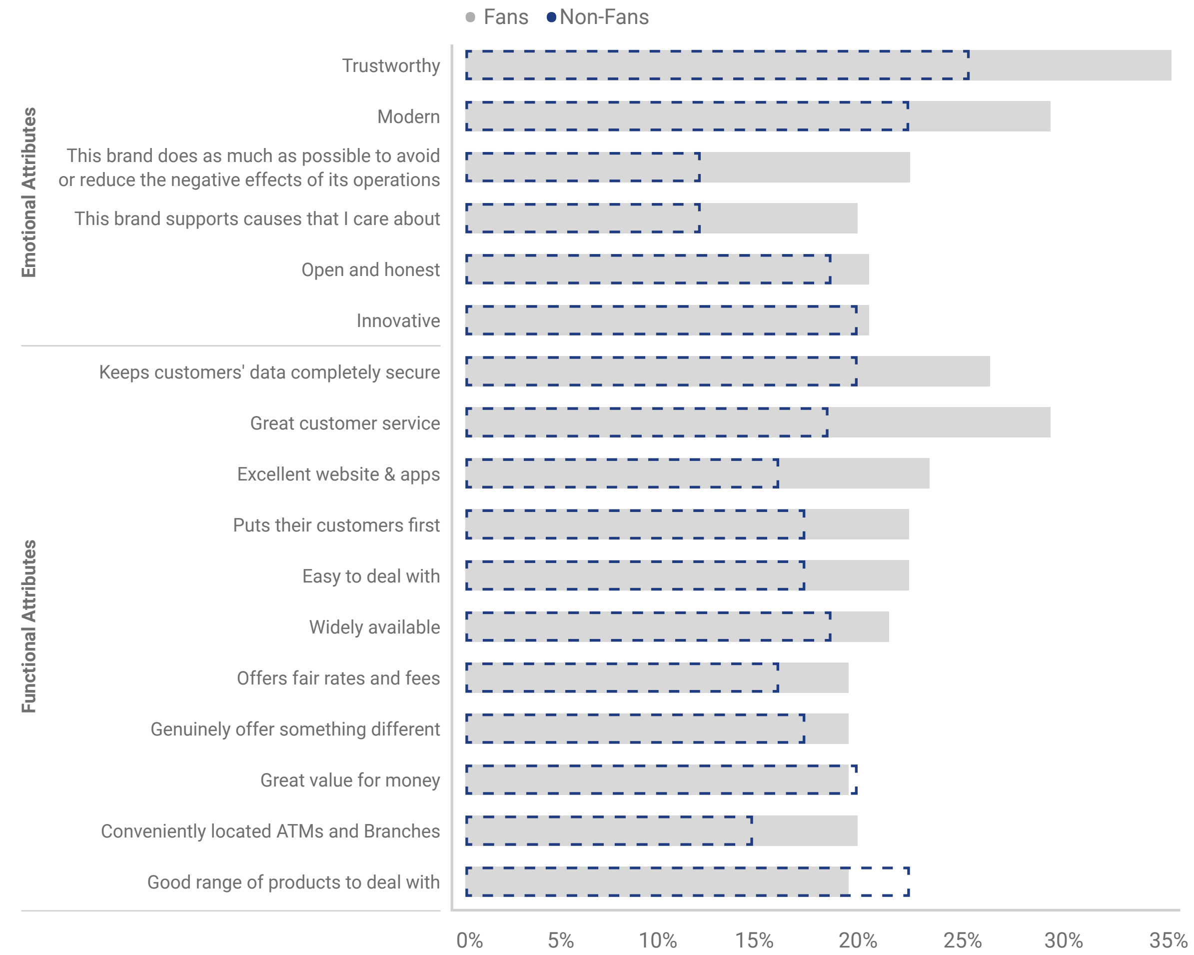

How do consumers engage with the sports they follow? (Figure 4)

