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Research by Wunderman Finds Link Between Brand Building and Search Engine Use By Consumers

New York, Feb 9, 2010 – Initial research conducted by Wunderman, BrandAsset® Consulting, ZAAZ and Compete has found that the search engine consumers use to find a brand's website impacts their perception of that brand and impacts their decisions made while they're on the site.

“Search begins with the choice of search engine,” said David Sable, vice chairman and COO of Wunderman, one of the companies involved in the research. “What this means if you are managing a brand is this: you need to know how consumers relate to Bing, Yahoo! or Google and how that reflects on you.”

In this first-of-its-kind research, loyal users of Bing, Yahoo! and Google were found to have distinct characteristics that benefit some brands more than others. The research was funded by Wunderman, BrandAsset® Consulting, ZAAZ and Compete exclusively.

“This research demonstrates that marketers have a real choice to make when formulating search strategies,” said Shane Atchison, CEO of ZAAZ. “The search engine acts as a kind of ‘train’ on the Internet. Each train provides a different set of unique results or ‘destinations.’ Consumer preference for a specific train demonstrates a unique demographic and psychographic profile.”

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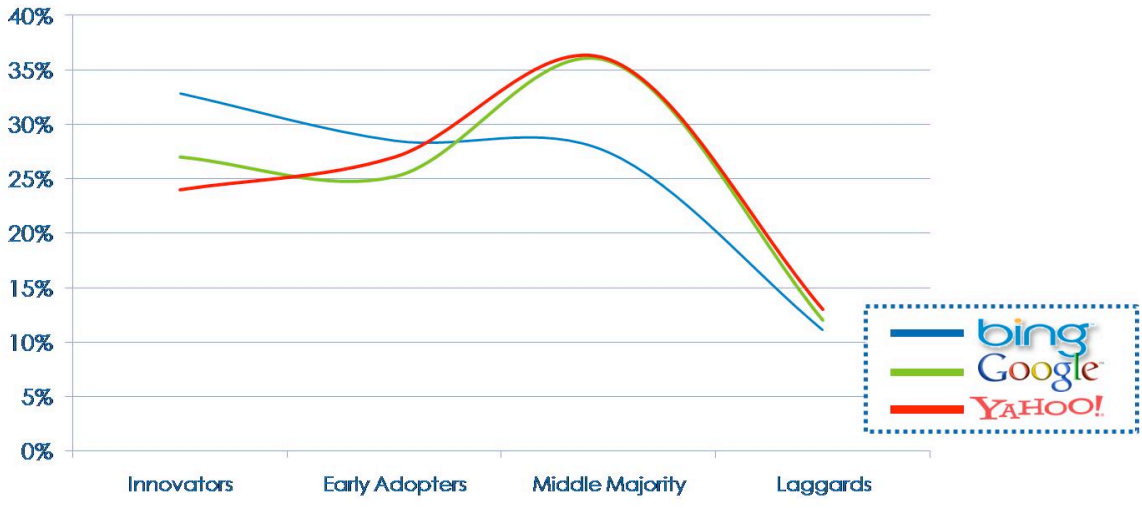
The research finds that the search experience on different search engines yields different results, with some being more relevant to the consumer than others. This, according to the research, contributes to overall customer and brand awareness. If the results of the search satisfy the needs of the consumer, then the search engine has greater appeal to that potential customer and he or she will have a deeper connection to the brand and the search engine. Therefore, the research indicates, search engines provide different degrees of a “brand lift” to the destination site.

The study finds two distinct reasons why different brands do better with different search engines:

- It's About Who You Are: The demographic and psychographic profile of each loyal search engine user is different. Bing users, for example, tend to be mostly from the tip of the adoption curve (innovators and early adopters) where Yahoo! and Google's passengers tend to be middle majority (see accompanying chart).
- It's About the Road You Take: Each search engine delivers a different result, whether paid for or earned. In the brands and vertical categories studied (automotive, travel, retail, and wireless), each search engine demonstrated different degrees of consumer engagement ranging from visiting to finally purchasing.

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Adoption of Search Engines




Base: BAV USA Internet Users Q1 – Q3 '09

Consumer search engine preference says something about, “who I am” and, “how I act.” Within a product category, users of each search engine showed a propensity for enhanced involvement with a particular brand. Below are examples in three different categories.

Retail


In the case of Walmart, Bing’s loyalists visit, shop, and, ultimately purchase more than other search engine loyalists.


RETAIL	Degree of Engagement	bing	Google	YAHOO!
	Visitors	26.52%	25.21%	24.79%
	Shoppers	5.11%	4.70%	4.78%
	Converters	1.23%	1.06%	1.13%

- For category definitions of degrees of engagement, refer to legend below.

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For Target and Amazon, Bing and Yahoo! are gaining on Google in converting its loyal users.


