

Walmart

**Are you feeling the love from Walmart?
Can emotional response be quantified?
Which brands strike the best emotional
balance?**

About a third of the predominantly senior-level marketing executives who responded to our survey said they never shop at Walmart, that the retailer doesn't appeal to them, never did and never will—recession or no recession.

If anything, our respondents say they are shopping at Walmart less frequently since the recession began. Most said that there is nothing about Walmart's appeal that they've applied to their own brands.

This may not be a surprising result, since our readership likely is more affluent than the average Walmart shopper, or would like to think so. As one reader joked: "I wish to project an impression that says I am far too successful to shop at Walmart."

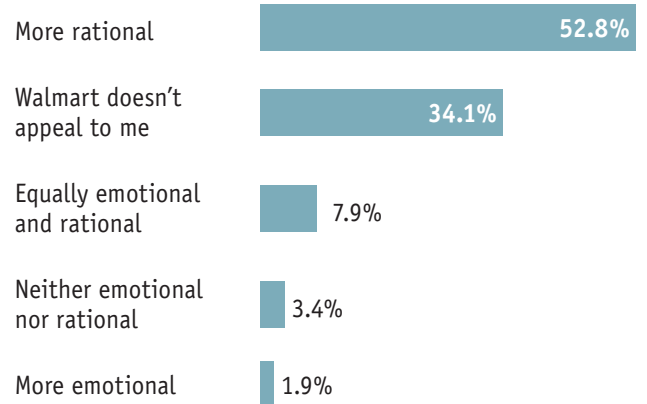
However, fully 58 percent of respondents acknowledged that Walmart shoppers are important to the success of their brands. Despite this, 33 percent said they have never gone shopping with one of their consumers at a Walmart store.

This might suggest a disconnect between marketing and the real world that warrants further research and discussion. Are marketing people out of touch where Walmart is concerned?

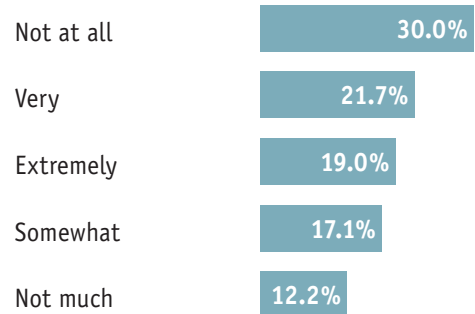
A good chunk of respondents took Walmart to task for any number of reasons—from how it treats its workers to the quality of its wares, the looks of its stores and its efforts at sustainability. As one reader put it: "I see their 'eco' campaign as dark smog intended to cover-up their lack of humanity."

Others were even less charitable (we can't print what some said because *The Hub* is a family publication). However, some did have nice things to say about Walmart's recent efforts to connect with its shoppers on a more emotional level.

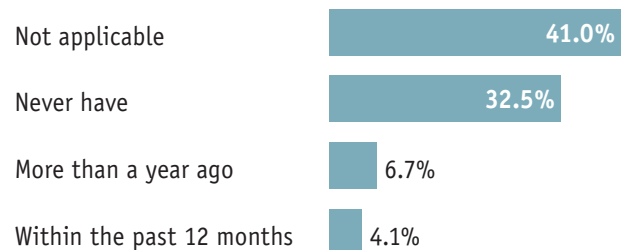
Is Walmart's primary appeal to you more emotional or rational?



How important is the Walmart shopper to the success of your brands?

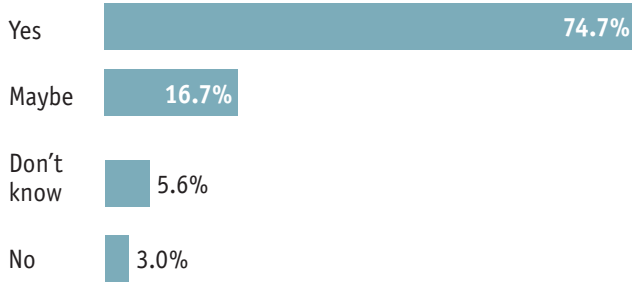


When was the last time you shopped with one of your consumers at Walmart?

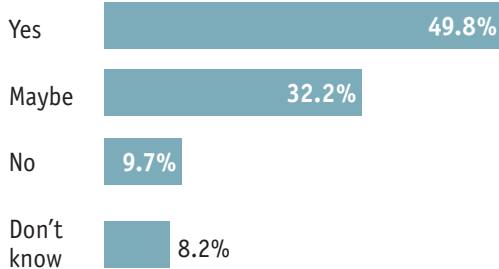


Emotions

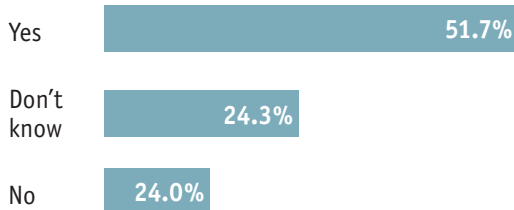
Do you think it would be important to quantify a consumer's emotional response to a brand?



Do you think it is possible to quantify a consumer's emotional response to a brand?



Are you satisfied with the current balance between emotional and rational factors in your brand strategy?



One respondent suggested that Walmart's new "Save Money. Live Better." campaign "has touched a deep chord within the American psyche—exactly what a great campaign is supposed to do."

Walmart's latest attempts to show a more emotional side include a new logo as well as efforts to improve the shopping experience.

While these initiatives appear to be paying off for Walmart, they do not seem to have affected our readers, with 55 percent saying that "price" is still their primary reason for shopping at Walmart.

With respect to their own brands, 47 percent said they felt their own strategies articulated "equally emotional and rational" factors and that they were satisfied with the strategic balance between the two.

However, just 50 percent thought it would be possible to do so. Fifty-two percent said they were satisfied with the balance between emotional and rational factors in their brand strategies.

Interestingly, 75 percent said it would be important to quantify a consumer's emotional response to a brand.

As to which brands are doing the best job of balancing their appeal between emotional and rational factors, the most frequently mentioned were Apple, Target, McDonald's and Nike, followed by Coke, Harley-Davidson, Dunkin' Donuts and Starbucks.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

A total of 272 survey respondents included agencies (28%), brand marketers (24%) and consulting firms (19%). Twenty-six percent worked in packaged goods firms, 10% in media/entertainment and nine percent in retail.

A majority were senior-level executives with 70% reporting more than ten years of experience in marketing.

Survey Results:

www.hubmagazine.com/survey/walmart