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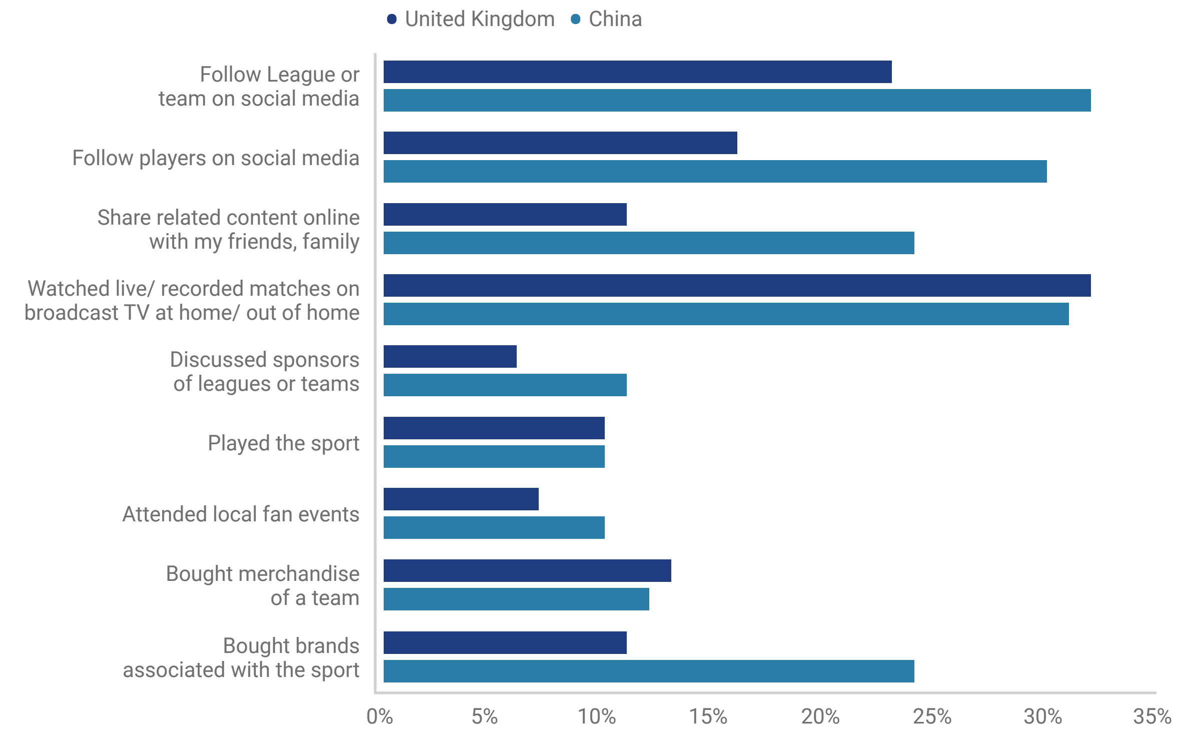


Show Me the Money – and a Commitment to Sustainability

Robert Haigh, *Strategy and Sustainability Director, Brand Finance*
and Sofia Liszka, *Strategy and Sustainability Consultant, Brand Finance*

A commitment to sustainability is increasingly seen as a business imperative, with stakeholders expecting environmental, social and governance (ESG) action. Brand Finance's Sustainability Perceptions Index quantifies the value of sustainability perceptions and the risks that can arise from a gap between those perceptions and actual performance.

