 [New report] The State of Social 2024

A crucial roadmap for navigating the complex world of social media marketing.

[Read the report >](#)

REPORT

Brandwatch 2024 Digital Marketing Trends

Discover the biggest digital marketing trends and uncover valuable insights and actionable tips to elevate your marketing strategy.

Imagine a world where consumers call the shots. That's precisely where we are. The days of CEOs steering the ship solo are gone; it's the consumers who hold the rudder now, directing brands toward personal, lightning-fast, and engaging experiences.

2024 promises to be a whirlwind of trends that will shape how marketing plays out. We've tapped into subject matter experts and dug deep into the data to give you all the insights.

Again this year, we've uncovered the top ten trends that will define marketing in the coming year. In this report, you will find:

- Data-based insights about why these trends matter (now and in the future)
- Inspiring stories of successful campaigns from brands already engaging with the trends
- Actionable tips to level up your strategies today

👁️ Ready to see how Brandwatch can help you to achieve your marketing & sales goals for 2024?

We hope you enjoy it.

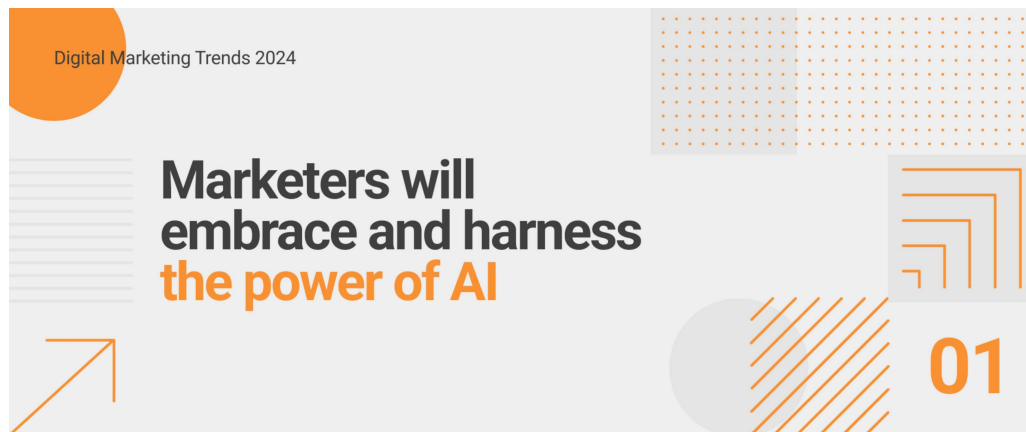
Methodology

This report is based on the insights gleaned from a survey of 517 marketing professionals conducted in September 2023 and consumer research from Brandwatch's [Consumer Research](#) platform. We also received contributions from marketing leaders and social media practitioners, which added depth and diversity.

Our methodology cast a wide net, embracing various media sources encompassing social platforms, blogs, and mainstream news — millions of online mentions were analyzed for this report. This comprehensive approach was instrumental in capturing the complexities of discussions, sentiments, and perspectives surrounding these pivotal marketing topics.

Trend #1: Marketers will embrace and harness the power of AI

Combining AI automation with human expertise will help brands create best-in-class strategies.



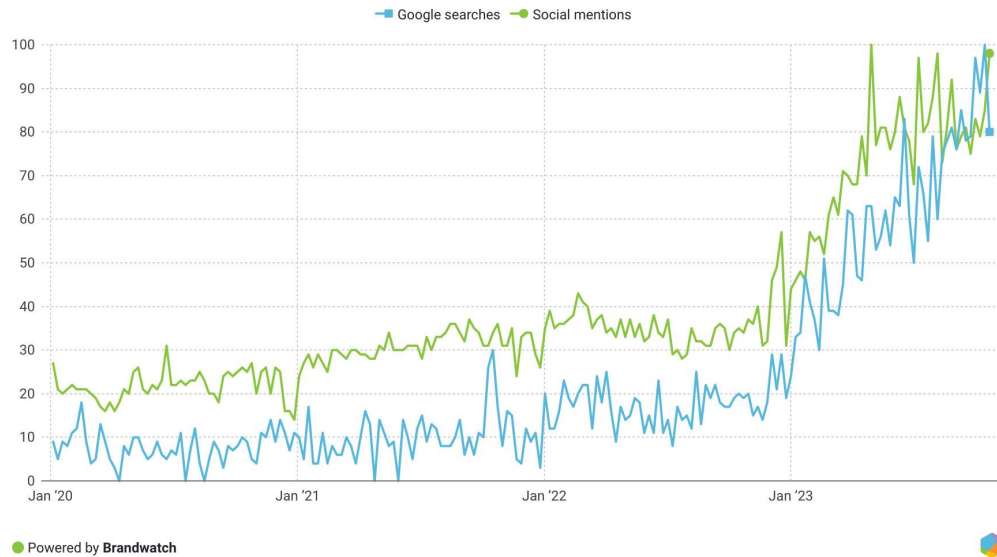
Guess what's taking the marketing world by storm? AI, crowned the [word of the year](#) by the Collins Dictionary, isn't just a buzz—it's a seismic trend. In our survey, an astounding 92% of respondents pointed to

the imminent integration of AI in marketing as the #1 trend for 2024, signaling a significant industry shift on the brink of redefining strategies and outcomes.

The AI and marketing conversation has exploded in the last two years

Source: [Google Trends](#), [Brandwatch Consumer Research](#)

Chart shows global Google search interest and volume of social mentions around the topic of AI and marketing. Data is indexed to 100 at its highest point. Data gathered from Google Trends as well as public posts on social media, blogs, forums, and review sites from Jan 1, 2020 - Oct 31, 2023.

