

# AUTHENTIC INSIGHTS: THE CULTURE GAP

  
FLEISHMAN  
HILLARD



Global Report 2022

## INTRODUCING GENERATION DIVIDED

An exploration of society  
and how we bridge divisions

# A COMMUNICATOR'S MANUAL FOR CHANGE

In partnership with acclaimed author and  
Columbia University lecturer, Kai D. Wright



## EXPLORATION

Learn about the new Generation Divided (Gen D) and what makes them tick: who they are, how they see the world and their expectations for communicators.

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## TRANSLATION

Unpack how Gen D navigates and views key market sectors – sports, healthcare, media, food and beverage, politics and employee engagement – as individuals and communities.

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## APPLICATION

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# BRIDGING THE CULTURAL DIVIDE

In an era of people power where words combined with actions are the minimum expected to maintain connections between business and brands, most find themselves in a state of arrested development.

In this year’s edition of FleishmanHillard’s Authentic Insights report, we unpack a new generation, Generation Divided, to help brands and businesses understand how to bridge the current cultural divide. Our study builds on global insights to highlight the new cultural dividers that govern society, showing a tactical way forward for brands and businesses to connect and empower the people and communities they serve.

Exploring this divide will spotlight not only how brands and businesses can gain a deeper understanding of culture but include takeouts which can act as a springboard to strengthen reputation and help brands stay culturally relevant without losing authenticity.

Flipping the script, this year, FleishmanHillard puts cultural issues at the heart of the discussion to further understand how brands can move out of paralysis on today’s most critical topics and navigate a path forward.

**Candace Peterson,**  
Global Managing Director  
of Brand Marketing



## BRIDGING THE CULTURAL DIVIDE CONTINUED

### WHY NOW?

We’re seeing traditional demographics being dismantled as intersectionality is embraced. With that comes new shared perspectives that are blurring the historic binaries and generalizations that once categorized us and reinforced stereotypes. If we are to understand what impact the current paradigm shift is having on people, we need to look beyond the labels that businesses and brands used previously and find a more progressive way for society to communicate.

### ★ Expert Opinion

**KAI D. WRIGHT,**  
AUTHOR AND COLUMBIA  
UNIVERSITY LECTURER



As the world becomes more multicultural, intersectionality is pushing brands to evaluate whether demographic-based strategies work best for business relevance and growth.

Brand and business decision-makers must balance growth imperatives with the greater necessity to operate in an inclusive, ethical and empowering manner. Increasingly, audiences expect their employers, favorite brands and large institutions to learn how to both navigate culture and help solve societal issues.



What we’ve found is that to understand society’s true dimensions, we need to move away from standard demographic splits based on age and gender, and instead look to identify communities through commonalities across a range of factors. The inclusion of socioeconomic indicators, gender identity, religious beliefs and political leanings ensure that all aspects of humanity are reflected via a mindset within our research.

This mindset is an evolution of, and response to, the findings of our previous report, Togetherness Economy.

Published in June 2022, the study found that, in this age of culture wars and divisive rhetoric both in the media and online, consumers are putting a renewed emphasis on the importance of togetherness. Using the results of our study and working with Harvard Medical School’s Robert Waldinger and Martin Raymond of the Future Laboratory, we devised two frameworks for brands to adopt more ways to effectively foster cohesion in their words and actions. Within the Togetherness Traits framework developed with Waldinger, we stress the importance of “remembering the forgotten” in all communications and then “emphasizing ‘in-commonness’ rather than difference” in depictions of these forgotten demographics. This provides a more inclusive and rounded view on a much deeper scale of understanding, not only of what divides us but that which unites us as well.



Communities over individuals — we need to understand people’s taste networks as the reliance on psychographics for understanding buying habits is outdated due to our new spheres of influence.



# INTRODUCING GENERATION DIVIDED

"Be global, but think of the planet and don't travel. Be vegan, but don't go over-green. Have an opinion and be active, but don't offend anyone. Embrace other cultures, but don't appropriate. Compete against others, but we're all winners and equal. Be yourself online, but promote yourself and your hustle."

People aren't just divided within communities; they are divided within themselves. An internal state of flux on what's right and what's not is underway within us all. People are struggling to be honest with themselves and their actions, feeling a disconnect between what they're told they truly care about, and what they honestly do in reality. Our moral compass on decision-making is in full swing — influenced by the state of division around us.

In short, we are living in a polarized world on both a global and individual level. Algorithms are creating echo chambers in our consumption of news feeds, and media agendas driving public opinion and brand action are only the tip of the iceberg. Our survey revealed that the proportion of people who believe brands should be 'bold and brave' versus 'sensible and conservative' was almost split equally (58% versus 56%), so it's no wonder brands and organizations aren't always sure how to make positive steps forward to eradicate these issues.

## INTRODUCING GENERATION DIVIDED CONTINUED

PREVIOUS GENERATIONS OFTEN LIVED OUT THEIR WHOLE LIVES IN THE SAME TOWN, ATTENDED THE SAME PLACE OF WORSHIP, LISTENED TO THE SAME TEACHINGS, READ THE SAME NEWSPAPERS, CHATTED TO LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE, WHO LOOKED AND SOUNDED THE SAME, AND SHARED THE SAME OPINIONS.

THE RISE OF THE INTERNET HAS OBVIOUSLY CHANGED THIS DRAMATICALLY; AND DESPITE ALL ITS POTENTIAL FOR CULTIVATING COMMUNITIES AND MOVEMENTS, THE ERA OF SOCIAL MEDIA HAS ALSO SEEN PLATFORMS BECOME TOOLS AND PLACES FOR DIVISION, JUST AS MUCH AS A PLACE FOR SOCIALIZING.

And it's not so much that our views are diverging, but that our differences of opinion have become far more visible. The fact is that people today are much less confined to ideological bubbles than they were in the past; this has contributed significantly to the evolution of today's Generation Divided.

Fake news is now evolving into deepfake videos, and we may not even be able to fully trust what we can see in the near future. The metaverse is promising a virtual ocean of possibilities, but within those possibilities still lie the dangers of such a vast and (as of yet) unestablished space. In terms of what the future holds, we know the direction, but the full picture of what we will find is yet to be determined — all the more reason to prepare and establish expectations, anticipate change and be part of that shift before it engulfs you.

**The one constant we can rely on is change.** With technological innovations promising to drastically alter our everyday realities and prospects, our vital, modern-day issues of diversity, equity and inclusion will be in need of safeguarding and consistent reevaluation. In an era of heightened cultural sensitivity and with new communities emerging every day, brands and organizations must keep pace with the major societal themes of our time to protect their reputation.

# 48%

believe it's becoming more difficult to get along with people who hold contrasting views.



ON A MACRO LEVEL, WE'VE SEEN THEMES AND TRAITS IN OUR AUDIENCE SEGMENTS, AND OUR RESEARCH HAS HELPED SURFACE GEN D'S TRAITS.

“

To cater to Gen D, your campaign must take into account and deliver against one of these internal dilemmas. If it doesn't, START AGAIN and look deeper into what is holding them back.



**Baby Boomers**  
Idealism



**Gen X**  
Materialism



**Millennials**  
Globalist mentality



**Gen Z**  
Undefined ID

### COMPLEXITY NORM

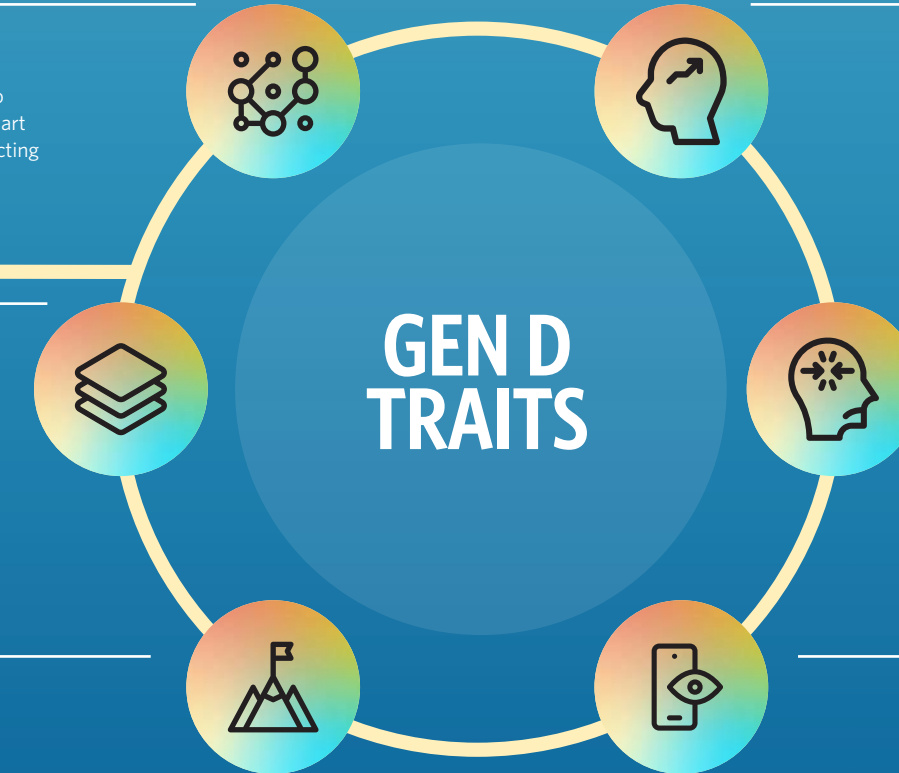
Gen D is used to being in a state of confusion, whether that's dissecting conflicting news or making personal decisions that go against public and personal agendas — confusion has become part of their normality, to the point they're almost content with expecting and dealing with it.

### LAYERED REALITY

Gen D live out lifestyles and personas to suit our hybrid but currently discordant culture. Able to switch gears, whether that's online or offline, they're finding out what works for them on a case-by-case basis depending on their cultural context. No longer just having multiple conversations in their heads and on various platforms, Gen D is moving to having multiple personas with some actively switching beliefs and tone dependent on IRL or online context.

### AMBITION AMBIGUITY

Not to be mistaken for a lack of ambition, Gen D are experiencing ambition ambiguity — finding alternative routes and states of mind as opposed to the traditional "hustle and grind." They are currently reexamining what their ambition means to them, where it takes them, and consequently informing businesses what it really means for future career and life ambitions.



### EVOLVING ID

On both a personal and societal level, Gen D know change is needed and on the horizon. They know their direction, just not the exact destination yet. Expect them to increasingly commit to conscious changes in the coming years, from their eating habits to travel habits to media consumption and more.

### INTERNAL CONFLICT

Gen D constantly experience an internal back-and-forth conflict with themselves. From Liberal Left to Conservative Right, short-term joy against long-term responsibility, sustainable ideals against capitalist consumerism — they're not 100% sure where they stand on the myriad of issues today as a result of the cultural divides so prevalent in society. Nonetheless, the conflict is a sign of their passionate views and refusal to settle for the status quo. Somewhat paradoxically, Gen D's internal conflict is a sign of them trying to cross the cultural divide themselves — they just need some guidance.

