



## Amazon dominates trust in E-Commerce: BrandSpark Announces Canada's Most Trusted Retailers

*Amazon wins 13 of 26 e-commerce categories as Amazon Prime Day arrives (July 16-17); Ikea, The Home Depot, and Shell all make major gains in traditional retail, as voted by over 5000 Canadian Shoppers*

**TORONTO, ONTARIO (July 17th, 2018)** – Market research firm BrandSpark International today announced the 2018 BrandSpark Most Trusted Awards winners for Canada’s major retail categories in e-commerce and brick & mortar. Amazon has overwhelmingly won the trust of Canadian consumers as they gear up for another record Prime Day, the online retailer’s biggest savings event of the year. In the traditional retail space, Ikea, The Home Depot, and Shell have all moved into top spots in Home Furniture, Major Home Appliances, and Gas Station categories as changes in the retail landscape have altered consumer trust in this sector.

“The BrandSpark Most Trusted Awards program gives shoppers a chance to understand which retailers are trusted by other Canadians. This allows everyone to make better purchase decisions because being trusted is the greatest indicator of which retailers are delivering the most value and best experience to consumers,” said Robert Levy, President of BrandSpark International. “These endorsements are especially useful for shoppers who don’t regularly shop the category – particularly in e-commerce where many shoppers are still learning where the most trusted places are to shop online.”

More than 5,000 respondents were surveyed online to determine the 2018 BrandSpark Most Trusted Awards retail winners through their “top of mind” unaided responses. Results were ranked based on the greatest volume of mentions, and if the difference between retailers nationally was less than three percent, ties were declared. BrandSpark also conducts the Most Trusted awards in over 150 consumer product categories and services.

All of the BrandSpark Most Trusted winners can be found at [www.BrandSparkMostTrusted.com](http://www.BrandSparkMostTrusted.com)

### E-Commerce Retail Winners

Canadian shopping habits are evolving dramatically. According to the BrandSpark Canadian Shopper Study, 41% of Canadians expect to do more shopping online in the coming year (only 5% expect to do less). “Consumers are opting for the online shopping experience as it provides them with the ability to search for special deals, save time and effort, buy unique brands, and read reviews so they can make more informed purchase decisions,” said Philip Scrutton, VP of Consumer Insights at BrandSpark. “In November 2016, 11% of the Canadian population had an Amazon Prime membership. As of last month, that number had risen to 1 in 4 Canadians, even before the bulk of Amazon’s 2018 Prime Day communication. In comparison, over 50% of households in the United States hold a Prime membership, which may be a sign of where things are heading for Amazon in Canada.” The BrandSpark research showed that the three main reasons consumers shop online are lower prices, convenience and selection. As part of this online revolution, BrandSpark recently launched ShopperArmy.ca, a cash-back site helping consumers save money on all the products they purchase on Amazon.ca.

Although Amazon is clearly the primary site for Canadian e-commerce shoppers, several specialized retailers have been successful in making their own mark online, including: Best Buy, Sephora, PetSmart, and The Home Depot. These retailers are trust leaders in their e-commerce categories and are examples of traditional brick & mortar stores that have successfully built an omni-channel presence. “If other retailers want to catch up with Amazon in their category, they need to stay top-of-mind as their customers move online, and deliver the online browsing experience, selection, value, and service required to be shoppers’ go-to destination in the category,” said Levy.

See Canada’s Most Trusted E-Commerce Retailers Below:

E-Commerce Category	Most Trusted Retailer
Auto Parts & Accessories	Amazon   Canadian Tire (tie)
Baby & Childrens Clothing	Carter's Osh Kosh   Old Navy (tie)
Baby Goods	Amazon
Beauty & Cosmetics	Sephora
Books	Amazon
Electronic Gaming / Videogames	Amazon
Electronics	Amazon
Eyewear & Contacts	Clearly
Food & Beverage (non-perishable)	Walmart
Furniture	Wayfair
Grocery / Fresh Food	Walmart
Health & Wellness	Amazon
Home Appliances	Amazon
Home Decor	Wayfair
Home Improvement / Renovation	The Home Depot
Housewares / Kitchenwares	Amazon
Laptop/Desktop Computers	Best Buy   Dell (tie)
Men’s Clothing / Fashion	Amazon   The Bay (tie)
Personal Care	Amazon
Pet Supply	Amazon
Printer Ink / Toner	Amazon

Shoes / Footwear	The Bay
Sporting Goods	Sport Chek/Sports Experts
Toys & Games	Amazon   Toys "R" Us (tie)
Travel / Accommodation	Expedia
Women's Clothing / Fashion	The Bay   Old Navy   Pennington's (tie)

### Brick & Mortar Retail Winners

It is no surprise that the Canadian retail landscape is changing rapidly due to the massive shift in the popularity of online shopping. As a result, some major companies are ceasing their operations in Canada, unable to keep up with the times and stay relevant with Canadian consumers. With the recent closing of Sears, companies are fighting to fill the void left behind, and The Home Depot in particular has been successful by going from the third Most Trusted Major Appliance Retailer to the number one within this category.