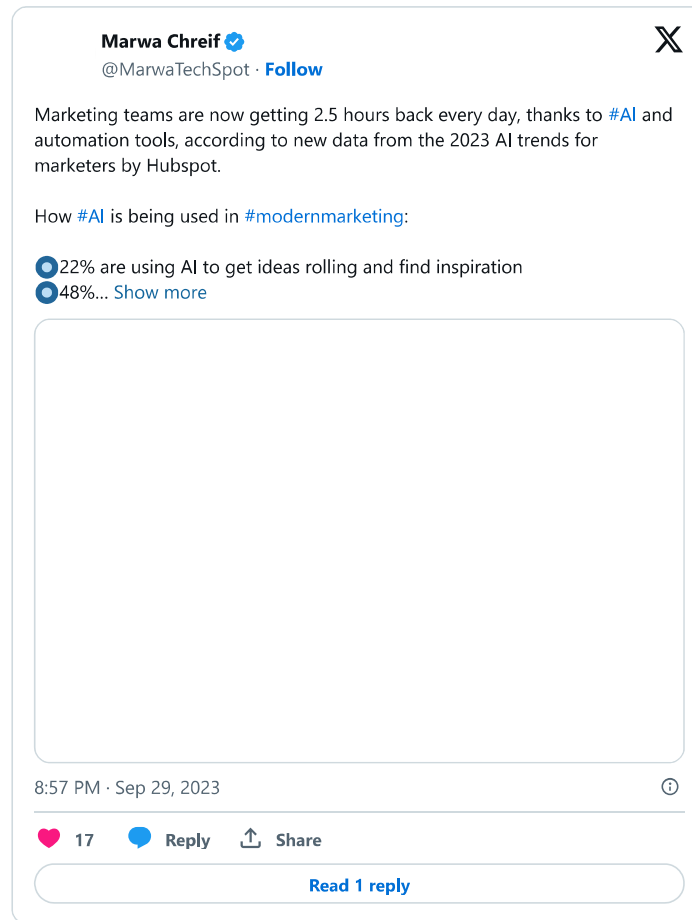


Using [Brandwatch Social Panels](#), we created an audience of marketers on X (formerly Twitter) and people discussing marketing on Reddit.

In AI and marketing discussions in the last six months (from April 1 to October 1, 2023), this audience also talked about:

- SEO, up 95% from the previous six months
- Content creation and content marketing, up 91%
- Tools and marketing automation, up 86%
- Strategy, up 84%
- [ChatGPT](#), up 18%

The growing conversation around these topics speaks to the multifaceted potential of AI – not just the tools marketers should use.



Generative AI has become a force in marketing, enabling marketers to work more efficiently and unlock their creative potential. There's no shortage of AI applications that can help streamline creative tasks, from crafting engaging social media posts to generating personalized website content and designing visuals. Its influence will no doubt span across all areas of marketing and drive innovation.

When it comes to AI-generated content, a pivotal discussion revolves around ownership dynamics. Unlike with conventional intellectual property ownership, generative AI tools stake a claim in the content they generate. When a brand uses AI to alter a product shot, for example, the AI tool partly owns the resulting content. This poses potential challenges for brands, raising concerns about copyright conflicts later down the line. On top of that, using unregulated generative AI triggers ethical discussions – the tool might incorporate other people's intellectual property, which could have legal implications for the brands using these AI tools.

Brands who do their due diligence with generative AI tools will reap the benefits while remaining clear of infringements on the ethicalities and copyright concerns.

Particularly two areas of AI have seen significant growth in conversation lately: AI voice cloning and AI chatbots.

AI voice cloning and AI chatbots

"Fake it till you make it" may have taken on a whole new meaning, with conversations about AI and voice cloning taking off in recent months.

Digging into the voice-cloning discussions, there seems to be a consensus among marketers that AI voice clones can help them:

- Save time by turning multiple scripts (think Zoom chat and call transcripts) into lots of content, like blogs and social posts.
- Encourage creativity and personalization: Marketers can do voiceovers on their video and audio material without having to re-record themselves after the first time.
- Do work in more languages.

As one of our survey respondents, Lauren Howell, Social Media and PR Specialist at Simply Media and Advertising, LLC, predicted: *"AI will take an even more intricate role in social media strategy and improving the client experience by matching the client's tone. We are even experimenting with AI to 'Clone a client' for voiceovers and content."* (Source: Brandwatch Digital Marketing Trends Survey, 2023.)

And this Redditor seems to be thinking in similar terms:

Consumers are also voicing their concerns about cloning voices with AI, such as potential misuse. Careless use of AI can significantly impact the industry and the person whose voice may have been used without

[their consent.](#)

AI chatbots and automation are already revolutionizing day-to-day marketing

Meta says users and businesses have [600 million daily chats](#) on their platforms. Our survey found that 75% of marketers agree that AI-driven customer service (for example, via chatbots) will dominate in 2024.

We analyzed close to 200k online conversations about AI, automation, and chatbots shared across social media, blogs, forums, and review sites between April 1 and October 1, 2023. Conversational and generative AI tools that assist with tasks like drafting emails, creating music, and engaging in conversations with consumers generally receive a lot of enthusiasm in online discussions.

Here's what one marketer had to say:

On the other hand, concerns regarding chatbot design flaws and gaps in functionality also surfaced in our research.

According to Gartner research, [just 8% of customers used a chatbot](#) during their recent customer service interactions. Despite their flaws, the low adoption of chatbots appears to be a missed opportunity for marketers – we saw an 85% uptick in joyful mentions relating to AI and chatbots between April 1 and October 1, 2023.

Brand inspiration

The NYC mayor is bridging the communication gap with his voters

NYC Mayor Eric Adams [deployed a generative AI voice clone](#) of himself speaking multiple languages in a series of robocalls to voters.

CD Projekt Red uses AI to recreate the voice of a deceased artist

With consent from the family, this Polish video game developer paid tribute to the deceased voice actor by [recreating his voice using AI](#) to preserve his character in the new game release.

H&M helps customers find clothing and accessories based on their preferences

Fashion retailer H&M utilizes AI to help customers navigate their online product selection and handle the buyer journey from discovery to purchase.

Newegg uses generative AI to create product detail page content

Online electronics retailer Newegg launched a generative AI tool that summarizes product reviews and generates accurate and [customer-driven product descriptions](#).

Tips for marketers

1. **Develop personalized strategies for maximum impact.** Use AI to optimize and automate your marketing campaigns for better customer experience.
2. **Continuously improve and optimize your AI initiative.** Stay ahead of evolving AI trends, monitor your AI initiatives closely, and adjust strategies based on feedback. In 2024, the key takeaway for marketers is to proactively anticipate and address potential marketing oversights influenced by AI in their campaigns.
3. **Don't solely rely on AI for your marketing strategy.** Blending AI with human expertise leads to more personalized and effective marketing.

Trend #2: Authenticity-driven marketing will thrive

In a world increasingly dominated by AI, consumers demand authenticity.

Alongside artificial intelligence's boom comes its antithesis: authenticity. A heightened skepticism among consumers about the authenticity of brand content is rising.

Our survey revealed that 56% of marketers agree that human-to-human marketing will dominate in 2024 as a way to counter the domination of AI. And while the use of artificial intelligence isn't inherently fake or ingenuine, it is raising questions with consumers about what's human-driven and what isn't. And customers are craving genuine connection more than ever before.

So, why is authenticity important? A whopping [86% of consumers](#) consider a brand's authenticity when making a purchasing decision. Yet, while [the majority \(80%\) of brands](#) think they deliver authentic content, only 37% of consumers actually agree. This discrepancy offers room for improvement for many brands.

To be more authentic with your marketing efforts, brands need to showcase their values across every aspect of your brand. From production to promotion. For example, brands that implement human-driven brand-to-customer experiences – like customer service offerings – will undoubtedly receive [better feedback](#) than solely relying on automated processes.