### INFORMATION RESTRAINT

With such an abundance of information, perspectives and conflicts occurring in the culture gap, Gen D pull back from information sources, wanting them in easy-to-digest, all-in-one, personable resources they can trust. Reliable information will be more important than ever in order to cross our culture gaps today and tomorrow.



# THE CULTURAL CANVAS: WOKE TO WAKE-UP!

If you were called “woke,” would it be a compliment or an insult?

This simple question sums up a lot about the “culture wars” that have become such a focus across the world in recent years. And as language is constantly evolving, it also poses the question, do we all truly know what the term means?



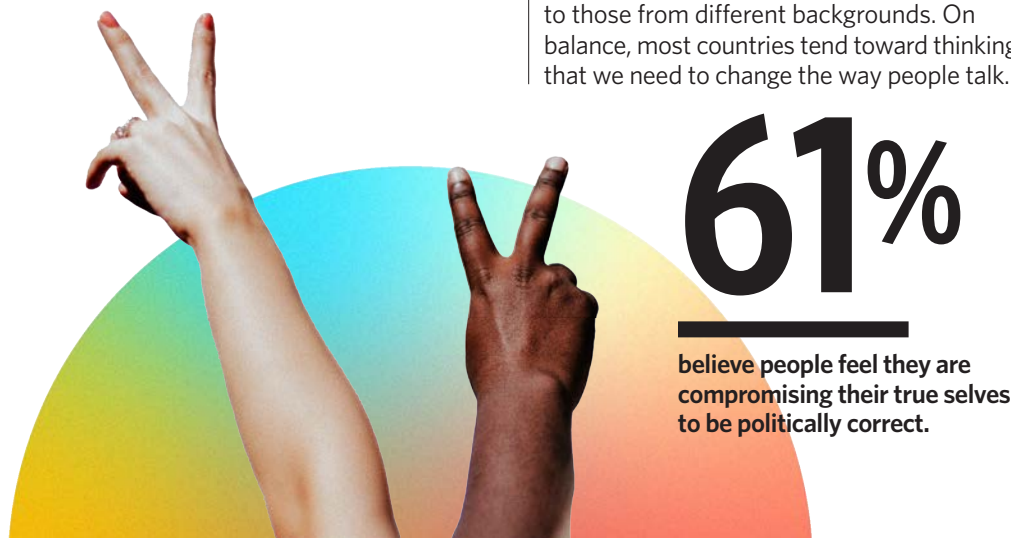
## WOKE TO WAKE-UP! CONTINUED

**Language is a collection of terms that originate from communities, each term having a meaning and context often historically eroded over time. In summer 2022, the 140-year-old Oxford English Dictionary announced it was adding a new glossary — the Oxford Dictionary of African American English — by 2025.**

Harvard professor, renowned historian and newly named editor of the African American Vernacular (AAVE) dictionary, Henry Louis Gates Jr., noted “every speaker of American English borrows heavily from words invented by African Americans, whether they know it or not.” And “woke” is no exception. Born from the spirit of Marcus Garvey and the African American community, a state of being “woke” was a code never intended for mainstream debate. Being “woke” was a reminder to members of the global pan-African community to activate one’s consciousness to forces — visible or intangible, legal or improper, ethical or immoral — that governed inequitable social norms.

In the 1940s, the term “woke” resurfaced as a concept that symbolizes awareness of social issues and movement against injustice, inequality and prejudice. But today, popularity has diluted its meaning and the idea has been cynically applied to everything from soft drinks to period dignity, attracting criticism if too liberally applied. This shift in meaning has forced people to ask the question: Are we living in a “political correctness gone mad” era, where freedom of speech is compromised?

When asked to rate their feelings about political correctness on a scale, research by The Policy Institute found that the British public emerged as most likely of 28 nationalities surveyed to say that people are too easily offended. Only those in Australia and the U.S. felt as strongly that people take offense too readily — although other nations, such as Sweden, Canada and the Netherlands were not far behind. At the other end of the spectrum, people in India, Turkey and China were most likely to feel that people need to change the way they talk to be more sensitive to those from different backgrounds. On balance, most countries tend toward thinking that we need to change the way people talk.



Outside of communication, the same study found on average across the 28 countries surveyed that people perceive the most tension to exist between the higher and lower socioeconomic groups, followed by divisions by politics, social class and immigration, and between those with different values.

In a world that feels more divided than ever, learning how to communicate sensitively and appropriately has never been more important for brands to remain inclusive. However, the challenge is finding a way to do so without compromising your authentic brand self.

**What’s interesting is that it’s clear we are at a cultural crossroads**

Our survey revealed that indeed, more than three in four (79%) agree that brands should be conscious of the language they use to engage with different communities if we are to progress, but the majority agree that convoluted concepts, or hyper-language, can actually be more divisive. With this in mind, is it time that we strip this back, and go back to basics? We can all agree that it’s positive for society to wake-up to cultural issues. Maybe it’s time we stopped trying to sound smart, and spoke in simple terms, where authenticity can no longer be compromised.

However you view the term, being alert with your eyes wide open to what’s constantly going on outside of your four walls is the only way to remain in touch and avoid a backlash regardless of the “woke” factor you are dealing with.

**DON’T FAKE IT UNTIL YOU MAKE IT.**

## ★ Expert Opinion

**KAI D. WRIGHT**  
AUTHOR AND COLUMBIA  
UNIVERSITY LECTURER

“When it comes to dismantling the language around concepts like “woke,” people want brands to be sensitive to cultural shifts.

**81%**

of consumers believe it’s most important for brands to be authentic and empathetic (70%).



ONLY HALF  
**50%**

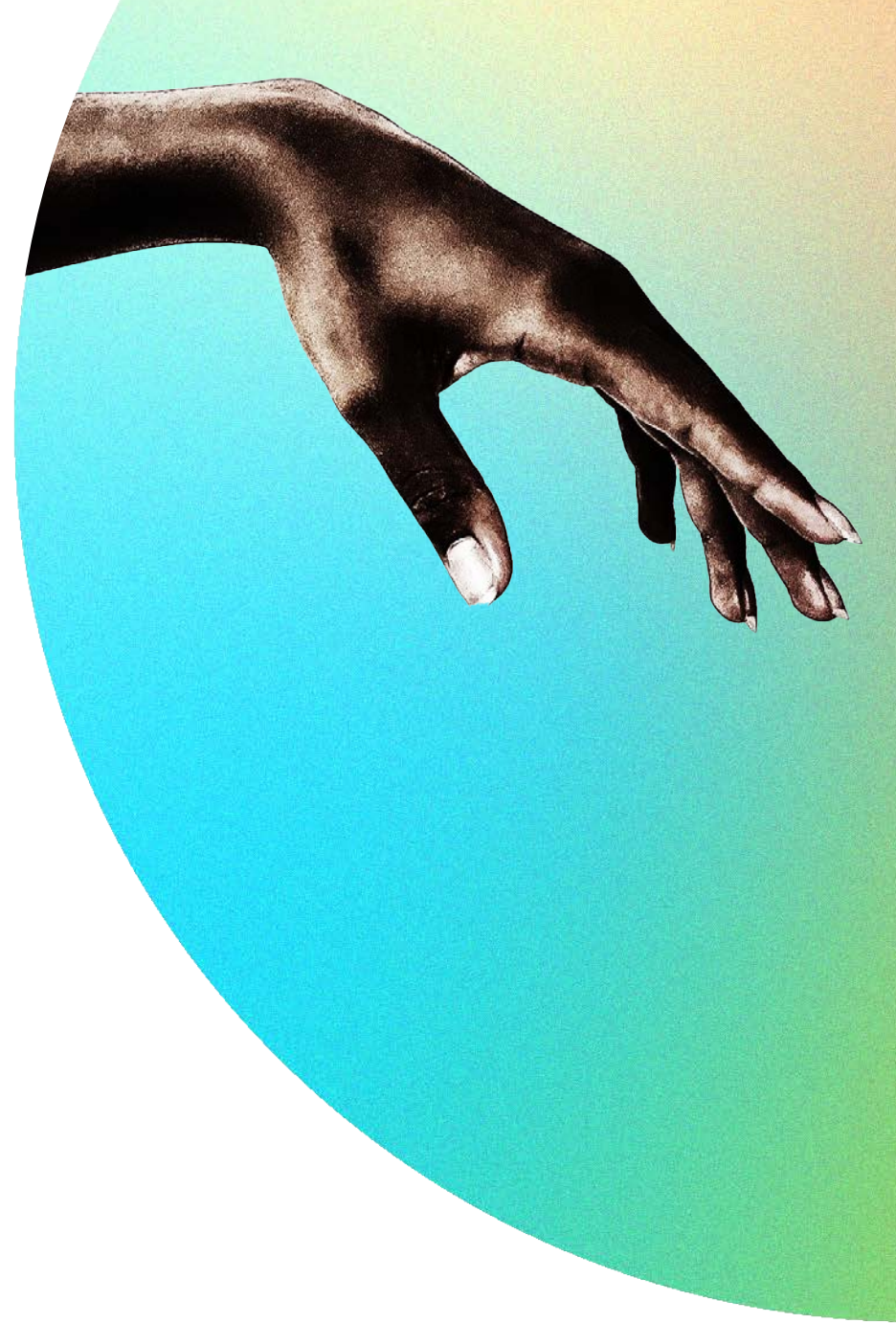
think that monogamy will still be the norm in 20 years, one-third (33%) think it will be the norm in 50 years and 1 in 4 (25%) think it will be the norm forever.

## OUTDATED TRADITIONS AND SHIFTS IN IDEOLOGY BLURS LINES

As a result of this woke conflict, there has been a blurring of the lines across various aspects of society, leaving many feeling divided as these new areas of growth or change are perceived as infringing on others' beliefs. From fluid gender identities, and traditional and religious beliefs making a comeback, to reproductive rights reversal, personal ideologies are being fought for in both immediate and long-term futures.

**We have reached a boiling point in society where the social agenda no longer focuses on one sole issue; change is expected and needed across the spectrum.**

Ideologies and social structures that seemed irrefutable have started being challenged: What is the correlation between laws, practices and actions? What is the role of brands, organizations and governing bodies in confronting societal issues?