Ikea has also shown a big increase in consumer trust, going from third place in the Furniture category to now being tied with two long-standing Canadian brands, The Brick and Leon's. Ikea's growth in trust can be attributed to their ability to stay ahead of emerging style trends while maintaining reasonable prices, two things that savvy millennial shoppers seek out in a brand.

Shell was able to gain trust in the Gas Station category by tying with last year's winner Petro-Canada. It is interesting to see foreign companies such as the Netherlands conglomerate continue to gain share of category trust against well-established Canadian brands. Currently approximately half of the most trusted general retailers in Canada are Canadian companies, down about 10% from last year. This is indicative of the growing strength of international brick & mortar retail brands in Canada.

See Canada's Most Trusted General (Brick & Mortar) Retailers Below:

General Retail Category	Most Trusted Retailer
Auto Parts & Accessories	Canadian Tire
Baby & Children's Clothing	Carter's Osh Kosh
Baby Products	Walmart   Toys "R" Us (tie)
Beauty & Cosmetics	Shoppers Drug Mart
Computers & Accessories	Best Buy
Discount Store	Dollarama
Electronics	Best Buy
Eyewear & Contacts	Costco   Clearly   LensCrafters (tie)
Furniture	Ikea   Leon's   The Brick (tie)
Gas Station	Petro-Canada   Shell (tie)
Hardware Store	Home Hardware
Health & Personal Care	Shoppers Drug Mart
Home Décor	HomeSense
Home Improvement / Hardware	The Home Depot
Housewares / Kitchenware	Walmart
Major Home Appliances	The Home Depot

Mattresses	Sleep Country
Men's Clothing / Fashion	Mark's
Pet Supplies	PetSmart
Pharmacy	Shoppers Drug Mart
Sporting Goods	Sport Chek
Supermarket / Grocery Store	Real Canadian Superstore
Toys & Games	Toys "R" Us
Women's Clothing / Fashion	Winners   Walmart   Reitmans (tie)

### How Do Canadian Retailers Continue to Win Consumer Trust?

“Canadians say their trust in a brand is greatly increased by personal experience, responsiveness, transparency, fair pricing, and the endorsements of other consumers,” said Levy. The BrandSpark Canadian Shopper Study study shows that it is important that a brand respond quickly to serious issues, with 73% of consumers saying it greatly increases their trust in the brand. Transparency is also revealed as a key to building trust: 56% agree that brands that provide detailed information about their product or service earn trust, and 49% say trust is built when they see unfiltered customer reviews on the brand web site. A majority of online consumers reported that they now seek reviews to support their purchase decisions, and they read both positive and negative reviews to get a more complete picture. Without this information, many shoppers will not complete a transaction. Positive endorsement in the form of awards is also very impactful, with 85% of respondents stating their trust in a brand increases if it has won awards based on the feedback of consumers. Pricing also influences trust, with brands that offer consistent and competitive pricing more likely to be perceived as fair and honest.

### About BrandSpark International

BrandSpark International uniquely combines real world consumer insight with marketing credentials and services. BrandSpark Insight gets at the heart of WHAT consumers think, WHY they act the way they do, and HOW marketers need to respond to successfully grow their business. BrandSpark Marketing Services runs major CPG awards programs Best New Product Awards, BrandSpark Most Trusted Awards and consumer product trial and Amazon cash-back platform, [www.ShopperArmy.ca](http://www.ShopperArmy.ca). For more information, visit [www.BrandSpark.com](http://www.BrandSpark.com).

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For more information or interview requests, please contact:

Nicole Manes | Manes Communications | [nicole@manescommunications.com](mailto:nicole@manescommunications.com) | 416.707.0737

### BrandSpark International

Robert Levy, President, [RLevy@BrandSpark.com](mailto:RLevy@BrandSpark.com)

Philip Scrutton, VP Consumer Insights, [PScrutton@BrandSpark.com](mailto:PScrutton@BrandSpark.com)