



Introducing the

Morning Consult Reputation Score™

A Modern Approach to Measuring Brand
Reputation

Rethinking Brand Reputation for the Modern Era

Reputation Is Strategy

In today's environment, brand reputation is not just a byproduct of performance — it is performance. Communications is no longer just a support function; it is a strategic force at the core of corporate decision-making. The Chief Communications Officer now occupies a position at the C-Suite table, steering reputation, risk, and business strategy with data and foresight. As stakeholder expectations increase and the risks to reputation grow, the role of communications is evolving—driven by real-time insights, predictive intelligence, AI, and emotional understanding.

Reputation Is More Complex — and Critical — Than Ever

1. The Acceleration of Reputation Risk

Reputations can rise or fall overnight. News cycles, viral moments, political dynamics, and stakeholder expectations evolve daily. In this climate, relying on quarterly or annual reports is not enough. Leaders need real-time intelligence to manage and protect their brand equity.

2. The Erosion of Trust — and the Cost of Inaction

Consumers, investors, and employees are becoming more focused on values. Trust is no longer an automatic given; it must be actively earned and sustained.

A single reputational misstep can diminish not only brand perception but also market share and recruitment opportunities. It is essential to understand the factors that influence trust and how these differ across various audiences.

3. The Need for Precision

Reputation is not monolithic. What drives credibility with a policymaker may not matter to a Gen Z consumer. What works in Germany may backfire in the U.S. That's why measurement must be granular, global, and audience-specific.

At Morning Consult, we believe it's time for a new approach to reputation measurement.

Today's communications leaders need more than a fragmented view of reputation—they need clarity, speed, and strategic depth. **Our solution pairs Morning Consult Intelligence—an always-on view of brand reputation across thousands of companies—with custom research that uncovers the emotional drivers behind stakeholder behavior.** At its core is our proprietary Reputation Score™, a simple, consistent metric tracking five key levers: Trust, Favorability, Value, Admired Employer, and Community Impact.

This unified approach shows you what's happening, why it's happening, and how to respond—turning reputation into a strategic engine for building and protecting your brand in a fast-moving world.

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Reputation Score™ Dimensions:

Corporate Credibility & Character

A company's reputation is built first and foremost on its corporate character and credibility—the essential qualities that earn stakeholder trust and define a company's license to operate. Our reputation framework measures these qualities through three core metrics: Trust, Admired Employer, and Community Impact. Together, these metrics provide a comprehensive, actionable view of how a company is perceived in terms of its ethical standards, leadership, and social responsibility.

Academic and industry research consistently show that corporate character and credibility are not just “nice-to-haves”—they are essential for earning stakeholder trust, maintaining a social license to operate, and driving sustainable business success. In today's environment, where expectations for ethical behavior and social responsibility are higher than ever, these metrics provide communications leaders with clear, actionable levers to build, protect, and activate their corporate brand's reputation.

Trust

Trust is the cornerstone of corporate reputation. It reflects the degree to which stakeholders believe a company will act reliably, ethically, and in their best interests. High trust signals that a company is seen as honest, transparent, and dependable—qualities that are critical for building long-term relationships with consumers, employees, investors, and regulators.

Our measurement of trust captures both rational assessments and emotional confidence in a company's actions and intentions.

Admired Employer

Admired Employer measures how a company is viewed as a place to work. This metric goes beyond internal HR performance; it reflects external perceptions of how a company treats its employees, its workplace culture, and its commitment to fair and inclusive practices. Being recognized as an admired employer not only attracts top talent but also signals to all stakeholders that the company values people and invests in its workforce—a key driver of both reputation and business performance.

Community Impact

Community Impact assesses a company's perceived contribution to society and the communities in which it operates. This includes social responsibility, environmental stewardship, and support for local and global causes. Companies that are seen as making a positive impact are more likely to earn goodwill, foster loyalty, and mitigate reputational risk. Our metric captures the extent to which stakeholders believe a company is a force for good, both locally and globally.

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Reputation Score™ Dimensions:

Brand Appeal

While corporate character and credibility establish the foundation of reputation, Brand Appeal is what transforms positive perceptions into meaningful engagement and advocacy. At Morning Consult, we measure **Brand Appeal** through two essential metrics: Favorability and Value. These metrics capture the emotional and rational drivers that motivate stakeholders to choose, recommend, and remain loyal to a brand.

In today's competitive landscape, it's not enough for companies to simply be trusted—they must also be attractive and relevant to their audiences. Brand Appeal is where emotional and rational perceptions converge, turning positive reputation into real-world outcomes: increased engagement, advocacy, and business growth. By measuring and understanding favorability and value, organizations can identify what resonates most with their stakeholders and activate strategies that strengthen emotional bonds and marketplace performance.