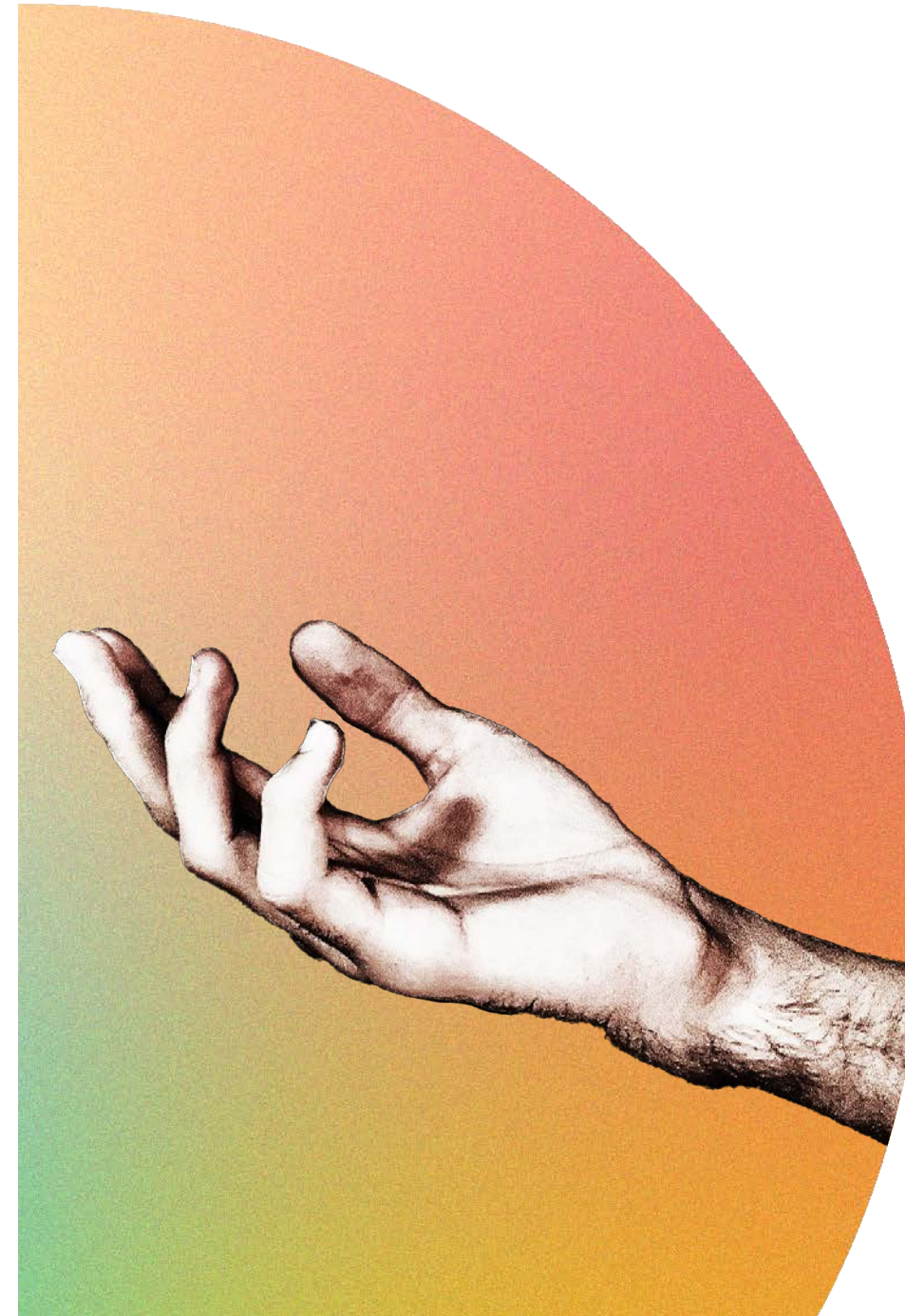
“  
ONLY  
**40%**

We are seeing societal growing pains as we try to reconsider, readjust and reinvent through this era.

One thing's for sure, how businesses and organizations navigate and act in these quickly changing landscapes needs to be respectful. They need to consider the myriad perspectives and communities that fill out the cultural canvas around us — or else risk wading into murky waters where even actions taken with the best intent can be criticized and deemed one-sided and overly targeted to the “woke,” or overly manufactured and not authentic or impactful enough.

think home ownership is a stronger signal of prosperity and adulthood now than it was in the past.

With these new lines being drawn in the sand, we are changing the way we look at our identities and the societal structure around us. Our accepted norms are evolving, driven by underrepresented groups and digitally connected movements that spill out into the street. We are seeing societal growing pains as we try to reconsider, readjust and reinvent.





With new identities and perspectives come a new set of expectations, and with these come new opportunities to impact the culture around businesses and organizations in positive, productive and empathetic ways. Kai D. Wright, author, academic and Columbia University lecturer adds that in order for brands to impact culture, they have to be intentional. This means proactively identifying points of friction, then evaluating and evolving systemic issues within your organization.

**BY FOCUSING ON PUTTING PROGRESS AND UNDERSTANDING IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT, BRANDS CAN FEEL SAFER KNOWING THAT THEIR REPUTATION WILL BE IN THE BACKSEAT COMING ALONG FOR THE JOURNEY.**



### THE ERA OF 'BRAND STORYTELLING' IS OVER.

Progress means brand story-acting, which means walking the talk versus just brand storytelling. In a landscape that is being pushed and pulled from all sides, constantly in flux, there is a need for reliability from brands and businesses to show up, and do and say the right thing.

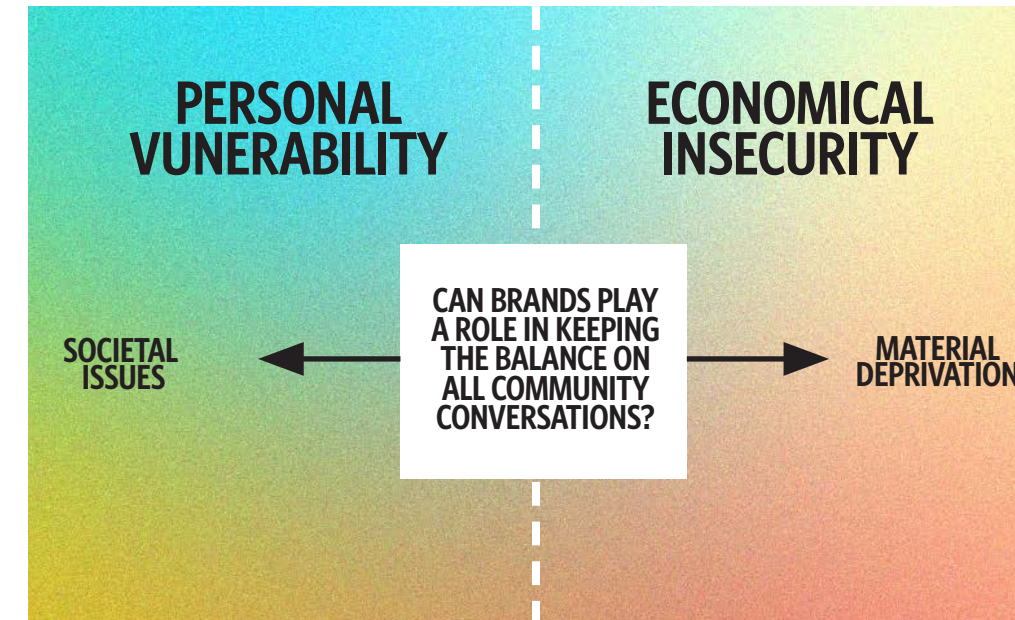
Forget trends and instead make longer-term commitments that embed you in movements with real purpose.

### HOW TO BALANCE ECONOMIC EMPATHY

The challenges of trying to fight the good fight are compounded by our recent global economic struggles. The outlook has been deemed grim, with experts predicting a decade of stagnant global growth. Currently, geopolitical readjustments are ongoing and conflicts on the horizon are all resulting in bleak forecasts, with anticipation of an era of deglobalization causing supply issues for core components of an economy, such as gas, oil, wheat, semiconductors and people's safety, among others.

This will have an enormous and long-term effect on culture, consumerism and how the general public views money — a foundational aspect of our society and the system that governs us.

While civil unrest will be much more likely, there is also the possibility that with a bleak economic environment, other issues may drop in the context of people having to choose between heating and eating in trying times. There is a clear divide between personal needs and emotional wants for society, with no one clear answer to bridge all divides.



“

**In challenging times we come together. As the UN secretary-general says: “It takes a world to fix the world.” For communicators, inaction simply is not an option.**

And action is critical for brands too. It's not just about how we target, talk and sell to consumers anymore. Our consumers are real people, who are sitting on a vulnerability scale, lost and in need of support. They require active solutions that contribute to their everyday lives, not endless and costly product upgrades and empty campaigns that have no impact.

- More than half (53%) think brands should release fewer upgrades/new products over the next year.
- A significant portion (46%) say that new launches make them more likely to buy things they don't really need.
- This rises to 56% for Gen Z.
- 55% believe certain products and product categories have reached their peak in terms of upgrades, with smartphones and other technologies most often noted.

We're seeing that, in fact, brands can win more in this space by helping people view adversity through a new, positive lens. Adversity is a powerful force that can build character that often evolves into strength and the power to overcome personal barriers. Celebrating this via a lens that spotlights positivity can help nurture the resilient spirit needed to succeed.

