A MATTER OF TRUST

MAGNETIC

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Introduction

With issues around trust dominating the news this year; United Airlines, Pepsi, Facebook, to name a few, it's unsurprising that advertisers are increasingly writing it into their briefs. In this report we take a look at how consumers view different media environments and the brand rub effect this can have for advertisers, in particular in relation to published media and social media brands.

Trust is an ambiguous concept, not easily defined by a single metric and rich in meaning and interpretation. Our study was designed to measure a number of angles, to be confident the perceptions was accurately captured. The results show that despite the prevalence of pure play digital platforms, magazine brands (in print and online) provide a trusted environment for advertisers. This is because magazine brands are seen as relevant, reliable and expert, all of which are significant factors underpinning trust in media brands.

When looking at trust in the context of key category areas, magazine brands outperformed social media on six out of eight categories; fashion, beauty, motoring, news, home and entertainment. Social media and in particular Instagram was most trusted for food. Consumers also trusted social media more for sports, and in particular Twitter.

We were also able to prove a brand rub effect, trust in a magazine brand translates into perceptions of trustworthiness for brands who use this environment. Across a basket of campaign effectiveness studies and a range of trust based metrics, we saw an average percentage KPI uplift of between 64 per cent and 94 per cent, per brand. This impact is about the magazine brand not the platform, these examples spanned print and digital solutions with magazine brands.

This study underlines that if you want to achieve brand trust it's important to choose trusted media. Magazine brands have a trusted status, this still holds true across the evolving range of platforms they offer and in the context of new consumer media behaviours.

Anna Sampson

Head of Insight
Magnetic

"Trust is high on the agenda for clients right now, so it's key to be able to distinguish the elements that make a brand trustworthy in the eyes of the consumer. Any insight that can demonstrate the value of context and prove the rub effects of media brands is invaluable for advertisers."

Ffion Turner
Business Intelligence Board Director
MediaCom

Why is trust so important right now?

There is increasing evidence which seems to suggest that public trust is being eroded at an alarming rate. This year's Edelman Trust Barometer revealed its most worrying findings for a decade with the largest-ever recorded drop in trust across government, business, media and NGOs.

Of course, brands are not immune to this effect. When brands behave in an unethical way, fail to share information that is authentic and accurate or mishandle a reputational crisis, the cost to their business and reputation can be massive.

VW serves as a prime example. On the day news of the emissions scandal broke, VW shares dropped by 20 per cent and since then, the company has made more than $24bn in provisions to pay their dues. Two years later, their stock price is yet to recover despite a continued boom in stock market valuations around the globe.

And there are plenty of instances where poor choices, and the resultant public response, can result in extreme reputational and brand damage. The viral footage of a passenger being dragged off a United Airlines flight or uproar caused by the Kendall Jenner "Pepsi Protest" ad reminds us that the trust that consumers have in brands is fragile and easily broken.

Against this backdrop it is hardly surprising then that agencies are seeing an influx in the number of client briefs around trust. Mintel has also highlighted its importance in a recent report which showed trust is linked to KPIs such as brand preference and a brand being worth paying for. Although the same report makes a strong link between usership and trust, it did leave us at Magnetic pondering the role that advertising plays in this crisis of trust.

As a result, Magnetic sought to understand whether media brands offer advertisers the opportunity to elevate perceptions of trustworthiness through brand rub - the placement of advertising in relevant contextual environments and via partnership activity.

It is within this this context that we decided to embark on a new study 'A Matter of Trust'.

Measuring trust - what should we consider?

As the marketing agency for magazine media, Magnetic's core objective with this study was to develop a better understanding of the role that magazine brands play in helping brands achieve or improve perception of trustworthiness.

In laying the foundations for how to approach the work, we were conscious of three important considerations:

- Trust is an ambiguous concept which is not easily defined by a single metric. It is rich in meaning so a study designed to measure it would need to incorporate a number of angles.
- Trust is a relative concept and it is best understood specifically in relation to a category rather than generic
- Brand trust is routed in direct experience. Media can only do so much, and its contribution is to move perceptions of trust or trust worthiness.

In selecting an appropriate benchmark, we wanted to ensure that it reflected the modern media landscape. As such, we were particularly interested in the role of magazine brands play relative to pureplay social media brands.

It is of course important to note that magazine brands themselves are active across a number of platforms spanning print, digital, events, brand extentions as well as social media. Therefore, where we reference magazine brands it entails the full spectrum of cross platform activity rather than a particular channel.

In constructing this research, we wanted to answer two key questions:

- To what extent do consumers trust magazines vs the social media brands they consume?
- Does trust in the media brand translate into increased levels of trustworthiness for the brands that advertise using them?

In order to unearth these answers we realised that we would need to take a multi-disciplinary approach this project, as such we employed a 5-stage process for the research.

1) Planner workshops were designed to understand the prevalence of trust briefs and what media channels were thought to be appropriate by planners for delivering against these objectives

   Interestingly these revealed that trust was coming up more and more frequently in client briefs, even if sometimes that was indirectly. When tackling these types of briefs, planners in our study saw TV and social media as the best environments

2) The 'Trust trade-off' took a gamification-style approach and played media brands and institutions off against each other, so that we could start to understand the factors that underpinned trust

3) The Factor analysis was informed by the trust trade-off and created a trust formula. Factor analysis was one of the sophisticated ways that we deployed to understand trust given it is a complex concept. Factor analysis allows researchers to investigate concepts that are not easily measured directly by collapsing a large number of variables into a few interpretable underlying factors.

4) We also deployed IAT, which is a technique that captures consumers' immediate, gut instinct or subconscious responses to brands. It allows us to understand the implicit associations between media types and trust attributes free from the biases of conscious rationalisation

5) Finally, having established the level to which media brands are trusted, we also wanted to quantify the brand rub for advertisers. We did this through a basket of case studies with brands who had a clear brief on trust. Here we specifically looked for uplifts in any trust-related KPIs.

How do magazine brands perform on trust?

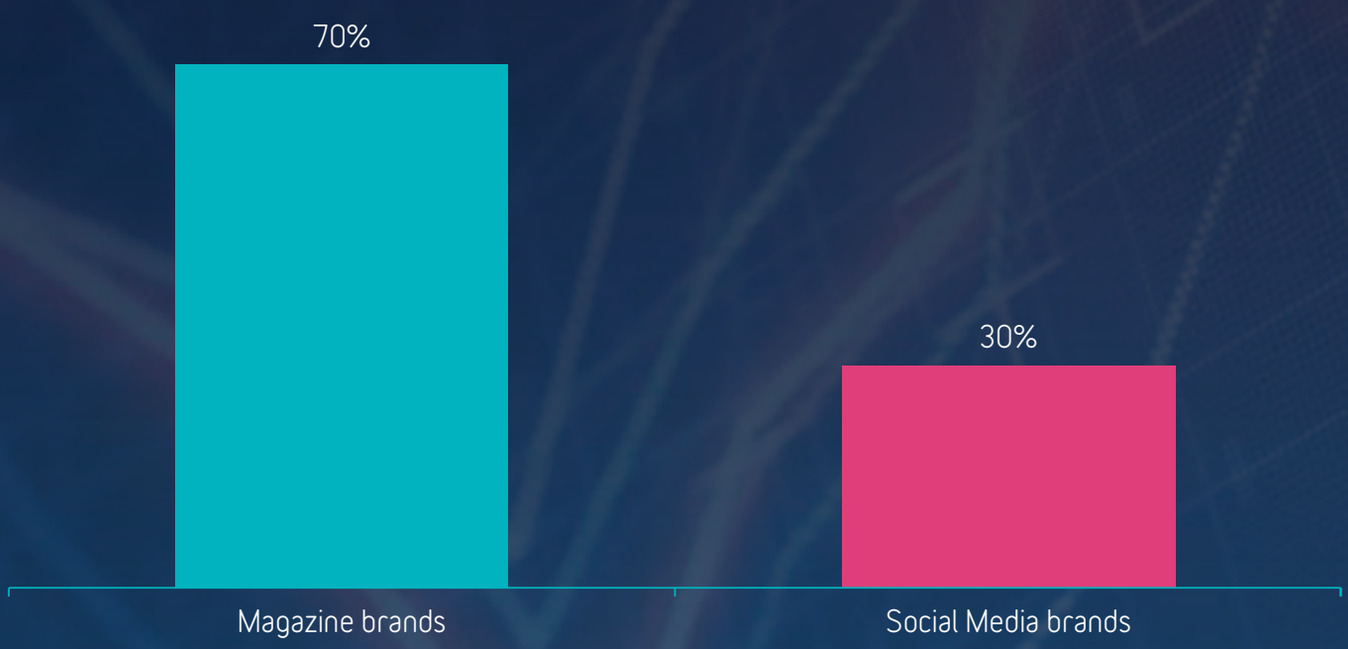
Given the complexity of unpicking trust, we set out to measure it in a number of ways in our study. As such we deployed three key measures:

