

Tuesday, 12 December 2023

Bunnings overtakes Coles as second most trusted brand

Hardware store favourite **Bunnings** has broken the 'supermarket duopoly', as the most trusted brands in Australia for nearly three years, overtaking Coles as the second most trusted brand in the 12 months to September 2023.

In the pre-pandemic era **Bunnings** was the most trusted brand in Australia and was in top spot until May 2020 when overtaken by **Woolworths** – which has held first place ever since.

Over the last year overall distrust in organisations and brands has grown disproportionately – the level of distrust is clearly taking Australia further into Net Distrust territory.

According to Roy Morgan CEO Michele Levine, "As cost-of-living pressures deepen, this trend only gets worse as much of corporate Australia, from banks and airlines to supermarkets and utilities, are viewed by some as greedy and profiteering; Australians feel their wallets are shrinking while companies and executives are getting richer."

In contrast, Australia's favourite hardware chain **Bunnings** has experienced a significant recovery in trust. From a low in the 12 months to October 2022, trust in the brand has soared -the largest absolute improvement in trust of any of the trusted brands for that period.

"Bunnings has harnessed many of the foundational pillars of a trusted brand including great customer service, communicating what it stands for and delivering, being an active part of the community, solving customer's problems and expertise and product knowledge." said Ms Levine.

Australians have told us in their own words why they trust **Bunnings** and the hardware chain is now in a very strong position to regain the coveted title of Australia's most trusted brand as soon as early in 2024.

"They do what they say, provide a huge range of competitive-priced products, and complaints or returns are handled fairly and promptly."

"They are no frills, and always provide down to earth advice. They price products reasonably, and have a great range. Their staff really seem to care about customers."

"The staff are friendly and helpful, they're often doing things for the community and always have Saturday sausage sizzles."

"Their staff have good knowledge and expertise when it comes to home hardware I can rely on."

"Good price and people who know their jobs, willing to do the right thing for the customer not just the bottom dollar."

"Equal opportunity employer, transparent pricing"

Ms Levine notes that trust in **Bunnings** is highest among people aged 35+ - those most likely to be homeowners or paying off a home. Not only are these older demographics most likely to be invested in home ownership, and potential home renovations, they're also the people who have maintained their spending power despite a series of 13 interest rate increases since May 2022.

"The focus Bunnings puts on delivering great customer service matched with excellent product knowledge and a huge range of hardware items at competitive prices are key factors in the soaring levels of trust for the company over the last year," said Ms. Levine.











"As many Australians face rising cost of living pressures driven by high inflation, and a record setting series of interest rate increases, the reputation Bunnings has built over many years is paying off."

"Many other prominent retailers are dealing with perceptions that they are 'price-gouging' and taking advantage of the current environment to raise their prices above the rate of inflation – but these issues are having only a minimal impact on Australia's favourite hardware chain."

MOST TRUSTED BRANDS

1 st  =	6 th  =
2 nd  ↑ (1)	7 th  ↑ (1)
3 rd  ↓ (1)	8 th  TOYOTA ↑ (2)
4 th  =	9 th  ↓ (2)
5 th  =	10 th  Australia Post =

MOST DISTRUSTED BRANDS

1 st  =	6 th  =
2 nd  =	7 th  ↓ (2)
3 rd  =	8 th  ↑ (2)
4 th  ↑ (9)	9 th  ↓ (1)
5 th  ↓ (1)	10 th  ↓ (3)

Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia). Risk Monitor, 12 month average to September 2023.

Base: Australians 14+, n=25,863. Arrows with numbers show ranking change since June 2023. Green shading highlights ranking improvements for trusted brands, red shading highlights ranking deterioration for distrusted brands.

Trusted Brands

The most trusted brands are still dominated by major retailers, with supermarkets filling three of the top four spots with Woolworths (1st), Coles (3rd) and ALDI (4th) joined by the soaring Bunnings in 2nd place and Kmart once again rounding out the top five most trusted brands in fifth place.

Myer and Toyota were two other leading brands to improve their positions in the top ten in the most recent rankings with department store **Myer** boosting its ranking to seventh overall while leading automotive manufacturer **Toyota** increased two places to eighth.

Other brands to improve their rankings as some of the most trusted brands in Australia include **NRMA**, up two places to 11th overall, the **ABC**, up three places to 15th overall and **ING**, up one place to 18th.

Distrusted Brands

Telecommunications company **Optus** remains the most distrusted brand in Australia – even before the recent data outage in early November 2023 which eventually led to the ouster of former CEO Kelly Bayer Rosmarin soon after.

Other familiar names near the top of the most distrusted brands include social media giant (and former and long-standing most distrusted brand) **Facebook/Meta**, embattled airline **Qantas**, private health insurer **Medibank** and retail giant **Harvey Norman**. All four have faced significant scandals in recent years including content policies and moderation, widespread data breaches and allegations of profiteering.

There are also several well-known tech and social media companies in the top ten most distrusted brands including retailing behemoth **Amazon** and controversial social media companies **TikTok** and **Twitter/X**.

Roy Morgan CEO Michele Levine says: “Risk assessments and procedures by executives and company directors across all industries need to formally factor-in distrust. The flow-on effects from the extensive service outage at Optus in early November have provided a salutary reminder that dealing with distrust should be on the risk register of every board in Australia.

“Distrusted brands have felt the negative consequences of taking ‘business as usual’ for granted. These brands have been directly impacted by lax standards and not guarding properly against the potential for mistakes and errors to quickly metastasise into brand-defining events that destroy company value built up over many years in an instant.”

Subscribe to Roy Morgan's YouTube channel to ensure you don't miss our next webinar on trust and distrust: <https://www.youtube.com/c/roymorganaus>. The Risk Report with rankings of over 200 brands and analysis by industry is now available for purchase [here](#). Trust and Distrust Webinar Reports with insights into trust and distrust across various industries are available [here](#).

The *Roy Morgan Risk Monitor* surveys approximately 2,000 Australians every month (around 25,000 per year) to measure levels of trust and distrust of around 1,000 brands across 26 industries. Respondents are asked which brands they trust, and why, and which brands they distrust, and why. The survey is designed to be open-ended, context-free, and unprompted. *Roy Morgan Risk Monitor* data is available in a variety of formats, from snapshot overviews to detailed tracking of individual brands and competitors. Industry Trust and Distrust Deep dive Surveys are also conducted (e.g. Telco, Utilities, Insurance, Life Insurance, Banking, Agribusiness, Media, Retail, Real Estate, etc.) for deep insights into brand health, perceptions of, and customer experience (CX) with brands.

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About Roy Morgan

Roy Morgan is the source of the most comprehensive data on Australians' behaviour and attitudes, surveying over 1,000 people weekly in a continuous cycle that has been running for two decades. The company has more than 80 years' experience collecting objective, independent information.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
1,000	±3.0	±2.7	±1.9	±1.3
2,000	±2.2	±1.9	±1.3	±1.0