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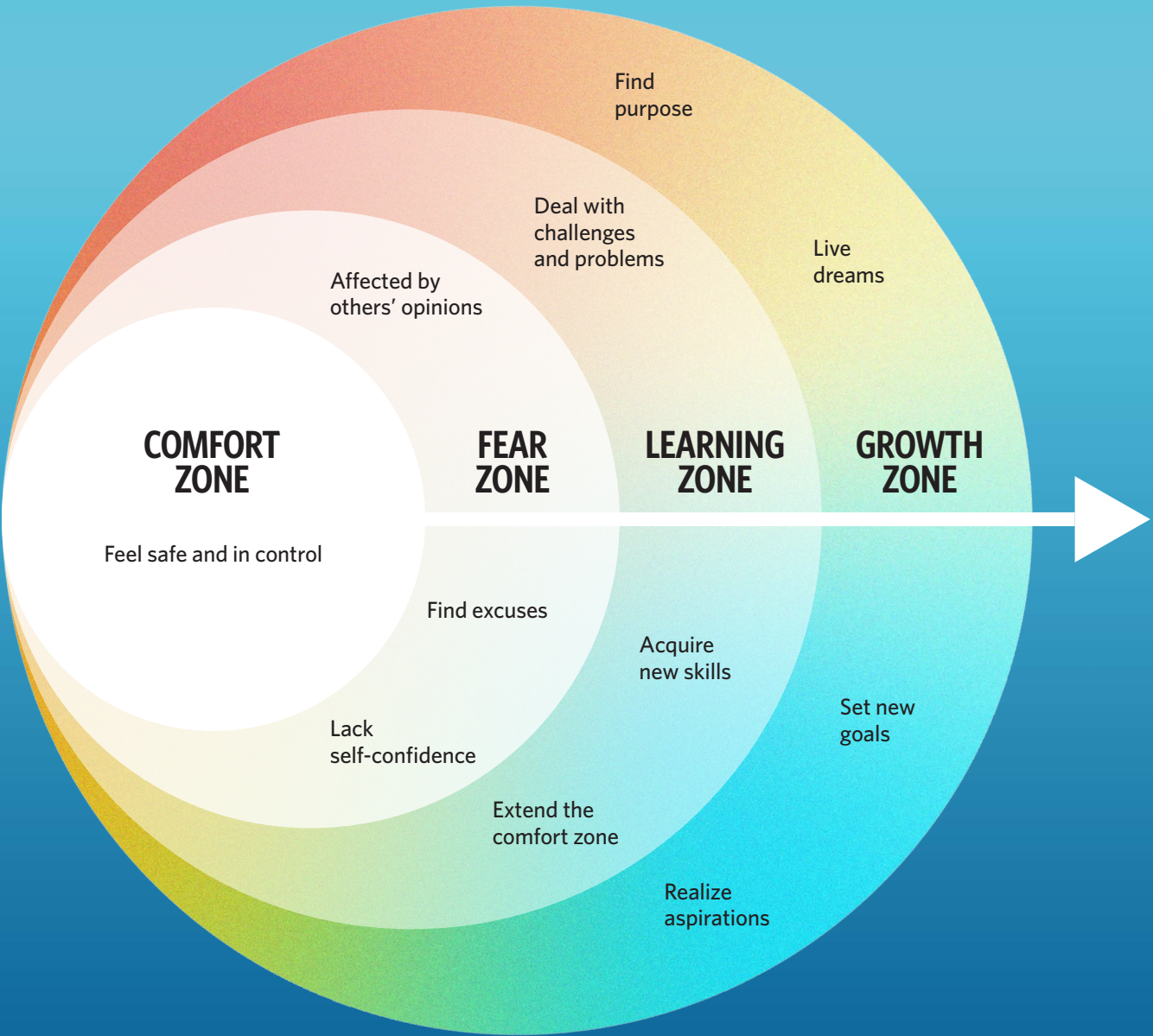
**Consumers are people first — communicators need to stop talking and hijacking conversations and start listening to help move people's needs to the top of the agenda.**



# REASONS WHY CULTURE X ISSUES CROSSROADS

To better understand the cultural crossroads facing business sectors and their communities, we need to look at the core areas in which those brands and businesses operate.

However, while all issues are relevant to Gen D across a variety of situations and topics, these are not isolated to just the genres we lay out next. It is more that these are pertinent drivers for the changing face of these sectors, which must be truly understood in order to play a role of enablement and support through this change.



## COMFORT ZONE TO GROWTH ZONE

Brands, businesses and communities can find themselves aligned by shifting in partnership from the current fear zone to the growth zone.

Communicators can assist this by ensuring they are pressure testing themselves with outside perspectives that ensure campaigns are not built only in the comfort zone.



# THE CHANGING FACES OF SPORTS

Inclusion in sports and what it means for teams and sponsors is a prevalent topic causing rifts as a younger generation tackles new rules that the industry is struggling to get ahead of.

It sounds simple:

**“We want to create a level playing field in sport for everyone, from top to bottom.”**

While the ambition might be simple, creating that space for aspiring sports people and fans around the world could not be more complex and divisive.

Whether it's trans inclusion, spotlighting women, reviewing outdated rules, or enabling the next generation to thrive in sport — we are seeing what was once traditional and predictable for athletes, teams and sponsors is now a fast-developing and contentious area for understanding.

From brands already involved or wanting to help, through to rights holders, all have transformative roles to play in understanding the situation and journey we need to take so they can be driving forces for positive change. It's time we leveled the playing field.



## SPORTS CONTINUED

### Cultural Signposts

#### Trans to Transform

Transgender athletes in sport — nowhere is the distinction between sex and gender more nuanced than in the context of competitive sport. Our research found that 50% think it will be important to have more mixed team sports. Could this be the first step for brands who champion inclusivity? Brands need to stop talking about binary categories with such finality and look at how they can create new categories and bring people together, finding the balance for consumers who are divided between inclusivity and assurance of fairness within competition.

# 52%

**THINK SPORTS TEAMS AND SPONSORS SHOULD MOVE AWAY FROM GENDER-BASED CATEGORIES.**

The London and Boston marathons recently announced that they are introducing a nonbinary category in 2023; is it time other brands looked to make these types of shifts?



#### Create the Demand, Don't Wait for It

Women's sports is the right investment — the reach and profile of women's sport has grown over the last few years, and our research confirms that the general public want to see more movement in this space: 60% think it will be important to have more female leaders in sports teams/organizations, and 64% think having more female officials in games is important. But while women's sports has grown in the right way, it's still disproportionate to investment in pathways and marketing that should be blazing the trail for the next generation. From a business investment perspective, the ROI is staggeringly high, and yet many brands for whom both men and women are key audiences still choose to only sponsor men's sports. As brands who champion equality, how can this situation be evolved? Can we stop focusing on following demand and lead the way on empowerment to create demand?

**TO BRING WOMEN'S SPORTS TO THE SAME LEVEL OF POPULARITY AS MEN'S SPORTS, CONSUMERS BELIEVE THE TOP PRIORITIES SHOULD BE TO:**

**44%** Drive a cultural shift around the perception of women in sports.

**42%** Develop better grassroots program for girls.

**39%** Secure high-profile sponsors/brand partnerships.

**37%** Secure more prime-time TV spots.

# 47%

**almost half think that marketing communications around sports should focus on individual players as people rather than the sporting category they exist within.**

#### NIL in Collegiate Athletics

In the U.S., the NCAA recently updated its rules to allow collegiate athletes to make money by selling rights to their name, image and likeness, ushering in a new era of opportunity for amateur athletes.

On the one hand, the shift addressed longtime inequity in the distribution of wealth created by predominantly black student-athletes to a multibillion-dollar collegiate sports enterprise. On the other hand, the new rules threaten to create new inequities for athletes across race, gender and sport. Can brands win by wading into this new era? To support next-gen youth, how can brands play a role in structural changes applied to the sports ecosystem, which itself tends to be highly inequitable, exclusive and disproportionately resourced?

#### Wellness Winning in Youth

Globally, grassroots sports offers so much more than just the sport being played. There are tremendous mental and physical health benefits. However, the importance of competition has been reassessed. Two-thirds (71%) agree that participants' mental health should be prioritized over winning, and more than 1 in 3 (33%) believe youth and grassroots sports should even eliminate competitive categorizations. Do brands need to reframe what “winning” actually means against a new climate where health and mental well-being comes first?



# THE HEALTH IS WEALTH PARADOX

What is the **true cost** of good health in today's society?

The healthcare demands of people around the world are changing at a rapid pace. As people and the planet face new challenges, their priorities shift and so too do their expectations of healthcare companies to find solutions to their emerging health challenges.

Today, offering effective solutions to healthcare problems is no longer enough. People want to be able to make more sustainable choices and they want the provision of healthcare products and services to be more inclusive. However, these demands come at a cost. Most people are unable to afford access to the latest advancements in medical care, further expanding the health equity gap.



## HEALTHCARE CONTINUED

The cost of shifting toward more sustainable business practices is having a direct impact on the affordability, and sometimes efficacy, of everyday health and personal care products. And while there are an increasing number of organizations taking bold steps to be more diverse in their internal and external actions, their efforts are being met with a mixed response of support and criticism.

Businesses in the health space are struggling with communicating on multiple issues, varying from abortion to trans inclusion as matters of health and equity. Employees of healthcare companies see their leaders leaning in hard on health equity topics but failing to confront these real-world issues.

No one company can be everything to everyone. So how do healthcare organizations balance the need to deliver safe and efficacious products while answering the growing demands of their consumers? And how do they do this while prioritizing and focusing their efforts on changes that are most authentic for their business?

### Cultural Signposts

#### Inclusive Language vs. Traditional Labeling

This is particularly relevant when it comes to gendered healthcare brands targeted toward women. For example, there's a lot of pressure on period/intimate hygiene brands to be more inclusive with their language. However, brands adopting inclusive labeling, such as "for people who bleed," have faced backlash from customers for being "woke" or "marginalizing women". Clinical trials are also evolving to become more inclusive of the dimensions of global society including gender, race and other factors.

**OUR RESEARCH CONFIRMS THAT CONSUMERS NEED HELP TO NAVIGATE THIS GROWINGLY COMPLEX CATEGORY:**

**44%**

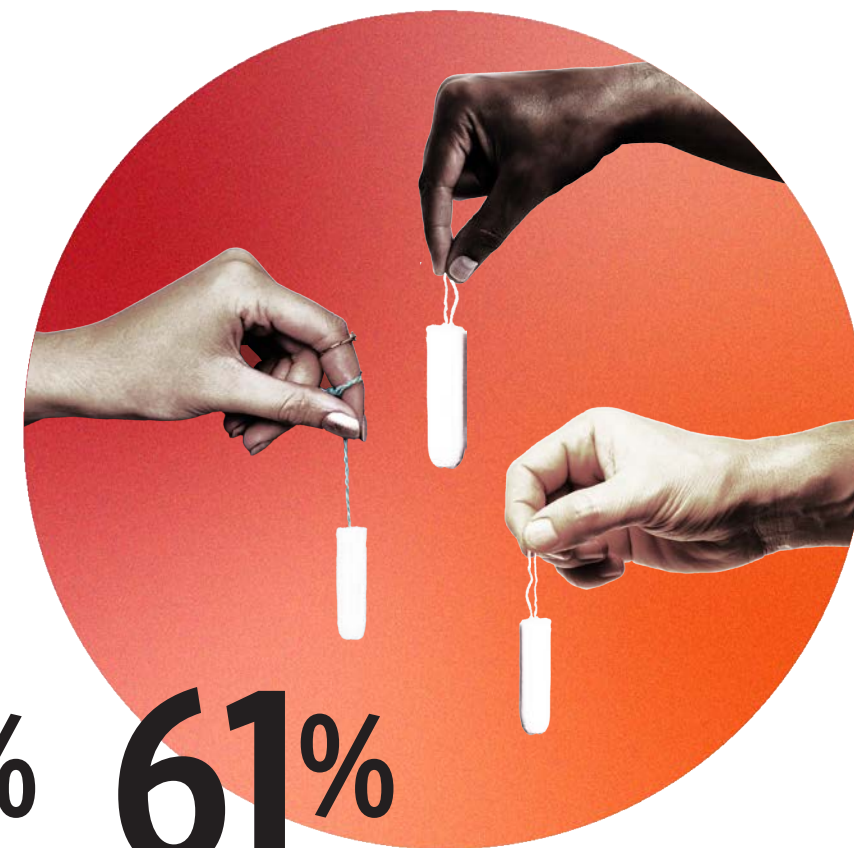
think gender-based coloring on products and packaging should be removed.

