

USA BECOMES THE WORLD'S BEST COUNTRY BRAND



Although the old favourites are still at the top of the list, the world's Top Ten Country Brands have experienced a bit of a shake up this year. Whereas Canada's maple leaves used to be symbolic of the best country brand on the planet, Canada's southern neighbours have leapfrogged it into first place.

According to the Futurebrand's Country Brand Index, **the USA is now the number one country brand in the world, followed by Canada and then Australia in third place.** It has been generally agreed that Canada and Australia hold a rather neutral status on a global scale and tend to represent high living standards, natural beauty and tolerant people. Countries such as Japan, Germany or Britain are certain to evoke bias, prejudice or stereotypes, meaning their status in marketing terms is always fighting a losing battle as long as people continue to study history.

So this leaves the question as to why the United States has shot into pole position on the brand course? Indeed, one can hardly say that people are indifferent to seeing the star-spangled banner on items of clothing and even Americans would not be surprised or offended to hear that their country is not adored in the rest of the world.

The answer is that America offers almost everything, a fact exploited by those in the sphere of marketing. From glorious nature of all types to a massive amount of famous people, the USA has it and knows how to promote it. On a similar note, the global financial crisis has made people think in financial terms and America is becoming a symbol of financial stability whilst it recovers. Plus, we should not forget that there are likely to be a large amount of artifacts with American flags considering the country has a population of around 300 million.

New Zealand, France and Italy also appeared in the top-ten list for varying reasons. In the future, the list is expected to look a little different as India, China, Vietnam, UAE, South Africa and Croatia hope to make appearances. South Africa's case will be greatly aided by hosting the world cup next year.

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