



# The Power of Connecting With What's Happening

U.K.

M/GNA

IPG MEDIA LAB



# Brands Are Becoming More Involved In What's Happening Today

campaign

SEARCH + FILTER + SORT

Omar Oakes | July 28, 2017

How long? | 1 minute

## Tesco to cover cost of 'tampon tax' for customers

Tesco is cutting the price of women's sanitary products so their customers will not be impacted by VAT.



**Tesco Tampon Tax off | We're paying it for you**

The UK's biggest supermarket announced the 3% price reduction today ahead of government proposals to remove value added tax on such products – dubbed by critics as the 'tampon tax'.

The initiative, spearheaded by its ad agency Bartle Bogle Hegarty London, will apply to nearly 100 Tesco own-label and branded products.

Support The Guardian

Search + Filter + Sort

The Guardian

## Iceland's Christmas ad was brave and necessary. It shouldn't be banned

Jessica Brown

The advert shone a light on the devastation caused by palm oil producers, a story TV viewers have a right to know about

- Iceland's Christmas TV advert banned for being too political



The Greenpeace film Iceland wanted to run as its Christmas advert - video

Major retailers enter a battle every Christmas to make us cry with their saccharine seasonal ads - but this year we already have a clear winner.

campaign

SEARCH + FILTER + SORT


Omar Oakes | May 11, 2018

How long? | 3-4 minutes

## The Royal Wedding: how brands are getting involved for Prince Harry and Meghan's big day

His Royal Highness Prince Henry of Wales is getting married. Whether driven by a fascination with royalty, celebrity, or blokes who have been in the Army, there is no shortage of hoopla over Prince Harry getting hitched to American actress Meghan Markle. Campaign takes a closer look at how brands are getting on board another Royal wedding train and will update this story as new campaigns and products are launched.

- KFC launches "Kentucky Fine China"



Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn icons

The Drum

SEARCH + FILTER + SORT

## HSBC continues its 'Together We Thrive' pledge with 'We are not an island' campaign

By Imogen Watson  
03 January 2019 16:27 GMT

**WE ARE NOT AN ISLAND. WE ARE A COLOMBIAN COFFEE DRINKING, AMERICAN MOVIE WATCHING, SWEDISH FLAT-PACK ASSEMBLING, KOREAN TABLET TAPPING, BELGIAN STRIKER SUPPORTING, DUTCH BEER CHEERS-ING, TIKKA MASALA EATING, WONDERFUL LITTLE LUMP OF LAND IN THE MIDDLE OF THE SEA. WE ARE PART OF SOMETHING FAR, FAR BIGGER.**

HSBC UK

We Are Not An Island

A year on from introducing its 'Together We Thrive' brand promise and 'Global Citizen' TV campaign, Britain's biggest bank, HSBC, continues to demonstrate its view on the Brexit trade deal by sharing its internationalist vision.

'Together We Thrive' was launched ahead of Britain's departure from the European Union (EU). The TV campaign 'Global Citizen' starred The IT Crowd's Richard

Consumer Perspectives  
On Brand Involvement  
With Culture

**As An  
Industry, We  
Need To Learn  
More About...**

Benefits of Being  
A Culturally  
Relevant Brand

# We Did Some Preliminary Research



## Why

- How should we define culture from a consumer's point of view?
- How do consumers think about culture in relation to the brands they interact with?



## What

- 4 webcam-based mini-groups were conducted for online discussion (90 min each)
- Pre-group assignment to find a digital ad they thought was culturally relevant, which were shown and discussed in the groups



## Findings

- Brands that are culturally relevant are brands that align well with cultural events, promote trends that define today's culture, and support social issues that benefit everyone\*



# Methodology

## Objective:

Uncover what consumers think about brands' involvement in culture



### Recruit

Recruited panelists into online survey  
UK General Population A16+, n= 505  
Twitter Booster Sample n=200



### Demographic

Participants were asked standard demographic questions to ensure representativeness



### Culture Deep Dive

Deep dive into what consumers think about brands' involvement in culture



### Conjoint

Conjoint questions to pinpoint the most important factors consumers consider when making purchase decisions