A single explicit question (to what extent do you trust this media brand)

A list of direct questions about media brands, which we statistically correlated to trust to capture the nuances of trust - we've called this the 'T score'

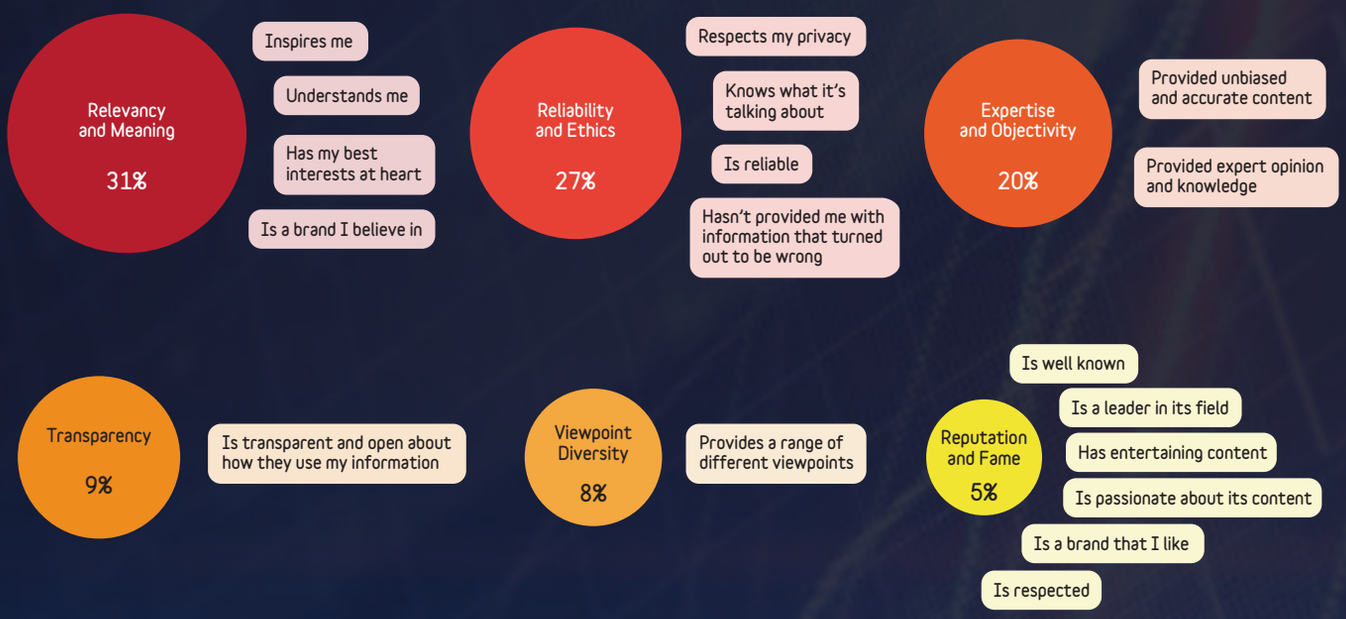
Indirectly as a list of attributes consumers subconsciously associated with a media channel

Magazine brands trumped social media across all measures. Measuring trust explicitly as a single question has the starkest results. The graph below shows the net score achieved for magazine brands and social media by their respective users. This shows that the explicit trust levels in magazine brands are more than twice as high as those reported for social media.



Magazine brands are trusted because of relevancy and expertise

Our second metric – the T score - was constructed using a statistical approach called factor analysis. For this analysis we identified a broad range of factors that underpin trust in relation to published brands and social media. Using statistical analysis this was then distilled further into the six most critical factors. These six factors and the statements that feed into each are shown below.



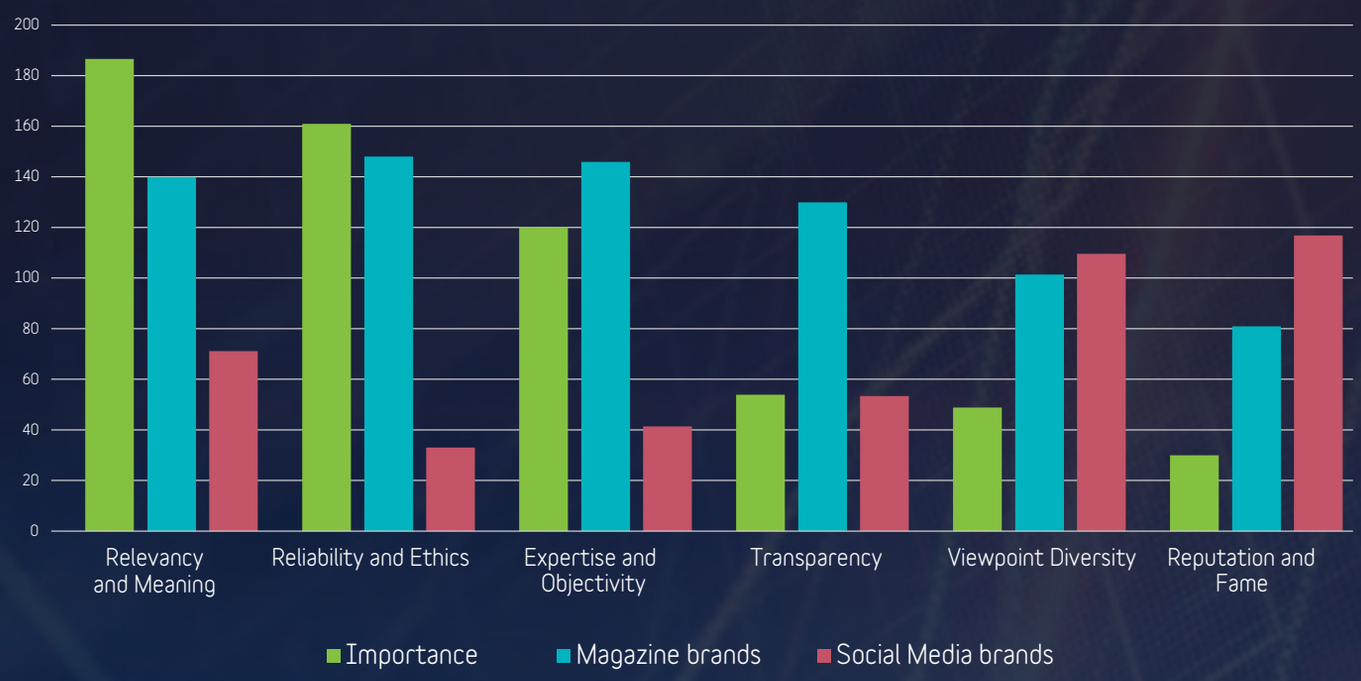
Each factor carries a different significance weighting. Relevancy and meaning carries the most weight overall and contributes 31 per cent to trust. This was followed by reliability and ethics making a 27 per cent contribution to trust, and expertise and objectivity which contribute 20 per cent to trust.

These three factors alone are hugely important as when they are combined they explain 78 per cent of trust.

The other three factors - which include transparency, viewpoint diversity and brand stature - whilst still playing a role in trust, trail the first three factors somewhat.

It is of course important to note that factors such as brand stature (which is expressed here as reputation and fame) may still play a pertinent role for brands, especially in areas such as building awareness, however in the context of the role it plays it trust is was the weakest factor overall.

This chart shows how magazine brands stack up relative to social media against each of the six factors. The green bar shows the importance of each factor, the blue and pink colour shows how magazine brands and social media respectively perform against each of the factors.



This shows that magazine brand perform most strongly against the first four factors, (which accounts for 87% of trust) whereas social media performed most strongly against factors such as viewpoint diversity and brand stature.

More importantly perhaps this data also uncovered a disjoint between consumer and planner perspectives. Relevancy as a theme came up with planners and consumers, both seeing it as critical to trust. Planners more readily linked relevancy to social media whereas our consumer sample shows magazine brands as better equipped to deliver trust and, in particular, relevancy.

