

# Platinum brands create friends for life



What people  
think, feel and do.

# Key Learnings



Brands that are in growth are more likely to be distinguished, prominent and connect with consumers.



Being distinguished can allow brands to become more premium



Making an emotional connection is often the key factor in driving purchase

## Evolution is inevitable.

The world keeps turning, the way we behave on it keeps changing and how we interact with one another alters with each new technological innovation. However, we have basic human needs that don't change.

The need for love, acceptance, camaraderie and friendship hasn't changed, but some of the ways in which we satisfy that need have. You still have that friend that is quite high maintenance but is always great company and you can rely on them. You still have those old friends that you used to see all the time but don't any more; but when you do, you drop into the old routine. And you have some friends that are just acquaintances as you don't really know them that well.

And of course, you have your 'platinum' friends, the 'gang' from school or college, the drinking mates, the ushers or bridesmaids at your wedding, the friends for life.

Brand building is the business of building friendships, making a connection and being something a consumer can rely on. Yes, the world in which those friendships are created has changed, but the basic need hasn't. In a time-poor and financially pressured world, the power of the brand becomes more important. People want short cuts to decisions, both big and small. A strong brand can make life easier for customers by letting them know that it sees things from their perspective, doesn't let them down, delivers on its promises and gives them value for money.

## And you can have a friend for life.

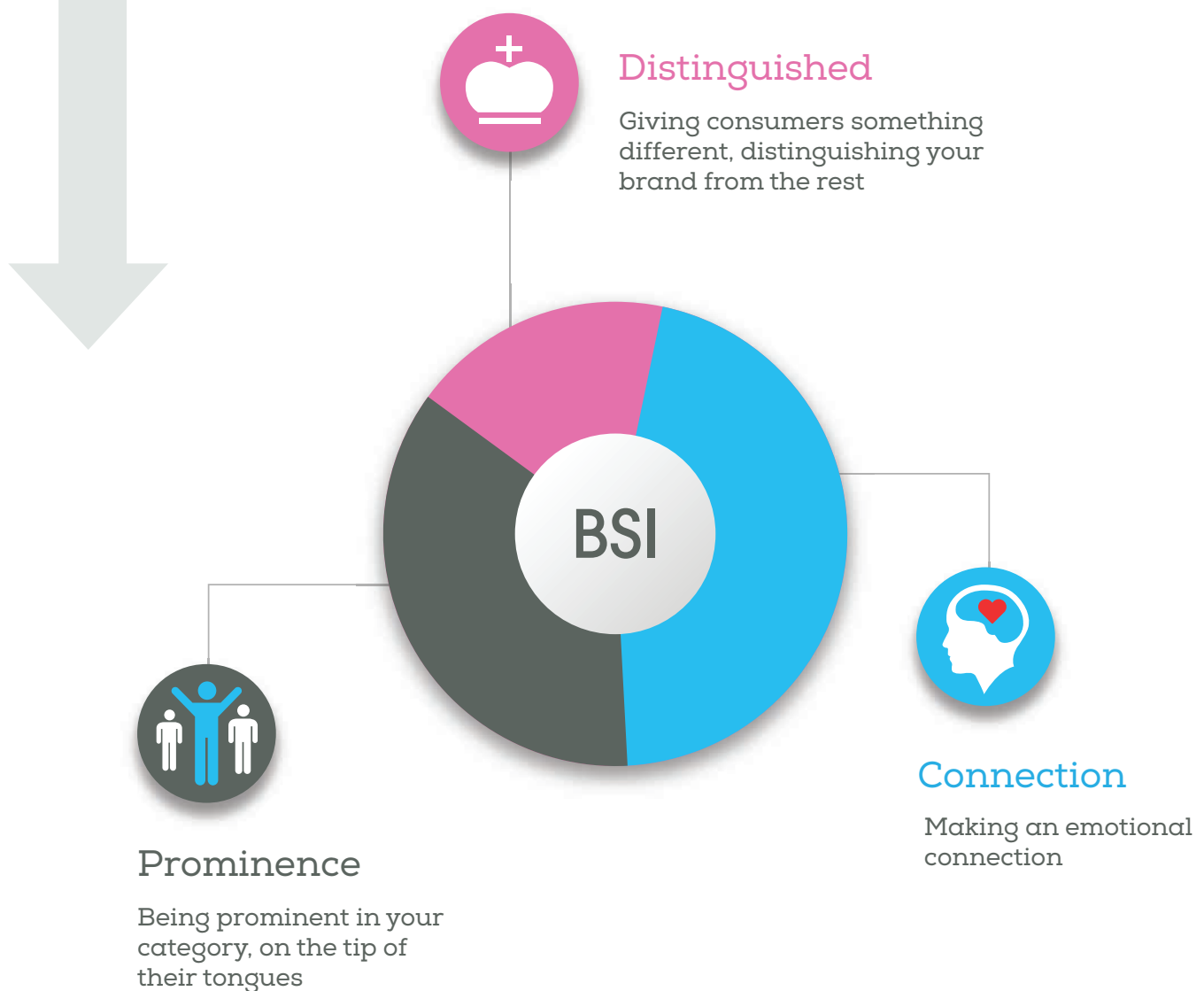
At Opinium, we believe in helping our clients make and keep friends for life. A platinum brand attracts platinum friends, and creates a solid, sustainable business platform for growth.

