
Expert Outlook 2024

Anchor Us



Anchor Us

Contents

- 1 How to be an anchor for your audience in 2024
- 2 Methodology
- 3 2024 Threat Monitor
 - 01 Global Boiling Point
 - 02 Economic Polarisation
 - 03 Cultural Detachment
 - 04 Rogue Actors
 - 05 Anti-human
 - 06 DE&I Rollback
 - 07 Synthetic Reality
 - 08 Cyber Vigilantism

- 4 Sector Shifts
 - Beauty
 - Careers
 - Citizenship
 - Communications
 - Eating & Drinking
 - Fashion & Style
 - Getting Around
 - Health & Fitness
 - Home & Relationships
 - Luxury
 - Media & Entertainment
 - Money
 - Shopping
 - Technology
 - Travel & Leisure
- 5 Horizon Planner



1

How to be an anchor for your audience in 2024

People will look for stabilisation in a year of uncomfortable transition

Record heat, record flooding, record inflation, record polarisation, record trust decline, record existential fear... welcome to 2024.

It's true that over the last decade, we've seen worst-case scenarios play out with increasing frequency – since the early 2000s, a collective conviction in how things are has trembled against wave after wave of geopolitical, economic and technological change. Dystopic scenarios, rendered on a 24/7, always-on media cycle, have come to fruition; people have endured them. These increasingly frequent shocks are [fracturing people's grasp on reality](#) and making them [scrutinise the value](#) of products and ways of life they previously took for granted.



There's no other side to emerge out of. As we look into 2024, there's instead a sense of eerie and repetitive uncertainty. The same candidates are running in the presidential election in the US, the UK wrestles with systemic breakdown, prices stay high, people work through their relationship with technology with a mix of ambivalence, fear, and fury, major economies struggle amid patchy consumer confidence, the West negotiates a fraught and uncomfortable relationship with China and India, and the war in Ukraine continues. There are many unknowns in this unsettling new status quo.

People are starting to normalise a more extreme state of play. As they wrestle with everyday volatility, they're looking for connection and leadership that roots and directs them through a temperamental reality. In 2024, people are looking for an anchor point in stormy waters. This doesn't mean people don't want to embrace or explore the tides of change, but that they're looking for places to attach to be brought safely along for the journey.

The mainstreaming of AI will have massive implications for people's sense of agency, and employees will continue to fear the rollout of new technologies in the workplace. We've already seen the ramifications of this, [with precedents set by writers' and actors' strikes in the US](#) as people reject the use of AI by streaming services and ongoing train strikes in the UK as people fear an increased [overreliance on technology](#). Increasing launches of disruptive technologies by businesses

in 2024 will see people further advocate for the security (albeit already precarious) of keeping things as they are.

The pace of change will be a key destabilising force in the year ahead. Where people do feel left behind, they're seeking out like-minded communities to nurture resilience and re-root themselves. As such, 2024 will see a rise in localism and in-person community as people gather to connect and organise in tangible ways. Also in response to technological innovation, the ability to taste, see, and touch the world will become more important as misinformation, deepfakes, and cyber hacks grow.

As worst-case scenarios play out more frequently, the desire for [reprieve and release will grow](#). In 2024, we'll see superfandom hype through major cultural moments such as Taylor Swift's eras tour in Asia, with people savouring live moments with their idols alongside thousands of fellow fans. The open approach of the Paris Olympics will also serve as a centring point for millions worldwide. But the desire for release will also generate financial and existential nihilism as people cut loose in the face of situational overwhelm. In culture, fast content and equally rapid product distribution are driving apathy. From fad fatigue to waning loyalty, in 2024, brands will have to fight harder to retain attention. Defining purpose will be essential – and demonstrating how that purpose is critical to your audience will be the real winner.

The coming year has the propensity to be filled with grief – about the new realities of [our experience of the planet](#), about the new, less satisfactory norms of everyday existence, about coming to terms with [the pandemic skip](#). But there are also plenty of opportunities for hope and building. With the knowledge that more challenging times are ahead, people value feel-good moments and comforts that lie beyond monetary value or status, such as treats, tactility, new-stalgia, and shared moments with others. Anchoring is active and specific. It's about openness, not obfuscation. Giving people stabilisation points through knowledge, shared resources, co-creation, and honest communication will help them feel more rooted, loyal, and engaged amid significant instability.