Magazine brands are trusted implicitly

For the final measure in this study we deployed implicit analysis which is a technique that captures consumers' immediate, gut instinct or subconscious responses to brands free from the biases of conscious rationalisation.

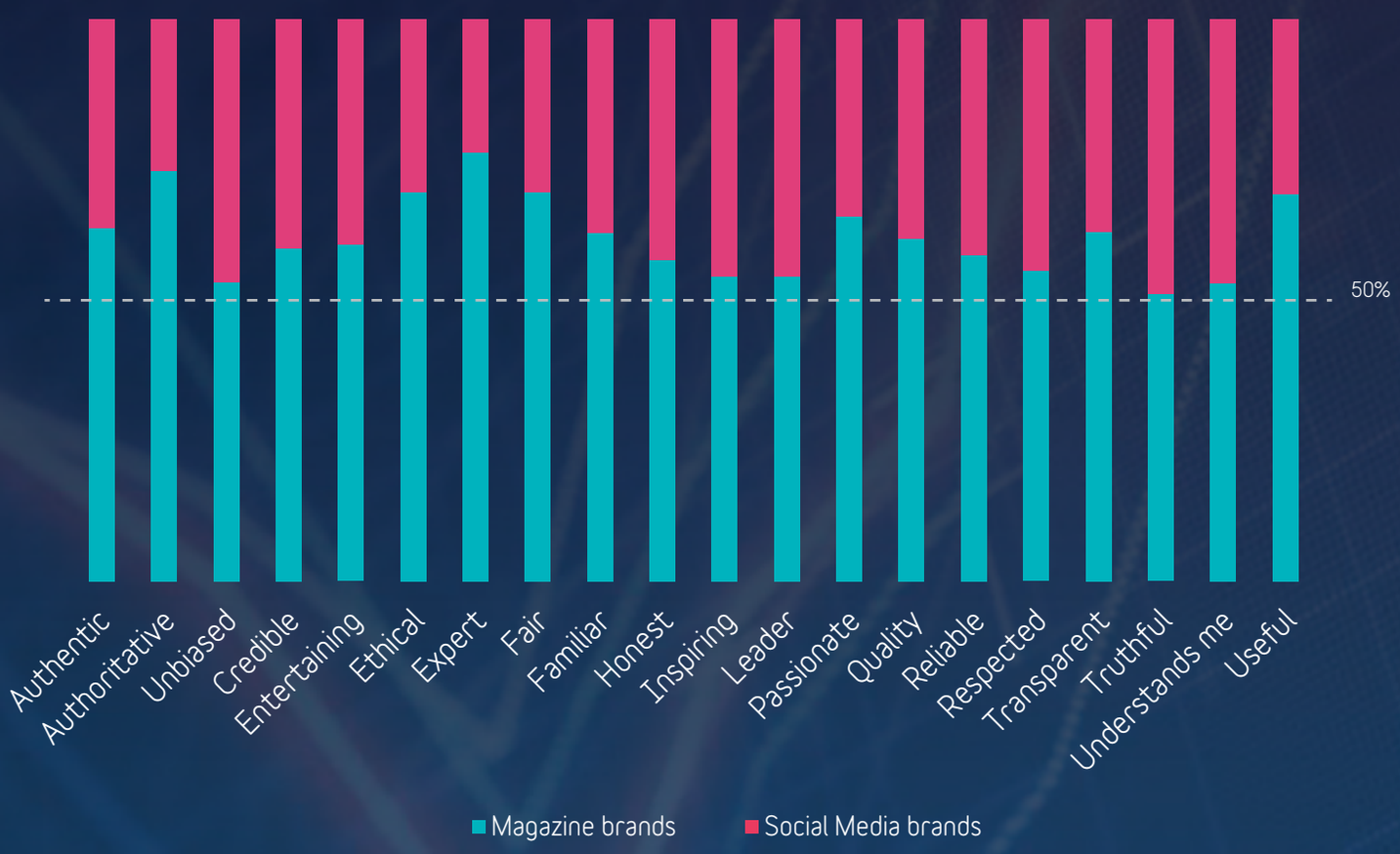
It is informed by system 1 and system 2 thinking and owing to the way the survey is delivered, we had to focus on five social media brands and eight magazine brands. A collage was created for each of these and this is what was tested with consumers.

For magazines we included Cosmopolitan, Men's Health, NME, Radiotimes, Hello!, Good Housekeeping, The Economist and Grazia, and for social media we included Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter.

The same attributes used for the factor analysis were again included in the implicit analysis but all the attitude statements were translated into words that people were then asked to immediately associate with either the magazine brands or the social media brands.

The approach used established a link without the use of direct questions, instead it uses stimuli and a timed response.

This chart shows the outcome of the exercise, and again we can see that magazine brands are more likely to be implicitly associated with each attribute.

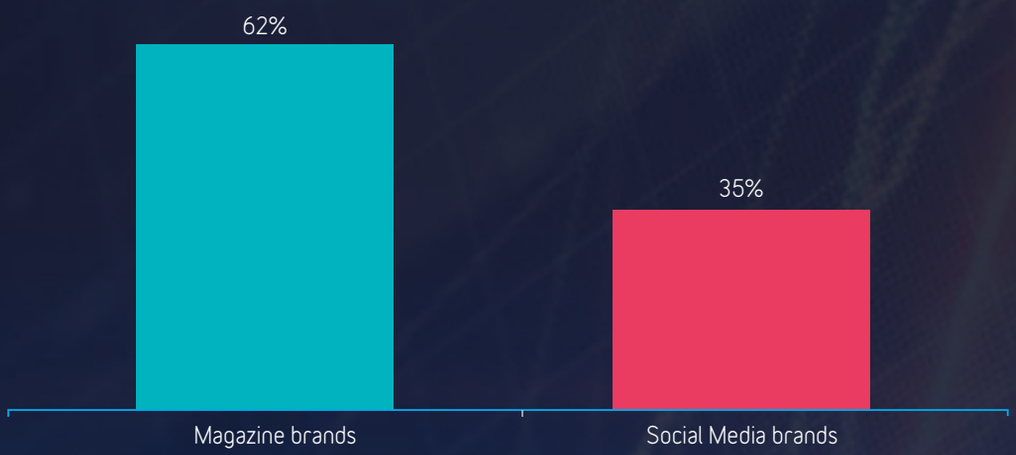


Trust and digital natives?

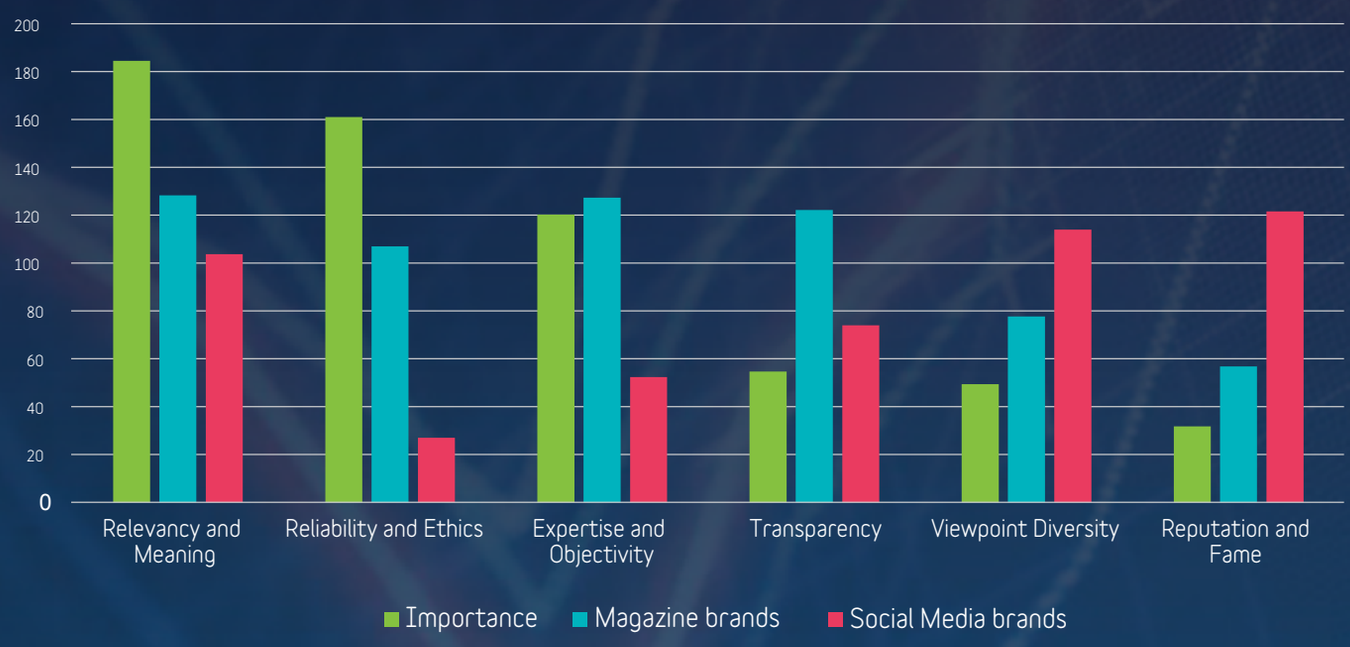
Magazine brands are still more trusted than social media amongst digital natives

We were keen to scrutinise the data and look at the under 35 yr. old digital native audience. Going back to our single direct measure, we can see that by splitting the age group between those under 35 and those over 35, some variance occurs in the data.

