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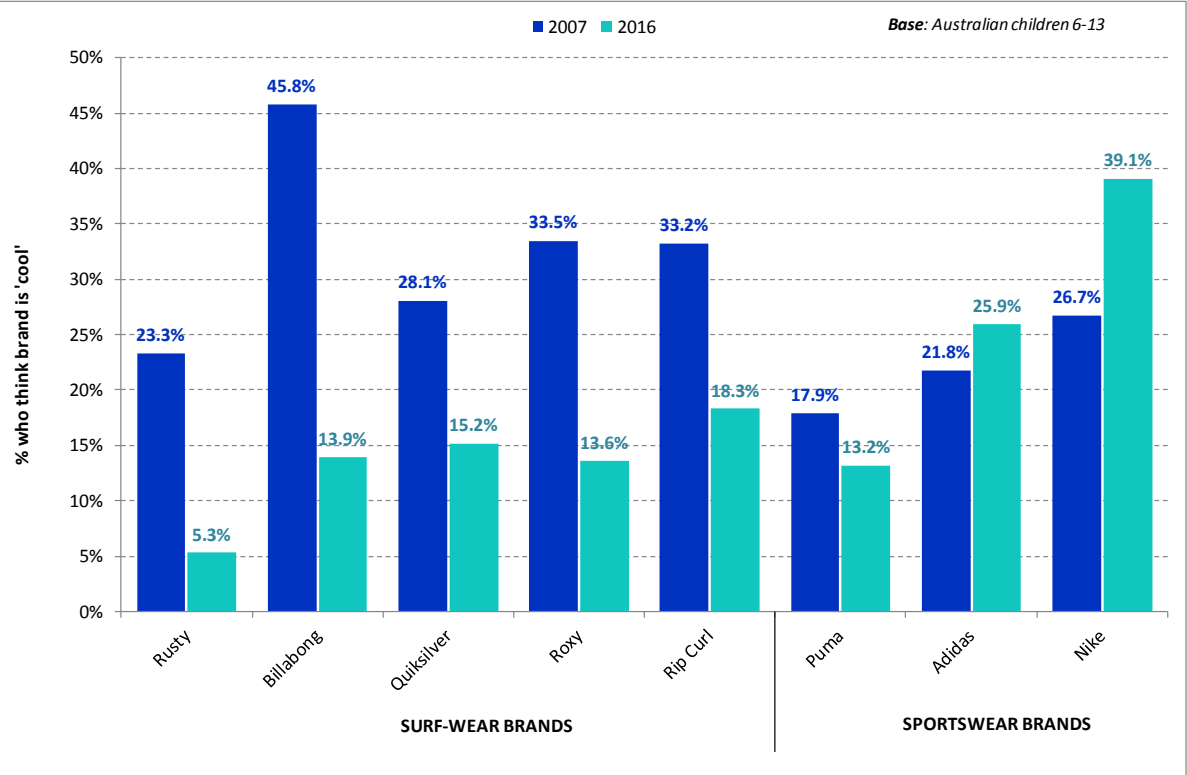
So long Billabong: kids like Nike (or how sportswear overtook surf-wear on children's cool list)

Despite high-profile surfing champions like Mick Fanning, Taj Burrows, Tyler Wright and Stephanie Gilmore doing Australia proud on the international circuit, iconic surf-wear brands such as Billabong and Rip Curl are no longer considered cool by nearly as many Australian kids as they used to be. In contrast, sportswear labels Adidas and Nike have been steadily gaining ground with this challenging demographic.

Back in 2007, when asked to choose 'What is really cool' from an extensive list of brands, games, TV shows, cartoon characters, toys and tech devices itemised in Roy Morgan's Young Australians Survey, 46% of Aussie children aged between six and 13 years old included home-grown surf-wear brand Billabong among their 'cool' picks. Fast forward to 2016, and only 14% ticked Billabong.

Fellow Australian surf brand Rip Curl has also fallen from juvenile favour: between 2007 and 2016, the proportion of children who considered it cool fell from 33% to 18%. Aussie-founded (now US-owned) Quiksilver also lost popularity, with just 15% of kids including it on their cool list in 2016 (down from 28%), while its sister brand Roxy suffered a similar fate (from 34% to 14%). Only 5% of kids rate Rusty as cool now, less than a quarter of the 23% who did in 2007.

Which surf and sports labels are cool with kids? 2007 vs 2016



Source: Roy Morgan Young Australians Survey Jan-Dec 2007 (n=2,284) and Jan-Dec 2016 (n=2,906).

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This decline in surf-wear's cool credentials is evident among boys and girls of all ages, but the most pronounced downturn has been among girls aged between 10 and 13. For example, whereas 72% of girls in this age bracket thought Billabong was cool and 79% thought the same of Roxy in 2007, these figures have plummeted to 22% and 30% respectively.

Sportswear on the rise

Sportswear, in the meantime, has been winning young fans left, right and centre. Considered cool by 27% of Aussie kids in 2007, Nike is now at 39%. While Adidas's trajectory hasn't been as steep, it now outstrips all five surf labels with 26% of children rating it as cool (up from 22%). Curiously, Puma hasn't fared so well (slipping from 18% to 13% between 2007 and 2016).

Just as the cool status of surf-wear brands took its biggest hit among 10-13 year-old girls, sportswear's most dramatic improvement was with this same group. An impressive 57% of girls aged 10-13 agree that Nike is cool, up from 29% in 2007; with 40% feeling the same way about Adidas (up from 25%).

Norman Morris, Industry Communications Director, Roy Morgan Research, says:

"Whereas surf labels like Billabong and Rip Curl used to be about as cool as it got with Aussie kids, Roy Morgan data shows that this is no longer the case. Those in the apparel trade will know that this is consistent with a wider slump for surf-wear, which has struggled (along with many other local clothing retailers) to compete with the influx of cheap'n'cheerful international retailers such as H&M and Topshop.

"Furthermore, surf culture in Australia has moved so far from its rough-and-ready roots that it's now part of the mainstream, with even former PM Tony Abbott hitting the waves. On the other hand, Nike and Adidas are benefitting from the current athleisure craze, with kids (especially girls) clearly responding to sportswear's popularity with fashionistas around the world. Nike's relationship with actor-comedian Kevin Hart and Adidas' association with singer Kanye West undoubtedly add to these labels' desirability, even among children.

"Aussie kids are an influential consumer group, not only spending their own money but often influencing their parents' purchasing decisions. They have strong opinions on what's cool and what's merely lukewarm, and what they like today may well be different to what they liked just 12 months earlier. Brands wishing to stay abreast of this group's ever-changing trends and preferences would benefit from the in-depth data contained in Roy Morgan's Young Australians Survey, the largest continuous survey of this important market."

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research's Young Australians Survey data, please contact:

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About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2