

# 2020 B2B

## TRUSTED BRANDS REPORT



# Introduction

The **2020 B2B Trusted Brands Report** by Sagefrog Marketing Group is an annual report revealing and discussing the most trusted B2B brands of the year.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF BRAND TRUST

Brand trust is a fragile business asset that's difficult to earn and easy to lose. In B2C and B2B markets, brand reputation is the driving force behind sales and a leading indicator of success. As the B2B sales cycle evolves to become more like that of B2C—where customers look to online reviews, self-service business models, ecommerce capabilities, and frictionless buying experiences—more B2B companies are hiring full-time online reputation managers to ensure a pristine customer experience, and subsequent, trusted reputation.

78% of customers trust peer recommendations, which explains why 84% of marketers believe that building trust will be their primary focus for marketing efforts in the future.<sup>1</sup> With brand trust driving the success of B2B companies, **Sagefrog uncovered what the most trusted brands of 2020 have done to earn trust from the masses.**

**See our survey methodology before diving into the results.** 

***\*Disclaimer:** Survey results for this report were collected during the first quarter of 2020, and may not accurately reflect the current Trust Factor.*

# Survey Methodology

At the beginning of each year, Sagefrog surveys B2B professionals with a customer-choice survey that lists the names of the most prominent B2B brands. The survey simply asks: What brands do you trust? Once the data is collected, which is comprised of more than 1,000 votes, we analyze the data and produce an overall ranking report based on the brands' Trust Factor.

**See the most trusted B2B brands of 2020. **

## THE TRUST FACTOR

The Trust Factor is calculated by assigning a value of 100 to the most-trusted company. This year, 51.85% of customers reported that they trust the top-placing brand. We then add the difference to all other brands to calculate their Trust Factor.



# Top 30 Most Trusted B2B Brands of 2020

70+ Exceptional Trust Factor Score	55+ Excellent Trust Factor Score	40+ Good Trust Factor Score
1 Amazon	10 FedEx	20 Southwest Airlines
2 Apple	11 Visa	21 John Deere
3 Microsoft	12 Canon	22 Samsung
4 Adobe	13 3M	23 Dell
5 American Express	14 IBM	24 Dun & Bradstreet
6 LinkedIn	15 Costco	25 HubSpot
7 Marriott International	16 CVS Caremark	26 HP
8 Starbucks	17 Johnson & Johnson	27 Proctor & Gamble
9 Google	18 Sony	28 Bank of America
	19 UPS	29 Lockheed Martin
		30 MasterCard

\*For permission to use any of the results in this survey for promotional services, please contact Natalie Schmidt, Marketing Specialist, at [natalies@sagefrog.com](mailto:natalies@sagefrog.com).

# What Can We Learn from the Most Trusted Brands?

The top four trusted brands of 2020 have lessons to offer B2B companies of all sizes and in all industries. Last year, marketing strategies like video and personalization were considered the driving forces behind brand trust in the winner's circle. This year, trust is the result of something bigger: **customer experience**.

1

## AMAZON

Create a Frictionless  
B2B Buying Experience



3

## MICROSOFT

Capitalize on  
One-Stop-Shopping  
Convenience



2

## APPLE

Recognize That  
B2B Professionals  
Are Consumers Too



4

## ADOBE

Embrace Digital  
Transformation  
& Disruption



Dive deeper into the lessons offered by this year's most trusted B2B brands. [!\[\]\(4436e6b00b9d5e62c2a161129eb3e4d0\_img.jpg\)](#)



## LESSON 1

# Create a Frictionless B2B Buying Experience

Amazon has been a competitive contender in this report for years. This year, the ecommerce company took the win as number one. In a B2C capacity, Amazon has rigorously gained the trust of consumers as the world's largest online retailer. But now, it has won the trust of B2B professionals after making significant investments in its B2B procurement arm, Amazon Business.<sup>2</sup>