Favorability

Favorability reflects the overall positive sentiment that stakeholders feel toward a brand. It encompasses emotional resonance, relevance, and the degree to which a brand is liked or admired. High favorability indicates that a brand is not only recognized, but also appreciated and embraced by its audiences.

This emotional connection is a powerful driver of loyalty, word-of-mouth advocacy, authenticity, and resilience in times of challenge.

Value

Value measures the perceived worth and benefits that stakeholders associate with a company's products, services, and overall brand proposition. Is the company fulfilling the brand promise? High value indicates that stakeholders believe they are receiving exceptional benefits relative to the cost, which enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty. By delivering strong value, a company can differentiate itself in the marketplace, drive consumer preference, and sustain competitive advantage.

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Always-On:

The Morning Consult Reputation Score™



Measuring reputation shouldn't be a guessing game. In today's fast-moving landscape, leaders need a reputation metric that is clear, actionable, and truly reflective of what matters to stakeholders. That's why Morning Consult developed the Reputation Score™—a modern, research-backed approach that cuts through the noise and delivers a single, powerful signal for brand reputation.

Why a Reputation Score™?

Legacy reputation models often overwhelm with complexity or oversimplify what matters. They may rely on outdated attributes, opaque calculations, or metrics that don't translate into real-world action. The result? Confusion, missed opportunity, irrelevant data, and a disconnect between your audience and decision-making.

Morning Consult's Reputation Score™ is different. It's designed for the realities of 2025: fast, transparent, and built for action.

Our score distills reputation into two essential dimensions—Corporate Credibility & Character and Brand Appeal—capturing both the rational and emotional drivers that shape how stakeholders perceive and engage with your corporate brand.

How It Works

The Reputation Score™ is built on five core metrics that matter most, combining a company's perceived trustworthiness, ethical behavior, social responsibility, and its attractiveness, relevance, and value to stakeholders:

Corporate Credibility & Character:

- Trust
- Admired Employer
- Community Impact

Brand Appeal:

- Favorability
- Value

For each metric, we capture both positive and negative associations, recognizing that the interaction of these factors impacts reputation. Our approach ensures that negative perceptions are acknowledged and not ignored; rather, they should be addressed through strategic communication efforts that cultivate positive associations over time.

The result is a single score—easy to understand, easy to communicate, and directly linked to the levers that communications and brand teams can influence.

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A Holistic Approach:

Syndicated + Custom

Morning Consult's approach combines the breadth of syndicated, always-on measurement with the depth of custom research, giving you a complete toolkit for reputation management.

Syndicated Insights: The “What’s Happening?”

Our syndicated platform – Morning Consult Intelligence – continuously tracks thousands of brands across key markets and audiences, providing a real-time pulse on your reputation. With daily updates and historical trendlines, you can:

- **Monitor shifts in real time:** Spot emerging risks or opportunities as they happen, not weeks or months later.
- **Benchmark against competitors:** See how your reputation stacks up in your industry and beyond.
- **Track progress over time:** Reputation is a long game, it's hard to build and essential to maintain.

Syndicated insights give you the “what”—a reliable, always-on view of corporate brand reputation, so you're never caught off guard.

Custom Insights: The “Why and What’s Next?”

When you need to go deeper, Morning Consult's custom research unlocks the “why” behind your Reputation Score™. Our custom solutions are designed to:

- **Diagnose drivers and barriers:** Uncover the specific factors shaping perceptions among your most important audiences.
- **Engage niche and elite stakeholders:** Go beyond consumers to understand the views of policymakers, investors, employees, and more.
- **Test messaging and scenarios:** See how new campaigns, products, or issues might impact your reputation before you go to market.
- **Map risks and opportunities:** Identify where to focus your efforts for maximum impact.

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Connecting Emotion to Action

Custom Reputation Solutions

The Morning Consult Reputation Score™ is the signal. Our custom reputations dive deeper into why – and what to do next.

At the heart of our approach is a proven framework that connects our syndicated Reputation Score™ with custom data that aligns emotional inputs to tangible outcomes.

Stakeholders experience brands emotionally before they evaluate them rationally. Our research captures this progression—starting with unconscious emotional responses, translating those into conscious perceptions and feelings, and ultimately measuring the behaviors they drive, such as advocacy, consideration, and trust.

A Custom Reputation Framework Built for Action



Morning Consult's custom model is designed for communications teams who need to lead—not just react. We provide a clear structure that maps the journey from feeling to reputation to business impact, enabling smarter messaging, risk mitigation, and brand building.