**43%**

find the use of language around gender identity in healthcare confusing. Brands and businesses need to consider the obvious and vital areas where archaic binary categories can disappear, while at the same time not rushing into judgments for the sake of change.

**61%**

would buy a gender-neutral product — and only 10% say they wouldn't (the rest are neutral). Brands should consider mixed category products to be used by men and women in the same way.





Know When To Be Quiet or Vocal

As expected, we’re seeing that consumers will turn to healthcare professionals (69%) or family and friends (58%) first when it comes to health-related information over brand websites (39%). This indicates that brands or organizations in this sector should look to create welcoming spaces that provide an open forum for comfortable discussion versus taking the role of health professionals themselves.

71%

of consumers believe that it is important to talk about the ‘unglamorous’ parts of health. We’re seeing lots more open discussions in this space — is there a role for healthcare brands to bring under-discussed topics to the forefront?

Ethical Practice vs. Efficacy of Products

It’s clear that there is a growing expectation for health and wellness companies to produce products with clean, simple and sustainable ingredients, without compromising on efficacy. Seventy-three percent of consumers believe climate change is a major concern with regard to their impact on healthcare for future generations. Today, healthcare brands must try and find a way to make products meet altruistic needs while still delivering on traditional product benefits.

62%

of consumers are not confident with what ‘digital healthcare’ means. Are there ways for healthcare organizations to simplify this so that consumers aren’t left behind? This continues to corroborate the role that healthcare brands and businesses need to play in being educators of the access and usability of modern, digital healthcare (43% want investment in health literacy).

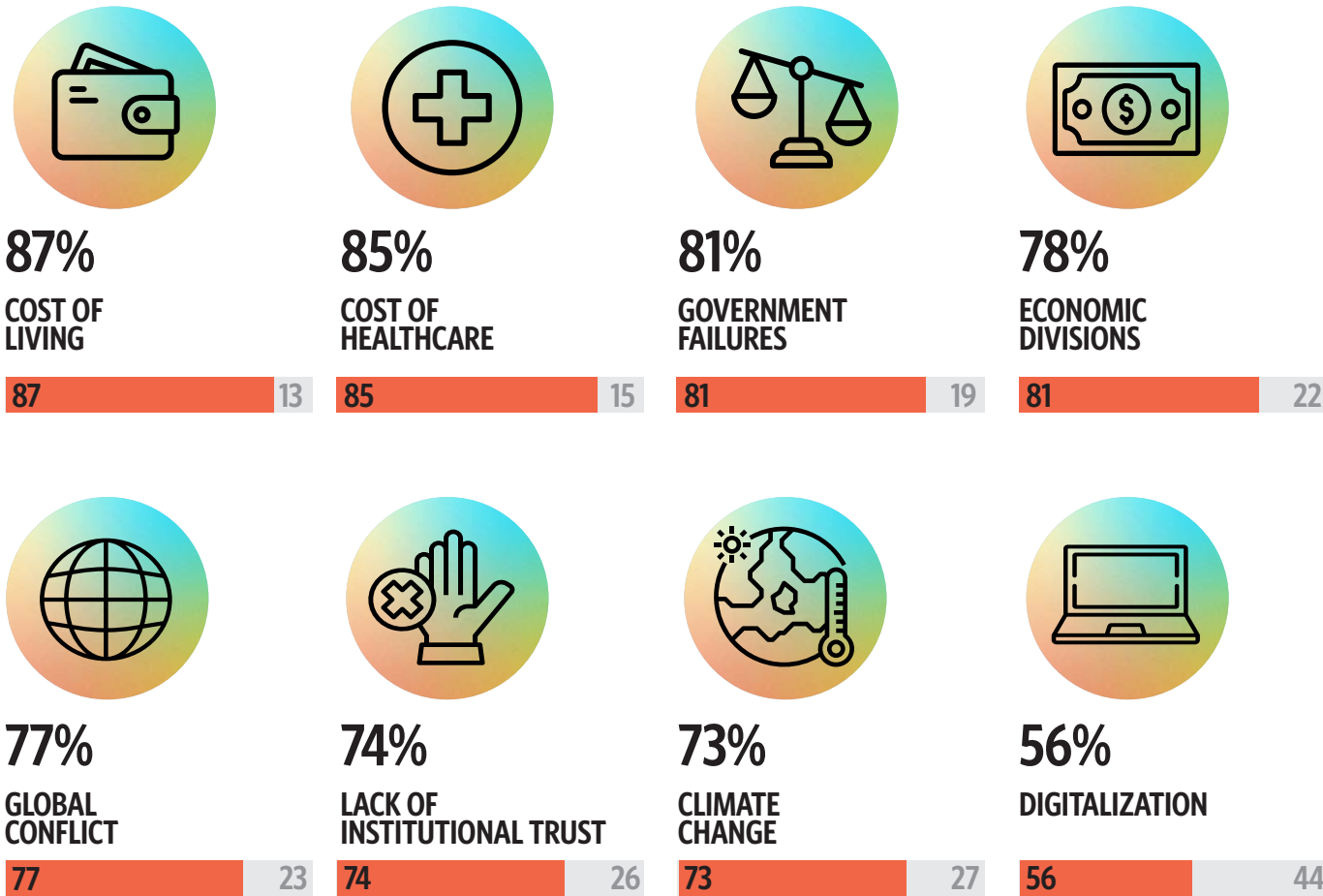


Accessible Healthcare

The rise in digitalization of healthcare and at-home diagnostics, even the reclassification of the contraceptive pill are all recent healthcare innovations that have helped to improve consumer access to healthcare. However, these benefits come at a cost.

While some argue healthcare is becoming more accessible, there are concerns about health equity and the disparity between the wellness and health literacy of the wealthiest versus poorest members of society. This is particularly sensitive against the backdrop of the cost-of-living crisis, which our research confirms is the biggest concern to the public (87%). If healthcare brands can find ways to manage and improve access without excluding certain communities altogether, they can help unite versus divide consumers in this space. Interestingly, our data also showed that a small proportion of people (14%) would go to a hospital in the metaverse. Could this be a future-facing solution to explore for helping reduce costs?

FACTORS THAT ARE EXPECTED TO BE A SIGNIFICANT/MAJOR CONCERN IN TERMS OF THEIR IMPACT ON HEALTHCARE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS:





# NEW PLACES TO PLAY

How will traditional values and social media be reinvented through the metaverse era on the horizon?



Accelerated digital innovation has put world-shifting technologies on a collision course with each other. There is a race to re-imagine everything, providing huge opportunities and unknowns for society, brands and people — potentially shaping the next generation of digital society for all ages.

**Web3** has begun to shift control, access and monetization to consumers through decentralization to redefine the internet, but is the world ready for Web3 or are we headed for a diluted Web2.5?

**NFTs** are as controversial as they are impactful, whether it be their environmental impact or market volatility or security concerns. Once the hype dies down, the true potential of a tokenized economy and smart contracts have the potential to reshape ownership, trade and access, but can the technology overcome its current significant hurdles to achieve its true impact? While there is still uncertainty around what the **metaverse** will look like in its final form, the technologies driving it have helped disrupt the way we work, watch, shop, gig, game, meet, date and even get married.

# 1 IN 5

say they would get married in the metaverse, while 21% would go to a place of worship.

## MEDIA + PLATFORMS CONTINUED

**What are the implications for the visions of the verse, and how far are we from a true metaversal experience?**

Whatever the answers, brands and businesses need to start thinking about how to harness this emerging technology to shape an ecosystem of opportunity.

With advancing innovations, the potential to change everything we think we know is already here.

The dominance of **Meta** is shifting. TikTok is not just surpassing other social platforms in terms of global internet traffic, but is being accessed to the level of Google and its suite of services, including Google Maps and Gmail. TikTok might be rewiring entertainment, giving the next generation of activists new ways to tell stories and challenging the global internet order. One of the key reasons behind this is authenticity. The youth are tired of high production, over-crafted content that is more of a one-way broadcast than entertainment. They want to use social media to connect, be entertained and showcase who they really are — while also connecting with friends. Authenticity is one of the reasons for the rise of the new kid on the social block BeReal and the fall in affection for Instagram. BeReal is social media with a focus on authenticity — as it gives you two minutes to post unfiltered what you are up to at the time. It is also brand free (mostly). If this is what people want — authenticity and a stronger connection with friends — what does this mean for overly curated brand content and corporate comms?

## Cultural Signposts

### Online Recycling

There is a lack of understanding among the general public about the current and ongoing environmental impact of NFTs and Meta. This leaves some hesitant to get involved, combined with the lack of understanding around future value. Our research shows that only 20% strongly believe they truly understand the real-life environmental impacts of their online activities. In recent months, the Ethereum blockchain has transitioned to a new proof of stake validation system that has cut its energy consumption by approximately 98%, making it less of an environmental risk that many didn't know existed in the first place. How can brands follow this example to seamlessly help people reduce their online impact without disrupting their everyday?

### Interoperability

One of the largest barriers to the establishment of a metaverse is the lack of interoperability, and, as with many things, opinions are split. Seventy-four percent agree that brands should collaborate to create more innovative and efficient products and services and eliminate silos. Brands should ask themselves, how and who can they authentically co-collaborate with to not only innovate but streamline a complex world. Can companies fight the financial incentives of keeping information ecosystems isolated and lean to the public benefit of collaborating with competitors for more streamlined information forums?



# 49%

say they would be at least 'somewhat likely' to engage in telepresence sexual encounters if they knew it would be 100% confidential.

### Journalism's New People Power

With people going onto social media to geek out and learn in detail about specific topics and hear about journalistic views outside mainstream media, we're also seeing people's heightened insecurities on whether they're consuming real news. Three-quarters (76%) agree that online content should be authenticated independently to reduce fake news and only half (56%) believe they can spot fake content online. How can brands and businesses play a role in this? Secondly, how could seemingly boring initiatives be championed online to be a source of information for individual passion points?

### Maintaining Manners

We know that a key reason why Meta has taken off is due to the fact that people are demanding more ways to show their authentic selves. Interestingly, our research showed that 58% of people think politeness is decreasing as online interactions take over. This poses the question, is our online persona going to affect how we interact in the real world in years to come? As Meta takes off, brands should prioritize kindness and politeness within all their communities.



# SUPER LOCAL VS. SUPER GLOBAL

The balancing act happening globally around provenance and sustainability in our diets.

Generation Divided has moved to our dinner plates. The pandemic reset what we chose to eat — both in the cuisine and the ingredients. After decades where an increasingly global supply chain and technology helped us not just learn about different cuisines, but source the ingredients and tools to make them, the necessity of cooking at home was accompanied by more time to cook and passion for gardening and food preservation, alongside the sharing of recipes.

Yet empty shelves (or more appropriately, the inability to order online) reminded us of our dependence on a fully functioning supply chain and the impact our choices have on our environment and farming families.