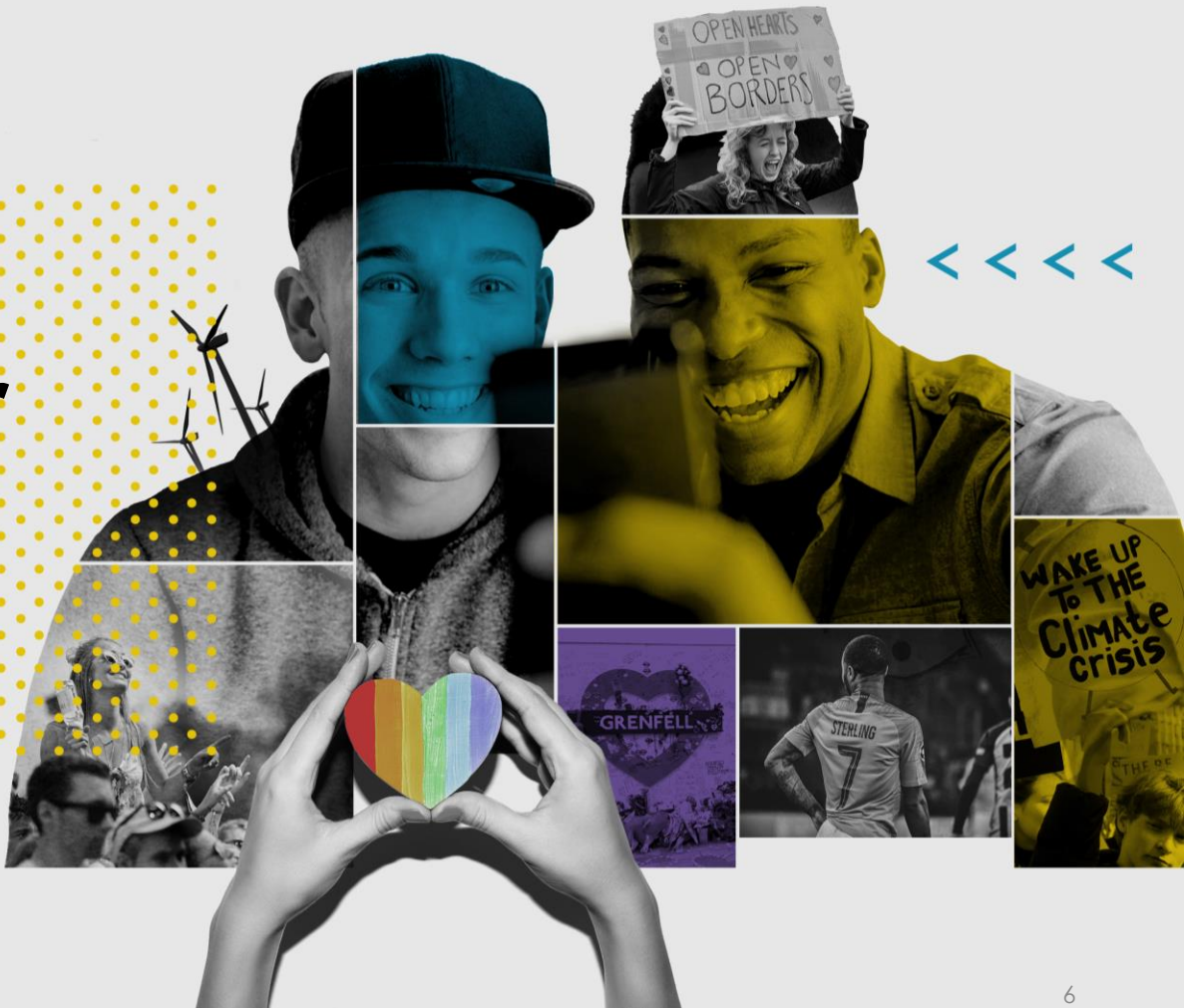


### Brand Index

Participants were randomized to rate brand perceptions, including cultural relevance, for a range of brands across 6 industry verticals

# Consumer POV

Brands + Culture



# There's Much More To Culture Than You'd Think

When You Think About Culture In Your Own Life, What Comes To Mind?



# Consumers Think Brands Should Be Involved, Particularly In Social Issues. Events & Trends Are Table Stakes

Importance Of Brand Involvement In Culture - % Very Important/Important

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**36%**

## Events & Trends

Includes pop culture events such as the World Cup and the Brits and cultural trends such as organic food and natural beauty

**41%**

## Social Issues & Movements

Includes social movements such as gender equality and disaster relief





# There's A Desire For Brand Involvement In What Consumers Are Most Passionate About

Passion for Cultural Events, Trends & Issues - % Very Passionate/Passionate

**32%**  
Events & Trends\*

**35%**  
Social Issues  
& Movements\*\*



\*Includes pop culture events such as the World Cup and the Brits and cultural trends such as organic food and natural beauty

\*\*Includes social movements such as gender equality and disaster relief

U.K. general population, n=505 | Q: How passionate are you in following cultural events, trends, and issues?



# Consumers Also Feel More Informed About Social Issues

Informed on Cultural Events,  
Trends & Issues - % Very  
Informed/Informed

36%

Events & Trends\*

39%

Social Issues &  
Movements\*\*

\*Includes pop culture events such as the World Cup and the Brits and cultural trends such as organic food and natural beauty

\*\*Includes social movements such as gender equality and disability rights

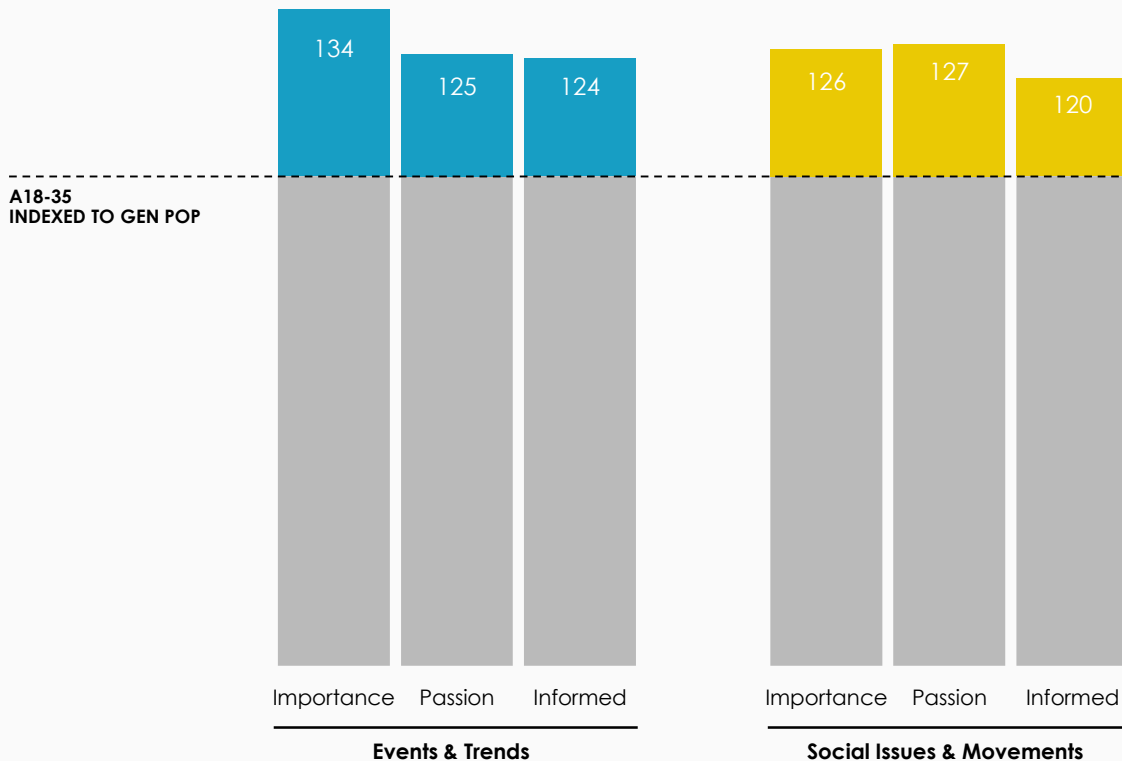
U.K. general population, n=505

Q: How informed are you when it comes to events, trends or issues in pop culture?



# Emerging Generations Feel Even More Strongly About Brand Involvement

Perceptions of Cultural Events, Trends & Issues - **Adults 18-35**, Indexed



U.K. general population, n=505, A18-35, n=123

Q: How important is it for a brand to be involved in each of the following?