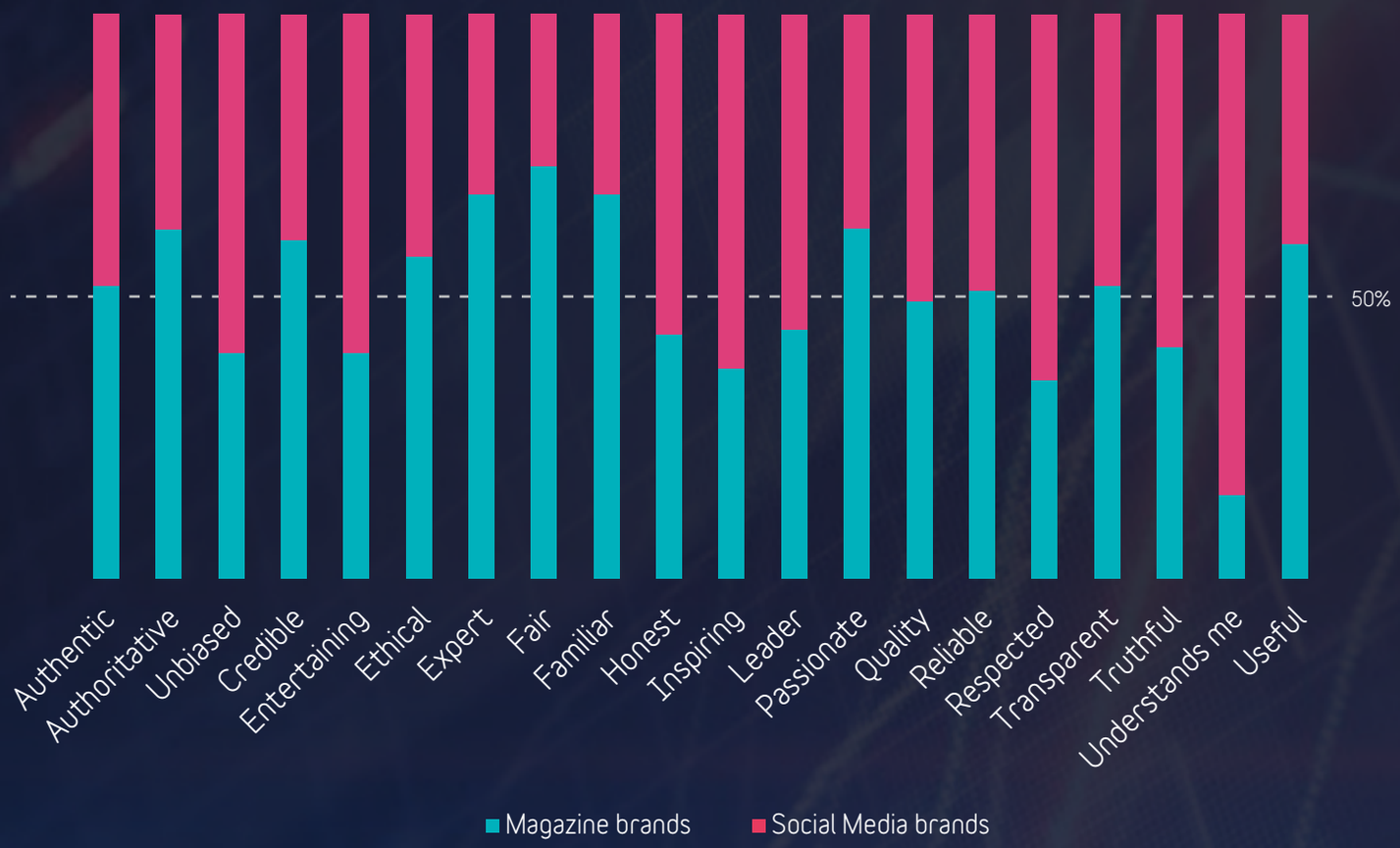
We found that under 35s show higher levels of trust in social media, but overall that only increases the levels of trust from 30 per cent (all respondent average) to 35 per cent. Although this age group shows slightly lower levels of trust in magazine brand, at 62 per cent this is still substantially higher than for social media.



In terms of the T score results we see that social media starts to perform better against the factors that are important to trust such as relevancy and meaning as well as reliability and ethics. Yet, magazine brands remain the top performer for the first four factors as was the case in the original data.



When it comes to measuring trust implicitly the scores are also more evenly matched between magazine brands and social media brands. We see that magazine are associated with eleven of the attributes tested and social media nine.



Trust in a category context

Context is critical and trust is a relative concept better measured specifically in relation to a category, so category specific analysis was an important part of this study.

We found that some magazine genres experience heightened levels of trust, with the 'hobby and interest' and 'news and current affairs' categories emerging as the most trusted. Interestingly, they are also the sectors which are most likely to have shown growth in recent ABC releases. Quality content that is highly relevant, is clearly playing a role in driving both the continued growth and the enduring trusted status of magazine brands.

The news and current affairs result is also backed up by a recent study from Kantar 'Trust in News'. It has revealed that the reputation of 'mainstream news media' remains largely intact while social media and digital-only news platforms have sustained major reputation damage as a result of the 'fake news' narrative during recent election cycles. In their study printed magazines were the most trusted news format.

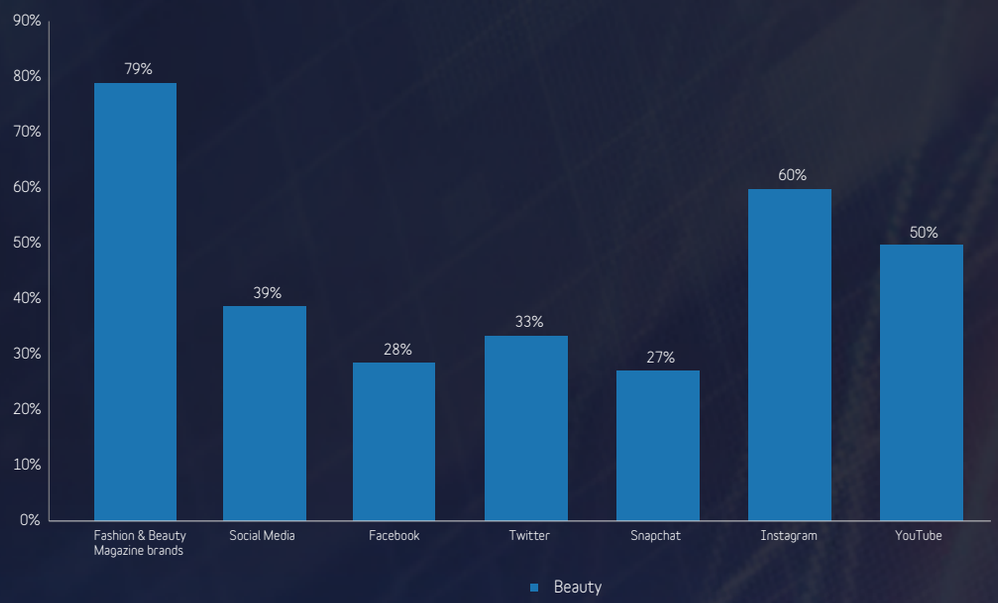
We wanted to look at sector analysis in more detail and for advertiser categories; to compare the performance of magazine brands vs. social media in terms of their ability to offer trusted advice and inspiration.

