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THE GOOD, THE TREND AND THE BRAND. VALUES THAT MAKE BRANDS GROW

Connexia in collaboration with **TrendWatching** and **Brand Finance**, presents the first study investigating the correlation between core values and brand performance and draws up a ranking of Italy's most popular brands by the values they represent.

On the podium: **Ferrari**, **Kinder** and **Nutella**.

But differences, especially between generations are not lacking!

Milan, 24 November 2022 – **Acclimators. Human. Metaphysical.** These **three maxitrends** are the main focus of **“The Good, the Trend and The Brand”**, the first survey to highlight the correlation between **core values** and brands' **performance (including economic performance)**, based on research and analysis of the findings. Conducted by the study centre of **Connexia**, the **Retex Group's** marketing and communication agency, in collaboration with two exceptional partners, consulting companies **TrendWatching** and **Brand Finance**, the study is set to become a yearly project, focused on the importance of **brands** and their evolving meaning. They are no longer merely a logo, however distinctive a symbol it might be for both larger and smaller businesses: a brand is now the very essence of a business and its values. In short, what one might call **a purpose**.

Mere rhetoric? Not at all! The merit of *«The Good, the Trend and The Brand»* is outlining the Italian people's opinion on the investigated brands, in relation to the most important value trends at a precise moment in time. And to back this up with actual numbers. Because a brand is not a monolith. It evolves alongside the business itself and the society in which it operates. With one very important warning: the survey, which was carried out on a representative sample of the Italian population by age group (18+ GenZ, Millennials, GenX and Boomers), presents rather marked intergenerational differences. Some of them unexpected! One last

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clarification: the scrutinised brands were not selected at random. They are, in fact, **the top 50 strongest and most valuable Made in Italy brands in our country**, according to Brand Finance's **Italy 100 2022 ranking**.

Ferrari über alles. Connexia's general ranking of the most popular Made in Italy brands, in relation to the three macro-trends taken into consideration, is topped by Ferrari's prancing horse. Also on the podium are two Ferrero brands: **Kinder** and **Nutella**. **Lavazza** follows in fourth position. Then it's Ferrero again, with their **Ferrero Rocher**. Sixth in the brand ranking - but in fourth place if we consider only the companies- is **Armani** the unquestionable leader of the Fashion & Luxury sector. **Barilla** takes seventh position. It is followed by two supercar brands: **Maserati** and **Lamborghini**. For the large-scale retail sector, **Coop** places tenth in the overall ranking. Up next is **Ray-Ban**, Luxottica's best-known brand, followed by two more top-notch representatives of Made in Italy fashion: **Gucci** and **Versace**. The ranking closes with **Pirelli**, another iconic Italian brand, and **San Pellegrino**, now owned by Nestlé.

But while the overall ranking is certainly interesting, it is even more so when analysed by macro-trend and age group. Want some examples? Among GenZ, **Armani** triumphs above all others, followed by **Ferrari** and **Versace**. Among Millennials, **Kinder** leads the race, followed by **Coop** and **Ferrari**. What about GenX and Boomers? In their case, gold and silver go respectively to **Ferrari** and **Lavazza**. GenX award the bronze medal to **Kinder** and Boomers to **Barilla**.

*"The insights revealed by our study centre's first edition of "The Good, the Trend and The Brand" are numerous, some quite unexpected. – comments **Massimiliano Trisolino, Connexia's Managing Partner, Strategy & Creativity** – You only have to browse the specially-curated *whitepaper* to see this. However, what I would like to*

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*emphasise right now is our desire to supply brands with a **shared platform, capable of capturing the evolution of the values that have the greatest influence on our purchasing choices, year by year**, thus providing a compass to guide even the most controversial and unlikely business choices. With one unshakeable certainty: in the long term, **investing in intangible assets will bring an increasingly tangible value.**"*

The massive survey carried out by Connexia brought to light several curiosities from a macro-trend perspective. Three examples were analysed, one for each trend:

1. **#acclimators** – Over 80% of Italians across all age groups believe that individuals are the true protagonists of the sustainability revolution. For better or worse. That is to say: if we as individuals don't take action, nothing will be done. This is true! Surprisingly, the second most common answer after "individuals" was "companies". Not governments. Not even NGOs. But companies. Over 80% of Millennials and GenX believe companies have a fundamental importance as actors of change, almost level with individuals and their efforts towards building "a better world".

2. **#human** – Diversity & Inclusion are GenZ's defining themes. 40% of people under 25 believe a brand's ability to address these issues is a "very important" factor in choosing whether or not to buy from them. All other age clusters stop at 33%. There's more. More than 2 out of 10 GenZ believe that the fact a brand decides to speak out openly, taking clear positions on often divisive political and/or social issues, should be rewarded. This is the famous *brand activism* that, unlike the situation in other, mostly Anglo-Saxon countries, in Italy is still in its infancy, but that, apparently, is hitting the mark, especially among young people. It is important to recognise this!



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3. **#metaphysical**– innovation is not enough. However you look at it, on a technological level, value for money is what matters. And this applies across all age groups, with significantly different penetration rates: 26 points of difference between GenZ and Boomers in favour of the latter, who are very attentive, apparently, to every single euro spent. But it must be said that for the youngest, too, the ability of individual brands to offer a rewarding and innovative shopping experience, both physical and digital, makes all the difference. That's the claim made by 36 percent of those under 25 and 30 percent of those born between 1981 and 1996.

So, begone bland virtual stores and/or shopping carts. Imagination wins the day. With a hi-tech flavour.

Connexia

Connexia is creativity.

It is data-driven thinking.

It is excellence in media management.

And it is technological innovation.

And not just that. Connexia is most of all passion, ethical commitment, transparency, corporate social responsibility.

It is a multicultural and multidisciplinary team: 160 professionals capable of building and expressing brand values and guiding the processes of digital transformation.

We think and develop ideas that thrive across all channels, fearless of being measured on the effectiveness of each campaign.

Expect to work with us in a new way: together, in real time, through co-creative processes continuously and experimentally oriented towards business objectives and communication. www.connexia.com

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