Implement authentic marketing with human-driven efforts, such as providing unique, quality content that is written by marketers with consumers in mind.

Consumers are savvy, meaning they are more adept at spotting inauthentic marketing efforts than ever before. And if Gen Z are in your target market, it's even more important to come across as authentic. No matter your demographic, make sure that the content you share online accurately represents your brand and is crafted with a focus on human connectivity. This approach is essential for fostering authenticity and connecting with consumers.

Brand inspiration

TALA showcases their values on social

Activewear brand TALA live and breathe their values, notably sustainability. Their authenticity shines through on social media, showcasing a robust dedication to corporate responsibility. Recently, TALA unveiled 'ReTALA,' a novel recycling program enabling customers to return old products for recycling in exchange for a discount. Their Instagram posts [introduce ReTALA](#) and offer a glimpse into the factory where this initiative thrives. The overwhelming praise from fans in the comments echoes the program's success.

Oatly aren't scared to exhibit their criticisms

The team behind the oat drink Oatly is as open as can be about ways the brand could improve. In fact, the brand has created a [dedicated website](#) discussing times the brand has come under fire, for example, when vegan critics questioned their decision to sell oat residue to pig farms. By acknowledging these commentators publicly, the brand's authenticity is skyrocketing.

Dove's campaign against beauty filters

Personal care brand Dove has a history of authentic marketing, and recently, they've been shining a light on the beauty space, calling out the [negative impact of beauty filters](#). The brand's campaign brought young girls' mental health to the surface, and their television advert for the campaign was specifically scheduled to be shown as an advertisement between breaks for TV shows that rated highly on their 'Body Toxicity Index' – shows that demonstrate unrealistic or unattainable beauty standards.

NutriPaw is on a mission to simplify dog health

Dog nutrition experts NutriPaw produce 100% natural pet treats with a clear mission: simplifying dog health. Their blog is packed with helpful tips for dog owners, and they're honest about the all-natural ingredients in every one of their products. With over 14,000 positive reviews from customers, it's clear that their authenticity is seeping into consumer opinion.

Tips for marketers

1. **Use testimonials to showcase what your brand is really about.** Collect and showcase genuine customer reviews to exemplify and prove the power of your products.
2. **Identify ways you can amplify your customer experience.** For example, you might want to implement honest, human-driven customer service to connect better with your customers.
3. **Use [Benchmarking tools](#) to compare competitors.** Discover how authenticity is working for your competitors with benchmarking tools. Understanding how customers interact with rival brands through benchmarking can unveil valuable insights and help you craft more compelling and engaging content.
4. **Showcase your values through employee-generated content (EGC).** Brands that walk the talk and live and breathe their core values will undoubtedly come across as more authentic, sincere, and honest.

Trend #3: Personalization will be more important than ever

Personalization is proving to be a great way to encourage returning customers.

With an increasing number of competing brands targeting the same customer, brands must become memorable to stay relevant. How will brands do this? With personalization.

Consumers who are offered a deeply tailored, personal experience with your brand have a higher chance of becoming repeat customers. And [increasing customer retention by just 5%](#) can increase profits by up to 25%-95% in the long run.

Personalization makes a customer feel valued, which in turn increases brand loyalty and strengthens customer relationships. With [60% of consumers reporting](#) becoming repeat buyers after a personalized purchasing experience, brands that don't offer customized experiences risk getting left behind.

Personalization is proven to boost ROI, too: [88% of the marketers in the US](#) saw that the personalization efforts led to the growth of their brand.

“Personalized digital content experiences and hyper-personalisation will be paramount in 2024, as brands compete for the same customer. Audiences are becoming more and more ignorant of traditional marketing. Therefore, brands must remain connected with their customers from different angles.”

— Meghan Pound, Digital Marketing Executive at Advanced Legal Technology (Source: Brandwatch Digital Marketing Trends Survey, 2023.)

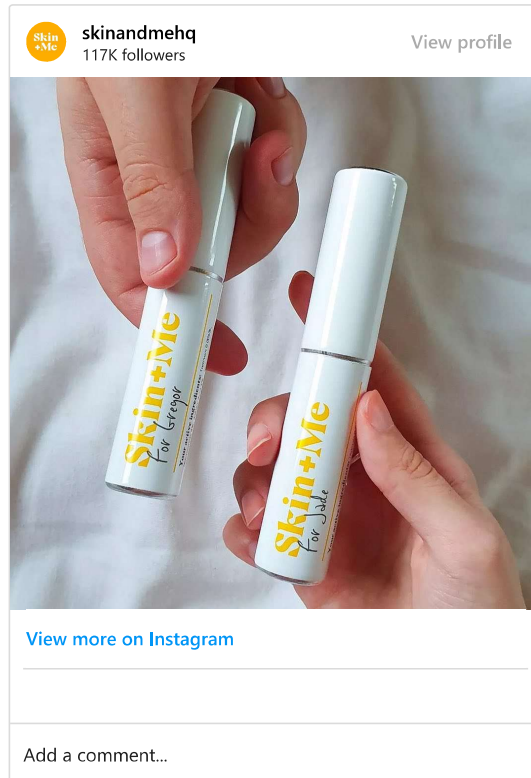
Customers expect personalization. [Around three-quarters](#) of customers expect improved personalization when sharing more personal data with businesses. So, offer an opportunity for consumers to provide you with more data about themselves, with the promise that they'll be rewarded. An easy example is offering customers discounts on their birthdays.

Brands will also need to focus on incorporating personalization into paid ad journeys, utilizing targeting in more profound ways. Marketing personas seem to be dying – instead, marketers need to focus on individualism within the customer journey. So get clear on who you want to target, and divide these demographics into as many groups as possible, defining their characteristics thoroughly. Not all consumer groups will have the same pain points, so explore this and meet these individual customer needs as intricately as possible.

Brand inspiration

Skin + Me adds personalization to packaging

UK-based online skincare subscription provider [Skin + Me](#) offers personalized packaging for each and every customer, printing individuals' names on their custom-built skincare offerings. Beyond this unique touch, the brand offers a deeply individualized experience by partnering with dermatologists who continuously adjust formulations to suit each user's evolving skin needs. The brand is well-loved online, rating 4.5 stars on [Trustpilot](#) and over 7,000 reviews.

**Netflix leans into creepy personalization to make a point**

To promote Netflix's latest dark fantasy series *Black Mirror*, the brand dove headfirst into over-the-top personalization to commemorate the themes of the show. Creating a [website](#) that asked for user details, including a photo, Netflix (after getting consent) used individuals' details to create a hyper-personalized web page that mimics a *Black Mirror* storyline.