The next piece of analysis was conducted by firstly establishing if a consumer was interested in a category area. We had already identified some magazine brands and social media brands they used. They were then asked to rate these media brands on the basis of their ability to inspire trust in this category area. This provides a fairer comparison between magazines brands and social media brands because fashion fans' social media profile content is likely to have a fashion bent based on who they follow.

On six of the eight topic areas we explored, magazine media was shown to be more trusted than social media.

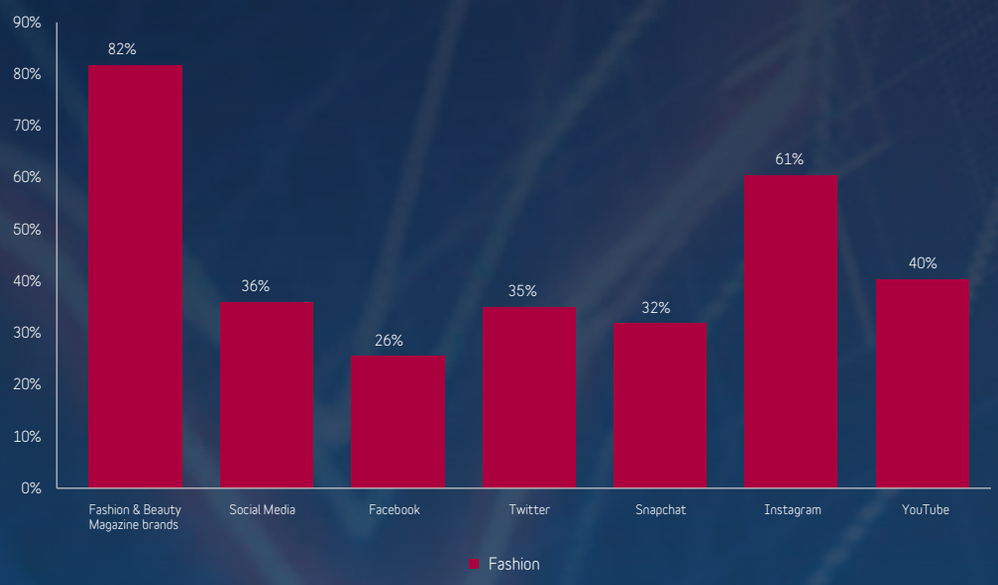
Beauty

In the beauty category, magazine brands showed the highest level of trust at 78 per cent followed by Instagram at 60 per cent. The same pattern persisted for those under 35s, although the gap between 'magazines and Instagram' and 'magazines and YouTube' narrows significantly.



Fashion

A similar story emerges for the fashion category with magazine brands achieving the highest result (82 per cent) followed by Instagram (61 per cent) and then YouTube (40 per cent), this is at a total sample level and the pattern in the data is reflected in the results for under 35s, but the gap narrows between magazines and these two social media platforms

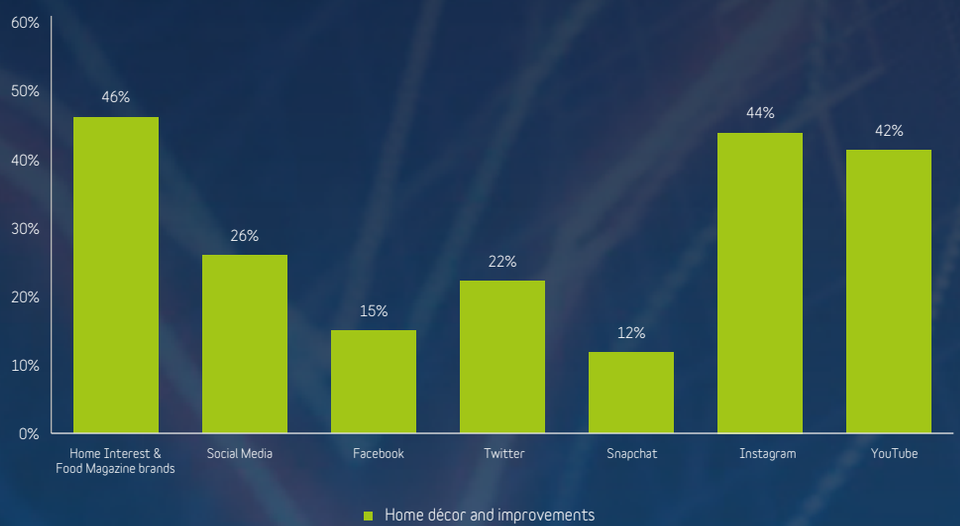


Food

The food category was one of two where a social media brand performed better than magazines brands. Instagram scored the highest overall (59 per cent), followed by magazines (52 per cent). The same pattern emerged for those under 35. Snapchat also starts to perform well for under 35s.

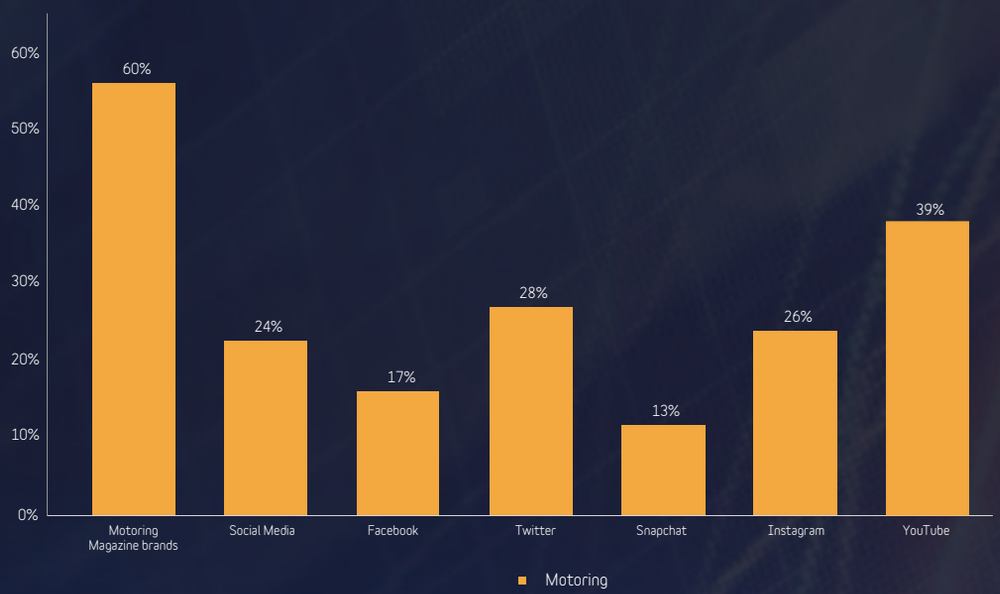
Home

When it comes to advice and inspiration in the home, magazine brands and Instagram are closely matched but magazines have the edge (46 per cent vs 44 per cent respectively). These positions switch when we look at under 35s



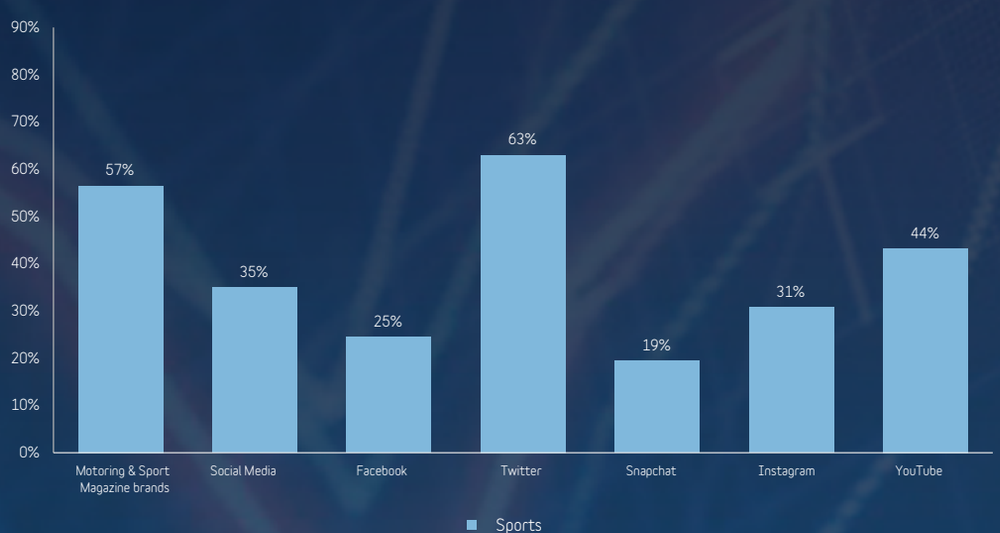
Motoring

In terms of motoring we see magazine brands are the most trusted advisor by far, and for motoring clients the over 35s are more critical, the data shows the same result for this audience too.