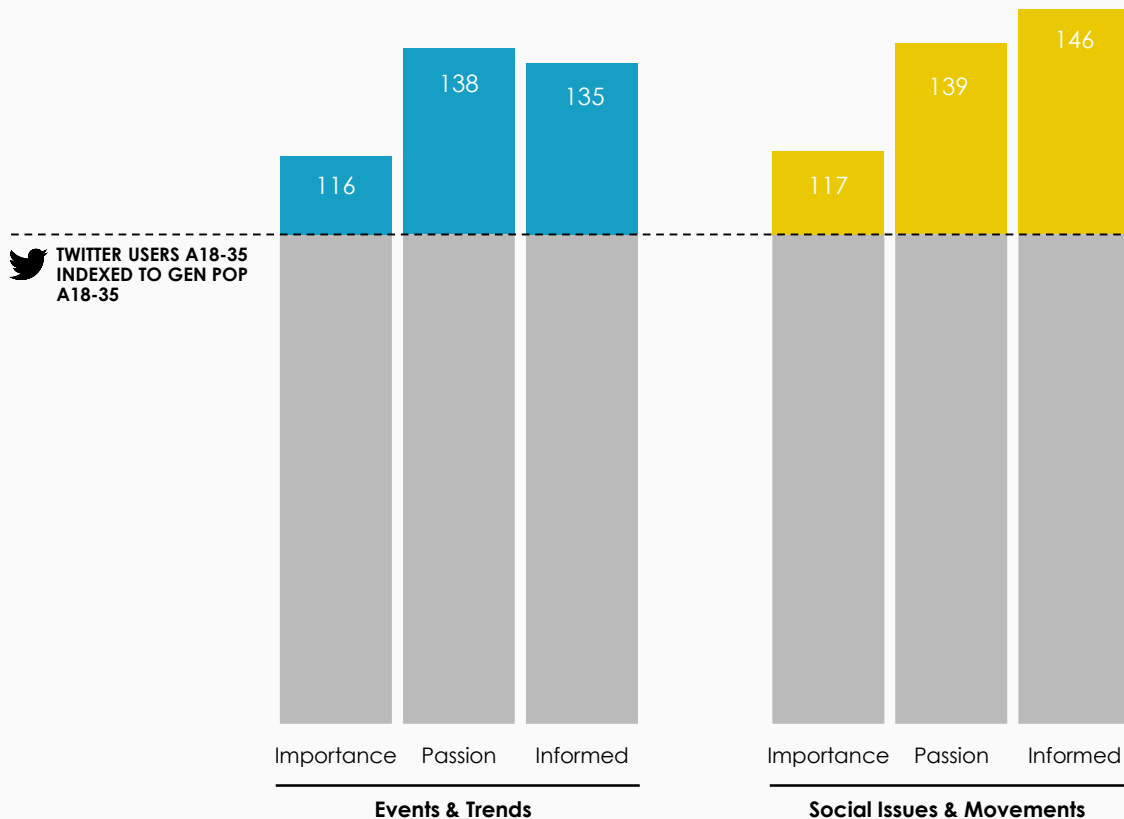
Q: How passionate are you in following cultural events, trends, and issues?

Q: How informed are you when it comes to events, trends or issues relevant to culture?

# Among The Young, Twitter Users Are Particularly Ardent About Brand Involvement

Perceptions of Cultural Events, Trends & Issues - **Twitter Users A18-35**, Indexed

Young Twitter users are more enthusiastic about brand involvement in culture **across all markets**



A18-35, n=123, Twitter users 18-35, n=113

Q: How important is it for a brand to be involved in each of the following?

Q: How passionate are you in following cultural events, trends, and issues?

Q: How informed are you when it comes to events, trends or issues relevant to culture?

# Many Ways Brands Can Become Culturally Relevant – But ‘Giving Back’ Is Key

Ways brands can become more culturally relevant - % strongly agree/agree

## Philanthropy

Give to community, 52%

Support social issues that benefit everyone, 48%

Donate to charity, 37%

## Know Your Customers

Be inclusive of all types of people\*, 48%

Puts customers first, 46%

Be transparent, 47%

Have a diverse leadership team, 29%

## Stay Current

Keep up-to-date with consumer trends\*\*, 32%

Sponsor cultural events\*\*\*, 30%

Create innovative products, 28.6%

Have a clear political stance, 21%

Have celebrity endorsements, 12%

\*e.g. Race, gender

\*\*e.g. Organic foods, natural beauty

\*\*\*e.g. The World Cup, The Brits

U.K. general population, n=505

Q: In your opinion, what can a brand do to become more culturally relevant?



# Twitter Users Are Especially Receptive Towards Brands Becoming More Culturally Relevant

Ways brands can become more culturally relevant  
- Δ (Twitter users – Gen pop)

## Stay Current

Sponsor cultural events\*\*\*, +14%

Keep up-to-date with consumer trends\*\*, +13%

## Know Your Customers

Have a diverse leadership team, +5%

Be transparent, +2%

Be inclusive\*, +1%

## Philanthropy

Support social issues that benefit everyone, +6%

Donate to charity, +5%

Create innovative products, +9%

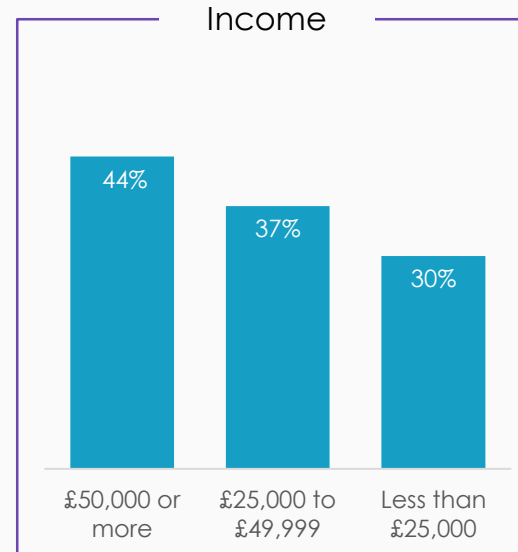
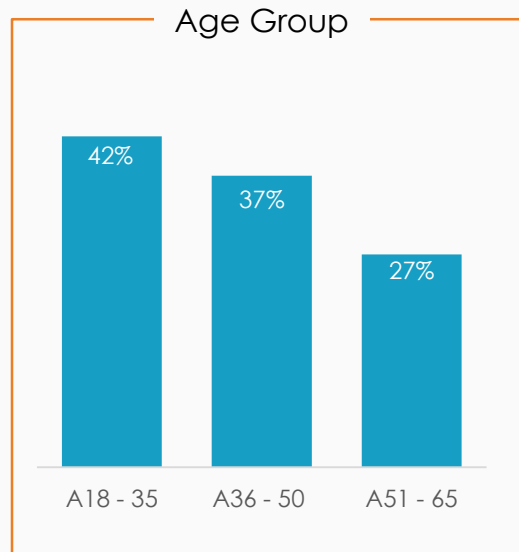
Have a clear political stance, +6%

Have celebrity endorsements, +6%

\*e.g. Race, gender  
\*\*e.g. Organic foods, natural  
\*\*\*e.g. The World Cup, The Brits  
U.K. general population, n=505, Twitter users, n=326  
Q: In your opinion, what can a brand do to become more culturally relevant?

