

# Most Trusted Brands 2015

Chronicling a long, strange year when brands gained and lost trust at an unprecedented rate

**K**eeping track of a brand's relationship with its customers is tough. One day it's all roses, rainbows and happy endings; the next it's a tragic, vodka-fuelled Russian novel. Just consider what happened to Maggi, arguably one of the year's biggest corporate stories. The controversy over harmful levels of lead and MSG in Maggi taste-makers got its 2-minutes of fame when it consumed our nation. Just last year, Maggi was celebrating its standing in the hearts and minds of Indian consumers.

The beloved brand that brings up all types of childhood, hostel and travel memories, broke into the Top 5 Most Trusted Brands for the first time in 2014, albeit placed at the lower end. In the 2015 edition of Brand Equity's Most Trusted Brands survey, however, Maggi has plummeted to 95. This poll finding proves that if one's looking for an Indian brand's relationship status, forget Facebook, look no further than BE's Most Trusted Brands.

Of course, turns out meri Maggi is safe. And now its Swiss mother, Nestle is going out of its way to win back consumers' trust, especially that of Indian mothers, who put their faith in Maggi every time they served up a bowl at snack time. Only time, or the next edition of Most Trusted Brands, will tell if Maggi

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is scripting a dramatic comeback to the top or a painfully slow crawl up the trust ladder. (Read *Maa & Maggi - Status: It's Complicated* for some indication.)

But it's not all about calamitous falls. If its good news you are looking for, Colgate has retained its position as India's Most Trusted Brand for four years running. Tata Salt has risen to No.2 from 16 last year, and the reasons for its climb

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are chronicled in the issue. (Read *Salt Of The Earth.*) If you are looking for bigger leaps consider personal care brand Dove and telco Idea. Dove's strategy to keep

it real has worked and consumers' faith in the brand has propelled it from No.30 last year to No.4. Idea, on the other hand, has travelled a massive 131 spots to inch closer to its rivals Vodafone and Airtel, the latter sitting pretty at 11. Depending on your point of view, it's either surprising (or hardly so) that the much talked and written about ecommerce brands are conspicuously absent in the Top 100 Most Trusted Brands list. A finding that reinforces what we had long suspected; consumer loyalty and trust, takes more than big sales and bigger ad budgets.

Stay tuned for our next issue for more stories analysing why India's Most Trusted Brands got to where they are and how they intend to stay the course.

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