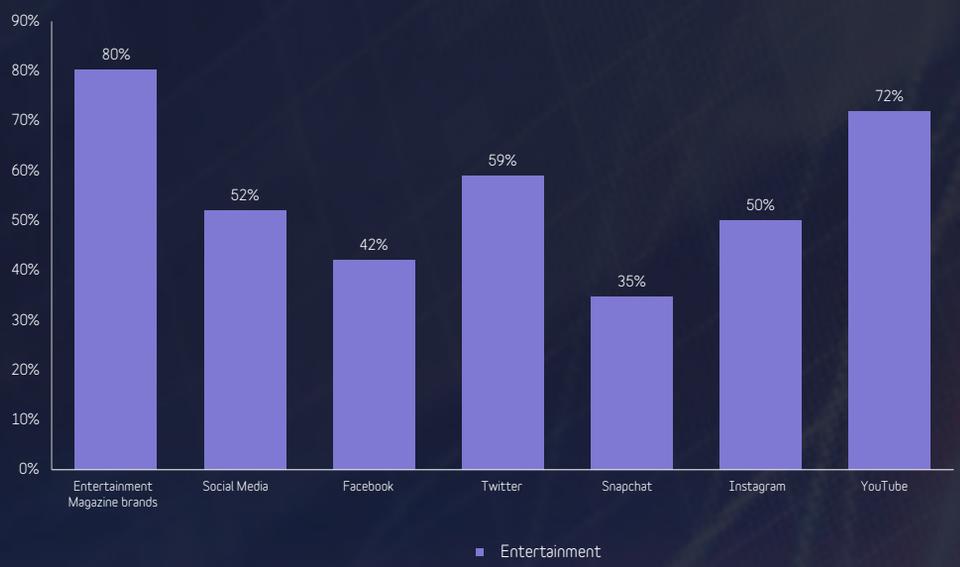
Sports

This is the other category where social media performs better than magazine brands. This time Twitter is trusted to provide inspiration when it comes to sport (63 per cent). This is closely followed by magazines (57 per cent). Twitters results improve for under 35s and magazine brands maintain their secondary status.



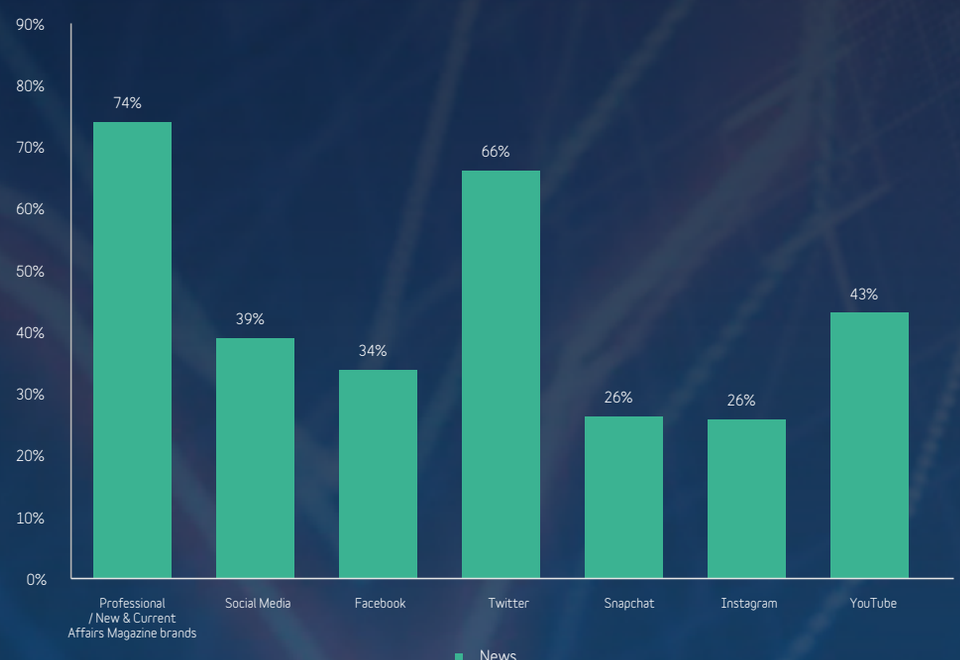
Entertainment

Magazine brands remain the most trusted source of inspiration and advice when it comes to entertainment (80 per cent) but the gap between magazines and social media is much smaller in this category. A number of social media channels perform well including YouTube (72 per cent) and Twitter (59 per cent). For under 35s magazine brands retain the most trusted status the gap but the gap narrows further and Facebook starts to perform well.



News

Comparing magazine brands and social media when it comes to delivering trusted news sees magazines performing better at a total sample level (74% per cent) followed by Twitter (66 per cent). These positions switch when we look at under 35s.



The enduring power of magazine brands to deliver trust across categories and audiences

Our findings show that despite TV and social media being default choices for planners when it comes to trust related briefs, due to perceptions or relevancy and stature, magazine brands are more trusted than social media brands.

Some magazine genres are more trusted than others 'hobbies and interest' and 'news and current affairs' as these exemplify some of the qualities that underpins trust in magazine media; specialist expertise and quality journalism.

This trusted status holds true for under 35s although the gap narrows. This however only serves to highlight the enduring power of magazine brands in a rapidly changing media landscape. This is due to magazine brands' ability to provide relevancy and meaning as well as expertise and objectivity in addition to reliability and good journalistic ethics.

Magazine brands successfully deliver trust by category as well. Across a range of subject areas magazine media is more trusted than social media, in particular for fashion, beauty and motoring. This also holds true for the relevant target audiences in these sectors.

The brand rub of context for advertisers

Work done exclusively for Magnetic by effectiveness guru Peter Field using the IPA databank, indicated the role that magazine media plays in creating long term brand and shareholder value. You can read the full report here. The key findings from this study shows that incorporating magazines into a campaign can result in a 40 per cent uplift in very large business effects. It found that magazines provide a very powerful amplification effect when added to social media by delivering an additional 15 per cent uplift to very large business effects.

It also shows that magazine brands are particularly effective at driving long term effects, but could magazines deliver more specifically against long term trust based KPIs?

We wanted to dive deeper into this and find evidence of a rub effect on trust. The idea of brand rub is a commonly used principle in planning and our planners from stage one of this study articulated this as the credentials a media channel can lend or borrow. This may span expertise, specific people or brands that sit within that media brand. The assumption being that by association an advertiser can take on some of these credentials either by being present in that environment or by partnering with that media brand.

A Matter of trust sought to also measure uplifts in trust associated brand metrics for a range of advertisers so that we are able to quantify this particular KPI in more detail.
We selected campaigns based on a minimum level of spend in magazines in the last year, usage of cross media channels and a mix of magazine touchpoints including display, advertorial, print, digital and social.

The data we showcase here for clients GHD, Plantur, Pearl Drops and Tesco comes from larger brand evaluation studies, but here we will zoom in on the trust related data for the purposes of this study. Most of the examples uses a basic exposed / unexposed methodology. However, we also have one case study that uses a sophisticated modelling approach.

