

A new study shows men who feel 'love' for their beer brand will purchase significantly more than a regular consumer

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(Phys.org)—A new study has found that men who feel 'love' for their beer brand purchase 38 per cent more beer than average, while women who feel 'bonding' with their laundry detergent brand purchase 60 per cent more than the average customer.

These are some of the findings from a study on 'emotional branding' by Murdoch University's Audience Labs and the University of Wollongong.

According to Dr Steve Bellman, Deputy Director of Audience Labs, [emotional branding](#) is becoming widely used globally – including

[MacDonald's 'I'm loving it'](#) campaign and Kodak's attempts to link its brand to [nostalgia](#).

However, its effectiveness has been virtually unknown up until now.

"Our study shows that when companies tap into consumer's deeper feelings, the payoffs can be substantial," Dr Bellman said.

"Emotionally attached consumers purchase substantially more than regular customers, which frees companies from having to rely on promotions and discounts to keep them buying the brand.

"On the flip side, however, while advertisers are eager to create emotional attachments between consumers and their goods, we've found forming these deep feelings can be a difficult task."

Researchers found full-strength [emotional attachment](#) occurred in only about 25 per cent of buyers – less in the case of utilitarian products like petrol and [laundry detergent](#).

Dr Bellman said emotional branding did occur with utilitarian products and that emotional branding was a better predictor of purchasing behaviour than the more traditional measurement of 'brand attitude' (customers rating a brand as simply good or bad).

"Our findings on utilitarian products were surprising, as we don't usually associate petrol and laundry detergent with emotions like companionship and love," Dr Bellman said.

"But obviously some people feel very strongly about pulling up to the pumps."

The study involved 1,025 people and saw participants rate brands

purchased over the past 12 months in product categories involving utilitarian and 'hedonic' products (such as instant coffee and beer).

These ratings were then compared with amounts purchased and attachment emotions, if any, felt for each brand.

Emotions included trust, bonding ('It's my brand'), resonance ('This fits my self image'), companionship ('This brand is like a companion to me') and love, in which a deep affection was felt and the consumer would be really upset if they couldn't have their brand.

Dr Bellman said the study showed emotional branding to be just as effective among men as among women.

'Emotional Branding Pays Off' by John Rossiter and Steve Bellman was published in the *Journal of Advertising Research* (September 2012).

Provided by Murdoch University

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