

Brand Regression Challenges Professional Services Firms, Says Greenfield/Belser Survey

Written by Australian Business

WASHINGTON--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))-- [Greenfield/Belser Ltd.](#) , an award-winning marketing and branding agency for professional and B2B services firms, announced today the results of a survey that capture trends in branding priorities and spending among professional services firms.

The survey report, titled [Brand Regression? The state of professional services branding in 2013](#) , uncovers discrepancies between the importance Managing Partners and CMOs assign to their brands and the associated budgets and quality of their firm's branding efforts. Some notable findings include:

1. Brand importance is out of sync with brand quality. The survey found that while over 90% of CMOs and Managing Partners believe their brands are moderately to extremely important, only a quarter feel their brands are very helpful to success. Moreover, less than half of clients, prospects and recruits have more than a moderate understanding of a firm's brand.
2. Brands are neither well-maintained nor unique. More than half of survey respondents said they have not refreshed their brand identity or promise for more than three years but plan to within the next three years. More than half also feel their brands are only marginally or moderately unique. Only one in five respondents believes her brand is extremely innovative. [Infographic](#)
3. Website investment matches its perceived importance but other communications are either overfunded or underfunded relative to perceived importance. CMOs consistently identified the firm website as the highest priority, followed by pitch materials, seminars and industry alerts. But the quality of every communications channel was given average marks with no single channel rated higher than 3.6 out of 5.0 on a scale of quality. [Infographic](#)

"This study started as a hypothesis, based on our extensive work in the professional services field. We wondered if the great recession had led to brand regression," said Joe Walsh, Principal of Greenfield/Belser Ltd. "Wherever we looked, we saw reduced brand activity and sameness. Once creative and compelling, service brands (via websites, advertising and more) seem less visible and memorable. This study replaces our educated opinions with facts. Respondents suggest that brand regression has followed the great recession."

The report is based on survey results from CMOs and CEOs at leading legal, accounting and consulting firms around the world, with average firm size of roughly 400

professionals.

For more insights and big ideas from Greenfield/Belser Ltd. visit <http://www.greenfieldbelser.com/> or to download the paper directly, click here: <http://www.greenfieldbelser.com/research-page/brand-regression#>

About Greenfield/Belser Ltd.:

Greenfield/Belser Ltd. is a national leader in brand research, strategy and design for professional services firms. For over 30 years, its consultants, designers, writers, account executives, web developers and media advisors have created and tapped the latest research to change the way the professionals communicate, create integrated branding campaigns and make over 400 professional services clients unique.