And this spring, the impact of international conflict on the global food supply began impacting not just food availability, but also food costs. So where will we settle? Will our desire for both variety and low-cost, readily available foods drive us back to our “super local” or will our desire to be more self-sufficient and make choices both good for us and good for the planet advance us further down a “super local” path?

The food, beverage and retail sectors find themselves at multiple crossroads. There’s a future need for labeling to highlight how far a brand is from farming. The shifting relationship between cost and quality — including what defines “cost,” what defines “quality” and can a cost be “too low” to deliver quality food?

## FOOD & BEVERAGE CONTINUED

The rise of country-to-country conflict and its impact on food security/uninterrupted supply, and food equity remains an issue with income and location affecting access to, and education about, healthy foods.

The fresh/frozen shifts, change in ready-made food purchases, views on what “healthy” looks like in a diet culture backlash and “Good for me, good for the planet” culture are taking a front seat. The balance between having nutritious foods in our body with regards to wellness comes at a price. Meanwhile, the change in the size of the online basket has shifted consumption, and the striving for perfect foods, the role of technology in delivering the right types and the amounts of food are all critical considerations for governments, brands, people and businesses.

### Cultural Signposts

#### Local Ingredients, Global Palate

The food availability vs. costs debate is high on the agenda for food brands and consumers, and both inevitably impact our environmental footprint. Our research confirms that three-quarters of consumers say using local resources to reduce the environmental impact of food is very/extremely important (74%). With such high figures, brands should learn and lean more into the benefits of going super local. Going super local doesn’t mean a lack of adventure. Our research shows consumers are embracing global cuisines and exploring new types of food, with 59% saying it is very/extremely important to them.



#### Blowing Up the Small Print

While we’re seeing ongoing conversations around labeling and farming, the food labeling and health debate is going nowhere, with research confirming that 65% of consumers agree that ingredients linked to health issues are most important for inclusion in food and drink, followed by “environmental impact of production” (49%). Interestingly, we also saw that more than a third (31%) of consumers say “animal welfare” labeling should be included. With consumer demands growing in the labeling space, health brands should think about how to label without overwhelming consumers with information.

#### Robot Ready-Made Meals

**68%**

of people are prepared to eat lab-prepared food if it helped the environment.

How do brands and businesses show the potential benefits of technology alongside the benefits on nature?

#### Trim Down the Fat Around Product Language

While half of consumers agree that the language associated with food is becoming less relevant (49%), more than a quarter disagree (29%). Brands need to trim down the fat, give the essential product information, and stop putting such emphasis on whether food is “good” or “bad,” “healthy” or “fat.” Audiences are smart enough, with an abundance of research available, and want to stop categorizing food and drink with physical attributes, and avoid terms like, “New year, new you.” With these changing expectations, we can expect people to become more disassociated when food is labeled with seasonal or body changes.



# WHEN DID IT STOP BEING ALL ABOUT THE PARTY?

We are learning to prioritize the issues that matter to us over the flags or faces that make up our political parties.



Overall, just over half (51%) of consumers feel loyal to a specific political party, while the other half don't (49%), showing a clear divide in the confidence and loyalty of political affiliations today. With the abundance of platforms and spaces where people now gather around issues, knowing what people care about should be clearer than ever. Yet with all this noise, it still seems as if no one is being seen and genuinely understood from across the chasm of the political divide.

It's not just a lack of communication between political oppositions, people are struggling to feel a clear line of communication into the politics they support, and therefore don't see themselves reflected in those politics. Major influential powers continue to enter office without getting the general public's explicit approval, and there continues to be an age-old disconnect between the young and the old, who are typically in power.

## POLITICS CONTINUED

# 45%

overall see themselves and their values reflected in mainstream political parties, but 58% don't see themselves reflected in their political leaders.

Because of this disconnect and lack of representation with an ever-progressive societal agenda, people today are learning to (or being forced to) act on issues, not just through party or affiliation. Voter apathy may be higher than ever, but the passion around issues remains — and rather than become explicitly party political, acting on issues is considerably easier and less problematic for brands.

## WHEN IT COMES TO DRIVING POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE:

# 35%

support companies that share certain values, which is considered to be as important as campaigning or protesting (36%).



## Cultural Signposts

### Personal Loyalty Over Party Loyalty

Voters, particularly young ones, are far more concerned about issues than party loyalty. It's not about right or left, it's about making the right decisions for society and future generations. The divides, differences in opinion and long-running tensions between key trading countries has the potential to be a landmark issue for this generation with ripple effects on economies, supply chains and trade partners. However, campaigning on issues is much more doable and less problematic for brands than it is for parties. With consumers united in their desire for more simple, digestible communication around politics (79% agree), there is a ripe space for brands to become category and opinion leaders and influence real societal change.

### Identity Immigration

The advancement of technology has seen global culture explode with foreign entertainment on streaming platforms, global cuisines trending on social media and cultural traditions making their way across borders. Despite all our differences and areas of conflict, we remain curious and captivated by the things that bring us together. Our research supports this, with half of respondents saying that the COVID-19 outbreak made them more aware of, and open to adopting, other countries' ways of living (50%). Brands and businesses, despite local and political tensions and laws, can still show the benefits of cross-pollination with other cultures, and that sometimes the best things for bringing us together can come from outside perspectives.

### From Consumers to Community

There is an opportunity to forge deep brand loyalty around key issues, but one that is still sensitive and in need of rigorous auditing. The conundrum of wanting community, but also wanting customers — a large proportion of whom hold enormously contrasting views — means brands must be careful that any actions they take go beyond cynical consumerism, and don't dismiss views that contrast or conflict with the one being promoted. The exposing of greenwashing and the ongoing 'all eyes on' to any statement of commitment means brands and businesses face risk of disingenuity, but with that risk comes the chance to get it right for the long term. Look to what's most important overall in your community and go big on your promise.

## IDENTITY POLITICS

# 56%

of respondents claimed that personal beliefs are most likely to influence the choice of a political party.

56 44

This was followed by

# 29%

who said that a leader's likeability had the most influence.

29 71

Overall,

# 45%

see themselves and their values reflected in mainstream politics.

45 55

However,

# 58%

don't see themselves and their values reflected in their country's current political leaders.

58 42



# THE WORKPLACE MAKEOVER

Our places of work have seen immense shifts in recent years — and so too have our behaviors and expectations.

The way that employees experience the workplace has fundamentally shifted along with their expectations of what they want from it, and we are still seeing the presence of cultural and generational divisions. Organizations today have rules in the form of contracts, policies and practices, hierarchies in the form of structures, leaders and roles, and norms in the form of culture, values, and behaviors; and we are seeing all three of these elements being blown up on a regular basis as the employer-employee dynamics shift.

The big issue that no organization can truly deny is that time is people's most precious commodity, and the death of the commute has given desk workers that time back.

We're in the midst of extraordinary times in the relationship between employers and employees. Employers seem to be finding themselves on the backfoot of nearly every challenge, and employees are consistently turning up the heat. Around the world, we're seeing unions making a comeback, with empowered workers demanding better wages, benefits and treatment. To many, this certainly has been good news. However, there is a growing divide between salaried supervisors and their hourly union team members, and we are seeing this globally.

As these cultural differences collide in the workplace, tensions are undoubtedly flaring on many fronts and it's unclear how this will shape up. Will the entry into recession and the tightening of the job market work in favor of employers or will we continue to see increased division in the workplace?

51%

responded that work/life balance is the most important topic for companies to update their policies on — closely followed by health (45%) and sustainability (43%).

A MASSIVE

89%

of people think that a virtual workplace would be beneficial. Attending virtual creative brainstorms (21%) were considered less beneficial.

#### Cultural Signposts

#### Future of Work Management Skills — 'Old Dogs' Need to Learn 'New Tricks'

Required management skills have evolved over the past few years due to several factors, not least of which is the changing expectations of employees. With the increase in remote working comes the challenges of managing people when you can't see them, having empathy to understand their unique personal circumstances, and focusing on the value of their results, versus their inputs.

Additionally, what people bring into work and the list of employee factors has grown; managers/leaders need to be attuned to this. It's not just work and personal needs that people are bringing, it's the divisiveness (nationalist-based, political) correlated with divided societies. Managers now need to have the skills required to mend divides and bring people together, and organizations need to help them feel equipped to do this.

Are companies that have actively been supporting, not just promoting, DE&I better prepared for this? What are their characteristics? At times of division, what are the universal truths that people can hang on to, such as mutual respect or care and compassion? Are we going to see changes in the typical CEO traits on a CV?

#### Societal Issues — Employers As Mediators

Societal issues around the world have entered workplaces and employers have found themselves operating as mediators, spokespeople and, to a certain extent, agents of employees whose voices have never been louder on these topics.

With increasing transparency about what happens inside an organization, and employees' willingness to be activists to drive their position, employers' reputations are at stake, and the positions they take can have consequences. Organizations should purposely take a stance because employees are more assertive in their position that they won't work with companies that don't take a stance on issues they care about.

74%

of people believe that outside educators provide the most hope for the future; however, consumers are still expecting brands (65%) and CEOs and business leaders (58%) to step up.





## THE 'SAY-DO' GAP: HAVE EMPLOYERS EARNED THE RIGHT TO SPEAK OUT?

Increasingly, employees are more vocal about what they want from an employer and are willing to speak out about it or go and work elsewhere. Alarming, 54% agree that employers often fake their interest in DE&I and other societal issues, which demonstrates a real need for organizations to make time to prove their commitment in this space. It's clear that employees want their beliefs to be matched by their employers, including purpose and brand values, but have they earned the right to speak and act on issues externally?

# 53%

say providing good benefits to staff is most likely to make employees feel proud to work for their employer. This is slightly ahead of helping staff feel like they are making a difference (49%).

# 58%

of people would choose an employer based on its willingness to take a stand on societal issues.

# 63%

say being able to play a role in shaping the future through professional life and through personal life (66%) are equally important. How can employers help employees feel like they are working toward a better future via the work they do?

## Community Over Cities, Consumerism and the Commute

Generally, people have picked up more sustainable habits since working from home, and all of a sudden the rat race is being rewilded to our new vision for our future. With this in mind, how can employees tap into their staff's new preferences? Employee benefits can be reinvented with this new mentality in mind, with benefits for home-life and work-life blurring.

## REWILDING THE RAT-RACE GRIND

**70%** are more likely to shop locally.

**64%** are more likely to repair existing products over buying new ones.

**61%** are more likely to use up leftover food.

**67%** are more likely to wear clothes on repeat.

# 46%

say opportunities for people to widen their knowledge is more of a driver to be ambitious than money (44%). Power is the lowest ranked driver of ambition at 18%.



Hourly workers are experiencing record-breaking profit sharing every quarter compared with a meager annual incentive bonus the supervisors get.

Meanwhile, the hourly folks clock out at the end of the day while these supervisors get called in at all hours of the night when things break down at work.



# 52%

of people either currently have a side hustle or are planning to start one.