# Culturally Passionate Consumers Are Different Demographically

% Who Are Passionate About Brand Involvement in Culture

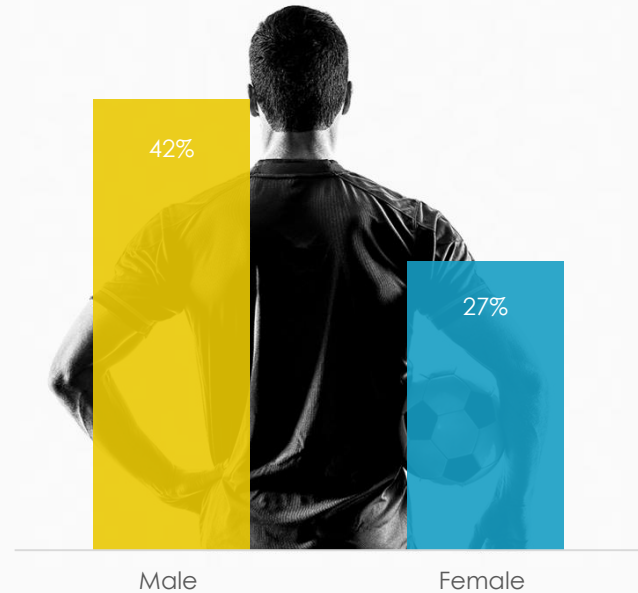


U.K. general population, n=505;  
A 18 - 35 n=123, A36 - 50 n= 180, A51 - 65 n= 201  
Income > £50K n= 119, £25K - £49k n= 167, < £25k n= 189  
Q: How passionate are you about cultural events, trends and social issues

# While Men And Women Are Equally Passionate About Cultural Trends And Issues, Men Are Especially Passionate About Cultural Events

% Who Are Passionate About Brand Involvement in Cultural Events

■ Male ■ Female

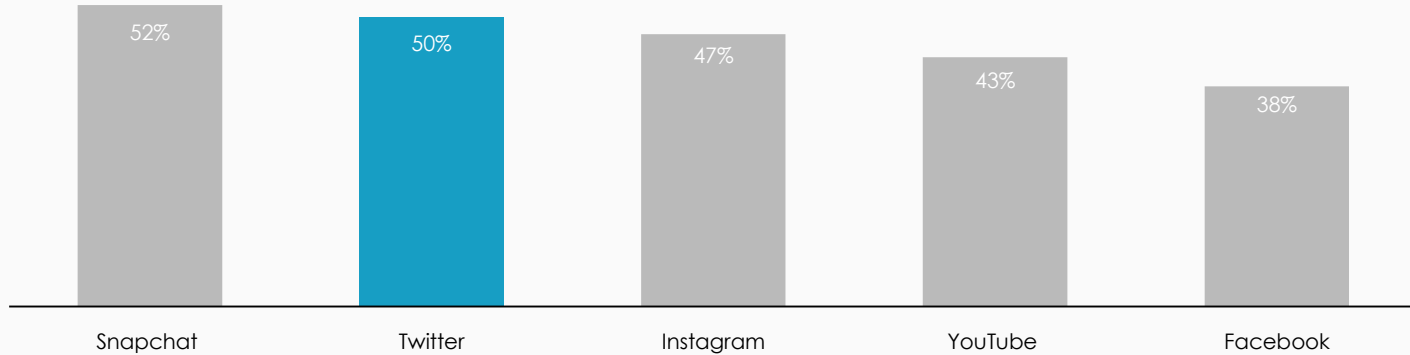




# But, Media Habits Are What Truly Set The Passionate Apart

% Of Monthly Platform Users Who Are Passionate About Brand Involvement In Culture

Differences in passion based on social media usage are 237% greater than the differences that exist across age groups



# Consumer POV: Key Learnings

Consumers think of culture as much more than just the traditional notion

Consumers think it's important for brands to be involved in culture, especially when it comes to social issues

Younger consumers are particularly keen on brand involvement in culture



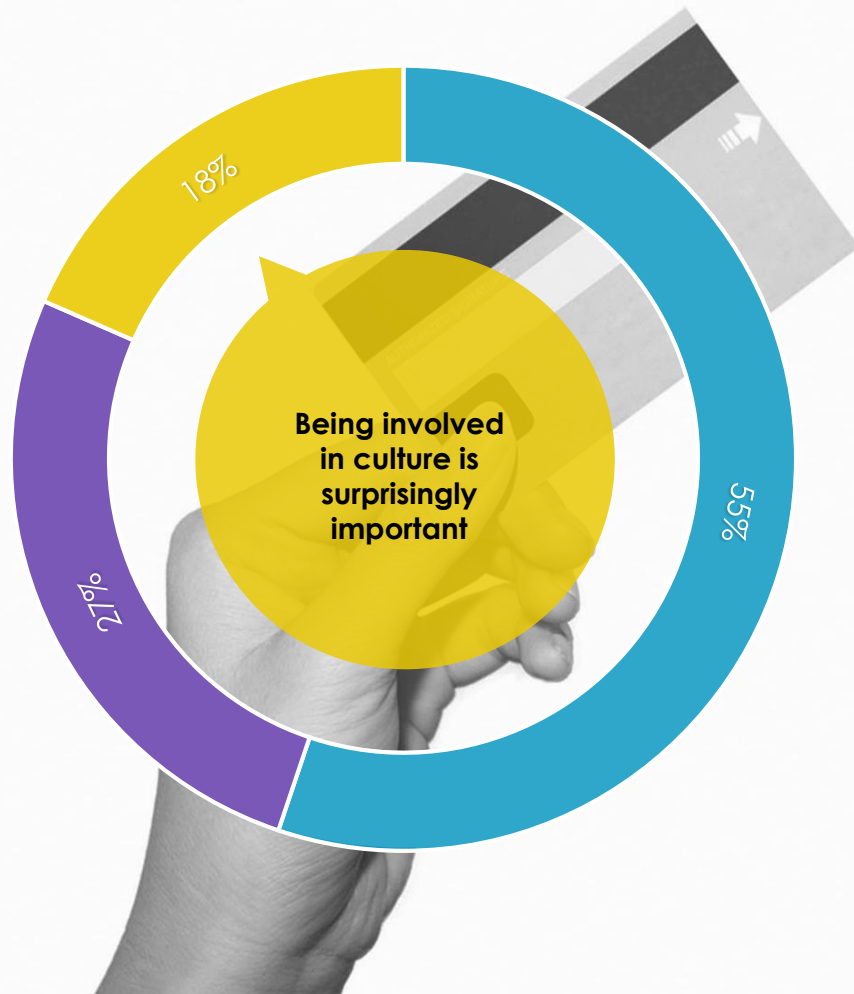
# Fringe Benefits

What's the impact for brands?

