



THE BUSINESS OF LONGEVITY · CONSUMER SURVEY FACT SHEET

10 things the beauty industry doesn't know about how loyalty is really built

A survey of 529 U.S. beauty buyers finds a shopper who trusts people over brands, rewards experiences over claims, and is quietly punishing the industry's addiction to newness. The figures below come from respondent-level data and have not appeared in prior published research.

01 **7x**

Experience turns buyers into evangelists

Buyers given a real brand experience are 7x more likely to join its community (28% vs 4%) and 4–5x more likely to defend it or follow its founder — the biggest effect in the study.

BASE 529 · EXPERIENCED 295 VS 234 · P<0.001

02 **2%**

Brands are the least-trusted voice in beauty

Only 2% rank a brand's own marketing as their most-trusted source for deciding what's worth buying — last of seven sources. Friends and peers lead at 45%.

BASE 519 · TOP TRUSTED SOURCE

03 **88%**

AI is shut out of trust — and so are influencers

88% won't rank AI tools anywhere in their top three trusted sources, and 87% exclude influencers. Only 15% trust AI recommendations; 48% are skeptical.

BASE 519 · TOP-3 TRUSTED SOURCES

04 **4%**

Almost no one is loyal for results alone

Just 4% love a brand for 'proof it works' alone; 90% name ritual, learning, people, or identity. Among shoppers who'd choose a brand over rivals, 95% love the experience — 44% the proof.

BASE 519 · BRAND-CHOOSERS N=385

05 **2.4x**

Brand love is a luxury good

Emotional attachment more than doubles with income: 69% of \$100–200K buyers feel their favorite brand is 'more than a product,' versus 29% under \$50K.

BASE 492 · P<0.001

06 **60%**

Loyalty is rented — and performance is the rent

60% of buyers who left a brand they loved found something that worked better; 42% left for a cheaper version. Only 46% feel their brand is 'more than a product.'

BASE 519 · REASONS FOR LEAVING

07 **42%**

The launch treadmill is backfiring

88% feel overwhelmed shopping for beauty and 1 in 5 (21%) feel it every single time. The leading cause, named by 42%: too many new products.

BASE 529 · 'ALWAYS' 21%

08 **37%**

Discovery is a conversation, not a campaign

37% first heard about their favorite brand from a friend or family member — versus 5% from an influencer and 13% from a brand's own ad.

BASE 519 · HOW THEY DISCOVERED IT

09 **59%**

Honest opinions have left the public feed

59% get the most honest beauty opinions in person or in small private groups (Reddit, Discord, chats) — versus 12% from brand-owned channels and 12% from big platforms.

BASE 519 · MOST HONEST SOURCE

10 **48%**

The most loyal customers are the quietest

Buyers 60+ are among the most loyal in the survey, yet only 48% ever advocate — versus 87% of under-60s. They trust doctors most (33%) and reject AI almost entirely (2%).

BASE 60+ N=84 · P<0.001