

RDL*B

The Modern Dilemma: A hunger to be grounded*

Marketing is facing a rooted reformation
Boosting local businesses to help fight giants



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To be rooted is perhaps the most important and least recognized need of the human soul.
 —Weil (1952).

study as a feeling of emotional rootedness. The study highlights the causes and effects of this phenomenon and how savvy businesses can rain in on a consumer need that has not yet been classified and defined in marketing literature. It is a modern-day dilemma one that has manifested itself primarily in highly urban cities with a highly digitized work and most pertinent in areas of low social economic status or heavily impacted by covid.

While it has been well covered that businesses should offer a purpose and an experience to their consumer, it is an entirely different and new endeavor to sell the connection of a company to its roots as a form of consumer well-being.

People are turning to their roots, connecting with their homes, culture, and history, it is a result of the lack of purpose, community, and historical connection that urbanites feel in the modern world. There are several cases to show the growth and market impact of this consumer behavior, the study showcases some like the surprising growth and sustainability of the craft beer industry in comparison to overall beer volume sales. In 2019, craft beer accounted for 13.6% of total beer volume sales—a number that had increased by 4% even as overall U.S. beer volume sales had decreased by 2% (Brewers' Association 2020).

For the last 70 years, the world has been rapidly racing to a fast-paced, digitized, globalized world that is fostering a need in consumers for a reformation of people's roots. A study from the American Marketing Association by (Isabel Eichinger, Martin Schreier, and Stijn M.J. van Osselaer) claims that there is a growing need due to several external factors for emotional groundedness as defined in the



Another industry that has been recording great success in the past years is local foods which have increased from \$6.1 Billion in 2012 to \$8.7 billion in 2015 (Low et al. 2015; US Department of Agriculture 2016.) The revolution of local farmers markets in the past decade has been astounding, there has been a 180% growth in local farmers markets across America since 2006 this coinciding with the study's results showing responses that

consumers were willing to pay a price premium of **60%** for products that seemed more grounded.

This is not to imply that the future would be a return to traditional and old-fashioned markets and products at low mass, but that the growing need is valuable and in need for a solution in corporation's marketing.



One example of an innovative tech company that is leading the field in providing grounding products is Etsy, which has seen an impressive \$10.3 billion gross merchandise sales worldwide in 2020 (Etsy 2021.) It's the company that is providing its users a "closer to the creator" experience that mirrors that of a farmer's market or artisanal goods store. It creates an experience and open dialogue with its users and creators to take in the story, place, and people behind the product. It is a highly welcomed and gratifying feeling to purchase a product that feels unique, that expresses community belonging and a deeper purpose and history. It pushes the consumer to pay premiums that ultimately boost and propel local and artisanal producers to capitalize on this need across the market.

Businesses need to act quickly and fast to this market opportunity and consider new ways to reflect your company and product's story, its place, and the people behind it. To resonate with their consumers and attract new audiences of people who are craving this innate feeling that is becoming harder to attain in our modern, digitized, and globalized world.

So, to companies and entrepreneurs seeking to fulfill market needs, you might want to start by looking back to your roots.

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