

## *New National Research Study*

# **It's From Where? College Students Clueless on Where Favorite Brands Come From**

## **Cell Phone Makers and Cars Manufacturers among the Most Misidentified**

**Stamford, CT --- May 24, 2007** – College students may love to use the latest gadgets and wear the hottest fashions, but they may not know where their favorite brands originate, according to exclusive new research from market research firm Anderson Analytics. Fifty three percent of students thought Finnish cell phone company Nokia to be Japanese, while 57.8 percent thought Korean electronics company Samsung was Japanese. And 48.5 percent mistakenly thought Adidas clothing came from the United States, not Germany.

“For the most part, this next generation of educated American consumers either have no clue where the brands they use come from or simply assume everything comes from the United States, Japan or Germany,” said Tom H. C. Anderson, Managing Partner, Anderson Analytics, <http://www.andersonanalytics.com>.

“Marketers need to realize that country of origin can have a positive impact on their brand equity, particularly if they are a luxury goods or automobile manufacturer,” added Anderson. “But if no action is taken to educate the new generation of American consumers, this impact may be lost.”

The study is based on an online survey of 1,000 US college student conducted during the fall 2006 semester by Anderson Analytics’ GenX2Z.com, which provides in-depth research on the youth market. See how students rated brands here: <http://www.andersonanalytics.com/reports/BrandAndCountries.pdf>.

Cell phones shot to the top of the most misidentified country of origin category. Although Nokia has dominated the cell phone market, just 4.4 percent of students knew that Nokia was made in Finland; and just 8.9 percent knew LG cell phones came from Korea.

“Even strong American brands like Motorola are falsely believed to be Japanese,” said Jesse Chen, GenX2Z practice lead, “probably because the name sounds Japanese.” Forty two percent of students surveyed thought Motorola was Japanese compared to 37.9 percent who said it was American.

While students’ ignorance hurts some marketers, according to Anderson, for cell phone manufacturers ignorance truly is bliss.

“We found for cell phones, country of origin didn’t seem to affect students’ perception of the brand, since Motorola was ranked equally well whether students thought it was from America or Japan,” said Anderson. “This has allowed Korean brands, like LG and Samsung, to compete on a par with companies like Nokia and Motorola.”

But “country of origin plays an important part in making luxury goods and automobiles more exclusive and exotic,” Anderson said.

French Hermes scored higher with students who correctly identified it as a French rather than a UK brand with 23 percent more giving it high ratings. Similarly, fewer students (a 13.3% difference) gave Japanese Lexus top ratings when they mistakenly thought it was a US-made car.

“Marketers of luxury brands and automobiles should be doing more to play up their country of origin,” said Anderson. “If more students correctly identified them, the percentages rating them highly would increase.”

Even brands like IKEA which compete on cost may benefit from their ties to an exotic country of origin, said Anderson. In IKEA’s case, among the 31.2 percent of respondents who knew IKEA was a Swedish brand, the brand rating was 11.9 percent higher than among the 23.6 percent of respondents who thought IKEA was a US brand.

Anderson Analytics will undertake further study to determine if it is actually beneficial for a company to be mistakenly known as being from a different country.

### **Methodology:**

A representative sample of 1,000 US college students at over 375 US universities and colleges were interviewed. In addition to matching brands with their home countries, students were asked which countries were best at producing certain products, as well as producing quality products overall. Students were also asked to rate the quality of individual brands. The total sample size represents a confidence interval of +/-3.1% at the 95% confidence level. The survey was fielded online in late 2006.

### **About Anderson Analytics**

Anderson Analytics is the first next generation marketing consultancy to combine new technologies, such as data and text mining, with traditional market research. Anderson Analytics helps clients gain “the information advantage” by combining the efficiencies and business experience found in large research firms with the rigorous methodological understanding from academia and the creativity found only in smaller firms. For more information, please visit [www.andersonanalytics.com](http://www.andersonanalytics.com).

### **About GenX2z**

Whether you call them the 'MTV', 'Boomerang', 'I', or 'New Silent' Generation, GenX2Z will dictate what the will look like tomorrow. Anderson Analytic's GenX2Z Consulting focuses on studying this growing demographic. Learn more at [www.genx2z.com](http://www.genx2z.com).

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