SUSTAINABILITY AS A DRIVER OF CONSIDERATION

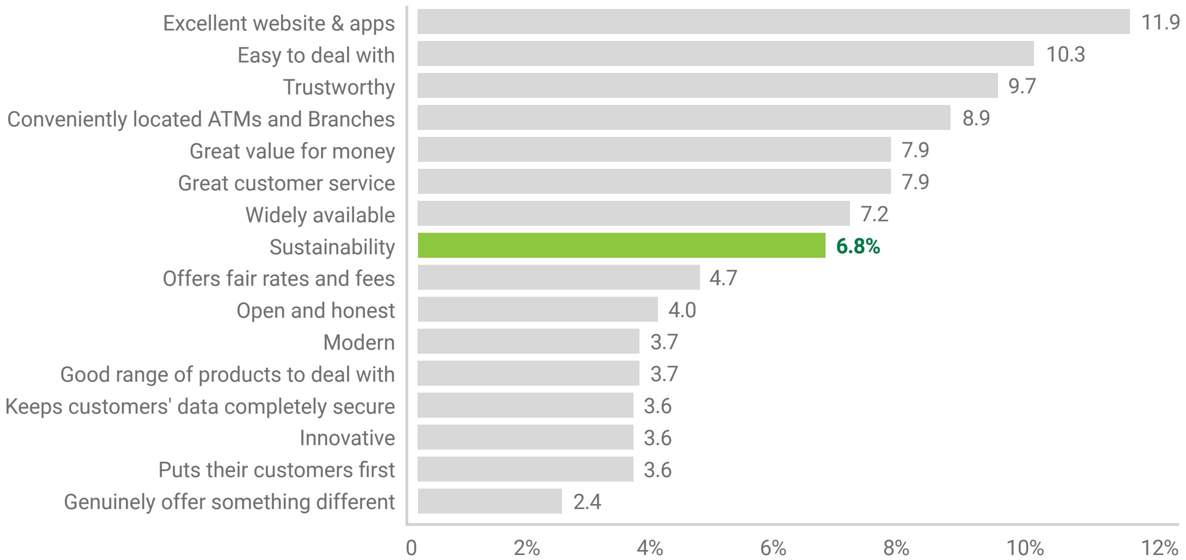
In retail banking, our research shows that sustainability drives 6.8% of brand consideration, relative to other attributes. Globally, it is the eighth most important attribute, as shown in Figure 1.

Though not the most important factor, this clearly underscores that sustainability plays a powerful role that can make the difference to consumer choice on the margin for most, and in a fundamental way for many. When there are millions of customers in the market, the 6.8% choice driver can amount to hundreds of millions of dollars of revenue at stake.

In addition, trustworthiness, which reflects perceptions of the governance dimension of sustainability, was ranked third at 9.7%.

Regionally, sustainability's importance in driving consideration ranges from 3.3% up to nearly 10% in regions like Middle East and North Africa and Oceania.

Drivers of Consideration: Banks (Figure 1)



Certain aspects of sustainability matter more to some stakeholder groups than others.

For example, banking brands generally communicate to business-to-business audiences about how they enable achievement of client ESG goals. Climate tends to be a top priority. Banks therefore may dedicate a proportion of their portfolios to climate-focused ventures. BMO (Canada) is viewed as a pioneer in this space for its client partnerships to advance net-zero transitions (World Benchmarking Alliance). By 2025, it plans to channel $239 billion in capital to clients pursuing sustainable outcomes, through a mix of environmentally and socially sustainable lending, underwriting, advisory services, and investment.

In retail banking, the link between a bank's day to day operations and social sustainability may be easier to communicate. For example, Santander (Spain) and Scotiabank (Canada) are among banks working to remove barriers to service access, entrepreneurship, and credit. Whilst this is positioned as a sustainability/CSR initiative, these programmes assist in building a larger and loyal customer base.

Top performers by market (Table 1)

Country	Environmental	Social	Governance
Australia	Adelaide Bank	Bendigo Bank	Mystate Bank
Brazil	Nubank	Nubank	Nubank
Canada	ATB Financial	Canadian Western Bank	ATB Financial
China	Bank of Dongguan	China Construction Bank	Bank of Hangzhou
France	Banque Palatine	Lydia	Crédit Agricole
Germany	Hello bank!	DZ Bank	Banque Privée Edmond de Rothschild
Indonesia	Krom Bank Indonesia	Bank Syariah Indonesia	Bank Syariah Indonesia
Italy	Cassa Centrale Banca	Cetelem	Isybank
Mexico	Citibanamex	BBVA	Citibanamex
Saudia Arabia	Al-Rajhi Bank	Al-Rajhi Bank	Al-Rajhi Bank
South Africa	Discovery Bank	Capitec Bank	Nedbank
South Korea	NH Bank	KB Kookmin Bank	KB Kookmin Bank
Spain	Banco Valencia	Banco Valencia	Deutsche Bank
Turkey	GarantiBBVA	GarantiBBVA	GarantiBBVA
United Arab Emirates	Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank	Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank	Abu Dhabi Commercial Bank
United Kingdom	Coventry Building Society	Monzo	Nationwide Building Society
United States	New York Community Bancorp	CIT	Axos Bank

LEADERS IN PERCEIVED SUSTAINABILITY

The leaders in our perceptual results above have developed a clear brand positioning around aspects of sustainability. DZ Bank (Germany) anchors its messaging on sustainability as an extension of trust and transparency with its corporate and institutional clients.