RETAIL	Degree of Engagement	bing	Google	YAHOO!
	Visitors	21.61%	22.63%	21.62%
	Shoppers	3.03%	3.17%	2.66%
	Converters	0.60%	0.68%	0.52%

RETAIL	Degree of Engagement	bing	Google	YAHOO!
	Visitors	42.50%	45.30%	37.13%
	Shoppers	8.82%	11.26%	7.95%
	Converters	4.35%	5.91%	4.02%

Travel

In the travel sector, the data indicates that Google leads the category in conversion.


TRAVEL	Degree of Engagement	bing	Google	YAHOO!
	Visitors	5.89%	5.87%	5.14%
	Shoppers	5.10%	4.93%	4.25%
	Converters	0.25%	0.33%	0.25%

TRAVEL	Degree of Engagement	bing	Google	YAHOO!
	Visitors	3.34%	3.65%	2.70%
	Shoppers	0.84%	0.92%	0.54%
	Converters	0.03%	0.05%	0.03%

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Wireless

Yahoo! loyal users showed a greater number of visits to AT&T Wireless websites than either Bing or Google users. In addition, Yahoo! loyal users were more likely to purchase wireless goods and services than Bing or Google users.


WIRELESS	Degree of Engagement	bing	Google	YAHOO!
	Visitors	12.61%	12.80%	13.35%
	Shoppers	4.37%	4.76%	4.79%
	Converters	0.11%	0.11%	0.14%

Search engine marketing has become more competitive since the introduction of Bing within the last six months. Despite longer tenures for Google and Yahoo!, Bing has established a foundation of loyal users whose engagement with brands is substantial.

Automotives

Google demonstrates category consistency from first visit through to actual purchase. Google loyalists constituted a greater number of visits to Lexus websites than either Bing or Yahoo users. Bing users show a greater number of visits and a propensity to buy Toyota than either Google or Yahoo users.

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AUTO	Degree of Engagement	bing	Google	YAHOO!
	Visitors	0.42%	0.50%	0.39%
	Shoppers	0.19%	0.21%	0.16%
	Converters	0.05%	0.05%	0.04%

“What this means for marketers is the need to choose their search engines wisely. The search engine which performs well at the brand level may not necessarily perform as well at the category level. Under spend on one search and you’re likely leaving money on the table or in your competitors’ hands.” said Ed Lebar, CEO, BrandAsset® Consulting.

Research Methodology

The research concentrated on loyal brand search users of Yahoo!, Google and Bing investigating:

- The correlation between brand awareness and search efficacy;
- How search engines are changing consumer behavior;

Category Definitions of Degrees of Engagement

	Autos	Retail	Travel	Wireless
Visitor	Site Traffic	Site Traffic	Site Traffic	Site Traffic
Shopper	Look at a specific model, build and price, car configurator	View product page, add item to shopping cart, compare products	Perform a search for a hotel/flight/rental car, etc.	View phones, plans, carrier maps
Converter	Request a quote, Dealer locator	Purchase	Purchase a hotel/flight/rental car, etc.	Purchase phone, plan

About Wunderman

Wunderman is the original architect of response-driven marketing, an estimated trillion dollar global industry. Today, with 50+ years of innovation, creativity, and insight, Wunderman stands as the first name in advertising that delivers measurable results. Throughout its network of 120+ offices in 50+ countries and 15+ specialized companies, Wunderman speaks the customer's language—whatever the dialect—at the right time, creating profitable conversations that build brands and generate sales. Wunderman is part of Young & Rubicam Brands and a member of WPP

About BrandAsset® Consulting

BrandAsset® Consulting helps business executives, investors and marketers assess and drive the strategic direction and intangible value of brands. BAC has created proprietary models and metrics using the world's most comprehensive database of brands. Its **BrandAsset® Valuator** model has measured brands since 1993 and today over 35,000 brands have been evaluated among over 600,000 respondents in over 50 countries. Brand Asset Consulting is part of Young & Rubicam Brands.

About Compete

Compete is a Kantar Media company -- Kantar Media was created by combining the deep industry expertise of TNS and TGI in order to provide media and marketing intelligence to 16,000 customers around the world. Compete helps the world's top brands improve their marketing based on the online behavior of millions of consumers. Leading marketers such as Carlson Hotels Worldwide, Hyundai Motor America, Upromise, Chrysler, and Verizon Wireless rely on Compete's services to create effective online experiences and highly profitable advertising campaigns. Compete's online behavior database—the largest in the industry—makes the Web as ingrained in marketing as it is in people's lives. Compete is located in Boston, MA, with offices throughout the U.S. For more information about us, please visit <http://www.competeinc.com/>, or to join the conversation visit <http://www.compete.com/>.

About ZAAZ

ZAAZ employs a unique combination of logic and creativity to achieve positive business results for clients large and small. ZAAZ provides web strategy, creative design, user experience, web analytics, and site- and search-optimization services. The combination of strategic planning, smart execution and comprehensive analytics to scientifically measure and optimize the customer experience sets ZAAZ apart from other interactive agencies and its approach complements Wunderman's "test and run" optimization philosophy. Founded in 1998, ZAAZ became part of Wunderman in July 2006.