Tips for marketers

- 1. Strengthen your retargeting journeys.** Whether a customer abandons their cart or you want to re-engage a past buyer, make sure you have a seamless and compelling experience across ads and emails to encourage them to rejoin the sales journey.
- 2. Implement loyalty programs to create superfans.** Find ways to encourage repeat customers – like with loyalty programs. Reward consumers by giving them something back when they shop regularly.
- 3. Personalize, yes, but don't go too far.** Avoid leaning too far into personalization, especially without first building a rapport with a customer. With data privacy concerns on the rise, consumers might get put off by excessive use of their data – especially if they haven't made a purchase yet.

Trend #4: Social listening will strengthen marketing strategies

Real-time consumer insights will shape marketing strategies and elevate customer experience.

Statista projects that the number of social media users worldwide will reach [5.17 billion in 2024](#), making social media the biggest source of consumer opinions and insights. Despite brands actively engaging on these platforms, they wield control over just [1.5% of discussions](#) about their own products or services.

This disparity underlines social media data's significance for marketers trying to build customer-centric strategies. There's nothing quite like having access to honest, non-incentivized, and unprompted consumer opinions.

With the right [martech](#), you can now have all insights in one place, accessible to everyone across the organization. Our survey showed that an overwhelmingly 76% of marketers agree that the use of [social listening](#) tools will inform marketing strategies next year.

"I predict that insights and qualitative research will continue to dominate over quantitative in social listening and that manual augmentation and combined methodologies will be seen more often. And I am already seeing way more brands using social listening to inform their primary research studies — something I've been preaching for years!"

— Wendy Goldman Scherer, Managing Partner at The Social Studies Group (Source: Brandwatch Digital Marketing Trends Survey, 2023.)

The power of real-time consumer insights

Real-time consumer insights create tangible opportunities for marketers – and even more so in today's uncertain economy.

With companies [pushing harder for profitability](#), identifying consumers' current preferences, understanding their intent, and learning from purchase-related discussions in real time becomes paramount.

We analyzed six months' worth of online mentions relating to marketing and strategy (between April 1 and October 1, 2023), and "customer" was one of the bigger topics in those conversations (37k mentions).

Our analysis surfaced mentions of complaints, negative and positive experiences with products or services, critiques of marketing strategies and tactics, and general customer feedback.

Insights like that can help guide customer research and inform decision-making.

This marketer got it right.

And nothing says “customer-centric” louder than the practice of customer experience (CX).

Consider these stats:

- According to Adobe and Oxford Economics, [85% of executives](#) say improving the customer experience is a significant business priority.
- The same survey found that 70% of customers are looking for a unified, seamless experience at any point of interaction with a brand.
- [86% of consumers](#) said the experience a company provides is as important as its products and services.
- [64% of consumers](#) wish companies would respond faster to meet their changing needs.

Great CX means anticipating and meeting immediate consumer needs seamlessly and speedily.

With [marketing budgets](#) under pressure, harnessing the power of social intelligence is a golden ticket for marketers looking to improve the measurement and ROI of their marketing initiatives.

“Measurement has been a burgeoning focus for brands for years, and now it’s more important than ever. The demand for ROI drives this and puts some tangible measure on how campaigns do, either at a post or cross-platform level. Social intelligence has played a huge role in that, both on the social listening and owned analytics side.”

— Danny Gardner at Haleon (Source: Brandwatch Digital Marketing Trends Survey, 2023.)

Brand inspiration

Clemson University uses social listening to influence social media campaigns

Clemson University students used social listening to help Dollywood Parks and Resorts enhance their social media marketing initiatives.

Supernatural and KAYAK uncover travel insights via consumer online discussions

Creative agency Supernatural leveraged social listening to learn more about consumer travel behaviors and preferences to launch a successful [data-driven campaign with KAYAK](#).

L’Oreal’s in-house teams quickly identify new beauty trends

Beauty giant L’Oreal, known for moving “at the speed of culture,” [monitors social media](#) for suitable emerging trends to match with brands within its portfolio, like NYX.



lorealusa
Original audio

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454 likes

Add a comment...

Call of Duty (Microsoft) uses social listening to analyze community likes and dislikes

The manager overseeing Call of Duty's social analytics highlighted the company's use of social listening. This approach allows them to monitor their community actively, gaining valuable insights into their preferences and sentiments.

Tips for marketers

- 1. Manage your online reputation proactively.** The advantage of real-time monitoring is that you promptly identify and address negative sentiments. Timely response to consumer feedback can help prevent potential crises and shape public perception positively. Implement dedicated crisis management strategies to handle issues as they arise, ensuring your brand maintains a favorable image in the public eye.
- 2. Use strategic insights to gain a competitive advantage.** Use social listening for market insights and to discover new competitors and industry trends. Translate these insights into actionable strategies to stay ahead. Regularly assess the competitive landscape to adapt your marketing tactics and stay relevant.
- 3. Optimize your brand's decision-making with data-driven strategies.** Think of social data as a cornerstone for your marketing strategy. Apply consumer insights to refine your content marketing efforts and drive customer engagement and satisfaction. Invest in analytics and data tools; these resources will help you make informed decisions based on real-time consumer feedback, providing a competitive edge in a rapidly evolving market landscape.

Trend #5: Content marketers will elevate creativity to secure consumers' attention

In today's world, brands need creative ingenuity to capture the attention of consumers.

We live in a world of information overload. The average American is exposed to between 4,000 and 10,000 ads every day. At the same time, the human attention span has shrunk to a mere 8.25 seconds. That's an attention span shorter than a goldfish.

It's critical for brands to grab consumers' attention in the first few seconds and keep their content short and sweet. According to Meta, short-form videos are 76% more effective in terms of impressions than long-form videos. Campaigns using Instagram Reels are 20% more effective than campaigns using other video formats. Video content is also the type of content that people like to share the most.

"In this day and age, consumers don't spend a lot of time watching long videos and scrolling through their feeds for hours. Consumers are looking for quick content consumption and what better way than 10-second stories..."

— Charles Poulter, Head of Digital Media at SWM Communications (Source: Brandwatch Digital Marketing Trends Survey, 2023.)

According to Brandwatch Consumer Research, online conversations about short-form videos increased by 9% from January to October 2023 compared to the previous period, peaking in September with nearly 3.9 million mentions. According to social data, it's clear that video content is growing in popularity.

From our survey of 516 marketing professionals in September 2023, 80% agreed that video marketing will continue to grow in 2024. In addition, an impressive 72% anticipate a surge in experiential and entertainment marketing in the coming year.