Banco Valencia, now merged with Caixabank (Spain) is similarly positioned as stakeholder-centric, stating a vision to offer "banking at the service of social challenges."

NH Bank (South Korea) builds its perceptions through business touchpoints linked to environmental sustainability as an agricultural bank. It works to increase the welfare of agricultural areas and reach underserved low-income and rural segments. Connecting environmental sustainability to livelihood and economic outcomes demonstrates an integrative approach to sustainability communications.

Worth noting in these results is the presence of digital banking platforms, emerging to offer a seamless and accessible banking experience to all. These platforms—such as Nubank (Brazil), Lydia (France), Hello bank! (France), Cetelem (France), Isybank (Italy), and Monzo (UK)— take top ranks in all dimensions of sustainability perceptions.

On environment, perhaps the lack of physical presence shapes consumer perceptions of a digital bank's lower climate impact. Social sustainability is most apparent from the business model that uses digitisation to remove barriers to financial services. Perceptions of adequate data security through online platforms would support the governance dimension.

THE SUSTAINABILITY PERCEPTION-PERFORMANCE GAP

Perceptions need to be backed by actual sustainability performance if a brand hopes to maintain credibility. In quantifying both, we place a financial value on the value to gain or value at risk—a gap—based on relative brand sustainability perceptions and performance. When performance exceeds perception, there is an opportunity to capture value by improved sustainability-related communication.

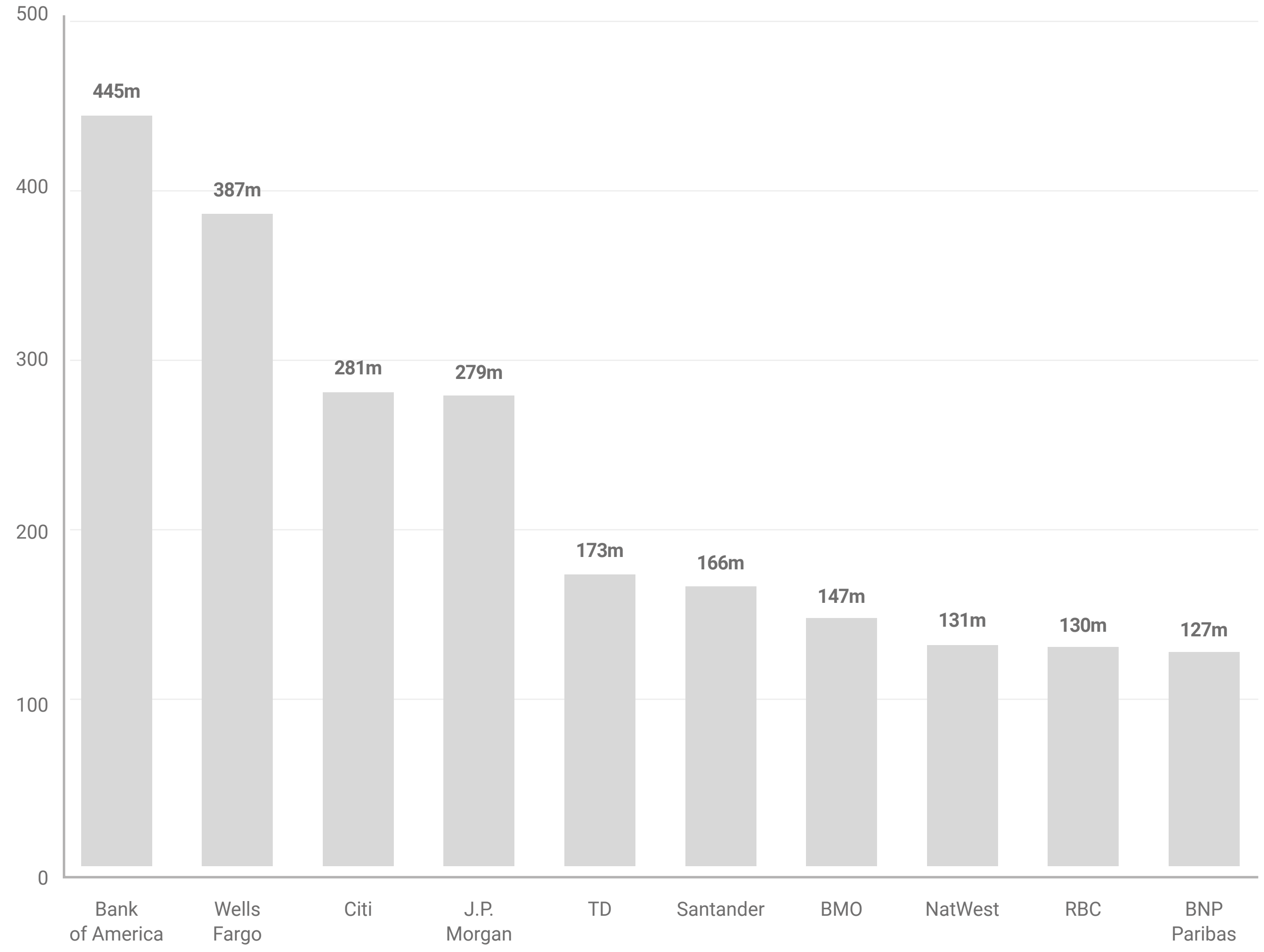
Conversely, perception exceeding performance indicates a reputational risk as observed with greenwashing, where value is at risk without sufficient action to manage performance. A positive sustainability gap value indicates that there is still room to communicate more consistently and clearly about brand sustainability efforts.

