

9 Brands to Watch in 2017

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By Peter Economy While Peter Economy has spent the better part of two decades of his life slugging it out mano a mano in the management trenches, he is now a full-time ghostwriter and best-selling author of more than 85... Full bio @ bizzwriter The Leadership Guy @ bizzwriter

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Denise Lee Yohn is a brand expert and author of the book, *What Great Brands Do*. She recently posted [a list of the 26 brands to watch in 2017, conveniently arranged A-Z](#). When Denise talks about brands, I listen--and you should, too.

Here are the first 9 brands to watch in 2017 from Denise's list:

A. America. The United States of, that is. [With Trump's assumption of the highest office in the land](#), it's unclear what the coming year holds for our country. We could see significant and surprising changes from Cuba to China and immigration to infrastructure, plus health care, regulation, and more,

B. Barnes & Noble. The venerable bookstore chain has let its CEO go, lowered sales expectations, and shrunk its footprint by dozens of stores. Meanwhile Amazon Books is opening stores. Is 2017 the year B&N's death will become imminent?!

C. Chipotle. No one thought it would take this long for Chipotle Mexican Grill to recover from its food borne illness crisis. Recovery plans for the coming year include a new store design, desserts, and digital ordering.

D. Donald Trump. The future of the Trump brand is in question. [Will the Donald's presidency help or hurt it?](#) The election might indicate that the brand has more fans than most imagine, but Trump's strong campaign rhetoric combined with conflict of interest issues might detract from the brand's power.

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E. Echo and Echo Dot. Sales of Amazon's Echo and Echo Dot voice-controlled speakers have topped five million in two short years. The company is now rumored to be working on a high-end Echo-style device that would feature a 7-inch touchscreen.

Yes, it's like a tablet-and-speaker in one, and yes, Amazon is continuing to land grab in its fight against tech giants like Apple.

F. Ford. Bill Ford recently made the bold announcement that autonomous ridesharing is coming in 2021. It's a big bet with a potentially huge payoff -- but what happens to the brand in the meantime?

G. Google. The Pixel smartphone that Google introduced in 2016 has gotten off to a great start, with positive reviews and three million units in sales. Let's see if it continues to grow and support the company's strategy of drawing more people to the Android platform.

H. Home Depot. Competition between The Home Depot and Lowe's has been one of the quintessential retail

rivalries. Currently The Home Depot is growing sales faster and enjoys higher profitability, and at the time I'm posting this, it was popping up as an analyst choice for holiday season sales. Let the game continue.

I. iPhone. Apple is expected to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the iPhone launch by introducing a brand new edition. Radical changes expected include a super-high-resolution OLED screen that stretches from edge to edge of the device, a virtual on-screen home button, and wireless charging capability.

Want to see the other 17 brands to watch in 2017? [Be sure to visit Denise Lee Yohn's website for the full list.](#)