



UQ

TOP

PHILADELPHIA

FALL / 2026

**Which Philly Brands Fly
Above the Rest?**

- What is the UQ?
- Know the method behind the metric.
- See the brands that lead the way.



**EVERY PHILLY BRAND THINKS IT'S SPECIAL.
NOW THERE'S A SCORE TO PROVE IT.**

The UQ measures the qualities behind an unstoppable brand. How human it feels. How much value it brings. And how clearly it stands for something.

For this ranking, the entire Philadelphia metro area was up for grabs. Food. Fashion. Sports. Retail. Culture. Finance. Local legends faced off against newer names. Different industries. Same scorecard.

The City of Brotherly Love has plenty of friendly competition. Here's who came out on top.

BRANDS HAVE TO PROVE THEY ARE WORTHY OF THE SHORTLIST

These three key attributes create a brand's UQ, a score that predicts how preferred a brand is in their category. As Philly's longest running independent advertising agency, we want every brand to be unstoppable.

EMPATHY

This is what makes a brand feel relatable and trustworthy. Does the brand communicate with personality and authentic emotion? Are they transparent and honest, therefore building trust?

ENRICHMENT

This is how the brand adds value. Does it provide practical utility and engaging experiences? Does it create moments of delight and/or help people accomplish their goals?

EDGE

This is a brand's distinctiveness. How boldly does the brand act? How clear is their point of view?

METHODOLOGY

WHO WE ASKED AND WHAT THEY TOLD US.

SAMPLE SIZE

1,762

PHILADELPHIA RESPONDENTS

TARGETING

Gen pop, 18+. Current residents of Philadelphia, PA, or previous residents of 5 or more years.

SCREENING

Professional conflict (marketing or advertising).
Current residents, or previous residents of 5 or more years.

TOPLINE FINDINGS

DRIP CITY

Philadelphians have style on lock, with fashion brands making up 50% of the top 10.

TRUST ISSUES

Philly is a tough customer when it comes to doling out trust, with low Empathy scores across the list.

LAST CALL

In a city with a debaucherous reputation, only two beer brands make the list.

FOOD FIGHT

Philadelphians know brands that make their mouth water, with eight spots going to food brands.



UQ

TOP

20

PHILADELPHIA

UQ
TOP
20
PHILADELPHIA

- | | | | |
|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| 01 | Nuuly | 11 | Five Below |
| 02 | Wawa | 12 | Gopuff |
| 03 | Free People | 13 | Herr's |
| 04 | Lincoln Financial | 14 | Peanut Chews |
| 05 | Mitchell & Ness | 15 | Dietz & Watson |
| 06 | Vanguard | 16 | Rita's Water Ice |
| 07 | Phila. Pretzel Co. | 17 | Yuengling |
| 08 | Victory Brewing | 18 | IBX |
| 09 | Anthropologie | 19 | Honeygrow |
| 10 | Urban Outfitters | 20 | Tastykake |
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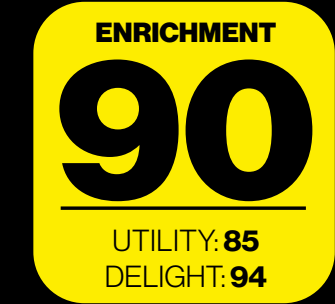
01



nuuly



KEEPING PHILLY CONFIDENT AND TRENDY, BUT ALSO THE CITY'S BEST KEPT SECRET.



STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: DELIGHT (94)

The Nuuly experience is firing on all cylinders, delivering delight to their customers across the city.

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: UTILITY (85)

Even their weakness is a strength at a score of 85, easily outpacing the category in the study.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

Nuuly has done the hardest part – build a brand and product experience worth loving. But at only 27% awareness in their own backyard, it's time to bring the brand story to new households and show people the delight they've been missing.

“Nuuly brings convenience, creativity, and endless possibilities to everyday fashion.”

02



UQ SCORE

87

**WHERE PHILLY ALWAYS FEELS AT HOME,
KEEPING IT FRESH AFTER ALL THESE YEARS.**

EMPATHY

87

HUMANNESS: 94
HONESTY: 80

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: HUMANNESS (94)

A brand that feels familiar, like a neighbor or a friend, and helps Philly feel like home.

ENRICHMENT

86

UTILITY: 82
DELIGHT: 90

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: HONESTY (80)

A score that's clearly a tier below the brand's other attributes, but still respectable. Something to watch moving forward – food quality and transparency could be an opportunity area to plus this up.