Figure 2 depicts the top 10 largest positive gap values for banking brands in the latest Sustainability Perceptions Index.

On environmental sustainability, Bank of America (US) is notable for its above-average performance, but perceptions in this dimension are below average. The company's net-zero target for 2050 reflects best practice by encompassing not only its operational emissions, but its financing and supply chain.

Bank of America also has committed to deploy $1.5 trillion of sustainable finance by 2030 jointly addressing environment and inclusive social development. The bank is also among national corporate leaders in issuing ESG-themed bonds. It may be the case that, perceptually, these efforts are less visible or relevant to a consumer audience.

Top 10 Positive Sustainability Gap Values (Figure 2)



*More information on our sustainability perceptions study can be found via **brandirectory.com/sustainability***

For Love or Money: Drivers of Account Switching in the UK

***by Annie Brown**, General Manager, Brand Finance*

According to the UK retail payments regulator, record numbers of UK consumers switched banks during 2023. For the 12 months from October 2022 to September 2023, NatWest gained roughly 330,000 new customers, a growth of approximately 1% in its customer base.

In an apparent contradiction of these gains, the latest results from Brand Finance found that NatWest declined in brand strength between 2023 and 2024, driven by weaker performance on brand health measures such as consideration and reputation, as measured via nationally representative consumer research commissioned by Brand Finance each year. The same research found that NatWest lags market leaders and challenger brands alike in brand love.

Our research indicates that less of the general public were attracted to the NatWest brand compared to the previous year, and yet we witnessed record customer acquisition rates for the bank.

It may not be surprising to hear that the key to understanding this apparent discrepancy is money. In 2023, NatWest boosted its current account switch incentive promotion to be market-leading, offering new customers £200 if they switched their main current account to NatWest. If all new customers were bought with this incentive, this could imply that NatWest spent over £60m on new customer acquisition last year.

Over this same period, Santander suffered the highest levels of attrition, with over 158,000 - approximately 1% of customers - switching away and only 67,000 new customers.

Over half of these new customers were gained in Q1 2023, which coincides with a £200 switcher cashback programme which ran from 23 January to 9 February.

But loved brands with no cashback incentives such as Monzo demonstrate that being a market leader on brand love can support new customer acquisition, due to the word-of-mouth benefit.

Customer number gains for NatWest are likely to continue early this year as the bank recently relaunched its market-leading £200 current account switching offer, following its success in 2023. But in the longer term, cashback promotions cannot support brand building.

Degeneration of marketing budgets in favour of short-term promotional incentives may further erode brand strength, and longer-term customer value. Our latest Banking 500 ranking reveals that globally, NatWest brand value declined by $374 million (down 4.9%) between 2023 and 2024, due primarily to the drop in brand strength witnessed.