Building  
brand  
friendships



# Making a Connection

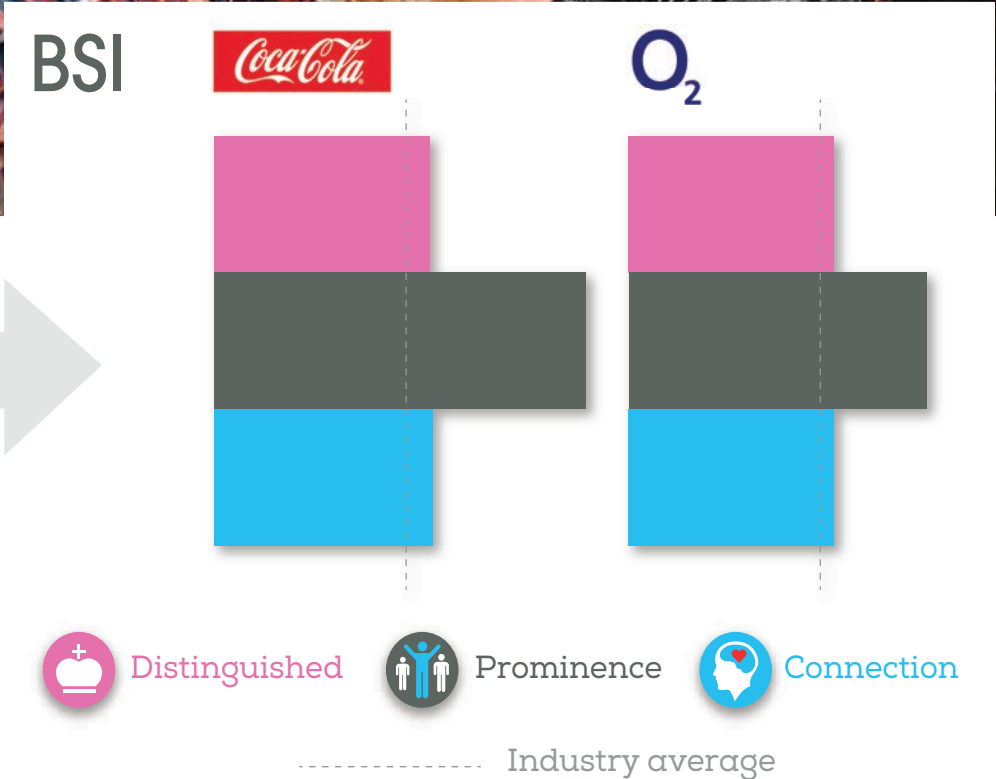
Of course every brand can't be Apple or Nike, but the principles of a strong brand remain constant across categories. The Opinium Brand Strength Index (BSI) is built on the key areas that turn good brands into great brands:



We then relate those perceptions to purchase behaviour, as ultimately the brand needs to play its part in delivering sales, along with all the other parts of the marketing mix.

Many Platinum brands are strong in all of these areas.

For example, take Coca Cola and O2, both giants in their respective fields, scoring higher than average on all 3 measures but both with a particular strength in being prominent in consumer minds.



