

# Is Your Brand Virtuous or Vice-ridden? Development and validation of the brand's morality scale (MRLS)

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Cite as:

Golossenko Artyom, Discetti Roberta, Tran Hai-Anh, Khamitov Mansur (2024), Is Your Brand Virtuous or Vice-ridden? Development and validation of the brand's morality scale (MRLS). *Proceedings of the European Marketing Academy*, 53rd, (119312)

Paper from the 53rd Annual EMAC Conference, Bucharest, Romania, May 28-31, 2024



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## **Abstract**

This study presents the Brand Morality Scale (MRLS), a novel instrument for measuring brand morality, defined as a set of morally praiseworthy traits attributed to a brand. Across three phases with 2,028 participants, we comprehensively validated the MRLS, demonstrating its content, factorial, nomological, discriminant, and incremental validity, and ensuring its measurement invariance across diverse consumer groups. Grounded in virtue ethics and a person-centered approach to moral judgment, the MRLS distinctly measures brand morality, setting it apart from existing consumer perception scales. Our findings provide insights into how brand actions, particularly in crisis situations like product harm, influence consumer perceptions of brand morality. The development of the MRLS represents a significant contribution to the fields of consumer psychology, enhancing our understanding of brand morality and its implications.

**Subject Areas:** *Attitude, Branding, Consumer Behaviour*

**Track:** Social Responsibility & Ethics