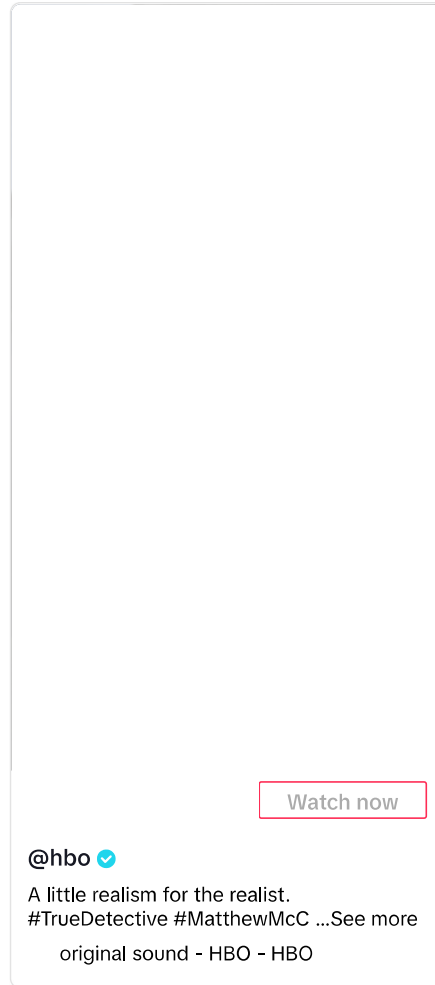
Marketers are looking for ways to capture consumers' attention and foster connections, and in 2024, we will see continued growth in short-form videos and experimentation with interactive and experiential content.

Brand inspiration

Photoshop uses Reels to inspire and educate

<https://www.brandwatch.com/reports/digital-marketing-trends/view/>

TikTok is the perfect place to post short videos, and HBO knows how to play the game. They use short clips, many under 20 seconds, of their current and upcoming shows to promote their streaming service and keep their followers entertained.



Domino's and their "mind ordering" app

For the launch of Stranger Things's fourth season, Netflix partnered with Domino's. In addition to commercials and custom pizza boxes, they also created an app that allows users to step into the shoes of a character from the show – giving them telekinetic powers that allow them to order pizza using only gestures. The campaign was a success, generating over [820 million media impressions](#) and performing particularly well with the target audience.

Mars Wrigley used the controversy around one of their products and went viral

Mars Wrigley used the controversy surrounding their Bounty chocolate as a marketing campaign that got lovers and haters talking. After announcing they were removing Bounty bars from their Celebrations product,

online discussions quickly went viral, and the campaign achieved a global reach of more than [75 billion impressions](#).

Tips for marketers

- 1. Short-form video is key.** Be it Reels, TikTok videos, or YouTube shorts. Use short-form videos as part of your social media strategy. Keep it short, simple, and to the point. You can repurpose your existing long-form content into smaller snippets and give your content an extra boost.
- 2. Tailor your content to your audience's needs.** Evaluate what types of content and formats your audience likes best with social media analytics tools like [Brandwatch](#). Do they want entertaining or educational content? Do they like behind-the-scenes videos or user-generated content? What kind of music do they like? With this information, you can create content that truly resonates with your audience.
- 3. Don't forget to experiment.** Standing out from the crowd is not easy. Look for ways to engage your audience in new ways. Interactive and experiential campaigns can help you stand out and attract new customers.

Trend #6: Social media will become the go-to search engine

Social media is quickly becoming a main source of news, recommendations, and research.

According to [Hubspot's 2023 global social media trends report](#), 87% of social media marketers believe consumers will find their brand via social media rather than search.

People view social media as [less biased than Google](#), and younger audiences are migrating their searches to platforms where they have [already spent significant time](#). In fact, according to reports from the [New York Times](#), TikTok surpassed Google as Gen Z's primary source of information.

Rise at Seven did a small-scale study of [5k competitive industry keywords](#) across Google, YouTube, and TikTok, which found that 100 keywords on TikTok and 100 keywords on YouTube are searched for more than on Google.

[Social media is now firmly a search engine in its own right](#), with 76% of consumers using it to search for or discover new products and brands.

Audiences use it to find local activities, discover brands, find restaurant recommendations, and even educate themselves on world news. The [#TikTokTaughtMe](#) hashtag alone has over 14 billion views – people are learning from social media in unprecedented ways.

Online, people are actively discussing their shift towards social media for research:



Platforms like TikTok are investing in [developing the search experience](#) to meet this demand.

Meanwhile, traditional search engines that have been ["gamed" by marketers](#) for years are being abandoned.

Unable to find unique information there, audiences are turning to social, where real-time, trending content provides the novelty they seek. Driven by conversation and breaking news, social platforms offer the unfiltered info and authenticity Google lacks.

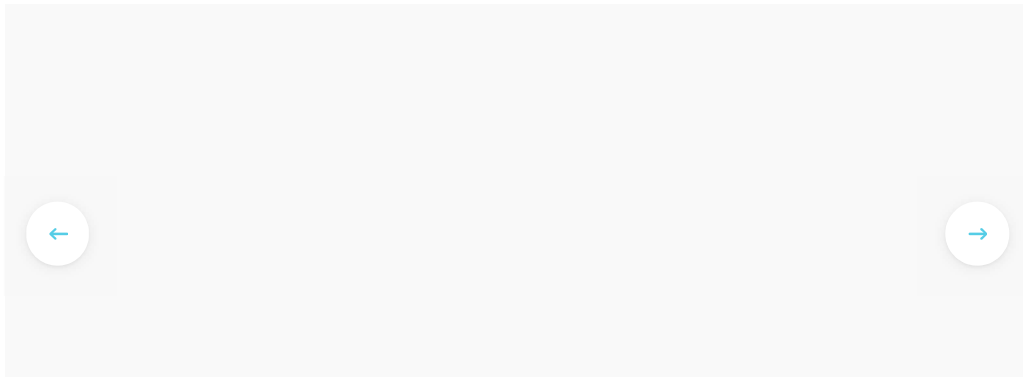
"I think we'll see even more organic social media marketing and that SEO and social media will be even more connected."

— Katinka Sletten, Head of Social Media at Synlight (Source: Brandwatch Digital Marketing Trends Survey, 2023.)

It's not just audiences recognizing the power of social content. Google itself has been increasingly surfacing social UGC in the top search positions.

Following on from its [E-E-A-T update in December 2022](#), it prioritizes "experience" focused content and rewards UGC with more visibility than ever before.

Marketers have noticed a spike in SERP answers from social media platforms like TikTok, Reddit, and LinkedIn, [as reported by search-first creative agency Rise at Seven](#) using Sistrix data.



Source: Rise at Seven

In 2024, we foresee the relationship between search and social strengthening, especially if Google further ingests social media content into its AI-generated search experience.

“Continued changes to Google’s search algorithms will increasingly favor human-centered content frequency over static search terms, especially as AI becomes more integrated into how Google interprets web content.”