How it Works: From Emotion to Impact

- **Emotions:** Utilizing a validated Brand-Self approach, we capture the instinctive, gut-level responses that stakeholders have toward a company. This serves as the foundation for their affinity or aversion to the corporate brand.
- **Perception:** Decode how those unconscious emotions shape key dimensions like Trust, Favorability, Admired Employer, Value, and Community Impact, alongside the brand and reputation attributes that shape corporate brand evaluation.
- **Feeling:** Affective Analysis is used to assess the range and intensity of feelings, providing insights into the emotional landscape of stakeholders.
- **Business Impact:** Tie these perceptions to stakeholder behaviors—recommendation, advocacy, consideration, employment, and investment.

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Insights When You Need Them

Custom Reputation Solutions

Our flexible custom solutions help you dive deeper, navigate issues and seize opportunities.

Rapid Response: Quick turn surveys to dive into any issue (less than 48 hours)

Crisis & Issue Navigation: Size the threat to reputation and sales—fast.

Narrative Testing: Validate the messages that will shape perception across key audiences.

Employer Brand Strategy: Track and strengthen your ability to attract and retain talent.

Sponsorship & Partner Evaluation: Measure the reputational value of major investments.

Audience-Specific Diagnostics: Go deeper with policymakers, media, employees, and investors.

Methodology Matters

Purpose-Built for Comms

Communications today is a strategic function. Our custom reputation research gives comms leaders the tools to diagnose challenges, guide narratives, and measure outcomes—with the precision and credibility required in the C-suite.

Integrated with Syndicated Data

Use your Morning Consult Reputation Score™ as a foundation, and layer on custom research to uncover deeper truths. Track what's happening in real time, then dig into the why and define the what's next.

Emotionally Intelligent + Business-Focused

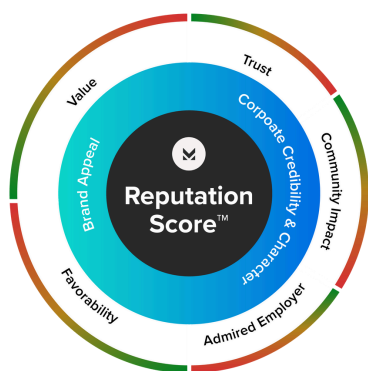
Legacy models overlook emotion. Ours begins with it. By capturing emotions, feelings and self-expansion responses, we provide a more accurate picture of how your brand resonates—and how to build stronger, more resilient connections with your stakeholders.

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Automotive

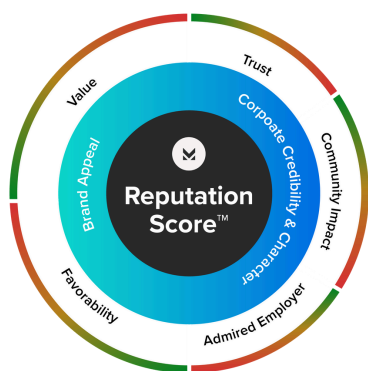
Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Automotive Service, Parts, and Repair	AutoZone	79.3
Automotive Information and Support	AAA	78.8
Automotive Companies and Makes	Toyota Motor	77.4
Motorcycles	Harley-Davidson	73.1
Car Rentals	Enterprise Rent-a-Car	72.7
Automotive Retailers	Autotrader	70.5
Ride Sharing	Uber	69.8
Oil and Gas	Shell	69.6

Education & Non-Profits

Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Higher Education	Johns Hopkins University	76.6
Non-Profits	St. Jude Children's Research	84.7



Note: Each brand was only eligible for one category. Brand industries are classified using standard definitions and Morning Consult's best judgment. Some companies span categories, so classification may involve subjective decisions.



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Financial Services

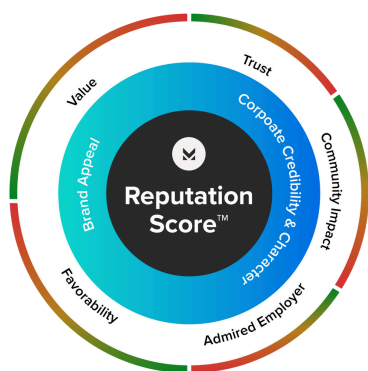
Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Banks	Navy Federal Credit Union	73
BNPL	PayPal Pay in 4	70.5
Credit Cards	Amazon Prime Rewards Visa	72.7
Crypto	Coinbase	59
Loans	Rocket Mortgage	65
Payments	Visa	80.8
Tax Preparation	TurboTax	73.6
Oil and Gas	Shell	69.6

Food & Beverage

Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Candy	Hershey's	82.3
Snacks	Ritz Crackers	80.8