For Santander, global brand value rose year on year by USD2 billion (up 12%), and brand value in the UK rose 27% due to enhanced brand strength and revenue performance.

Instead of account switch incentives, Santander has invested in brand-building campaigns, achieving the highest advertising recall among consumers for any UK bank in our research study.

Last year's celebrity star-studded campaigns, from Brian Cox to Ant and Dec, appear to have fuelled the memorability of Santander advertising and supported the brand strength growth.

Cashback incentives offer short-term boosts to switching. But the longer-term trend requires brand love and loyalty.

Lloyds Banking Group tapped into customer loyalty with its Smart Start Campaign, which promoted the bank's connected current and savings account, enabling parents to give their children more money independence while monitoring their spending.

"The campaign was released across traditional and digital media with the creative recalled by over half the UK population," says Suresh Balaji, the group's chief marketing officer (CMO).

Current Account Acquisitions

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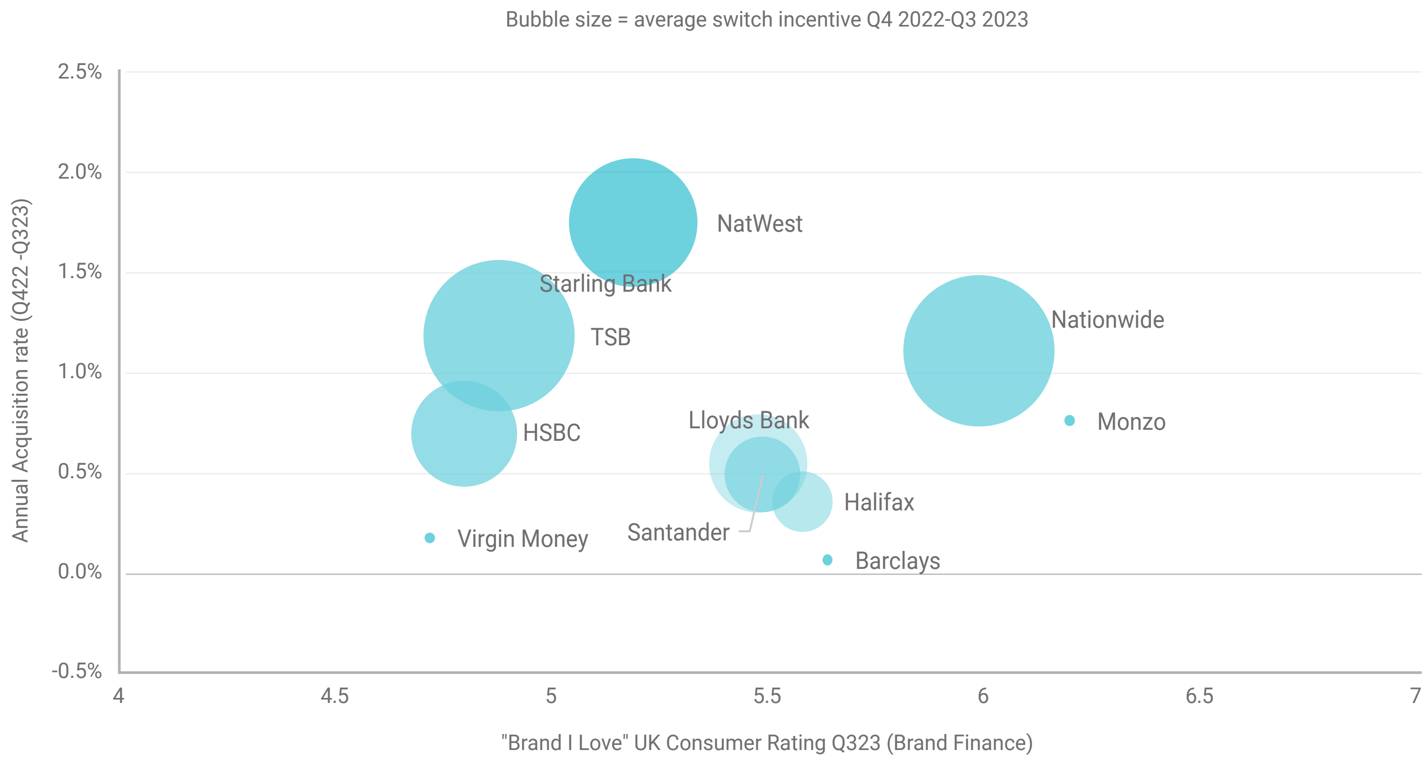

"According to our brand research, it helped reinforce our position as the most trusted high street bank to have our customers best interests at heart."