*"We provide easy access to hundreds of millions of products – everything from IT equipment to janitorial supplies – to businesses of all sizes and across industries," said Amazon Business's Head of Commercial Customers, Martin Rohde.*

### Reimagining B2B Procurement

Amazon's B2B procurement platform has been used by one million customers, signed by over 400,000 businesses and 45,000 sellers, and generated over \$1 billion in revenue. It was created to alleviate common pain points faced by procurement and purchasing professionals like time-consuming pre-qualification processes, approvals, and form-filling. **Amazon Business gives B2B customers access to an expansive product selection, exclusive enterprise pricing, fast and easy shipping, flexible payment options, and multi-user accounts .**

### New Frictionless Features

Amazon Business recently invested in features that have likely contributed to the Company's uptick in brand trust. A new tool named **Coupa Open Buy** automatically applies a company's spending and budget controls to its process, allowing users to source products from outside their typical catalogs without being hampered by non-compliant spending issues. The **Amazon Tax Exemption Program** is another new feature that allows qualifying companies to make tax-free purchases.

**By supplementing its already-frictionless buying experience and procurement benefits with these new business features, Amazon is well-positioned to further disrupt the B2B ecommerce space in 2020 and beyond.**



## LESSON 2

# Know That B2B Professionals Are Consumers Too

Apple has earned increased trust among B2B buyers in 2020 by embracing one simple concept: **the most powerful products for businesses are the ones people already love to use.** With 1.4 billion active devices worldwide, including the iPhone, iPod touch, iPad, Mac, Apple TV, and Apple Watch, it's easy to see that consumers already love Apple for everyday technology needs and convenience.<sup>3</sup> Now, the technology company's business division, Apple at Work, is the preferred technology choice in the workplace for its simplicity, productivity, creativity, collaboration, and integration capabilities.

### Same Products, Different Uses

With B2B transactions being more mobile than ever, it makes sense that hardware, including the iPad, iPhone, and Mac be conducive to business. These products are built for business connectivity, providing secure, reliable, compatible features that are easy to deploy. Apple's operating systems, including iOS, iPadOS, and macOS collaborate seamlessly with Microsoft Office and Google G Suite, infrastructure services like Microsoft Exchange, and VPN solutions from providers like Cisco.

### Tech Source for Small Businesses

Small businesses are closer to the world of consumerism than enterprises, and Apple made sure to accommodate these companies with a suite of helpful integrations. Applications that are familiar to the average Apple user also make for powerful small business applications, such as **group FaceTime** for conference calls, **AirPlay** to share presentations on the go, and **Keynote** to collaborate on documents.

**In recognizing that B2B professionals are the same consumers that know and love Apple products for personal use, Apple tailored and marketed their products for B2B use, winning the trust of business professionals and adding an additional revenue stream to their business.**







## LESSON 3

### Capitalize on One-Stop-Shopping Convenience

Microsoft is now the third most trusted B2B brand in 2020, beating Google as its office suite rival. The reason? Microsoft offers it all. Its strategy is all about providing one-stop-shopping convenience to B2B professionals who are consciously moving away from disparate systems, solutions, and subscriptions in their companies.

#### Single Source > Simplicity and Speed

At least this was the case in a comparison of Office 365 and Google's G Suite.<sup>4</sup> While Google's productivity suite boasts more than 5 million paying customers, Office 365 is unrivaled as a single-source solution. In a review of features, Office 365 offered more than G Suite in almost all categories, including:

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Office 365 offers more levels with each boasting more features than G Suite business plans

**APPLICATIONS:** Office 365 wins the application battle; MS Word, for example, has nearly 50 templates compared to Google Doc's five, with similar ratios for Excel versus Sheets and PowerPoint versus Google Slides

**EMAIL:** Office 365 leads in "power features," giving users more ways to filter and focus their inbox

#### Then, There's Microsoft OneDrive

Microsoft OneDrive is the only cloud-based file sharing solution that meets these four criteria: HIPAA, FISMAA, FERPA, and US export control laws. When deploying a company-wide solution in a B2B enterprise, there's no substitute for compliance, making Microsoft the obvious choice.