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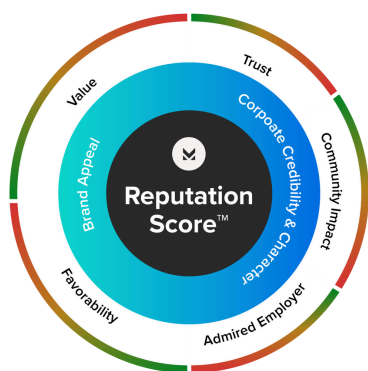


Food & Beverage (Continued)

Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Food and Beverage Products	Betty Crocker	80.7
Beverages	Minute Maid	80.3
Condiments	Heinz Ketchup	80.1
Desserts	Breyer's Ice Cream	80
Cereals	Honey Nut Cheerios	79.9
Chips	Lay's	78.8
Sports Drinks	Gatorade	78.5
Grocery Stores	Aldi	78.5
Casual Dining Restaurants	Texas Roadhouse	78.1
Carbonated Soft Drinks	Sprite	77.9
Frozen Foods	Green Giant	77.9
Quick Service Restaurants	Dairy Queen	77.5
Yogurts	Yoplait	77
Coffee	Folgers	76.9
Pizza Restaurants	Pizza Hut	75.9

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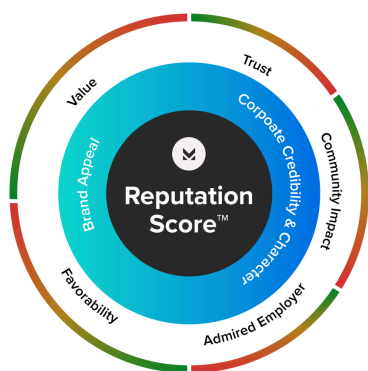


Food & Beverage (Continued)

Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Baby Food	Gerber Baby Food	75.3
Coffee & Breakfast Restaurants	IHOP	75.2
Restaurants	Longhorn Steakhouse	75.2
Waters	SmartWater	75
Fast Casual Restaurants	Panera Bread	74.1
Food and Beverage Delivery	Amazon Fresh	74
Whiskey	Maker's Mark	68
Beer	Stella Artois	67
Wine	Stella Rosa Wines	66.7
Tequila	Don Julio	66.3
Vodka	Tito's Handmade Vodka	65.5
Hard Seltzers	Truly	64.2
Champagne	Dom Perignon	63.5
Energy Drinks	CELSIUS Fitness Drinks	62.8
Light Beer	Michelob ULTRA	60.1



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Health

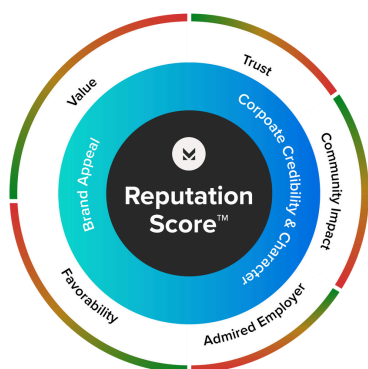
Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Medicines	Tylenol	80.1
Health	CVS Health	77.2
Pharmaceuticals	Bayer	75
Health Services	MinuteClinic at CVS	72
Health Insurance	Blue Cross Blue Shield	71.6

Media & Entertainment

Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Social Media	YouTube	82.6
Cable Channels	The Weather Channel	80.6
Streaming Devices	Roku	79.1
Video Streaming Services	Amazon Prime Video	78.9
Film Studios	Paramount Pictures	78.8
Music Streaming	YouTube Music	78.6



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Media & Entertainment (Continued)

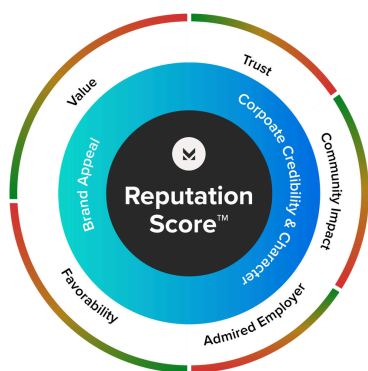
Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Games Software	Nintendo	76.9
Movie Theaters	AMC Theatres	75.2
Radio	iHeartRadio	74.4
Theme Parks	Universal Studios Hollywood	72.6
Casinos	MGM Resorts	68.9
Newspapers	USA Today	65.1
Dating Apps	Coffee Meets Bagel	62.8

Personal Care

Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Personal Care	Dove	82.8
Dental Care	Oral-B	81.5
Skin Care	Vaseline	80.8
Lip Care	ChapStick	79.1
Beauty	Bath & Body Works	77.5
Cosmetics	CeraVe	77.2
Hair Care	Head & Shoulders	76.3