EDGE

88

BOLDNESS: 89
PERSPECTIVE: 71

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

As Wawa and the QSR category continue to chase menu innovation, they should focus on protecting their core “sandwich credentials” (everybody loves Hoagiefest), making sure they can preserve a winning reason to visit.

“Wawa has everything I need. It is my happy place.”

03



FREE PEOPLE

UQ SCORE

85

A BRAND THAT PAVES THE PATH TOWARD SELF-EXPRESSION.

EMPATHY

81

HUMANNESS: 87
HONESTY: 75

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTES: DELIGHT (99), BOLDNESS, PERSPECTIVE (89)

Free People delivers a consistent dose of delight, boldness, and perspective to their adoring fans, giving them an edge over competitors.

ENRICHMENT

85

UTILITY: 82
DELIGHT: 99

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: HONESTY (75)

Free People has a reputation for a lack of transparency around safe labor practices and material sourcing, and this conversation would certainly keep them from winning on honesty.

EDGE

89

BOLDNESS: 89
PERSPECTIVE: 89

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

If they want to be a leader, they need to take control of their honesty. While they are the most honest in the study, there is a clear opportunity to make Free People's promise more credible to fans.

“Free People adds to my sparkle.”

04



Lincoln
Financial

UQ SCORE

84

A BRAND THAT BANKS ON THE EAGLES.

EMPATHY

81

HUMANNESS: 79
HONESTY: 82

ENRICHMENT

85

UTILITY: 83
DELIGHT: 87

EDGE

86

BOLDNESS: 83
PERSPECTIVE: 88

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: PERSPECTIVE (88)

Lincoln Financial's partnership with the Eagles has boosted brand awareness and given them a distinct market position.

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: HUMANNESS (79)

Though humanness is their weakest attribute, this brand still scores highest in the category, an impressive feat for an industry that typically struggles to humanize themselves and connect with their consumers.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

In a category that's increasingly competitive and AI-driven, Lincoln Financial has the opportunity to strengthen their position by embracing technology to compete.

"I see Lincoln Financial as a dependable partner that helps me build stable wealth and represents security."



05

Mitchell & Ness

UQ SCORE

83

WHERE PHILLY CULTURE MEETS FASHION IN THE PERFECT BLEND OF VINTAGE AND CURRENT.

EMPATHY

81

HUMANNESS: 88
HONESTY: 74

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: DELIGHT (90)
Trendy without trying, this brand is effortlessly cool, and inspires their customers to feel the same way.

ENRICHMENT

85

UTILITY: 80
DELIGHT: 90

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: HONESTY (74)
Fashion brands tend to have low honesty. While it is Mitchell & Ness' weakest attribute, they rank third highest among competitors, suggesting an opening to build a more personal connection with their fanbase through renewed focus on customer service.

EDGE

83

BOLDNESS: 83
PERSPECTIVE: 82

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:
In a category where tunnel walks have become the athlete equivalent of the runway, Mitchell & Ness can become a leader by leaning into that passion and starting conversations wherever sport and fashion overlap, more boldly expressing their own fandom and POV in ways that truly lead culture.

“Mitchell and Ness captures the bold, fiery energy and iconic legacy of sports culture.”

Vanguard®

UQ SCORE
77

HUMBLE ENOUGH TO OPERATE UNDER THE RADAR, HARDWORKING ENOUGH TO EARN PHILLY'S TRUST ANYWAY.

EMPATHY
72
HUMANNESS: 72
HONESTY: 73

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: UTILITY (83)

This brand has proven their worth by focusing on a product that not only appeals to customers but works.

ENRICHMENT
80
UTILITY: 83
DELIGHT: 78

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: HUMANNESS (72)

Being relatable in finance is always a challenge, but this score shows an opportunity to make an impersonal category feel human again.

EDGE
78
BOLDNESS: 79
PERSPECTIVE: 78

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

While other financial institutions may lead with technology, Vanguard has an opportunity to use their clear and approachable voice to help democratize financial literacy, and be a beacon for those in need of financial tools.

“Doing business with Vanguard makes me feel free.”





THE HEART OF PHILLY, ONLY ONE BITE AWAY.

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: HUMANNESS (85)

Capturing the heart of Philly, this brand feels steady and reliable, a pretzel you can count on to be affordable and quick.

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: PERSPECTIVE (71)

Philly Pretzel Factory is challenged with a classic category struggle of getting “tired.” They have their loyal fans but they may struggle to stay relevant.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

Serving up fresh ways to experience a classic, like popular limited-time offers or product collaborations, will be an essential part of staying relevant and growing their Edge in the category.

“It feels like a party every time I eat one.”