— Justin Williams, Digital & Analytics Practice Leader at Jackson Spalding (Source: Brandwatch Digital Marketing Trends Survey, 2023.)

Brand inspiration

Essie taps into TikTok search trends

The makeup brand Essie has been using the #TikTokTaughtMe hashtag to its advantage and has earned millions of views on its nail tutorial content as a result.

Essie also works with influencers to post user-generated tutorials, consistently driving millions of views.

Tips for marketers

- 1. Create social content that answers search questions.** Create inspiring, entertaining, and educational social media content to serve the questions people are searching for.
- 2. Prioritize user-generated content.** Develop customer, employee, and influencer collaborations to create authentic, experience-first content that ranks on both search and social.
- 3. Focus on creating practical and helpful social content.** Create “hacks,” “reviews,” “how-tos,” “tutorials,” and “alternatives” content to earn dual-channel visibility.
- 4. Build a multi-platform search strategy.** Research keyword trends in search (like using [Google Trends](#)) and find breakout trends on social media (such as using [TikTok's Creative Center](#)) to power your social media content.
- 5. Repurpose your social content across multiple channels.** Google still prioritizes its own YouTube content over TikTok, so upload videos to both channels to have the best chance

of winning search and social real estate.

Trend #7: Influencer marketing will grow even bigger

In an oversaturated industry, influencer collaborations can help brands cut through the noise.

In their latest [CMO report](#), Deloitte has anticipated 109% growth in influencer marketing over the next three years.

[McKinsey](#) reported that the global influencer market was valued at \$21.1 billion in April 2023 and noted an emergence in a “largely untapped market of less active influencers with smaller followings,” meaning micro- and nano-influencers. It found that a micro/nano-influencer strategy yields a “positive ROI for brands.”

“Brands will continue to invest more and more into TikTok e-commerce using small creator UGC. Micro-influencers have been a trend for years now, but I'm seeing more and more ads run by brands from small creator accounts.”

— Michael Doroszuk, Holistic Search Senior Manager at ColPal (Source: Brandwatch Digital Marketing Trends Survey, 2023.)

Through consistent interaction, influencers can forge deep trust with their audiences, making them highly effective brand promoters.

Brand inspiration

Duolingo teams up with YouTube creators to target Gen Z

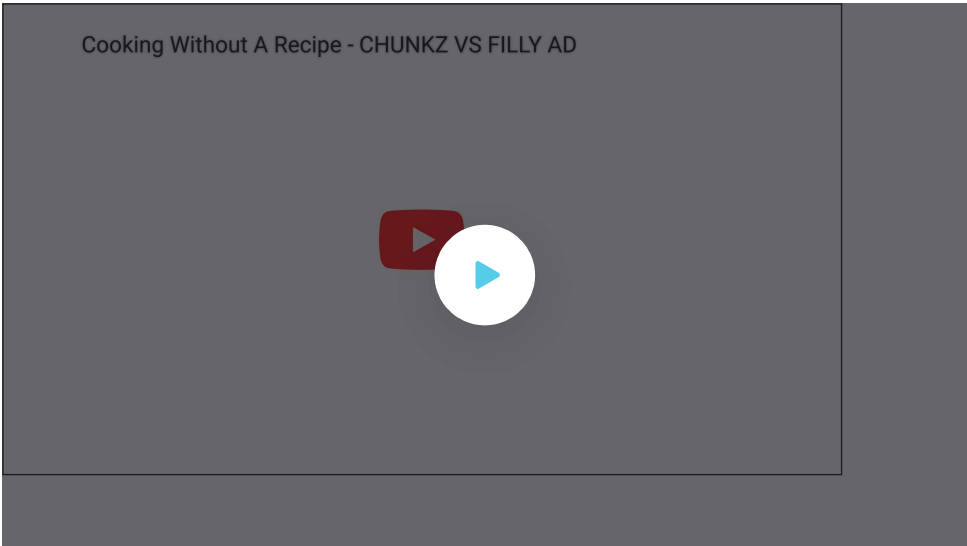
To target a new demographic of UK Gen Z, Duolingo partnered with YouTube macro-influencers Chunkz and Yung Filly.

The creative partnership involved a simple cooking challenge with a catch: the entire recipe was written in Spanish. The campaign successfully targeted two affinity audiences: those who consume Chunkz and Yung Filly's usual cooking content and those interested in languages and the Duolingo brand.

Opting to partner with these specific creators was a wise decision by Duolingo. They are an established pair, proven to be entertaining. What's more, creator Yung Filly is a Spanish speaker, meaning he is able to

progress the “storyline” through exciting anecdotes and simple language lessons, naturally tying the content back to the brand.

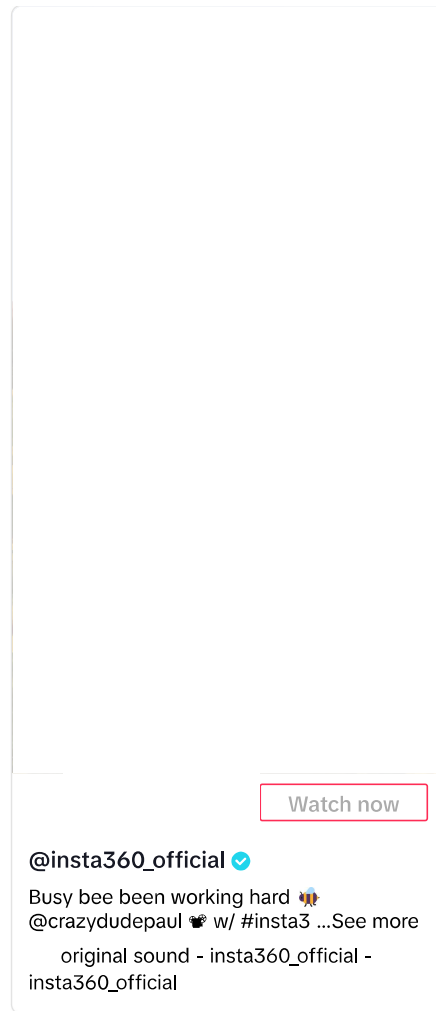
The campaign drove over three million views and won Duolingo a gold award at the annual Influencer Marketing Awards for [Best Brand Engagement](#).



Insta360 drives 680M views with a scaled influencer campaign

Camera brand Insta360 manages 4k influencer partners, running over 60 campaigns annually.

Using [Brandwatch Influence](#), [Insta360](#) discovered several of their customers had gone viral for filming themselves running around with Insta360 cameras in their mouths.



Thinking fast, they started the "nose mode" trend and activated their influencer network to create Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts.

The campaign generated 320M views from partners and 680m views in total. With a cost per view of \$0.0004, it significantly beat industry benchmarks.