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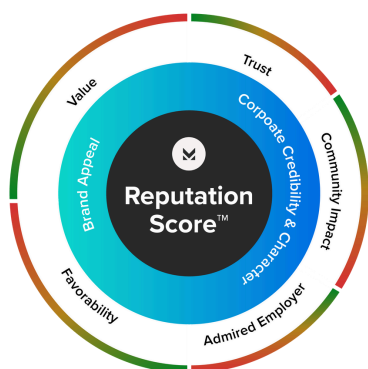
Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Gyms	Planet Fitness	71.3
Hair	Great Clips	66.8
Fitness	NordicTrack	66.3

Retail

Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Cleaning Supplies	Dawn Dish Soap	83.5
Toys	Lego	81.7
Shipping and Logistics	UPS	81.5
Apparel	Levi's	81.2
Retailers	Barnes & Noble	81.1
E-commerce	Amazon	81.1
Appliances	KitchenAid	80.6
Warehouse Clubs	Costco	80.6
Home Improvement	Home Depot	80.5
Underwear	Hanes	79.7

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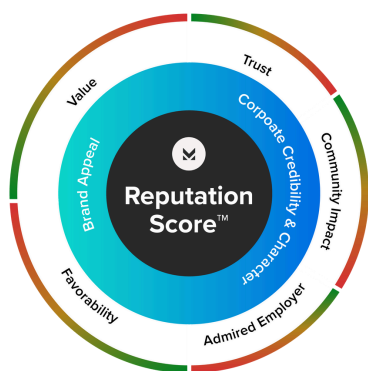


Retail (Continued)

Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Activewear	Adidas	79.5
Shaving	Gillette	79.4
Tools	Craftsman	78.9
Outdoorswear	Carhartt	78
Dollar Stores	Dollar Tree	77.5
Department Stores	Marshalls	77.3
Diapers	Huggies	76.6
Housewares Retailers	HomeGoods	76.2
Mattress Retailers	Tempur-Pedic	75.4
Pet Food	Purina	74.6
Shoe Retailers	Foot Locker	74.5
Convenience Stores	7-Eleven	74.2
Resellers	eBay	74.2
Childrens Clothing	Carter's	73.5
Lawn Care	Miracle-Gro	73.4
Jewelers	Kay Jewelers	72.3
Luxury Apparel and Accessories	Tiffany & Co.	71.2

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Sports

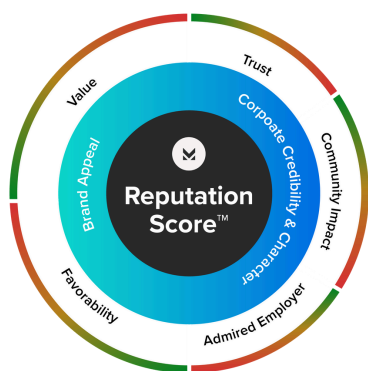
Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Sporting Good Retailers	Dick's Sporting Goods	76.6
Sports Leagues	National Football League (NFL)	72.7
Sports News and Content	NBC Sports	71.6
Sports Teams	Chicago Bulls	69.3
Sports Conferences	Big Ten Conference (B1G)	68.1
Sports Betting	Fanatics	62.1

Technology

Category	Brand	Reputation Score
E-mail	Gmail	83.5
Televisions	Sony	82
Phones	Samsung Galaxy	79.7
Enterprise Software	Microsoft	78.6
Audio Electronics	Bose	78.1
Computers	HP	77.7
Computers	Dell	77.7
Smart Home Electronics	Google Home	76.1

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Technology (Continued)

Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Cloud Software	Google Cloud	76
Virtual Assistants	Google Assistant	75.8
Job Search	Indeed	75.6
Tablets	Apple iPad	75.2
Wearables	Samsung Galaxy Watch	74.2
Mobile	T-Mobile	73.2
Broadband	Google Fiber	72.1

Travel

Category	Brand	Reputation Score
Hotels	Marriott	77.2
Hotel Loyalty Programs	Hilton Honors	73.3
Trains and Rail	Amtrak	72.9
Airlines	Delta Air Lines	71.3
Cruises	Norwegian Cruise Line	68.9
Home Rentals	Airbnb	67.7



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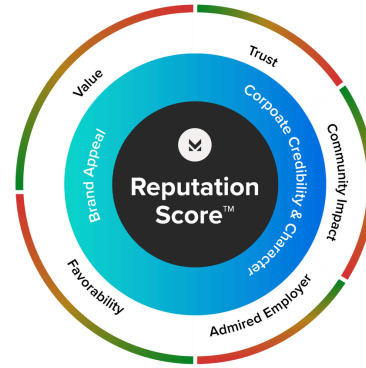