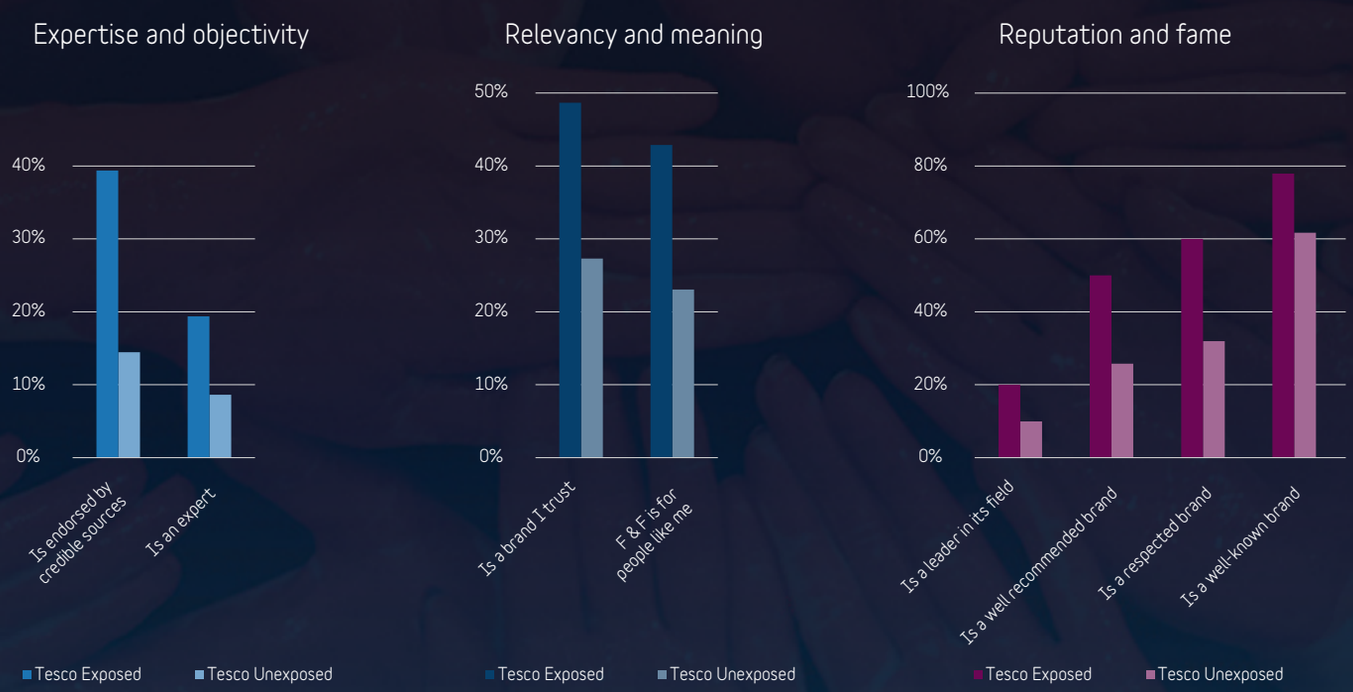
For this report we picked out any metrics from the studies which relate back to the factors that we measured in our factor analysis.

Case study 1: Tesco

Although the Tesco brand itself is well established and respected, it's fashion brand F&F had less traction. Tesco wanted to raise its fashion credentials amongst budget-conscious fashion-forward young women. It partnered with magazine media brands to deliver content across print, online and social.

Results show that for those exposed to the content in magazine environments we see a substantial uplift in the core measures related to trust, such as expertise and objectivity as well as relevancy and meaning. In addition, we also see a substantial uplift in brand stature.

Overall, this activity achieved an average brand trust uplift of 94 per cent and was p articularly strong at driving credibility and leadership associations.



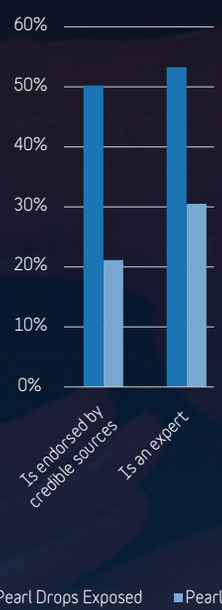
Case study 2: Pearl Drops

Pearl Drops wanted to reach 18-35s to differentiate the brand, by celebrating the beauty of authentic smiles. Their creative idea was celebrating 'the real' and 'outing the pout' and their magazine activity spanned display and partnerships across print, online and social.

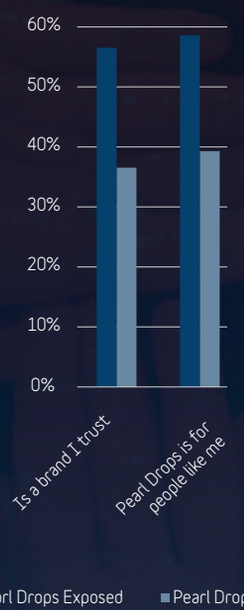
The work that Pearl Drops did with magazines helped to drive substantial increases in their trust metrics, this campaign was particularly strong in driving leadership and expertise associations.

Overall the activity achieved an average brand trust uplift of 64 per cent.

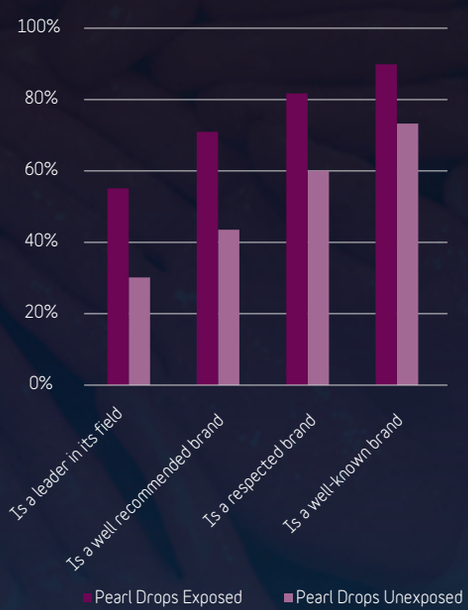
Expertise and objectivity



Relevancy and meaning



Reputation and fame

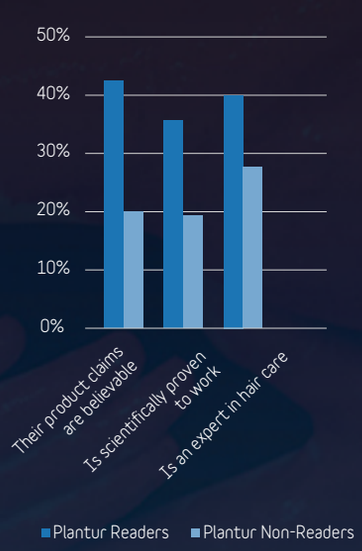


Case study 3: Plantur

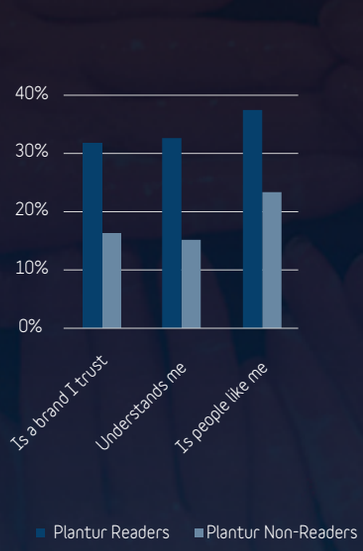
Plantur wanted to reach ABC1 women to increase awareness and consideration and crucially build credibility in the hair loss market. They partnered with a range of womens titles in print and online as well as delivering a TV campaign.

This activity achieved an average brand trust uplift of 77 per cent and was particularly strong at driving relevancy and expertise based associations. The results also show a strong media multiplier effect. Magazines combined with TV was even more powerful at moving trust scores