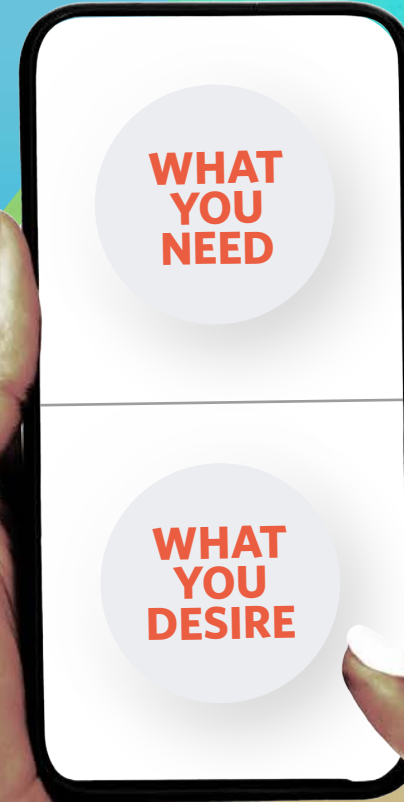


# BUYER BE AWARE: THE NEW PURCHASING DILEMMA

We've dived into sector analysis and looked at how divides have manifested, but our findings also demonstrate that this current context has indeed affected the purchasing model.

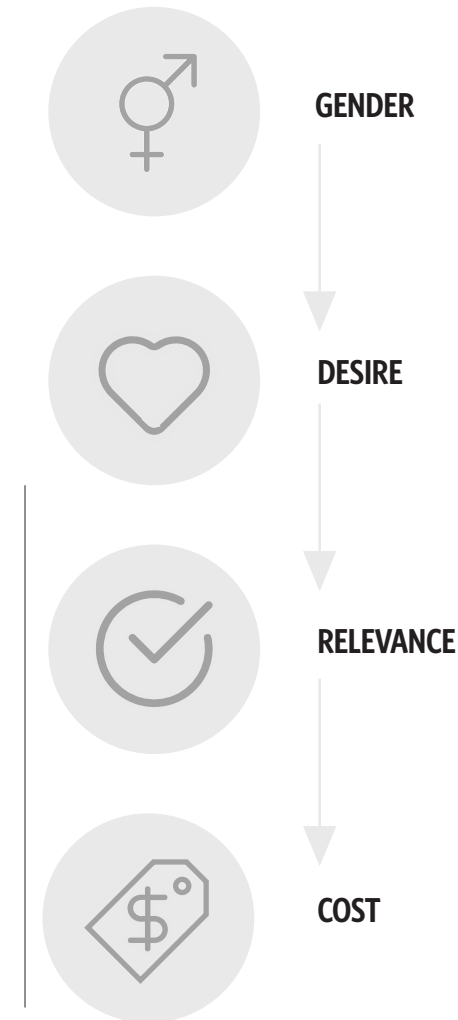
What our findings show is that consumers today are facing a more complex decision-making process when it comes to purchasing goods and services. Not only that, but they are in a state of making (sometimes) stressful, paradoxical purchasing decisions as they try and take control of what their impulse desires versus what they think they need and what they actually do. This is heightened against a backdrop of financial viability and future morality.

This significant shift means that comms leaders must pivot quickly away from talking about product benefits and instead look at how they can enable communities. In doing this, comms leaders can demonstrate that they have factored in a more holistic view that takes into account the new moral journey when purchasing. Just as Kai D. Wright noted earlier in the report, culture is dynamic, ever-evolving and never static; it affects every aspect of a customer's experience; if brands don't adapt, not only will they be left behind, they'll be left vulnerable.



## OUTDATED LINEAR JOURNEY

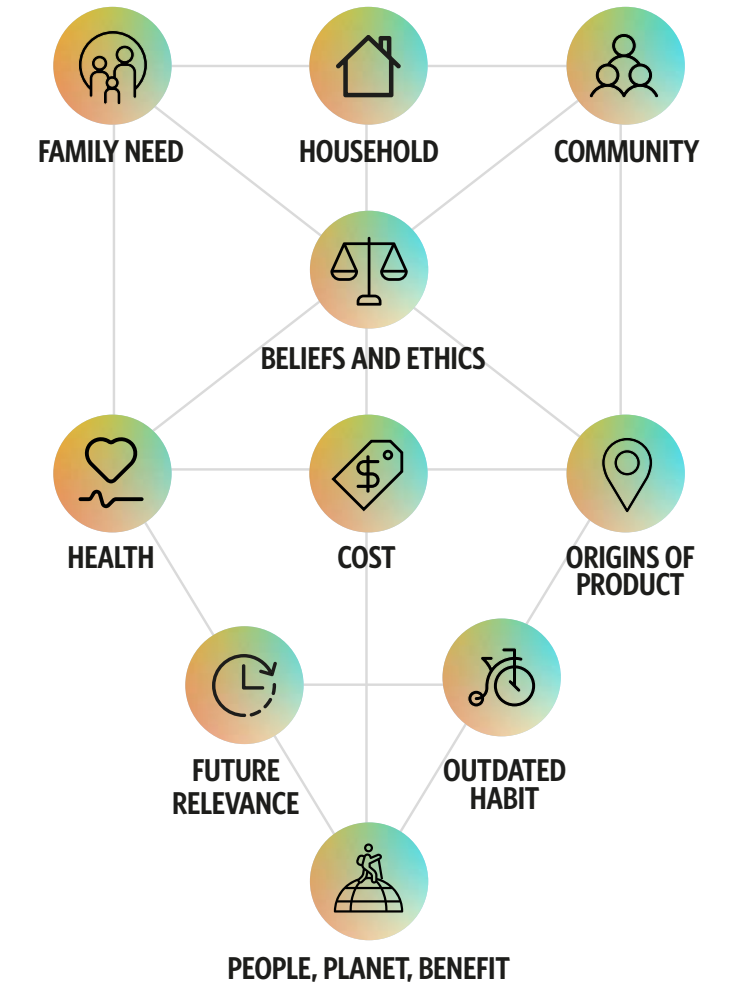
Too many businesses continue to view purchasing as a product-centric mechanic focusing on an outdated linear journey.



As consumers embrace the complexity of purchasing, we will see this continue to evolve to be a bolder state of mind and habits as people cement their beliefs and stick to routines that benefit more than just themselves.

## NEW REALITY ~~LINEAR~~ JOURNEY

New reality consumers are aiming to factor:





# CAMPAIGN EFFECTIVELY WITH YOUR AUDIENCES

Hear from acclaimed author and Columbia University lecturer, Kai D. Wright, and our approach for communicators to build highly effective campaigns that resonate and inspire action.

CAMPAIGN EFFECTIVELY WITH YOUR AUDIENCES CONTINUED

The generation of today analyzes the world through a lens of authenticity and moral judgment. From relationships to purchasing decisions, the key takeaway for brands and organizations is that in order to thrive in the coming years and beyond, they must evolve into their authentic selves.

This means moving away from neutrality and outdated ethics, heritage even, and into a state of ethical alertness and proactivity.



# HOW TO AUTHENTICALLY EVOLVE YOUR TRUE SELF



**KAI D. WRIGHT**  
AUTHOR AND COLUMBIA  
UNIVERSITY LECTURER

Our partner and contributing author and lecturer at Columbia University, Kai D. Wright, proposes that in order to remain comfortable in a state of ethical alertness, we must be “intentional” in our decision-making. This is so that we can proactively identify points of friction, evaluate conditions, and evolve systemic issues within our organizations.

While there is no one-size-fits-all formula for the above, there are ways to mitigate risks, to help brands and organizations remain on the front foot.

Brands and organizations must develop a relationship with Gen D, which should always start with cultural understanding. Why? Put simply, culture is a byproduct of communities. And with the proliferation of technology, social media and globalization, the idea of **community has expanded to include lots of shared traits**, from geography to identity. Understanding these nuances paints a clearer picture of who Gen D really is, and how they really feel.

We can challenge demographic-based messaging and tactics that lack timely cultural relevance by rephrasing “target audience” language and labels to “communities”. Although a seemingly subtle shift, framing a communication, brand or business goals in the context of group dynamics broadens the range of activations, authentically attracts brand attention, and efficiently empowers necessary nuance.

## ★ Expert Opinion



If brands and businesses are too focused on generational segmenting (i.e. age-based cohorts), then they miss the biggest ‘aha’ about culture: new communities are forming daily so brands cannot stand still in the speedway of culture by planting stakes around age-based beliefs.



## HOW TO AUTHENTICALLY EVOLVE YOUR TRUE SELF CONTINUED

We’ve illustrated that Gen D has their fingers on the pulse of authenticity and can easily sense whether a brand is looking to make a difference or just line their pockets with a guise. Brands and organizations must understand that they need to **dive in when championing a cause versus dipping their toe** if they want impactful change; that means putting themselves in the shoes of their consumers where one’s **moral responsibility to society comes first**.

Of course, systemic change doesn’t happen overnight, and for brands to authentically commit to making a long-term difference, they need to be committed to incremental gains. While this kind of commitment can be expensive or lengthy, **consistency is key to driving trust in real change**. We understand that consistency can feel like a challenge against the spectrum of viewpoints your consumers may hold on social issues that might not always align with your brand or organization — this can often strike fear of the unknown into leaders.

## ★ Expert Opinion



Brand and business leaders face an increased risk of “cancel culture” if they fail to understand and engage with communities in a manner that’s rooted in and respectful of diverse cultures.

However, **neutrality can no longer be an option**; consumers are demanding more, it is more important than ever for **brands to be brave and have conviction in their stances**.

Ultimately, enacting bold and brave actions has impact because when brands listen, probe and address societal issues, communities are more likely to **become brand advocates**, reducing the need for mass communication and marketing. They will **defend the brand and business** if caught in the crosshairs of cancel culture, and **develop beneficial brand habits and behaviors** that reinforce long-term product and/or service usage.





# BRAND STORY-ACTING IN ACTION

A flexible planning  
approach for a  
divided world.

For brands to navigate, brand leaders need to audit recycled communications to align with timeliness (i.e., current cultural sentiment) and appropriateness (i.e., cultural sensitivity), to best move through the changing societal issues in a timely manner. This is particularly important as culture is dynamic, ever-evolving and never static. Just as the meaning of terminology shifts within society over time, so should brands.

★ Expert Opinion

KAI D. WRIGHT  
AUTHOR AND COLUMBIA  
UNIVERSITY LECTURER

“

In an increasing world of viral sensations, economic headwinds and political change, infrequently revising brand assets and guidelines create significant brand risk as sentiment and social norms change. Understand, and act to make communities better off in a manner rooted in and respectful of diverse cultures.