A Case Study

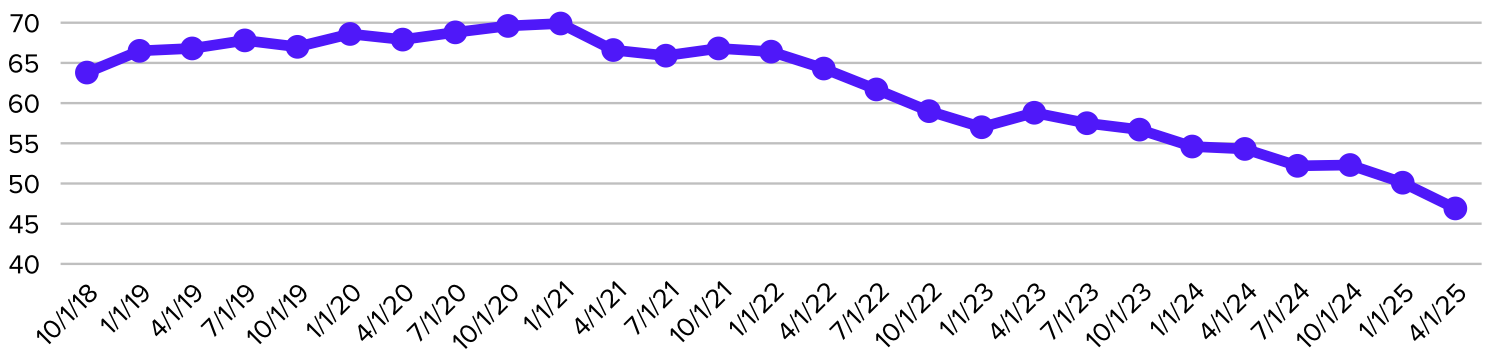
Reputation Measurement In Action

A look at the Reputation Score™ through
Tesla's rocky road.

Tesla's Reputation Decline A Global Story of Brand Erosion



● Tesla's Reputation Score™

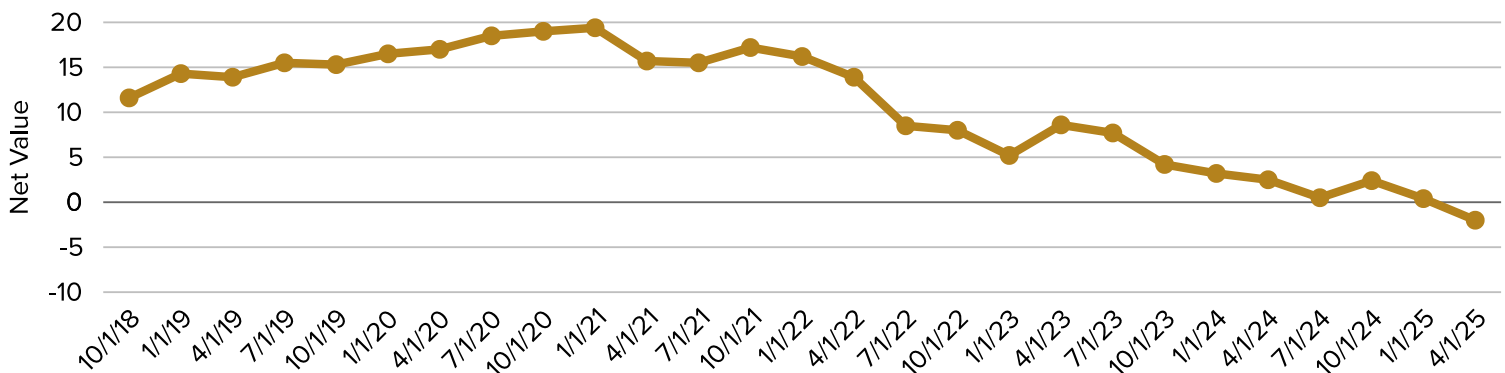


Early Warning Signs

Tesla's reputational decline didn't start with politics—it began with more subtle signals. In 2021, Tesla's market value peaked amid surging interest in the EV sector. Yet, even at this high point, early warning signs were present. Morning Consult's Reputation Score™—a composite measure of public perception—began to soften, indicating cracks in the brand's foundation before public discourse turned sharply political.

