

Do Your Customers Trust Your Labeling and Your Brand?

An eBook from Kallik

Reputation Matters

In a digitally-connected world, where it's easier than ever for customers to look up reviews about a brand or product online, manufacturers must work harder than ever to build and maintain public trust.

Expectations of social responsibility from brands is rising among consumers, too: in a recent large-scale global consumer survey 81¹ per cent of consumers globally said they must be able to trust a brand "to do what is right".

Yet too often these expectations are not being met, and trust in brands is diminishing. In the international study just a third of consumers said they trusted their commonly-used brands; falling to just 25 per cent in some markets such as France and Germany. Meanwhile more than half of consumers believed they could spot 'trust-washing'— where companies are less than truthful with the public.

Trust is earned

Building and maintaining public trust means reflecting and being consistent and true to core values globally. It means being open and transparent about products, and providing critical safety information in line with regulatory guidelines - information that's accurate and up to date, relevant to and easy to digest by the target user.

All of which comes down to a product's labeling.

This is often the first contact and experience the consumer will have with a brand. If the label quality is poor, or the information is incomplete, out of date, or poorly presented, this will have a bearing on public perception – and potentially on the individual's personal safety. If the user isn't confident how to use the product, or doubts the reliability of the information provided with it, they are less likely to have a good experience – or even use the product at all.

Don't leave trust to chance

Ensuring a positive product and brand experience means leaving nothing to chance. This isn't easy when today's global supply ecosystems are so complex, spanning multiple organizations and locations.

Whether the end product is a prescription drug, medical device, household cleaning solution, or a cosmetic application, there are likely to be numerous different parties involved in getting it to market. Between contract manufacturers, packaging/artwork design agencies, local market affiliates and distribution partners, diverse teams will play their part in handling the product and its labeling.



¹2019 Edelman Trust Barometer Special Report

Consistency across the global supply chain

Each point of handling and handover presents a point of risk that needs to be managed – to ensure that the finished item as it arrives with a customer bears the intended stamp of quality.

In other words, each product, wherever it ends up in the world, must be assured of carrying correct and current information – not just about what's inside, but about the manufacturer and marketing authorization holder. That includes the correct branding and company information, the latest safety symbols, and up-to-date user advice. And, beyond any special local requirements, this must be consistent from one market to the next, and with user information published online.

Trust in brand integrity starts internally

Before the public can have trust in a brand and in its labeling, there must be a high level of confidence internally in branding and labeling integrity – that is, within the organization with legal responsibility for the product.

Those in charge here must be able to count on the reliability, quality and consistency of product labeling from the design agency, to the factory floor, to in-country distribution, right through to the item as it arrives with the end user – from one side of the world to the other.

As long as each team involved across the global supply chain is left to look up and interpret requirements before executing labeling output, there will be points of risk and uncertainty - with the potential to compromise quality, and chip away at trust.

So trust in a brand - which starts with trust in its labeling - begins with global visibility and control across every aspect of label and artwork management.



Openness & control are critical to public confidence

Many of these initiatives are designed to make it easier to identify and trace individual items back to their source – so customers/patients/users can look them up, see what's in them, how they were made, and what has been reported about them. Manufacturers and their supply chain partners must comply with these initiatives by being more vigilant and consistent in their global product identification and labeling.

As part of a global push to improve public trust in goods and services, transparency and traceability has risen to the forefront of the regulatory agenda internationally. From centralized product databases, to new Medical Device Regulations in Europe and Unique Device Identification and serialization initiatives in the US and around the world, plans are underway to raise public trust in the products people consume – especially if they might be at risk in some way if a product doesn't live up to its brand claims.

Extending openness & control to internal operations

Historically in many industries, product labeling – including all customer-facing materials such as instructions for use advice (whether in a paper insert or published online) – has been subject to piecemeal practices and separate silos of source content scattered across different department, locations or organizations. Without consistent control and a clear line of sight over where labeling content has come from, how current it is, and how it measures up to the latest local market requirements, it is difficult for Regulatory, Safety and Quality teams to have complete confidence in the labels being output.

The larger the number of different parties that are involved along in designing, creating, approving, printing, and distributing labels, the greater the potential for something to go wrong. That might be critical information or safety symbols being missed; errors creeping into local dosage/usage information; content being formatted incorrectly or rendered difficult to read; and so on.