# To Understand What Consumers Value Most When Making Purchases...

We asked consumers to rank a range of attributes based on...





## When It Comes To Making Purchase Decisions, Consumers Care About Brand Involvement With Culture

Influence on purchase decisions - relative importance (%)

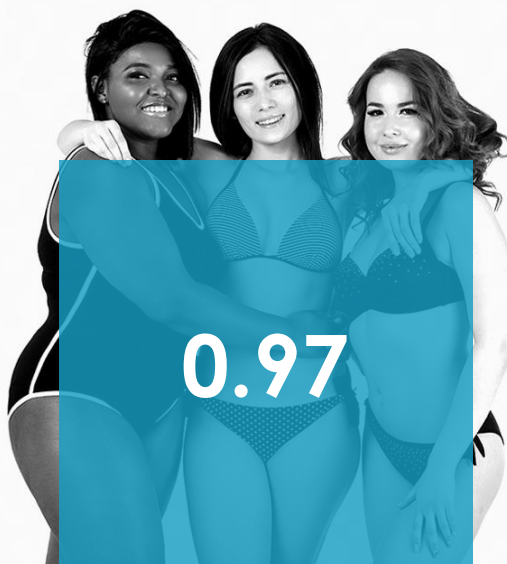
- Brand Cultural Involvement
- Brand Qualities\*
- Price and Quality

# Supporting Social Issues & Movements Has Greater Impact Than Sponsoring Cultural Events When Making Purchasing Decisions

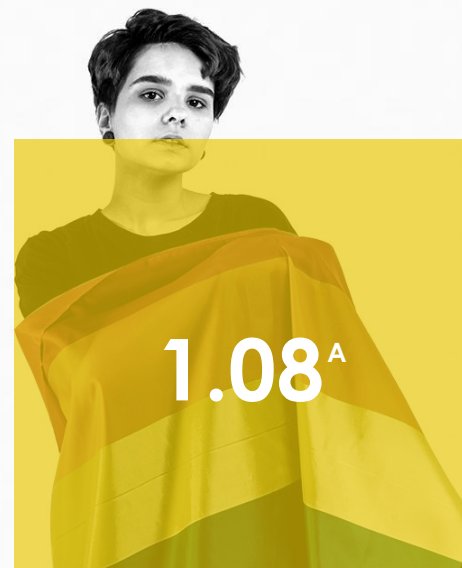
Influence of Types of Cultural Involvement on Purchase Decision - Importance Ranking



**Brands That Sponsor Cultural Events (A)**  
(e.g. The World Cup, the Brits)



**Brands That Promote Trends That Define Today's Culture (B)**  
(e.g. Organic Foods, Natural Beauty)



**Brands That Support Social Issues That Benefit Everyone (C)**  
(e.g. Gender Equality)

U.K. general population, n=505

Q: When you purchase a product/service, there are many factors that can influence your purchase decision. Please select your most preferred and least preferred feature for each category below:

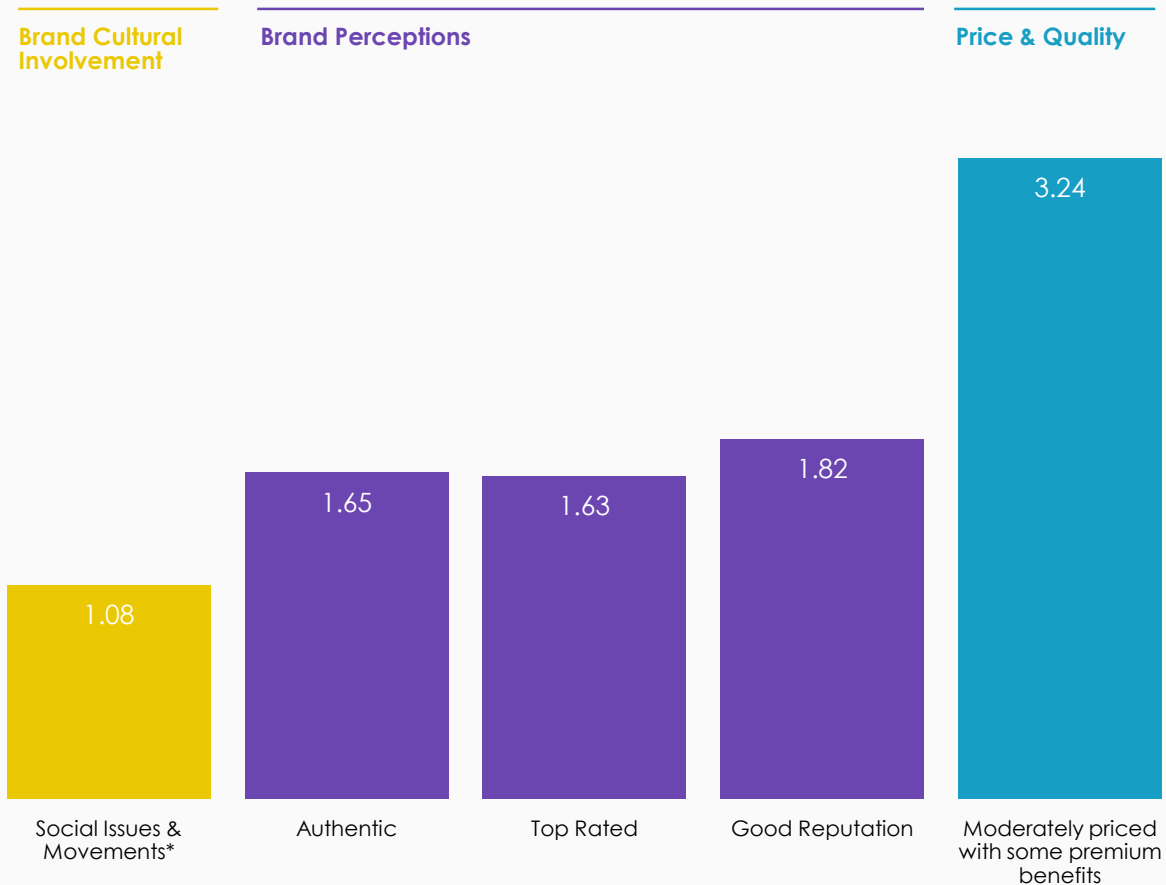
Rankings are between 1-10 and account for people's overall preference for a feature as well as the features' overall importance