UQ SCORE

77

EMPATHY

80

HUMANNESS: 85
HONESTY: 74

ENRICHMENT

76

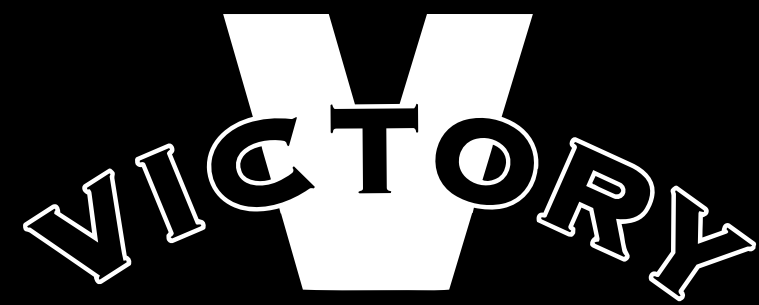
UTILITY: 79
DELIGHT: 73

EDGE

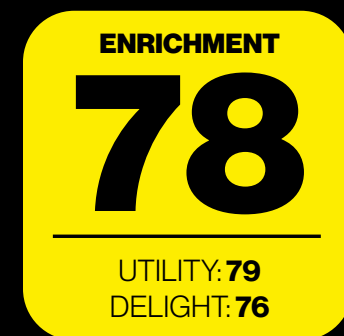
76

BOLDNESS: 80
PERSPECTIVE: 71





IN A BEER CITY, VICTORY IS VICTORIOUS.



STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: BOLDNESS (83)

A beer brand that scores high in boldness for their quirky, approachable nature and stands out among competitors with playful design.

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: HONESTY (65)

Honesty is this brand's weakest attribute, which may be a nod to any shift away from their classic beers or their taproom cleanliness issues.

PHILLY PRIDE FACTOR: 68%.

Victory Brewing has solid credibility, starting just northwest of Philadelphia in 1996, but there is room to show Philly more love.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

Victory is an innovative beer brand doing great things, but locking in on their brand experience at their taproom and other regional experiences will help their brand extend further.

"This company is about adventure and trying something exciting."

08



ANTHROPOLOGIE

UQ SCORE

75

BRINGING A CHIC AESTHETIC TO ADULTING.

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: DELIGHT (83)

In a time when inspiration is just a swipe away, Anthropologie still finds ways to bring inspiration into real life and delight their customers.

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: HONESTY (69)

Anthropologie's honesty suffers from community conversations over their commitment to transparency around their supply chain and labor practices.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

Transparency is an important part of cornerstone brands to keep them out of any negative fast fashion conversations. They should apply the same dedication they have to inspiration to their transparency around their supply chain to address community questions.

“Anthropologie makes me feel elegant, unique, and ready to bring my personal style to life.”

EMPATHY

70

HUMANNESS: 70
HONESTY: 69

ENRICHMENT

78

UTILITY: 73
DELIGHT: 83

EDGE

79

BOLDNESS: 78
PERSPECTIVE: 80



09

URBAN OUTFITTERS

UQ SCORE

72

STILL TRUSTED TO BE PHILLY'S CURATORS OF COOL.

EMPATHY

68

HUMANNESS: 68
HONESTY: 69

ENRICHMENT

76

UTILITY: 76
DELIGHT: 75

EDGE

73

BOLDNESS: 73
PERSPECTIVE: 73

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: UTILITY (76)

While a high score in utility shows their usefulness, it may hint that the brand is becoming disconnected from their original ethos.

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: HUMANNESS (68)

Urban Outfitters' low humanness score is likely a symptom of their success. They need to make sure that as they grow, they stay true to the uniqueness that got them where they are.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

Urban Outfitters needs to return to being one step ahead of culture, using more personal one-to-one connections to surprise people with what a big corporation is capable of.

“Inclusiveness and acceptance are two qualities UO has. This brand is fun and non-judgmental.”





KNOW WHERE YOU STAND.
KNOW WHAT TO DO NEXT.



five BELOW®

UQ SCORE

69

PHILLY'S OWN CORNER STORE FOR TWEENS.

EMPATHY

67

HUMANNESS: 71
HONESTY: 63

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: DELIGHT (75)

Even with the state of the economy, Five Below is able to delight people with exciting finds at a low cost.

ENRICHMENT

72

UTILITY: 70
DELIGHT: 75

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: HONESTY (63)

Affordability at scale can be challenging and often affects transparency, so it is no wonder that Five Below takes a hit on honesty.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

Five Below can't let who they are go off the rails. Delight does not just extend to the products they carry but the whole store experience, making sure tweens are engaged as soon as they step in the door.