Mitigating these risks, and restoring trust in labeling and the brand, means introducing some form of central control and visibility across everything that is going out to the market, anywhere in the world. It means creating a single source of labeling truth – of approved, current content components – which form the basis for all new labeling. If anything changes – to the brand, to the product or its ingredients, to the manufacturer's information, or to regulatory requirements – this can be managed in a controlled and robust way from a single, central vantage point.

Risks are reduced, trust is assured

Once they have centralized control, and end-to-end visibility of all labeling activity globally, brand owners are better able to spot issues ahead of time - so that products do not go out to market with errors or omissions in their labeling. As well as substantially reducing the safety implications, cost and reputational damage associated with product recalls, trusted labeling will help to safeguard the brand and maintain public confidence in the quality and safety of its products.

Kallik helps your organization improve trust in your labeling and maintain confidence in your brand by providing an end-to-end software solution that addresses your entire label lifecycle. From orchestrating your artwork requirements to providing stringent, auditable approval workflows, to time-of-print distribution and e-Labeling, Kallik helps you trust your process, helping your customers trust in you.

What is trust, and why does it matter?

No company would bother going to the expense of building an internationally-recognized brand if it wasn't trying to cultivate trust among customers. A company that manages this successfully can trade on its name, knowing that its logo alone conjures up feelings of confidence - that certain standards will be upheld, and a consistent experience will be delivered.

In safety-sensitive industries, a brand should also be strongly linked in people's mind to quality, rigor and best practice. 'Buy from us, choose our products, rely on our processes, and you will be safe,' is the implication and market assumption: here is a company that has invested in all of the best people; the latest research, techniques, processes and technologies; the hardest-won industry badges and accreditations. All of these values are implicit in the brand, and are layered beneath the company logo - its shorthand for 'a global household name you can trust'.

Trust may be hard won, but it is fragile - especially in the digitally connected age, where reputations can be dismantled almost overnight as word spreads about a negative experience, a safety scare, a compromising of principles.



Trust issues can pervade whole industries

And when whole industries – such as Big Pharma, Medical Devices, Chemicals, and Cosmetics – begin to lose public trust, because of an exposé about potential risks to human life, or growing suspicion about what goes into products and how they're made, or a lack of transparency into pricing, that confidence can be very hard to win back.

In the latest annual US survey by Gallup (2019) into the reputations of 25 different industries among consumers nationally, the pharmaceutical industry was ranked lowest - and by some margin². The medical device industry continues to reel from the PIP breast implant scandal³. Trust in the beauty industry is under strain too, due to a lack of transparency of ingredients among other factors. Mintel research has found that less than 50 per cent of European consumers are confident that the industry does everything possible to ensure their products are safe⁴. Meanwhile chemical companies are battling continuously to maintain their reputation in the light of growing public consciousness about environmental threats⁵.

It is because of faltering public trust that these industries regulators are introducing stringent new legal requirements in each respective market, governing the transparency and precision with which companies promote, label and market their products. The only way to regain public trust is by increasing vigilance around product traceability and monitoring, and by insisting that manufacturers provide complete detail and unambiguous advice to anyone handling or using their products.

And almost all of this comes down to what is included on a product's labeling, how this is presented, its quality and consistency internationally, and how intelligible it is to the target consumer. After all, beyond the company logo, the label is most customers' first point of reference for a product and the brand behind it. If confidence and trust waver here, then any investment in the brand to this point will have been for nothing.



²Big Pharma Sinks to the Bottom of U.S. Industry Rankings, Gallup, September 2019 | ³PIP Breast Implant Scandal: A Story That Triggered Change, iMarc Research, August 2019 | ⁴The truth about trust in the beauty industry, CosmeticBusiness, July 2017 | ⁵From philanthropy to sustainability: Corporate Social Responsibility in the pharmaceutical and chemical industries is changing, Chemistry World, November 2019

The logo for KALLIK features a stylized letter 'K' on the left, composed of two overlapping geometric shapes: a teal one on top and a yellow one on the bottom. To the right of this 'K' is the word 'KALLIK' in a bold, white, sans-serif typeface.

KALLIK

TRUST IN YOUR LABEL • TRUST IN YOUR BRAND

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