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Is your company seen as left-wing, right-wing, or neither? And does it matter anyway? In France at least, tech companies are seen to be more right-wing than left. Even that bastion of counter-culture, Apple, is seen as conservative.

Ahead of the first round of France's presidential election, researchers polled French voters as to their perceptions of a wide gamut of brands in technology, luxury, clothing, retail, consumer products, cosmetics and services.

"There is a connection between the amount of effort brands make to have followers, and the leftish perception of the trademark," said Marcel Botton, CEO of Nomen International, which conducted the survey.

"When the brand seems to be very close to the consumer and appears as defending the consumer, then it appears to be more leftish."

Mr. Botton said there were far more brands perceived as right-wing than left. Energy and luxury brands were seen as very right. The most left-wing brand was a Vélib, which rents out cheap bicycles in Paris. "Of course it doesn't make any money," joked Mr. Botton.



In the tech sector, Free—[Xavier Niel's](#) challenge to the established mobile players in France—was the most left-wing brand, and closely followed by YouTube.

Social networks (Twitter, Facebook and MySpace) were broadly seen to sit in the middle, while IBM, Microsoft, BlackBerry and Apple were seen as the most right wing.

While the research is a bit of fun ahead of the French elections, is there a serious side to the findings? Yes, says Mr. Botton.

"Take away the luxury brands which are clearly on the right, and have to be there, being on the right is not a very good place for a brand," he said. "Probably, the consumer makes a connection between being on the right and making a lot of profit. Making a lot of profit does not have a very good perception in France. It has something a bit dirty about it."

The online survey was carried out between March 16 and March 20, with a representative sample of 963 French people aged 18 and over. Users were asked to rank companies with a score from one to 10 (one being left) on their perception of where the brand sat on the political spectrum.

As well as being asked their perceptions of the political slanting of brands, respondents were asked which values were associated with which end of the spectrum.

According to respondents, the left is associated with solidarity, generosity, and tolerance; the right with firmness, authority, discipline, and individualism.

To learn more about Nomen: <http://www.nomen.com/>