Brand visibility and favourability make customers more likely to select that brand for their current account. Increasingly, we also see banks offer £100 or £200 cashback current account switch incentives for customers who switch their primary bank account. If building brand value is the goal, UK banks should consider resources on campaigns to bring your brand closer to the consumer.

"We believe that brands are not built through advertising alone. Rather, brands are the sum-total of all experiences that a customer has with you," says Balaji. "It follows that our brands are only as strong as the experience we provide, and we therefore need to be fully focussed on delivering excellent experiences that are helpful and unique.

To do this we need to be reliable, simple to deal with, human in the moments that matter, and live our brand promises in everything we do. And we can't just do this once or when it suits us."

While the allure of cashback incentives undeniably has the power to sway customer decisions in the short term, the saga of NatWest and Santander underscores a deeper narrative.

It is not merely about whether customers are swayed by love or money; it's about cultivating a relationship where monetary incentives serve as the initial handshake, and brand love cements a long-lasting partnership. While money can buy attention, it's the strength of the brand that earns devotion.

Brand Value Ranking (USDm)

Top UAE Banking Brands **1-15**

2024 UAE Rank	2023 UAE Rank		2024 Global Rank	2023 Global Rank		Brand	2024 Brand Value	Brand Value Change	2023 Brand Value	2024 Brand Rating	2023 Brand Rating
1	2	▲	80	83	▲	Emirates NBD	$3,870	-0.7%	$3,899	AA+	AAA-
2	1	▼	82	82	▼	FAB	$3,846	-2.5%	$3,943	AA	AA-
3	3	=	109	113	▲	ADCB	$2,855	8.7%	$2,627	AA+	AA+
4	4	=	129	138	▲	Dubai Islamic Bank	$2,285	19.8%	$1,908	AA-	AA
5	6	▲	164	208	▲	Mashreq	$1,449	43.8%	$1,008	AA	AA-
6	5	▼	194	206	▲	Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank	$1,106	8.6%	$1,018	AA-	AA+
7	7	=	287	316	▲	Commercial Bank of Dubai	$569	19.8%	$475	A+	A+
8	8	=	293	327	▲	Emirates Islamic Bank	$550	22.5%	$449	AA-	AA-
9	9	=	336	358	▲	Rakbank	$436	13.2%	$385	A	AA-
10	10	=	488	-	-	NBF	$190	-13.2%	$219	-	-
11	11	=	496	514	▲	Sharjah Islamic	$173	5.5%	$164	A	A+
12	12	=	-	-	-	Al Hilal Bank	$61	-12.1%	$70	A	A
13	14	▲	-	-	-	Ajman Bank	$55	3.6%	$53	BBB	BBB
14	13	▼	-	-	-	Al Masraf	$53	-6.8%	$57	BB	BBB
15	15	=	-	-	-	United Arab Bank	$39	38.6%	$28	A-	BB

Notes

Methodology: **Brand Valuation**

Brand is defined as a bundle of trademarks and associated IP which can be used to take advantage of the perceptions of all stakeholders to provide a variety of economic benefits to the entity.

WHAT IS BRAND VALUE?

Brand value refers to the present value of earnings specifically related to brand reputation. Organisations own and control these earnings by owning trademark rights. All brand valuation methodologies are essentially trying to identify this, although the approach and assumptions differ. As a result published brand values can be different.

These differences are similar to the way equity analysts provide business valuations that are different to one another. The only way you find out the "real" value is by looking at what people really pay. As a result, Brand Finance always incorporates a review of what users of brands actually pay for the use of brands in the form of brand royalty agreements, which are found in more or less every sector in the world.

This is sometimes known as the "Royalty Relief" methodology and is by far the most widely used approach for brand valuations since it is grounded in reality. It is the basis for a public rankings but we always augment it with a real understanding of people's perceptions and their effects on demand – from our database of market research on over 3000 brands in over 30 markets.