Tesla's Perceived Value Peaks in 2021

● All Respondents

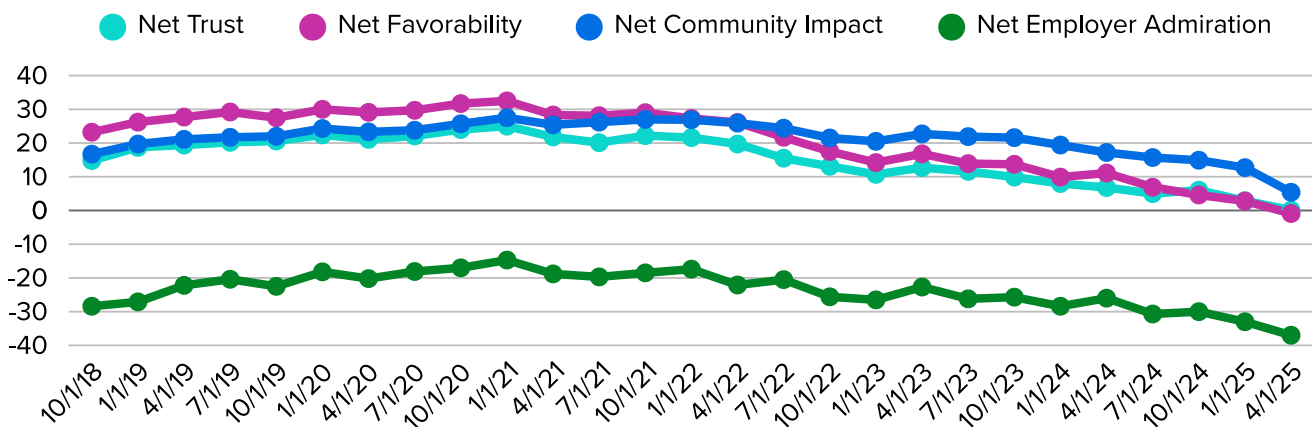


The Political Shift and Its Impact

In May 2022, Elon Musk publicly declared on Twitter that he could “no longer support the Democrats.” The reaction was swift and measurable. Favorability and Trust—two key components of brand strength—began to decline immediately, reflecting reputational damage tied to Musk’s growing political visibility.

This trend accelerated through 2023 and 2024 as Musk became increasingly associated with far-right discourse and the Trump administration. During this period, Tesla’s Reputation Score™ saw further erosion, particularly in metrics like Community Impact and Admired Employer—both of which are closely linked to perceptions of corporate purpose, inclusivity, and workplace culture.

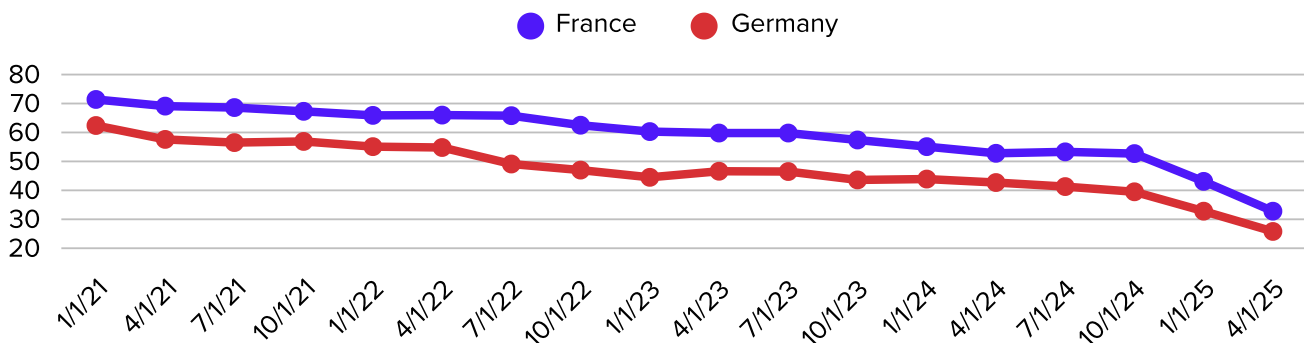
In Wake of Political Stances, Tesla’s Additional Reputation Metrics Decline



A Global Brand Under Pressure

Tesla’s reputational headwinds weren’t confined to the United States. In key international markets such as France and Germany, the company experienced parallel declines in both Reputation Score™ and sales. The data underscored a critical insight: brand damage rooted in a CEO’s political persona can transcend borders—even in regions where U.S. political dynamics receive less daily attention.