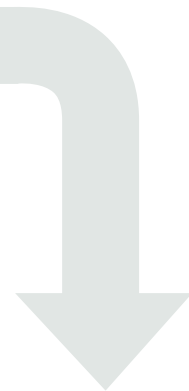
DO YOU  
KNOW WHAT IS  
IMPORTANT TO  
MAKING BRAND  
FRIENDSHIPS IN  
YOUR CATEGORY?



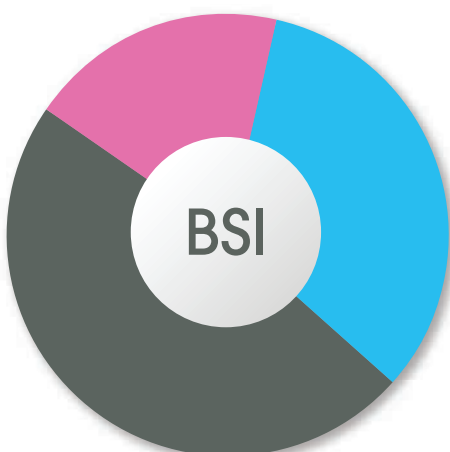
It is important to know what the priorities in your category are.

Each market is different, so knowing where you should channel your focus on brand positioning, to help deliver sales, can give you a competitive advantage. As you might expect, we often find that making a connection with consumers is a major driver, but to what extent?

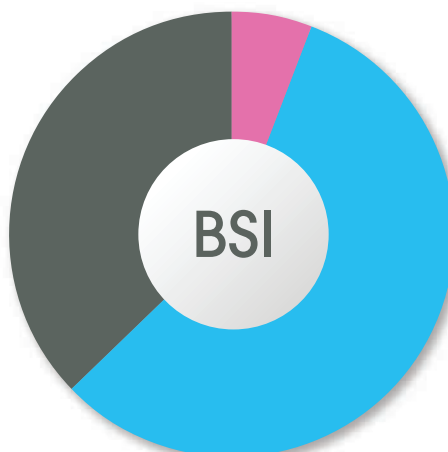
As you can see below, in the supermarket sector, making a connection and being prominent are the key factors for brands to focus on, whereas in the banking sector, being distinguished plays a bigger part in driving usage.



BANKS



SUPERMARKETS



Distinguished



Connection



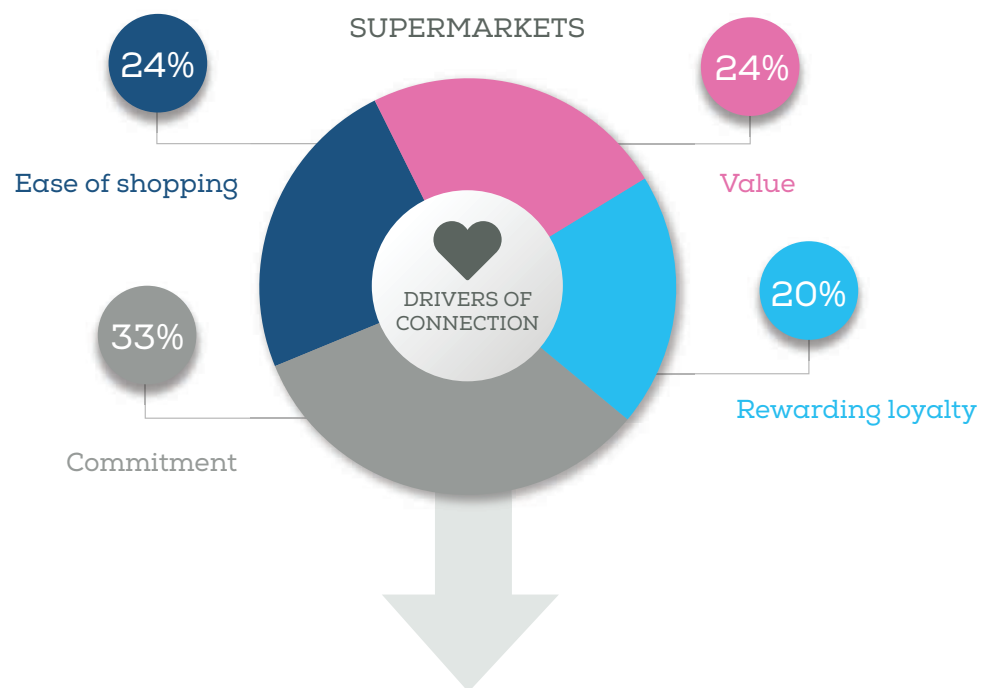
Prominence

## Making it personal

Your friends are your friends because you know about them, you know what makes them tick, what they like and what they don't like.