## BRAND STORY-ACTING IN ACTION CONTINUED

ALWAYS ADOPT A MORE HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EVALUATING BRAND ASSETS AND GUIDELINES, COMMUNICATION AND CAMPAIGNS FOR CULTURAL SENSITIVITIES BY SENSE-CHECKING AGAINST THE BELOW CATEGORIES:

### LEXICON/AUDIO/VISUAL

Evaluating both what is said and how it is said to ensure relevant nuance for community appeal through language, voices and imagery.

### EXPERIENCE

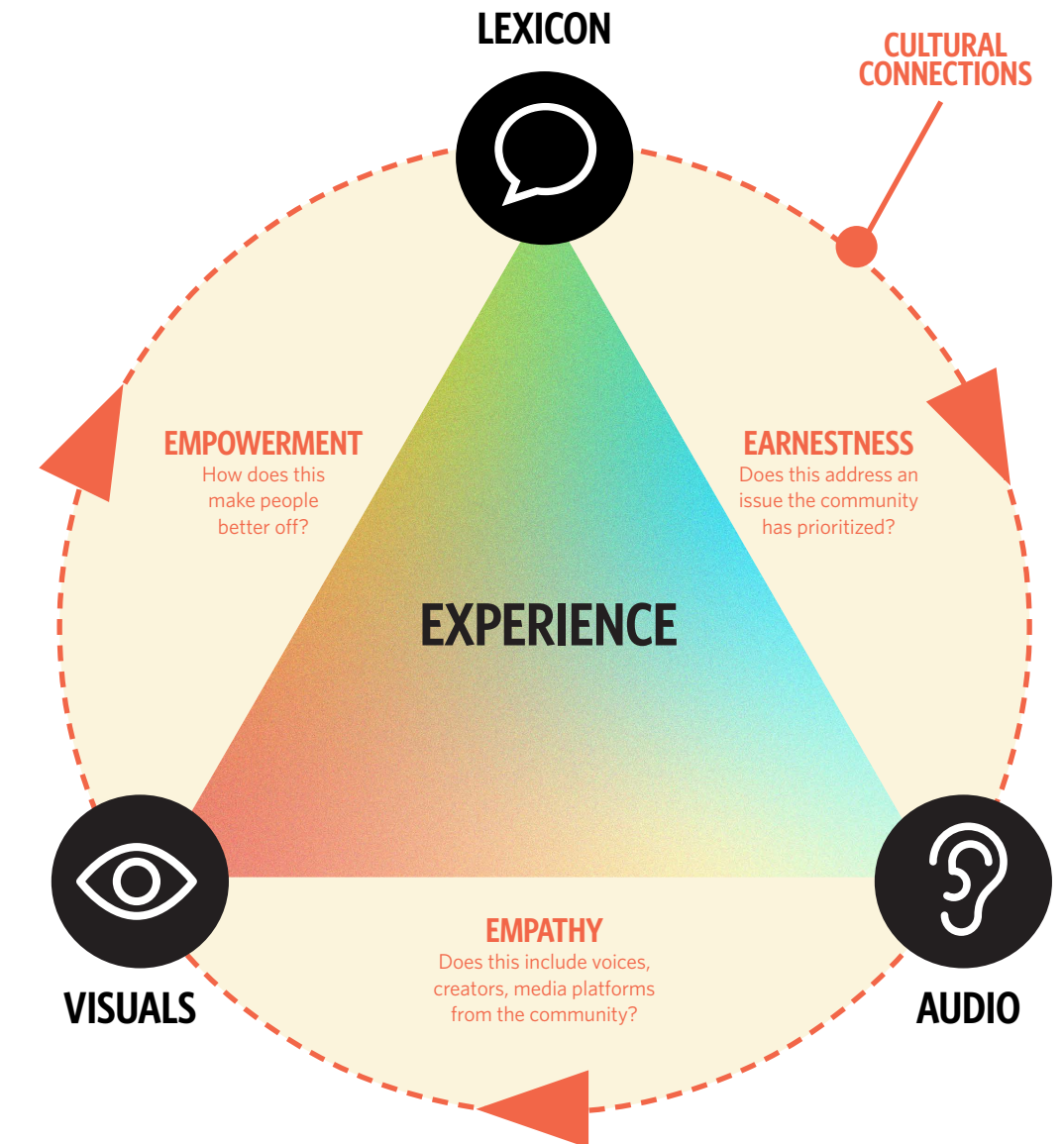
Creating community-oriented rituals, habits and customs that celebrate and recognize cultures through methods like immersion or conversation.

### CULTURAL CONNECTIONS

Ensuring ethical guardrails for strategy, execution and impact by solving three critical areas upfront.

- (1) How does this make people better off? (Empowerment)
- (2) Does this address or solve an issue the community has prioritized or asked for? (Earnestness)
- (3) Does this include voices, creators, media platforms from the community? (Empathy)

Adapted from Follow the Feeling: Brand Building in a Noisy World by Kai D. Wright (Wiley, 2019).





# SO HOW DOES THIS TRANSLATE ACROSS OUR SIX GEN D TRAITS? AND WHAT DO THEY MEAN FOR BRANDS?

## COMPLEXITY NORM

**Their Experience**  
Dealing with conflicting information, agendas and/or realities.

**Create Brand Value By...**  
**Amplifying Tangible Actions:** Demonstrating and building trust through tangible actions that both employees and customers can specifically reference and/or directly experience.

## LAYERED REALITY

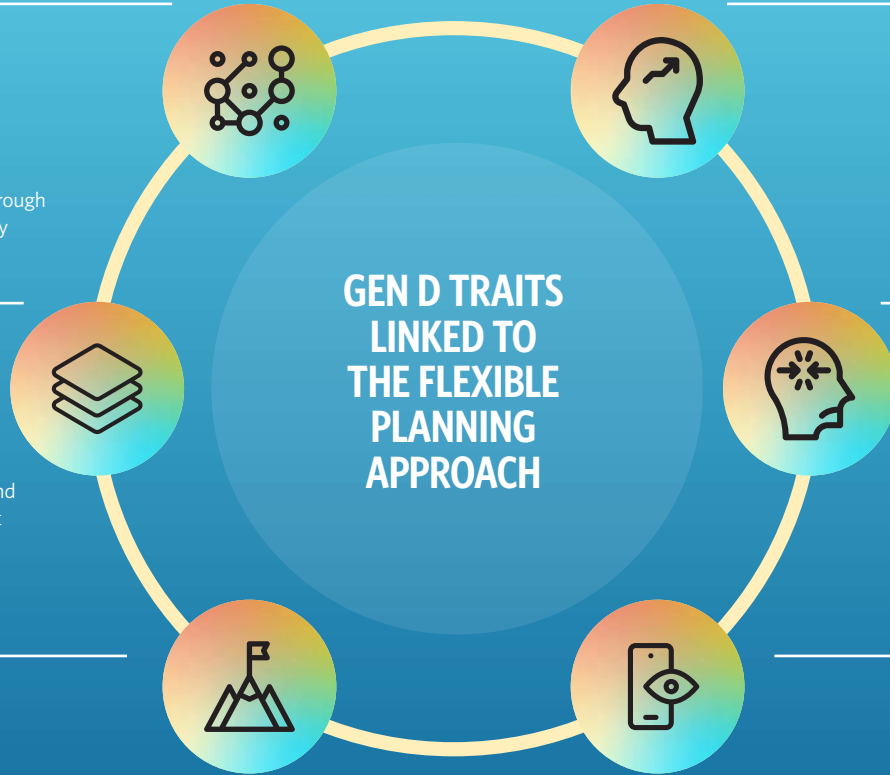
**Their Experience**  
Crafting and activating situational personas.

**Create Brand Value By...**  
**Respecting Privacy:** Catering to both online and offline attitudes and habits of an employee, customer or community, understanding that environment impacts decision-making.

## AMBITION AMBIGUITY

**Their Experience**  
Redefining the "success" playbook and mindset.

**Create Brand Value By...**  
**Leading With Empowerment:** Reinforcing the brand and business as an enabler, motivator and supporter of community priorities, goals and lifestyle.



## EVOLVING ID

**Their Experience**  
Relying on incremental self-improvement and education.

**Create Brand Value By...**  
**Celebrating New Norms:** Allowing flexibility for (mainstream) imagery and labels to evolve to match self-expression and preferences.

## INTERNAL CONFLICT

**Their Experience**  
Becoming more multi-dimensional means increased transparency of the good, bad and ugly.

**Create Brand Value By...**  
**Debiasing Systems:** Improving systems (e.g., practices, processes, policies) by proactively considering blindspots and intersectionality.

## INFORMATION RESTRAINT

**Their Experience**  
Filtering content through fewer trusted sources that are personable.

**Create Brand Value By...**  
**Increasing Cultural Aptitude:** Modulating to appeal to audiences by using voices, faces, facts and/or scenarios most conducive to their realities.

# WORK-SHOPPING

A gateway to your third act as a brand or business.

**After spending the time to establish and cement your presence and role in the first two acts of your journey, we can help you take the learnings from this year's insights report to help provide a gateway to your third act.**

Moving into your third act often means evolving your approach to make a difference; and this might require a readjustment, a realignment or maybe even a reinvention. Our global group of counselors with lived experience and professional expertise is on hand to help you authentically evolve your positioning by offering a fresh perspective, timely counsel and deeper audience understanding. This ultimately helps create lasting change — for our clients, their people, their audiences and communities worldwide.

Our taster workshops explore the drivers fueling a growing cultural divide between communities and can help you address the challenges and questions in your audience segment, ultimately to dissect where you can win.



## COMMUNITY

- What are the common dialogs?
- What is holding the community back?
- What would propel the community without gain?
- Voting / religious / gender / other?



## EMPLOYEES

- What are they looking for as individuals?
- How can we speak to them authentically?
- How can we empower their side hustles?
- How has learning and developing changed?
- How can they help you engage new talent?
- How can we foster better communities while retaining remote working?



## OLD CUSTOMERS / NEW CUSTOMERS

- What drives loyalty?
- What is alienating new customers?
- Are there intergenerational divides that need common ground?
- Are you willing to embrace new audiences outside your typical segmentation?
- How do you make your audiences feel like a united community?
- What can you implement to learn from your changing customer habits?



## STAKEHOLDERS

- Is sustainability "safer" than DE&I for you? Can you meet both needs?
- What does DE&I look like when the organization is more conservative in their values?
- Are you prioritizing the health of the planet alongside the health of your employees?
- Do you commit consistently to authentic changes within your organization?
- Can you put a price on impactful change?
- Are there some issues you think you need to sit on the fence more with?
- What are the issues where you believe you can have a strong viewpoint on without isolating your wider organization?



# A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS



Through this study and report, we hope to inspire and support leaders to not only authentically evolve, but to commit tangibly to change, regardless of where they are in the journey of having a greater positive societal impact.

This report's collective workshop questions, best practices, and tips provide a holistic approach to meeting the expectations of a Generation Divided, while remaining hopeful that today's societal issues will become yesterday's news.



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