Tesla’s Reputation Score Hit Globally



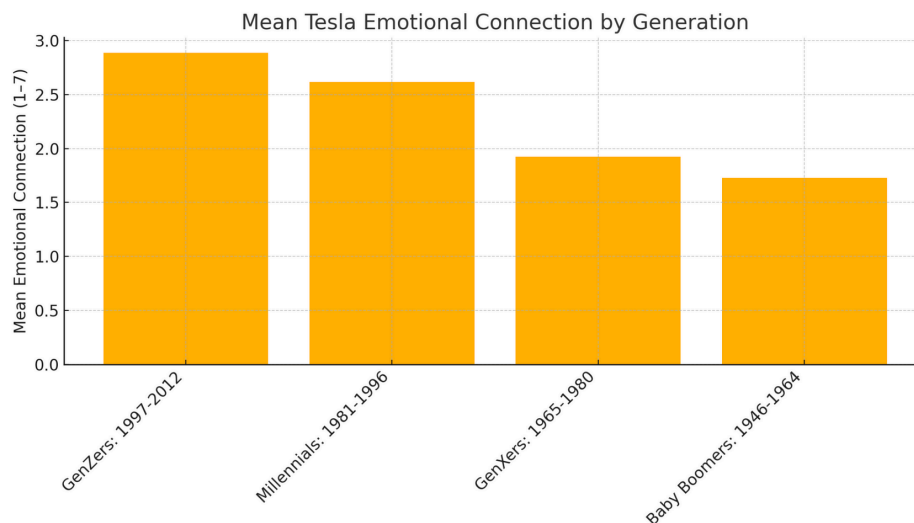
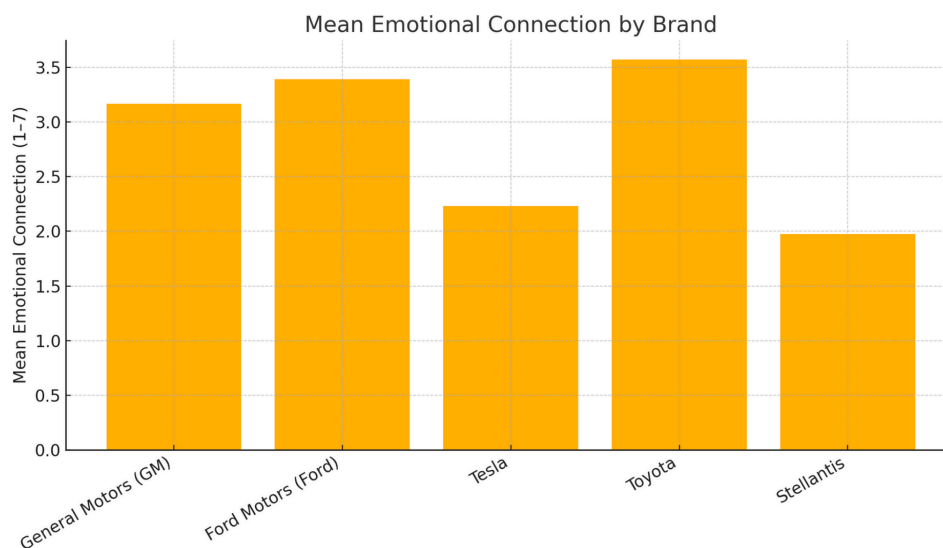
A New Approach to Emotional Closeness

To understand brand strength at a deeper level, Morning Consult uses a proprietary visual methodology to capture emotional connection—a powerful predictor of future brand usage and loyalty. Respondents are shown a series of seven pairs of concentric circles, labeled “Self” and the brand name. The circles range from fully separate to completely overlapping, representing a spectrum of emotional closeness.

This intuitive visual format prompts introspection and yields richer insights than traditional favorability scores. It helps brands move beyond surface-level approval to uncover how deeply people identify with them.

Findings: Tesla and the Emotional Disconnect

In early 2025, this methodology was applied across the automotive sector. The results revealed a striking insight: Tesla scored lower on emotional connection than Toyota, Ford, and GM. The data confirmed a growing disconnect between Tesla and the consumers it once inspired, pointing to challenges that extend beyond headlines and into the emotional core of brand loyalty.



Take Your Reputation Strategy Further with Morning Consult

You've seen how the Morning Consult Reputation Score™ empowers organizations to benchmark, monitor, and elevate their brand's standing in real time. But that's just the beginning. Morning Consult Intelligence puts the power of continuous, global reputation tracking at your fingertips—so you can make smarter, faster decisions with confidence.

Ready to Go Deeper?

Every organization is unique. That's why our team offers custom reputation solutions tailored to your specific needs—whether you're navigating a crisis, launching a new initiative, or seeking to understand your brand's impact across key audiences.

Let's Start the Conversation

Don't leave your reputation to chance. Connect with our team to discover how Morning Consult can help you protect, enhance, and grow your brand's reputation.

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