

Research shows complex demands when choosing a financial brand

Financial brands need to go way beyond simply offering a good deal to get consumers' attention.

Despite the growing popularity of all types of website, the majority of people (58%) say that they do not buy financial products just because the rates are the best in the market and 71% do not trust the industry, according to new research from the Direct Marketing Association (DMA). Reputation, recommendation and trusted-brand status are considered to be so important that customers use up to six different methods to assess their short-listed brands.

As well as comparison websites, between 30-40% of customers use the financial pages of newspapers, friend and family recommendations, independent and brand websites and direct mail literature from banks and building societies before making a decision. When stating what influenced brand selection, consumers chose most brands based on previous experience of the company.

The third DMA Financial Services Tracking Study was conducted by fast.MAP throughout December 2009 and January 2010 among a panel of 1,600 consumers whose demographics echo those of the UK. The research recorded consumers' changing attitudes to banks, insurance companies and investment businesses and the services they provide.

"A relative lack of enthusiasm for 'the most competitive rates in the market' will be heartening news for many suppliers

service reputations among almost all
and insurance companies tracked for
(Santander), Nationwide and Alliance
increased their reputation for custom