1. BRAND IMPACT

We review what brands already pay in royalty agreements. This is augmented by an analysis of how brands impact profitability in the sector versus generic brands. This results in a range of possible royalties that could be charged in the sector for brands (for example a range of 0% to 2% of revenue).

2. BRAND STRENGTH

We adjust the rate higher or lower for brands by analysing Brand Strength. We analyse brand strength by looking at three core pillars: "Inputs" which are activities supporting the future strength of the brand; "Equity" which are real current perceptions sourced from our market research and other data partners; "Output" which are brand-related performance measures such as market share.

Each brand is assigned a Brand Strength Index (BSI) score out of 100, which feeds into the brand value calculation. Based on the score, each brand is assigned a corresponding Brand Rating up to AAA+ in a format similar to a credit rating.

3. BRAND IMPACT X BRAND STRENGTH

The BSI score is applied to the royalty range to arrive at a royalty rate. For example, if the royalty range in a sector is 0-5% and a brand has a BSI score of 80 out of 100, then an appropriate royalty rate for the use of this brand in the given sector will be 4%.

4. FORECAST BRAND VALUE CALCULATION CREDIBILITY

We determine brand-specific revenues as a proportion of parent company revenues attributable to the brand in question and forecast those revenues by analysing historic revenues, equity analyst forecasts, and economic growth rates. We then apply the royalty rate to the forecast revenues to derive brand revenues and apply the relevant valuation assumptions to arrive at a discounted, post-tax present value which equals the brand value.

Methodology: **Brand Strength**

Analytical rigour and transparency are at the heart of our approach to brand measurement at Brand Finance.

Therefore, in order to adequately understand the strength of brands we conduct a structured, quantitative review of data that reflect the 'Brand Value Chain' of brand-building activities, leading to brand awareness, perceptions and onwards to brand-influenced customer behaviour.

To manage the 'Brand Value Chain' process effectively we create and use the "Brand Strength Index" (BSI). This index is essentially a modified Balanced Scorecard split between the three core pillars of the 'Brand Value Chain': Brand Inputs, Brand Equity and Brand Performance.

1. ATTRIBUTE SELECTION AND WEIGHTING

Although we follow a general structure incorporating the three pillars (Brand Inputs, Brand Equity and Brand Performance), the attributes included are different depending on the sector. A brand strength index for a luxury apparel brand will differ in structure from an index designed for a telecommunications brand. An index for luxury apparel brand may emphasise the exclusiveness, word of mouth recommendation, and price premium, whereas an index for a telecommunications company may emphasis customer service and ARPU as important metrics.

These attributes are weighted according to their perceived importance in driving the following pillar: Brand Investment measures in driving Brand Equity; Brand Equity measures for Brand-Related Business Performance measures; and finally the relevance of Brand-Related Business Performance measures for driving business value.

2. DATA COLLECTION

Brand's ability to influence purchase depends primarily on people's perceptions. Therefore, the majority of the Brand Strength Index is derived from Brand Finance's proprietary Global Brand Equity Research Monitor research, a quantitative study of a sample of over 100,000 people from the general public on their perceptions of over 4,000 brands in over 25 sectors and 37 countries.

However, at Brand Finance we also believe that there are other measures that can be used to fill gaps that survey research may not capture. These include total investment levels – for example in marketing, R&D, innovation expenditure, that can a better guide to future performance than surveys. They also include online measures – such as ratings by review sites and social media engagement that can give a more granular understanding of marketing effectiveness. Finally they also include real behaviour – for example net additions, customer churn and market share, to overcome the tendency for surveys to incorporate intended behaviour rather than real.

Over a period of 3 to 4 months each year, we collect all this data across all the brands in our study in order to accurately measure their comparative strength.

3. BENCHMARKING AND FINAL SCORING

In order to convert raw data in to scores out of 10 that are comparable between attributes within the scorecard, we then have to benchmark each attribute. We do this by reviewing the distribution of the underlying data and creating a floor and ceiling based on that distribution.

Each brand is assigned a Brand Strength Index (BSI) score out of 100, which feeds into the brand value calculation. Based on the score, each brand is assigned a corresponding rating up to AAA+ in a format similar to a credit rating. Analysing the three brand strength measures helps inform managers of a brand's potential for future success.

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