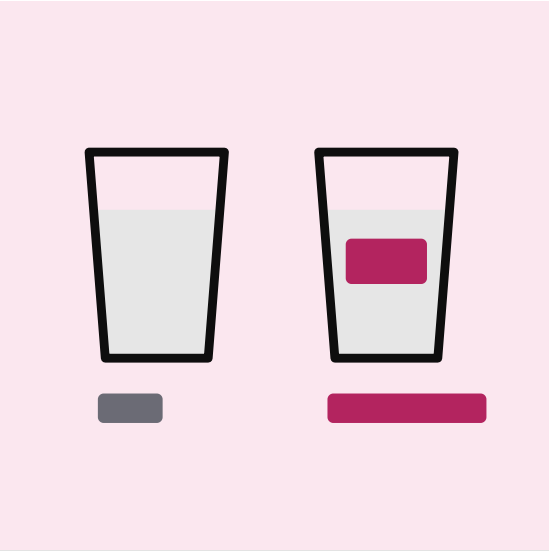
Model

Customer-based brand equity

The effect that what people know about a brand has on how they respond to it: whether they react better to a product, a price or an ad because it carries that name.



In Spanish
Valor de marca basado en el cliente

Origin
Keller (1993)

What problem it addresses

It gives brand design a goal that can be measured: it isn't enough for the identity to be liked; it has to make the brand known and link it to good, strong and distinctive ideas.

Components

Awareness
People recognize the brand when they see it and recall it when they think about what they need.

Image
The associations it evokes: attributes, benefits and the overall opinion of it.

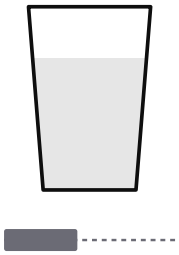
Favorable, strong and unique associations
They are liked, firmly fixed in memory and not shared by the competition.

An effect that can be measured
Compare how people react to the same thing with and without the brand name.

An example

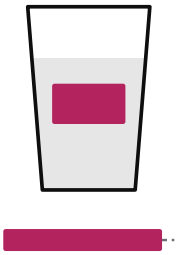
An illustrative example: people taste two glasses of the same juice. One carries a brand they know; the other, none.

Without a name



People judge it only by how it tastes. **Just another juice.**

With the brand



The same juice gets better scores. **It tastes better.**

The difference between the two glasses is the brand's equity: it comes from what people already knew about it.

How it works

1

People keep in memory what they saw, heard and experienced with the brand.

2

When they come across it, that memory is triggered with all its associations.

3

And their response changes: what they choose and how much they are willing to pay.

Applications in design

Use it like this

Write down which associations you want the brand to evoke and design every piece to reinforce them.

Avoid

Judging the success of an identity only by whether it is liked in a presentation.

Don't fall for it

An association shared by every brand in the category doesn't set you apart, even if it is a good one.

Connections

Used in

- Customer experience design
- Brand identity design

Related to

- Distinctive brand assets
- Touchpoint

Authors and works

1993	**Kevin Lane Keller**	Defined brand equity from the customer's side, split it into awareness and image, and proposed measuring it in two ways: by what people know and by how they react.
2001	**Kevin Lane Keller**	Later arranged it in a pyramid of six blocks: from awareness at the base to resonance, the bond with the brand, at the top.

Sources

Original sources

- Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. Journal of Marketing, 57(1), 1–22. View source (https://doi.org/10.1177/002224299305700101)
- Keller, K. L. (2001). Building customer-based brand equity: A blueprint for creating strong brands (Informe n.º 01-107). Marketing Science Institute. View source (https://www.msi.org/working-paper/building-customerbased-brand-equity-a-blueprint-for-creating-strong-brands/)

Last reviewed: October 27, 2026

Atlas público de diseño, de Adriana Ojeda. Texto e ilustraciones bajo licencia CC BY 4.0.