



MBLM  
114 WEST 27<sup>TH</sup> STREET #2  
NEW YORK, NY 10001  
WWW.MBLM.COM

RUBENSTEIN PUBLIC RELATIONS  
CONTACT: JULIE STRICKLAND, 212-805-3062  
JSTRICKLAND@RUBENSTEINPR.COM

---

## **Automotive Industry Holds #2 Spot Despite Supply Chain Challenges in MBLM's Brand Intimacy COVID Study**

*Toyota Maintains Top Spot in Year Two of the Pandemic, Followed by Harley-Davidson, BMW and  
Chevrolet*

NEW YORK — October 20, 2021 —The [automotive](#) industry ranked #2 out of the 10 industries featured in MBLM's 2021 [Brand Intimacy COVID Study](#), a study of brands based on emotional connections during the pandemic. MBLM (pronounced Emblem) uses emotional science to build and manage more intimate brands. Toyota is the top automotive brand, up from fifth position before the pandemic, followed by Harley-Davidson and BMW, respectively. Brand Intimacy is the emotional science behind the bonds we form with the brands we use and love.

Although the industry has faced manufacturing and supply chain challenges related to COVID, Brand Intimacy performance increased by an average of 5 percent since before the pandemic. Other brands rounding out the top 10 are Chevrolet, Ford, Honda, Mercedes-Benz, Jeep, Tesla, and Audi, respectively.

"Automotive brands continue to be among the strongest Brand Intimacy performers," stated Mario Natarelli, managing partner, MBLM. "Consumers closely identify with their car brands and the essential role they play in our lives. With supply shortages, this year we saw a 47 percent increase in consumers willing to pay 20 percent or more for automotive products, highlighting the important bond we have with these brands. COVID has intensified our emotional connection to automotive brands, and we expect the industry to continue to thrive as it works to improve operations and manufacturing."

Additional noteworthy automotive industry findings in the U.S. include:

- The U.S. automotive industry had an average Brand Intimacy Quotient of 48.4, well above the cross-industry average of 38.2
- Harley-Davidson, BMW, and Honda all showed improvement, while Chevrolet, Ford, and Mercedes-Benz all declined
- The industry's "can't live without" measure, based on a 10-point scale that determines how essential a brand is to our lives, rose 87 percent since our 2020 study
- Harley-Davidson is the highest-ranked automotive brand for which consumers are willing to pay 20 percent more for, with 25 percent of all users willing to do so
- Automotive ranks first among all industries for the highest percentage of users in sharing and bonding, the earliest and middle stages of Brand Intimacy
- The industry does better with men than women, and with consumers over 35 than under

MBLM also analyzed the industry in an [article](#) entitled "Driving Ultimate Brand Relationships". The piece addresses how brands have confronted the pandemic and how their messages have varied from 2020 to 2021.

To view the automotive industry findings, please click [here](#). Additionally, MBLM offers Custom [Dashboards](#) providing extensive data for brands included in its *Brand Intimacy COVID Study*. To download the main *Brand Intimacy COVID Study* report or explore the Rankings, click [here](#).

**About MBLM:** MBLM invented Brand Intimacy, the emotional science behind the brands we use and love. For our clients, we deliver expertise and value through our agency insights, services and software offerings.

With offices in five countries, our multidisciplinary teams invent, transform and enhance brands for businesses of every kind. We deliver marketing that creates stronger emotional connections with stakeholders. These bonds create better performance and long-term returns. To learn more about how we can help you create and sustain ultimate brand relationships, visit [mblm.com](https://mblm.com).