A/B/C: significant difference from indicated cultural involvement at 90% confidence (cultural events/cultural trends/social issues)

# What Are The Key Factors That Make Up An Optimal Brand?

Top Attributes for Strongest Influence on Purchase Decisions - Importance Ranking

The optimal brand supports social issues, has a good reputation, and is moderately priced with premium benefits



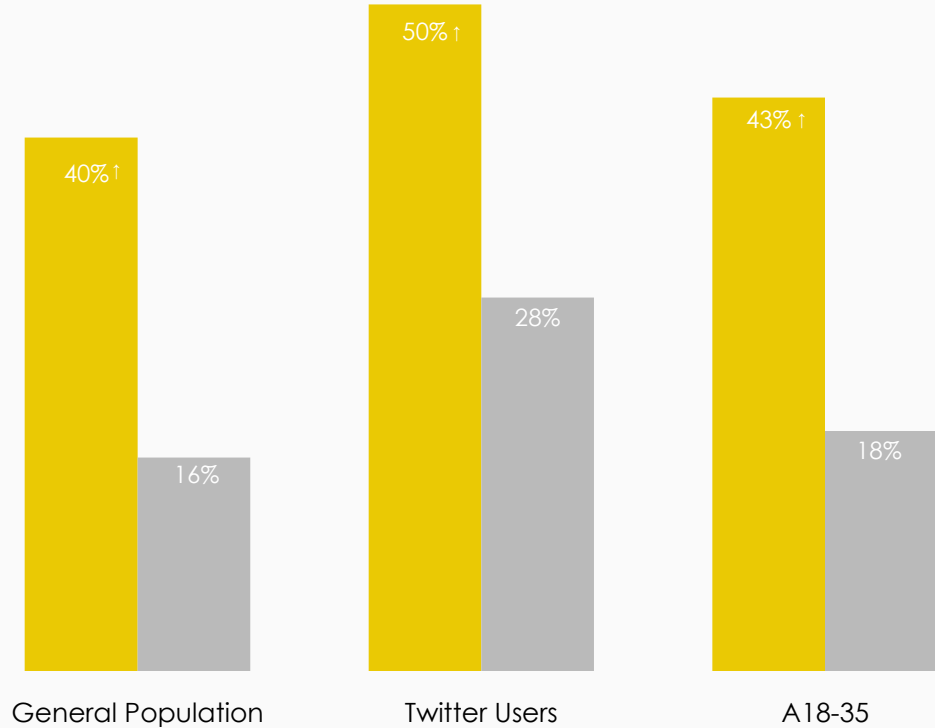
# Consumers Identify with Brands That Are Culturally Relevant

"Is A Brand I Identify With" by Cultural Relevance - % Agree

- High Cultural Relevance (Top 20% Of Brands)
- Low Cultural Relevance (Bottom 20% Of Brands)

## Brand Index

Consumers were randomized to rate brand perceptions, including cultural relevance, for 24 brands

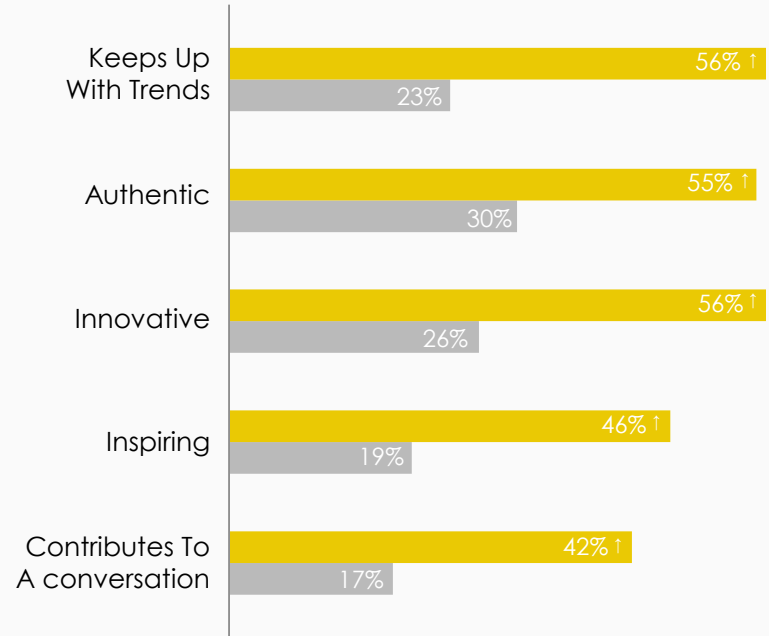




# In Fact, Brands With High Cultural Relevance Reap A Whole Host Of Benefits

Brand Attributes by Cultural Relevance - % Agree

- High Cultural Relevance (Top 20% Of Brands)
- Low Cultural Relevance (Bottom 20% Of Brands)



U.K. general population, n=505

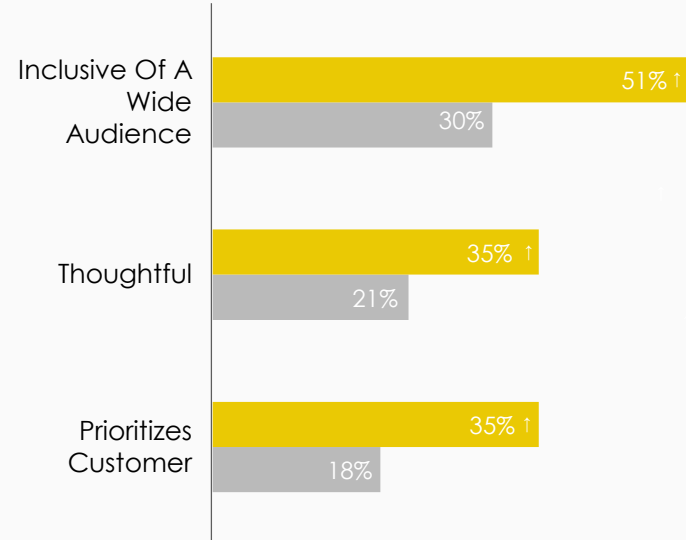
Q: How would you describe [insert brand] based on the below?

↑: significant difference between high cultural relevance and low cultural relevance brands at 90% confidence.

