

Is it true (brand) love?

“The only hope for the future of branding is to build intense emotional brand love”

Kevin Roberts (worldwide CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi).



Central to any interpersonal relationship is love, commitment and attachment. These elements are all emotionally based elements, indicating a strong relationship between individuals. This is no different in the marketing relationships that a consumer has with a brand. Consumers fall in love with brands just as they fall in love with people and form relationships with the brands they love. Brand love has become a key construct in academic conversations, as well as an emerging trend in the marketing industry, due to its ability to strengthen marketing relationships.

A research study was conducted by Melissa Eloff and Lizette Lategan, [Master's](#) students in the [Department of Marketing Management](#), to determine the relationships between affective brand commitment, emotional brand attachment, brand love, and word-of-mouth (WOM). This study gathered data from 535 respondents using an online questionnaire.

The findings indicated that brand love was the strongest predictor of positive WOM. Although affective brand commitment also had a significant relationship with positive WOM, its influence was not as strong as that of brand love. Emotional brand attachment did not have a significant influence on WOM. The results of the research suggest that marketers need to appreciate the importance of strategies that aim to emotionally connect the consumer to the brand. Marketing practitioners need to consider the impact of brand love and brand commitment when developing their branding strategies to ensure an emotional connection between brand and consumer.

This study proves that when consumers love a brand, they do engage in positive WOM about the brand. WOM is crucial to marketing managers as it has been shown to predict consumer purchases. It is suggested that organisations should target consumers who already like the brand and attempt to turn the liking into brand love. This will lead to positive communication about the brand and likely have a positive influence on consumer purchases.

This research was conducted as part of the fulfilment of the [Master's degree](#) in Marketing Management in 2015 with the [Department of Marketing Management](#) by Melissa Eloff and Lizette Lategan, under the supervision of [Dr. T. Maree](#).