**Providing B2B professionals with convenience as a single-source provider has proved to be more important than simplicity and speed in this battle of the brands.**







## LESSON 4

# Embrace Digital Transformation & Disruption

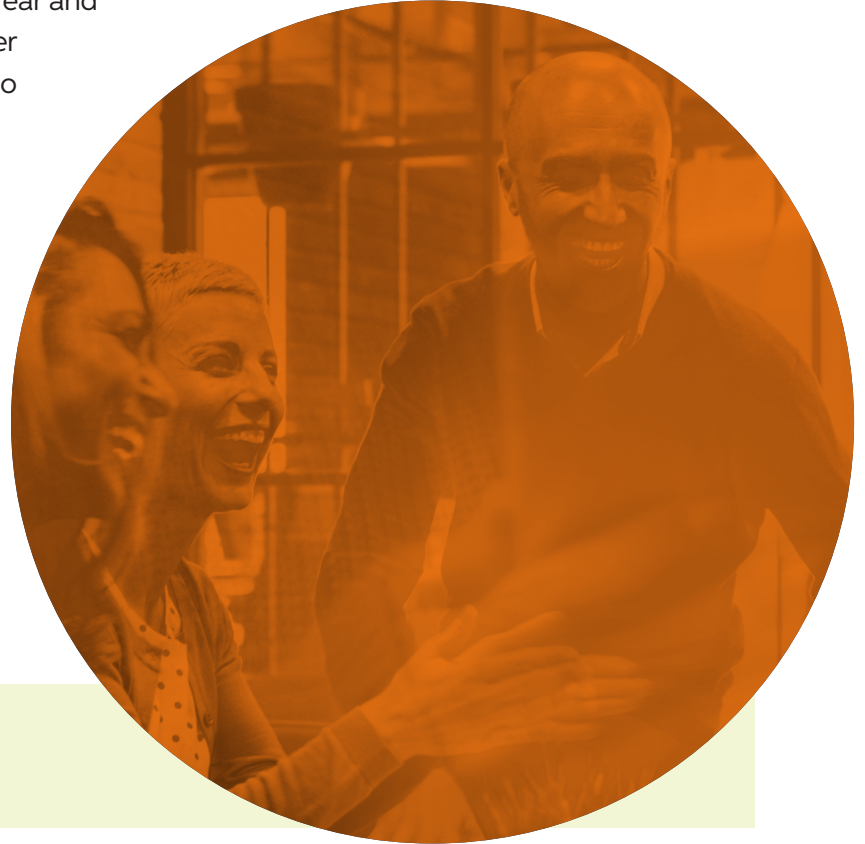
Adobe earned the trust of B2B professionals this year for a reason that can be summed up by these words from its CEO, Shantanu Narayen: **digital transformation is all or nothing**.<sup>5</sup> He elaborates on the concept stating, “Digital technology is changing life like never before, which is creating fear and a mandate for companies to transform themselves.” The multinational computer software company has become a reference for B2B companies as they undergo digital transformation.

### Playing the Role of a Customer

Adobe played the role of a customer, experiencing its Marketing Cloud product and service experience for themselves. The Company stressed that as its own “customer zero,” it’s important that they take the time to experience their offering for themselves through the eyes of their customers. Doing so would allow them to make improvements that would separate them from the pack.

**The result?** Adobe introduced Adobe Experience Cloud, which included three core solutions: Adobe Marketing Cloud, Adobe Analytics Cloud, and Adobe Advertising Cloud.

**These solutions were designed to give customers more than just a technology platform, but an experience spearheaded by digital transformation.**



**For more information on the 2020 B2B Trusted Brands Report, including its methodology and results, or for help increasing your brand's Trust Factor, contact us.**

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