EDGE

66

BOLDNESS: 67
PERSPECTIVE: 65

“The fun, treasure-hunt shopping vibe and affordable trendy goods make Five Below my go-to spot for cheap, exciting little finds.”

12



gopuff

UQ SCORE

69

**THIS BRAND LOST THEIR FRESH SPIN
ONCE THEIR UNIQUE SELLING POINT
BECAME INDUSTRY STANDARD.**

EMPATHY

66

HUMANNESS: 64
HONESTY: 68

ENRICHMENT

69

UTILITY: 68
DELIGHT: 70

EDGE

71

BOLDNESS: 75
PERSPECTIVE: 68

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: BOLDNESS (75)

Gopuff is a local upstart going toe-to-toe with big brands backed by big-name partners and a sensible, in-house quick-delivery model.

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: HUMANNESS (64)

With backlash stemming from new AI features, Gopuff needs to go back to basics and rehumanize their brand to make customers feel seen and heard.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

When you are going up against big delivery models like Uber Eats and Amazon Prime, you need to have a strong point of view and sharp product. Gopuff hovers in the middle right now, so they need to give people a reason to use them over the delivery behemoths.

“Gopuff has always taken care of me when I needed them.”

13



Happiness
BY THE
HANDFUL



UQ SCORE
66

**THE FIRST NAME THAT COMES TO MIND
WHEN PHILLY THINKS OF CHIPS.**

EMPATHY
63
HUMANNESS: 66
HONESTY: 59

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: DELIGHT (71)

Family-owned and offering a wide range of flavors, this brand feels both wholesome and fun.

ENRICHMENT
70
UTILITY: 69
DELIGHT: 71

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: PERSPECTIVE (58)

In a competitive, overpopulated category, Herr's hasn't shown people what they stand for and gets drowned out.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

In a cluttered category, being crunchy isn't enough. Snack foods with strong personalities or partnerships tend to stand above the rest.

EDGE
64
BOLDNESS: 69
PERSPECTIVE: 58

**"Herr's remind me of family being together
and summer fun and barbecues."**

14



Goldenberg's
Peanut Chews

UQ SCORE

66

A BELOVED BRAND GROUNDED IN PHILLY NOSTALGIA.

EMPATHY

64

HUMANNESS: 72
HONESTY: 56

ENRICHMENT

71

UTILITY: 75
DELIGHT: 67

EDGE

64

BOLDNESS: 66
PERSPECTIVE: 62

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: UTILITY (75)

Peanut Chews are known for being a good-tasting product that people remember fondly.

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: HONESTY (56)

Memories and word of mouth aren't enough to tell the full story, and it's hard to build trust when you're not marketing who you are to people who want to know.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

As generations transition and memories fade, Peanut Chews needs to fight to make sure they tell their story to a new generation who haven't had parents or friends introduce them to the brand.

"Goldenberg's Peanut Chews are out of this world."

15



UQ SCORE

66

A PHILLY BRAND THAT RESTS ON THE SUCCESS OF THEIR NECESSITY.

EMPATHY

67

HUMANNESS: 71
HONESTY: 62

69

UTILITY: 76
DELIGHT: 62

EDGE

63

BOLDNESS: 62
PERSPECTIVE: 64

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: UTILITY (76)

Dietz & Watson benefit from being a necessity – they are a well-known deli brand that people rely on for their meals.

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: HONESTY, DELIGHT, BOLDNESS (62)

While D&W's products often get chosen, it's a choice of convenience. However, they haven't nurtured that convenience into brand love like Kraft or Oscar Mayer.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

Resting on necessity will only take them so far. Dietz & Watson should look at food brands like Duke's Mayo that have made the jump from commodity to obsession in order to have a life beyond the fridge.

“Dietz and Watson reminds me of something carefully crafted and nurtured, like a quality product that takes time and care to develop.”



UQ SCORE

65

THE WATER ICE BRAND FOR PHILADELPHIANS.

EMPATHY

65

HUMANNESS: 66
HONESTY: 64

ENRICHMENT

71

UTILITY: 75
DELIGHT: 67

EDGE

60

BOLDNESS: 66
PERSPECTIVE: 53

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: UTILITY (75)

Rita's is a delicious water ice with high awareness and a high likelihood of choice, suggesting their strong utility score is driven by accessibility and habit.

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: PERSPECTIVE (53)

Rita's brand edge is a weak spot - this is a sign of limited trust, advocacy, and overall belief in the brand. Beyond their ice, people aren't sure what to think about them as a brand.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

Rita's shouldn't settle for being the water ice of choice; they should aim to be a dessert of choice, looking at inspiration from other dessert brands that capitalize on their uniqueness (i.e., Crumbl, Jeni's Ice Cream).