Tips for marketers

1. **Grow your brand through influencer marketing.** Build influencer partnerships to gain awareness in new niches and locations and open up your brand to new demographics.
2. **Align influencers with your brand to drive authentic engagement.** Select influencers who genuinely embody your brand values and persona and whose audience aligns with your target market. Enable them to organically integrate your product into content that's reflective of their own style.
3. **Prioritize subject matter expert partnerships.** Partner with influencers who are subject matter experts in their own right. Your brand will be viewed as more informed and credible by the association.
4. **Work with micro-influencers to create flexible content.** Micro-influencers are more flexible and willing to create custom brand content for promotions than larger influencers, which benefits their smaller account growth.
5. **Economize through influencer strategies.** Activating your influencer community can come with considerable cost savings.

“Audiences are becoming much more savvy when it comes to influencer ads, and therefore, brands need to be working with influencers who are experts within their given niche. A beauty brand, for example, may work with an influencer who is an expert in ingredients and formulations, which will add much more credibility to your brand.”

— Hellen Katherine, Senior Marketing Manager at MG Empower (Source: Brandwatch Digital Marketing Trends Survey, 2023.)

Trend #8: Social commerce is set to explode

Social media has a huge potential to sell, and it's poised for significant growth in 2024.

Social commerce has been around for a while. Still, new shopping features from major players like TikTok will take social commerce from the experimental stage to an essential part of most social media strategies.

Social media as a marketplace makes sense. The amount of time spent daily on social media worldwide is expected to reach a [new record in 2023](#), averaging over 2.5 hours a day. As consumers spend more and more time on social media, it's the perfect place for brands to promote and sell their products.

Consumers use social media platforms to research brands and look for new products or recommendations. According to a study by DataReportal, 75% of consumers use social media to [research brands](#), and nearly 28% actively use social media to [find products to buy](#).

“The integration of e-commerce into social media platforms is set to witness substantial growth in 2024. [...] Businesses must optimize their social media profiles to offer seamless shopping experiences. This optimization encompasses shoppable posts and streamlined checkout processes.”

— Daniela González at Media.Monks (Source: Brandwatch Digital Marketing Trends Survey, 2023.)

Online conversations about social commerce increased by 36% from January to November 2023 compared to the previous eleven months, and the volume of mentions peaked in November 2023. In those conversations, brands are discussing how to implement social commerce in their strategies, and consumers are interested in how this might impact their user journeys.

Social commerce sales in the U.S. will [grow nearly 30% to \\$69.92 billion in 2023](#) and are expected to grow to \$107.17 billion in 2025. With TikTok's launch of TikTok Shop in the US in September 2023, we can expect to see many brands implementing a social commerce strategy in 2024 to drive sales on social.

Another on-the-rise practice in social commerce is affiliate marketing. The benefits of affiliate marketing are that it requires only a small investment of budget, time, and effort, and brands can benefit from the trust of the partner affiliate. According to our survey of marketing professionals in September 2023, 87% of respondents agree that marketers will be asked to do more with a smaller budget in 2024. In times of [chaos in the digital advertising world](#) and marketers having to do more with less, affiliate marketing can be a great way to promote and sell your products and services.

Search interest in affiliate marketing increased in recent years, reaching a [5-year high in 2023](#). On TikTok, videos in the US with the hashtag #affiliate increased in 2023, [peaking in August 2023](#), while videos with #ad decreased steadily [since April 2022](#). There is a growing interest in affiliate marketing, and with tighter marketing budgets and the implementation of social as a revenue stream, we'll see more marketers using affiliate marketing to acquire new customers in 2024.

Brand inspiration

Wyze uses TikTok Shop to boost revenue

Wyze used TikTok Shop Ads and the Creator Affiliate Program to work with influencers to reach a new audience. The smart home company was able to generate \$1.3 million in sales with TikTok Shop Ads at an average cost per acquisition of \$5.95. The campaign not only brought money for the brand but also for the creators they partnered with.

Havaianas and the power of UGC

Havaianas encourages their customers to post about their shoes on Instagram with the custom hashtag #havaianasmoment. The footwear brand then repurposes the user-generated content on their website to promote their products and drive sales.

The North Face drives sales on Instagram

The outdoor brand is using Instagram's shopping feature to make shopping easier for consumers, removing barriers in the shopping process by allowing consumers to buy their products without leaving the app.



Tips for marketers

1. **Sell where your customers are.** Social media is a great place to provide a more convenient shopping experience. Identify which social media platforms your target audience is active on, and then experiment with the platform's different shopping features. Selling through social media can also help with discovery, as consumers like to use social media to discover new products and brands. Don't forget to make the shopping experience as seamless as possible to drive more conversions.
2. **Collaborate with influencers and use UGC to acknowledge your fans.** Working with influencers and leveraging user-generated content can be a great way to promote your products. Consumers trust the opinions and recommendations of influencers and their peers over brand advertising. Influencers and UGC can add a more personal and authentic touch that can help you drive sales.
3. **Utilize affiliate marketing to attract new customers.** Don't underestimate the value you might get from affiliate marketing. Be sure to partner with trustworthy affiliates who have a track record of success. Choose a niche and be specific to get the best results. And don't forget to iterate and experiment to continuously optimize your affiliate strategy.

Trend #9: Communities will take control and redefine engagement strategies

Brands need to tap into growing online communities to foster deeper consumer relationships.

From TikTok to customer-only spaces, the number of communities online is growing exponentially. Brands can tap into these active, engaged collectives to connect with potential customers.

As a growing number of people join social networks, more and more niche communities are forging their way. Take #BookTok, for example. #BookTok is a self-made community where book lovers discuss their passion for reading. #BookTok has almost 200 billion views on TikTok, and fans are excited that they have a place to geek out about their much-loved passion for books. For brands in the book space, it's a no-brainer to get involved. And there are communities just like this for literally every industry.

Brands that are built on communities are thriving. Brands like Letterboxd – a platform for movie fans to discuss and rank their favorite releases – are thriving. And their success can be attributed to the fact that they consider their members in their business decisions. For example, Letterboxd are actively listening to

community comments about suggested app features and have been known to hold off on releasing new features until the community is happy with them.

THE BRANDWATCH CHANGE MAKERS REPORT

Discover how brands like Letterboxd are making an impact and what you can learn from them.

[READ MORE](#)

Reddit – a hub for niche communities – is also thriving. The number of premium (paid-for) subscribers on Reddit is booming, jumping [38% in a single year in 2022](#). This indicates that individuals value online communities more than ever.

Marketers feel the same, too. In our Brandwatch survey, 63% of marketers agree that brands will lean into fostering consumer-to-consumer relationships via communities in 2024.