# Brands With High Cultural Relevance Demonstrate Care For Their Consumers And Community

Brand Attributes by Cultural Relevance - % Agree

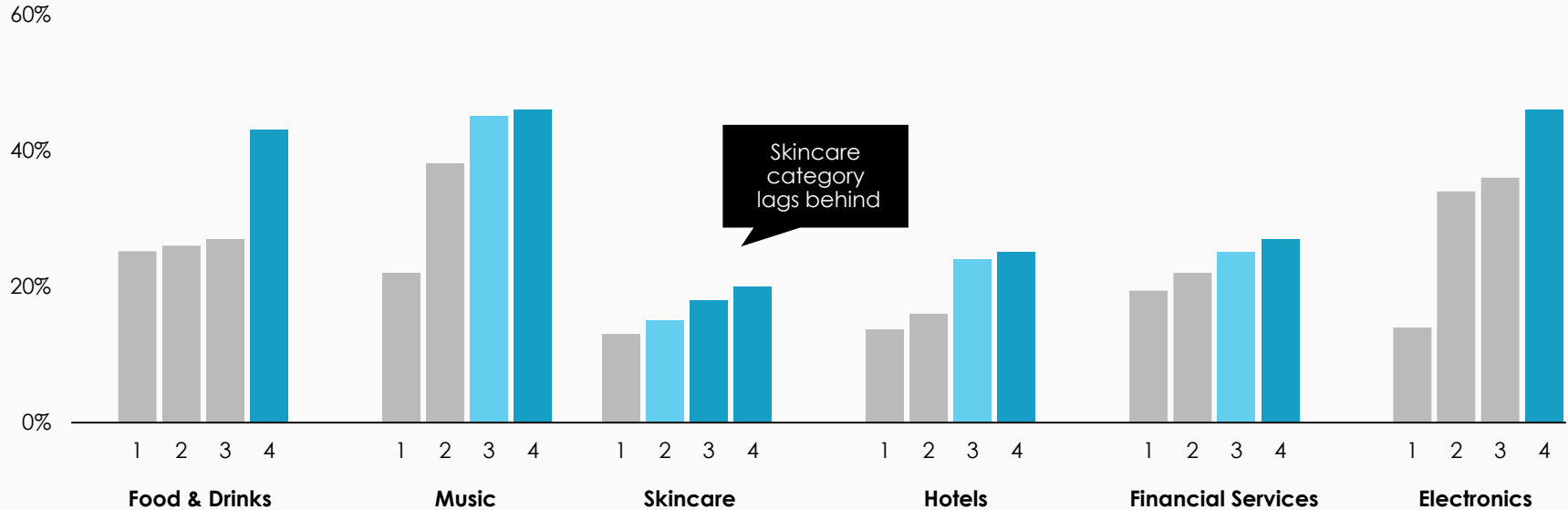
- High Cultural Relevance (Top 20% Of Brands)
- Low Cultural Relevance (Bottom 20% Of Brands)



# Leaders Exist In Every Vertical... But So Do Opportunities For Competition

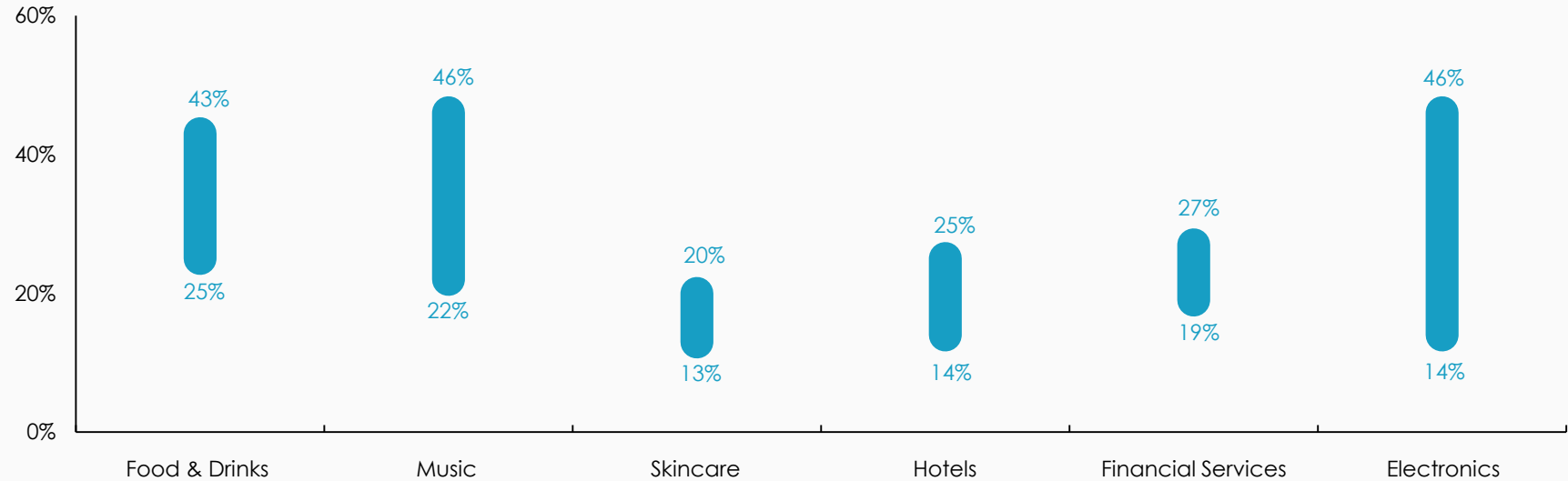
Culturally Relevant Brands by Vertical - % Agree

■ Front Runner ■ Middle of the Pack ■ Lagging Behind



# Opportunities In Each Category To Be Culturally Relevant

Range of Cultural Relevance by Vertical - % Strongly Agree/Agree





# Donations

Should brands reveal how much they are donating?

# To Understand If Revealing Donation Details Has An Effect On Brand Favorability...

We showed participants a hypothetical scenario involving a particular brand, donation value, and cause and asked them to rate brand favorability.