**"Rita's brings me happiness and enjoyment
whenever I eat it."**



16



A RELIABLE PHILLY CHOICE THAT LOSES THEIR VOICE IN A CROWDED MARKET.

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: DELIGHT (68)

While technically located in Pottsville, Yuengling is Philly's "lager pour" and an enduring go-to at tailgates, cookouts, and dive bars across the city.

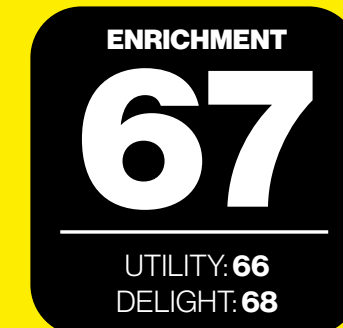
WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: HONESTY (54)

Yuengling's lower honesty and overall empathy score suggests that while they may be well known, they struggle to make authentic personal connections.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

Yuengling should leverage their awareness, building deeper brand affinity like other more vocal beers in the category to become more than just a habitual choice.

"Yuengling is great for uniting people at a party."



Independence 



PHILLY’S HOMETOWN INSURER.



STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: UTILITY (69)

Independence being known for Utility implies they are an insurance company that works hard to benefit those who use them.

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: HUMANNESS (58)

Insurance companies are not known for their Humanness. People actively distrust these brands, so IBX can rest assured that they are not alone in this score among their peers.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

Keep showing up for the people of Philly and their communities, building trust and closing the gap people feel exists between themselves and insurance companies.

“I associate independence, freedom, and healthy living with Independence Blue Cross.”



honeygrow®

UQ SCORE
62

ON THE VERGE OF GREATNESS, THIS BRAND JUST NEEDS AN EXTRA PUSH.

STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: HUMANNESS (68)

Honeygrow flips the script for QSRs with their humanness being their winning attribute. This may be due in part to their “freezer free” mission that puts good food first.

WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: BOLDNESS (57)

Like many QSRs, Honeygrow’s brand edge fades to the background. Surprising given their commitment to serving great food.

HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

Honeygrow is stuck in the middle of the category, weighed down by one of the lowest awareness scores. They should focus on using their humanness to fuel who they are like other QSR giants who pick a strength and amplify it further.

**“Honeygrow makes me feel happy
with their fresh ingredients and
healthy meal options.”**

EMPATHY

66

HUMANNESS: 68
HONESTY: 64

ENRICHMENT

62

UTILITY: 64
DELIGHT: 59

EDGE

58

BOLDNESS: 57
PERSPECTIVE: 60

19





A ONCE-BELOVED PHILLY BRAND THAT HAS STRAYED TOO FAR FROM WHAT WORKED.



STRONGEST ATTRIBUTE: HONESTY AND BOLDNESS (64)

Tied on honesty and boldness, Tastykake's highest ratings sit in the middle of the category, suggesting they are who they say they are.



WEAKEST ATTRIBUTE: PERSPECTIVE (50)

Their perspective ranks at the very bottom of the category, suggesting they are out of touch with who their brand is and how it connects to people's needs.



HOW THEY BECOME MORE UNSTOPPABLE:

Tastykake suffers from being a great habit buy for some core followers, but they need to tap back into the culture and spread that habit to larger audiences.

"I think of Tastykake as something from my childhood."

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A LOOK BACK AT WHAT MAKES PHILLY, PHILLY.

There's a lot of heart and soul in the brands that make up Philadelphia, and the competition keeps them current and fresh. There are heritage brands that stand the test of time and some that need a boost. Plus, there are hot upstarts that are taking on the world.

But no matter the challenge, these brands are up to the task and there are many more waiting in the wings. Some will rise or fall and others may join the list in the years ahead. Brands are always evolving, and as the UQ illustrates, only a select few can be truly unstoppable.





A SCORE IS ONLY USEFUL IF YOU DO SOMETHING WITH IT.

The Top 20 shows which Philly brands are strongest today. The bigger opportunity is understanding why.

UQ shows what's working for your brand, where it's falling short, and what to strengthen next. Because knowing your score is interesting, but knowing how to move it is the point.

Ready to find your UQ?

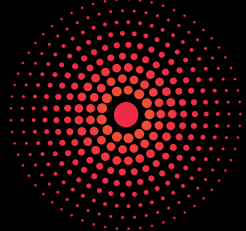
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