Brands can tap into these rising communities to better understand customer needs, concerns, and pain points. These groups also offer brands a way to develop a rapport with consumers, boosting brand awareness and loyalty.

Brands can bolster their community engagement by utilizing internal brand influencers by giving a face to the brand on social media. For example, find employees who can become representatives of your company. These internal brand influencers can foster community building on social, ultimately building consumer trust.

If you create your own community space, it's important that you add value to the customer experience. This might be through advice sharing, offering connection opportunities with fellow consumers, or even sharing exclusive discounts and deals.

Brand inspiration

Refinery29 gets women talking about money

Media and entertainment website [Refinery29](#) is using a [Facebook group](#) to facilitate a space for women to discuss money. As a result of their regular [Money Diaries](#) feature, the brand has fostered an active and engaged community of women sharing financial advice with each other online.

Female Invest is changing female finances

Community-driven membership brand [Female Invest](#) is on a mission to make finances easier for women to navigate. Their community is built into their business model – a membership that offers in-built advice forums, groups to facilitate communication among members, and live Q&A sessions with experts.

Estrid develops community off-platform

Community building doesn't need to be online. Razor subscription service [Estrid](#) encourages consumers to refer friends for a discount – promoting positive conversations about their products offline. While the business model isn't new, Estrid has implemented a system that builds a sense of community among members.

Tips for marketers

- 1. Get involved with existing communities.** While it might take time to create your own community Facebook page or subreddit, it takes minutes to find an existing group of potential consumers. Get involved with pre-existing communities to properly understand how to add value to these communities.
- 2. Consider influencers' communities.** Brands will benefit from utilizing influencer marketing to engage with existing communities en masse. Work alongside influencers with buzzing follower bases to tap into a pool of potential consumers.
- 3. Make sure the location of the community is thought through.** If you opt to use Facebook, are your demographic existing Facebook users? Equally, if using your website, how can you make it easy for customers to locate your community? You could utilize [social listening](#) software to see where your customers are talking about your brand, and set up your community on these platforms.

Trend #10. Consumers set the standards for business and marketing ethics

Growing consumer consciousness is pushing brands for more accountability.

Sustainability and ethical marketing practices continue gaining prominence as consumers become more conscious (and vocal) of environmental and social issues.

2023 has seen the sharpest increase in mentions of sustainability, up 20% between May 1 and November 28, 2023, compared to the previous period.

McKinsey and NielsenIQ's five-year-long study (2017-2022), which analyzed US sales data, discovered that consumers are shifting their spending toward products with ESG (environmental, social, and governance) or sustainability-related claims.

In our survey, 58% of marketers agree that "inclusivity and corporate social responsibility will gain momentum in marketing in 2024."

The marketing ethics conversation

New research by Edelman found that incorporating green marketing into brand strategies can boost brands' reach by 33%. The obstacle to authentic sustainability presents itself in the form of greenwashing. Despite

the positive image associated with green marketing, online discussions around corporate social responsibility (CSR) often reveal concerns about companies prioritizing appearance (greenwashing) over genuine commitment.

[The Natural Resources Defense Council \(NRDC\)](#) defines 'greenwashing' as "the act of making false or misleading statements about the environmental benefits of a product or practice," and that includes using eco-friendly language in marketing.

A quick search for 'greenwashing' using Google Trends revealed a rapidly growing use of the term online.

In online discussions relating to greenwashing, people often mention contradictions between companies' "green" climate goals and their actual practices. And it's not uncommon for consumers to encourage others to "fight back" by closing their wallets.

Pink- or rainbow-washing is another term that consumers use to call out brands that try to appeal to the LGBTQ+ communities for their own benefit.

We tracked over 40.3k mentions of pink- and rainbow-washing shared by 32k unique authors online between April 1 and October 1, 2023. As [one consumer](#) put it, "I feel sorry for these youngsters who thought that corporations had values and supported the LGBTQ community (...). Sorry kids, It was a marketing decision all along."

There is a lot of frustration online over companies that profess sustainability or inclusion, yet fall short of the standards of ethics they claim they're working towards. In a time when consumers are well-informed, have strong opinions, and express them unabashedly, brands need to be particularly attentive.

Consumers aren't shy about telling brands when they're not a fan of their marketing, especially when it appears unethical or insensitive. We found many examples of consumers calling out marketing material for being invasive, missing the mark on DE&I (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) initiatives, and for being misleading.



Brand inspiration

Apple transforms sustainability reporting

In their latest video, Apple uses storytelling to share their environmental update and a sustainability goal for the next six years (Apple has promised that by 2030, all Apple devices will have a net zero impact.) The brand has artfully packed a [5-minute video](#) with impressive stats and a firm commitment to transition their products to a more sustainable future.

PokemonGo gamifies sustainability ahead of PokemonGo's Sustainability Week

Remember the time when groups of strangers would walk around on their phones at all times of the day? In April 2023, PokemonGo introduced a new edition of Pokémons, tied to their [Sustainability Week 2023](#).

ThredUp informs consumers about the impact of each purchase

Consumers increasingly shop for environmentally friendly products. When shopping with second-hand resale brand ThredUp, consumers can see just how big of a positive impact each item will make. And this example of green marketing seems to be working. In the third quarter of 2023, ThredUp reported [21% year-over-year revenue growth](#).

“I believe that brand importance of sustainability and responsible practices....with product transparency the biggest opportunity/differentiator.”

— Mark Hanna at Richline Group (Source: Brandwatch Digital Marketing Trends Survey, 2023.)

Tips for marketers

- 1. Embrace sustainability and ethics.** In the increasingly polarized socio-economic environment, brands' actions will face even more measurable consequences, from reputational damages to a loss of revenue. Marketers should avoid compromising on ethics and making unrealistic promises, all while actively listening and incorporating customer feedback.
- 2. Communicate transparently.** Clear and transparent communication is paramount. Marketers should openly share information about sustainability efforts, progress, and challenges. Honest communication builds credibility, and consumers appreciate brands that are forthright about their sustainability journey, even if it involves acknowledging areas for improvement.
- 3. Beware of consumers calling you out publicly.** Consumers are conscious and well-informed on the topics of CSR. They research, make informed judgments, and they aren't afraid to call out brands for wrongdoing and ethical lapses. Brands should be on the lookout for missteps and closely monitor any shifts in consumer sentiment.
- 4. Show your audience the continuous improvements.** The landscape of ethical and sustainable marketing is dynamic. Brands should commit to continuous improvement by staying informed about emerging best practices, industry standards, and innovations. A proactive approach to evolving DE&I goals demonstrates a genuine dedication to positive change and resonates positively with consumers.

Use the right tools to boost your digital marketing strategy

Chat with an expert about how Brandwatch can help bring your strategy to life, and how to manage and track your digital campaigns.

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