### Brand friendships are just the same.

To make them more personal, we need to get down to specifics and find out what attributes help build that connection or make brands more distinguished. When we look at the grocery retail market in the example below, we can see that 'Value' & Ease of Shopping' drive connection with the brand, but the way to make a stronger connection is through 'Commitment'.



### Key Attributes in Commitment

- ✓ Passionate about food
- ✓ Committed to giving customers the freshest food
- ✓ Offer good quality products
- ✓ Excellent range of products



In life we should be honest with ourselves; we're not all great at everything.

People have perceptions of us, what we're known for.

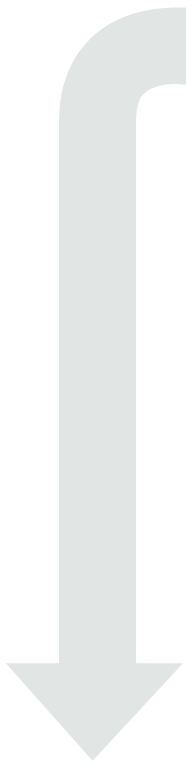
The same is true for brands, so we need to look at what consumers say is important to them to make that emotional connection and then assess whether our brand is known for that in consumers' minds. Looking at the data below we can see why perhaps Tesco has been struggling recently as consumers no longer associate the brand with the key drivers that make that all important connection.



But we have to be true to ourselves and be true to our brand positioning. Consumers might be asking for something which just isn't us, in which case we need to find a way to show our brand can deliver on what they want in a manner that fits existing perceptions and our capabilities.

So the key to building lasting brand friendships is to listen to what your friends are telling you.

Do you know what your friends want from you? For example, in a category where customers want their brand friends to be the centre of attention, the life of the party, there's no point in being the quiet brand in the corner. Alternatively, if you're in a category where customers are looking for a brand that is distinguished by its trustworthy, solid and discreet reputation, there's little point in thinking that prominence alone will win you friends.



## Making Friends isn't expensive and shouldn't be complicated

It's amazing to think that there are literally hundreds of brand managers out there who don't know as much as they'd like to about their brand. Sure they know the sales figures but don't know what consumers think & feel about the brand they are supposedly managing. Cost is often the excuse. Or in many instances their 'brand tracker' has become so convoluted, no one reads the deck anymore.

Brand evaluation done the right way doesn't have to be expensive. It needs to make the intangible become tangible and provide business friendly metrics that deliver insights to help future brand strategy. Don't be left in the dark. You can't manage your brand if you don't know what consumers think of it. Once you know what consumers want in your category you can go about making those connections that will create lasting bonds, making consumers become advocates, and ultimately friends for life.



### About the author

Steve heads up Opinium's Brand and Communications practice area and has over 15 years of experience working in market and consumer research delivering insight across many areas of the business world from small start-ups through to iconic global brands. Steve's experience comes from across the FMCG, B2B & service categories dealing with many facets of marketing information such as: communication evaluation, concept testing, brand planning & strategy development, and customer satisfaction.

**[stevelooney@opinium.co.uk](mailto:stevelooney@opinium.co.uk) :: 0207 566 7437**



What people  
think, feel and do.

### About Opinium

Opinium is an award winning strategic insight agency built on the belief that in a world of uncertainty and complexity, success depends on the ability to stay on the pulse of what people think, feel and do. Creative and inquisitive, we are passionate about empowering our clients to make the decisions that matter. We work with organisations to define and resolve commercial issues, helping them to get to grips with the world in which their brands operate, by ensuring we develop the right approach and methodology to deliver robust insight, targeted recommendations, and address specific business challenges.

**[www.opinium.co.uk](http://www.opinium.co.uk) :: [research@opinium.co.uk](mailto:research@opinium.co.uk) :: 0207 566 3190**