- A variety of brands were tested, with donations to various charities
- 80 scenarios were tested, but each participant rated only 1 scenario



# Brands Don't Necessarily Need To Quote A Donation Amount

Brand Favorability By  
'Donation Amount  
Shown' vs. 'Donation  
Amount Not Shown'

\*Each participant rated  
only 1 donation scenario



Donation Amount  
Shown

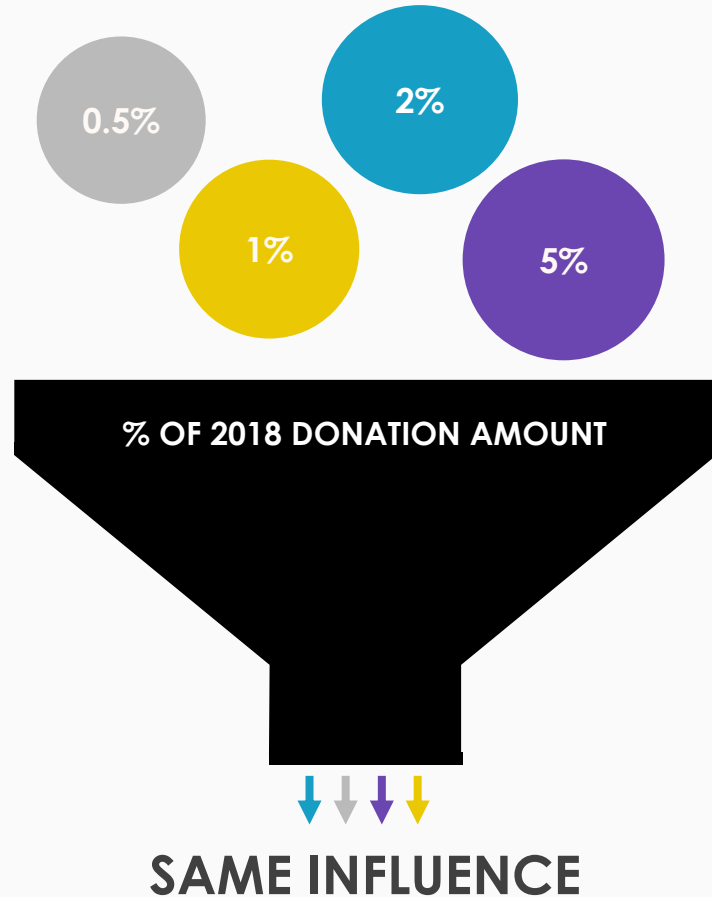


Donation Amount  
**Not** Shown



# When Brands Mention A Donation Amount, A Higher Amount May Not Directly Influence Brand Favorability

**Brand Favorability By % Donation Amount** - \*Each participant rated only 1 donation scenario





# Brand Fringe Benefits: Key Learnings

Brand involvement accounts for 18% of a consumers' purchase decision –  
*it is nearly as important as having a strong brand image*

Brands with high cultural relevance reap a host of benefits

It doesn't matter if brands quote a donation amount or not. Brand Favorability remains the same regardless

# What Do Consumers Think About When Brands Get Political?

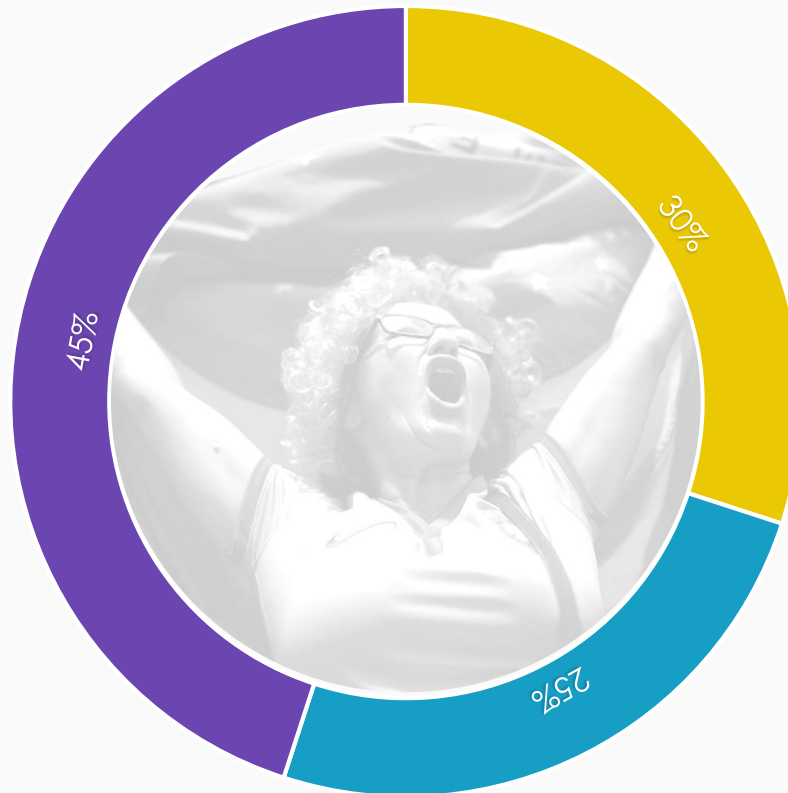


# Around Half Of Consumers In The U.K. Do Not Care Either Way If Brands Take A Political Stance

% On Brands Taking A Political Stance

- More Brands Should Take a Political Stance
- Fewer Brands Should Take a Political Stance
- I Do Not Care Either Way If Brands Take A Political Stance

Whereas in the US, consumers were evenly split across all three buckets



# In A Time When Politics Is Everywhere, Some Consumers Believe Taking A Stand Is Necessary

Consumer Opinions on Brands  
Taking a Political Stance



“Because they  
can make a  
difference.”

“To show  
they  
care.”

“It is important to me to know  
that I’m supporting companies  
who’s values are similar to  
mine.”

“Brands are influential and  
speak to people who may be  
disengaged.”

“Brands having a political opinion means that other people might be  
more forthcoming about their own, and it could help wipe out radical  
views.”

# On The Other Hand, Some Consumers Want Any Escape They Can Get – and Think That Brands Getting Political Are Just Trying To Curry Favor

Consumer Opinions on Brands Taking a Political Stance



“Because sometimes you just don’t want to see what’s going on in politics.”

“Brands should be apolitical and neutral.”

“I think politics causes issues rather than solves them.”

“Because they will take a side which I may not adhere to

“It’s not their job to influence me in my views. They should focus more on ethical and environmental awareness and distance themselves from politics, given that most politicians are corrupt and non-representative anyway.”

**When Deciding To  
Take A Political  
Stance, Brands  
Should Keep Their  
Audience In Mind  
And Engage In  
Ways That Are  
Relevant To Them.**



# Implications: Putting Culture Into Action

1

Today, consumers expect brand involvement with culture, particularly when it comes to social issues. **In order to stay relevant and keep pace with competitors, brands need to keep culture in mind.**

2

While there are many ways for brands to become involved, one size does not fit all. **Brands should be thoughtful in their approach to ensure authenticity and appropriate brand alignment.**

3

To target culturally passionate consumers, brands need to look beyond demographics alone. **They may be different demographically, but it is their media habits that separate the passionate from the not passionate.**

# Thank You

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