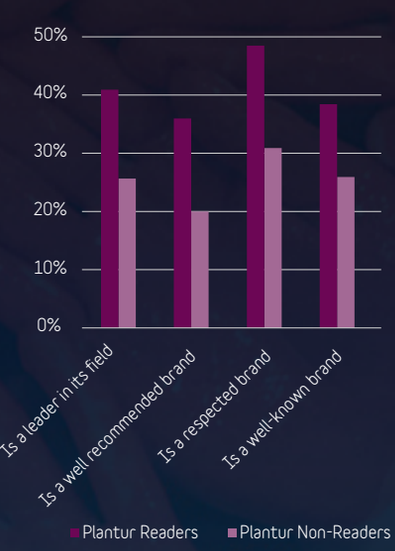
Expertise and objectivity



Relevancy and meaning



Reputation and fame

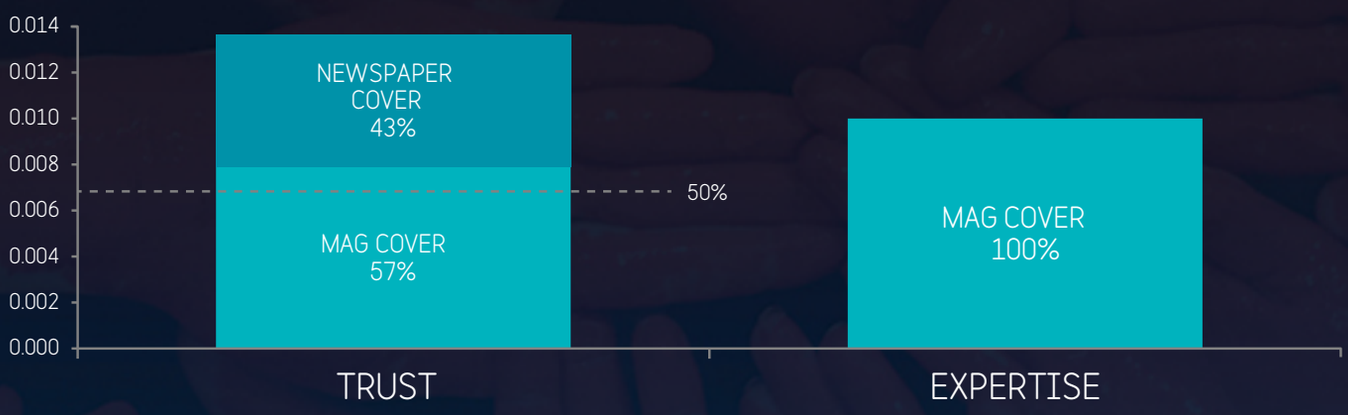


Case study 3: GHD

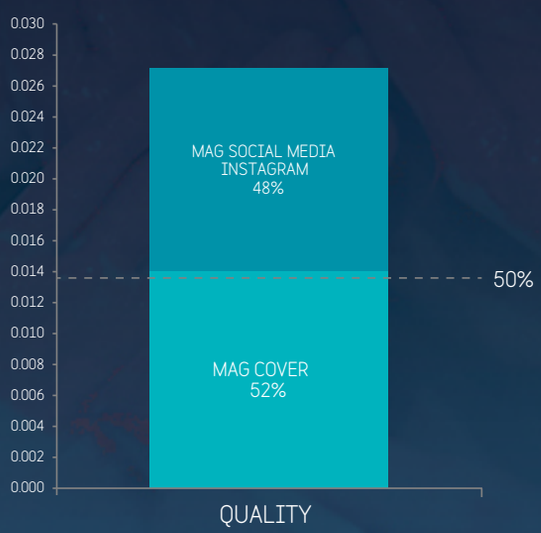
GHD has a long history with magazine brands and it understands the rub effect it provides which has been critical for maintaining its trusted status, perceived expertise and premium price positioning. Its target market of young women are however increasingly online so they were beginning to question their channel choices. They approached Magnetic to do a study to prove the overall value of magazine media.

For this study, Magnetic partnered with Carat and used their ICE tool. GHD used a mix of media for their campaign spanning magazines in print, online and social, newspapers, broader digital and outdoor.

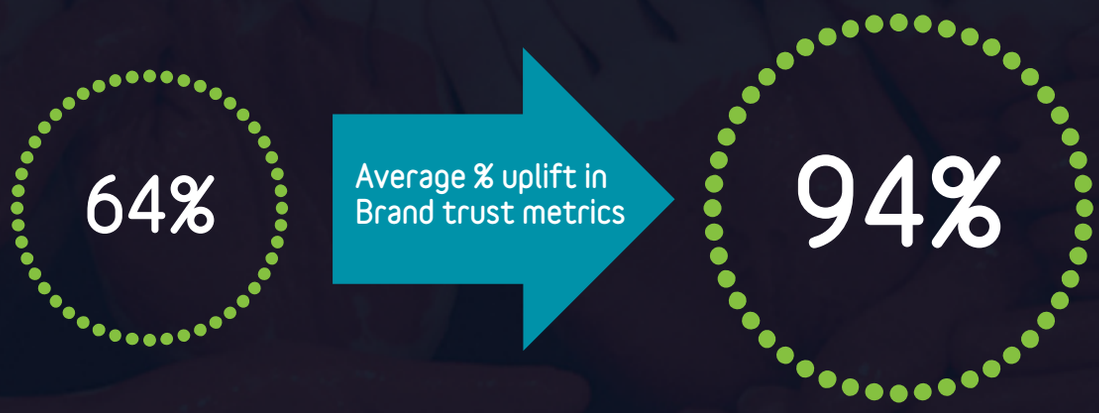
The results showed specifically that in relation to trust that only the magazine media and newsbrands cover contributed to perceptions of trust and that 57 per cent of that came from magazine cover activity. Magazines brands also delivered strongly against perceptions of expertise.



The GHD study perfectly showcases the synergistic effect of using magazines and social media in combination. It demonstrates the benefit of working with magazine brands to use both as in this instance the social media channels used were magazine brands social media. Magazine brands were the only ones that contributed to perceptions of quality, and using magazine social media environment combined with the magazine cover doubled the impact.



Across all the case studies we looked at, there is a significant positive impact on trust related KPIs for advertisers partnering with magazine brands. This rub effect ranges from an average uplift of 64 - 94 per cent



This serves as conclusive evidence that magazine brands infer trust on brands that advertise in them. We can also conclude that the rub effect is largely delivered by the magazine brand and not by platform, as such this effect can be achieved through display or partnership activity, print, digital or social.

In addition, we seen sufficient evidence to conclude that combining magazines and social media enhances the rub effect.

Conclusions

A Matter of Trust reached a number of important conclusions about the trusted status of magazine brands

1 Magazine brands are more trusted than social media, and this holds true for under 35s

2 The relevancy and expertise that magazine brands provide explains their trusted status

3 Magazine brands are more trusted than social media in the context of fashion, beauty, motoring, home, news and entertainment

4 Magazine brands deliver a significant rub effect on perceptions of trust for advertisers. This rub effect can be delivered through display or partnership activity, print or digital/social. It's about the magazine brand, not the platform

Appendix

Methodology

The key stages of the project

'A Matter of Trust' was a multi-stage process. Four of these stages were critical components in terms of measuring the trusted status of media brands and proving the rub effect for advertisers.

T Score

Objective: The objective of the T Score was to deconstruct trust and understand the nuances.
Methodology: Factor analysis is a statistical approach. It allows researchers to investigate concepts that are not easily measured directly by collapsing a large number of variables into a few interpretable underlying factors.
Output: The output was scores showing the relative importance of each factor and magazine Vs social media performance against these

Implicit Results

Objective: The objective of the Implicit Results were to understand the trust at a subconscious level.
Methodology: It established a link without the use of direct questions, instead using stimuli and a timed response. It's grounded in neuroscience and a system 1 / system 2 theory.
Output: The output identifies whether magazines or social media are more closely associated with trust at a subconscious level

Category Analysis

Objective: The objective of the Category Analysis was to deconstruct trust in context of a category.
Methodology: We asked respondents which categories they were interested in, then asked the to rate media brands on their ability to inspure trust in these areas. They were only asked in relation to media brands they used.
Output: The output gave us the ability to score media brands' trusted status in relation to key topic areas

Brand Rub

Objective: The objective of the Brand Rub was to identify whether trust can be transferred from media to brand
Methodology: Case studies of a brand with a clear brief on trust and investing in both magazines and another media, used an exposed/non-exposed methodology.
Output: The output demonstrated the impact of magazines on trust KPIs

The key stages of the project

We created three metrics for trust, the single question, the T score and an implicit measure. These were derived from two separate surveys.

The first survey was designed to be capable of measuring the performance of a large number of published media and social media brands, as such it needed a significantly large sample of 3,3230. This means we were able to include 142 magazine brands, 24 newsbrands and five social media brands. This survey was used to derive the single trust metric and the T score.

For the implicit analysis we used a second survey and different methodology. The survey sample size was 544 and measured magazines vs social media as platforms rather than at an individual level. We used a collage and timed response approach, with no direct questions. This stimulus led approach allowed us to represent social media using the same five brands in the previous survey, we had to choose seven magazine brands to represent the sector. We wanted to ensure we had a spread of brands that reflected the gender, age and social grade of magazine media, as well as the mix of weekly and monthly, interest areas as well as print and digital experiences. As such we chose the following brands; Cosmopolitan, Mens Health, NME, Economist, Good House Keeping, Radio Times, Grazia and Hello.

142 magazine brands

24 newsbrands

Social media: Facebook, Youtube, Instagram,Twitter, Snapchat

COSMOPOLITAN Men'sHealth HELLO! NME RadioTimes The Economist GRAZIA Good Housekeeping facebook YouTube

The single question by media brand

The T score - the nuances of trust by media brand

Implicitly by media channel

These results are a net of all the magazine/ social media brands in the study

(Sample size 3,230)

These results used a collage approach to get a view of magazine Vs social media in general

(Sample size 544)