Together with 49 industry leaders, Canvas8's Expert Outlook analysis is designed to help you solve 2024's most pressing challenge: What can we anchor around?

2

Methodology

Expert analysis

We spoke to 49 experts across 15 sectors, including those in economics, geo-politics, and the environment – each with a distinct and forward-facing perspective. We analysed their thoughts on the shifts coming in the year ahead, distilling their input into core insights.

Insight mapping

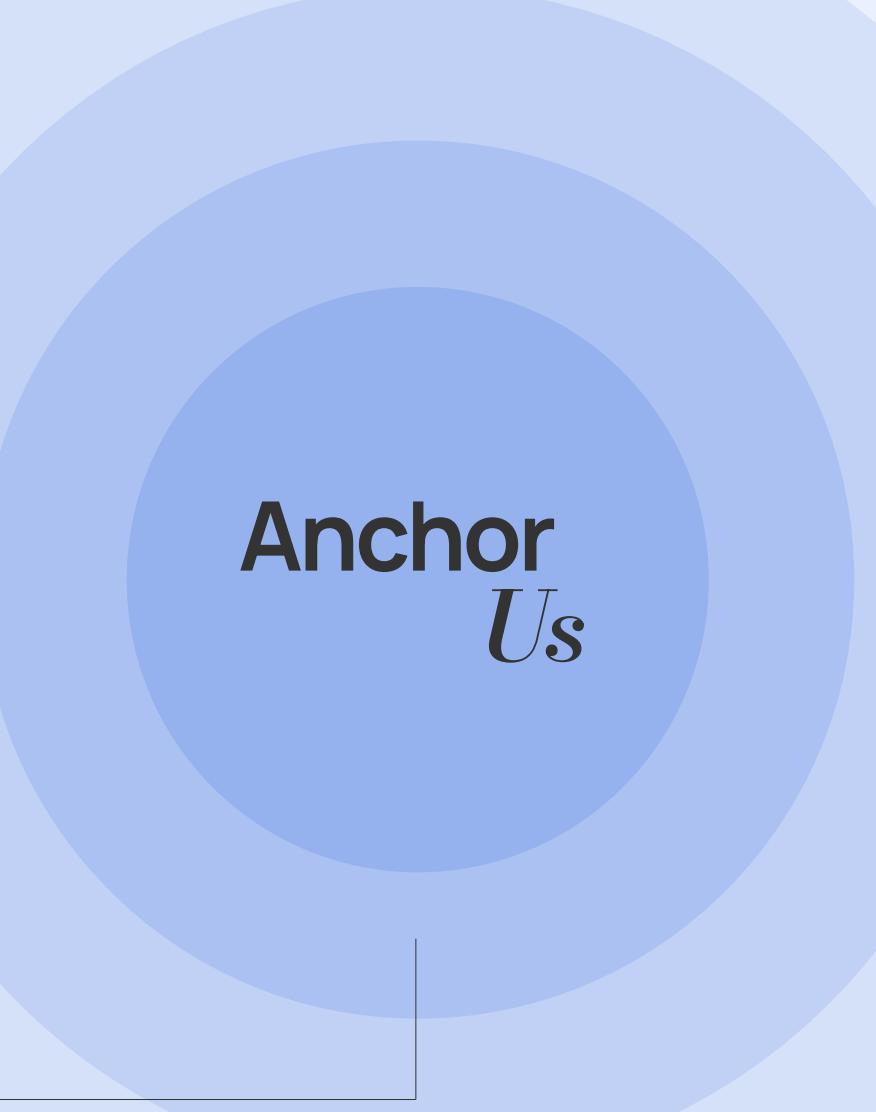
Prevalent themes from the expert interviews were cross-analysed with our Sector Behaviours and Macro Behaviours. Our analysts mapped the key drivers, tensions, and trend trajectories set to influence consumer behaviour in 2023.

Thematic clustering

We surfaced the most prevalent themes from the interviews and desk research and generated executive summaries to give teams a rich understanding of macro forces shaping 2024 and key shifts emerging across sectors.

Horizon Planner

Key events across culture, politics, technology and economics were identified as influencing 2024. These comprise our Horizon Planner, a calendar for anticipating audience engagement and using real-time monitoring on the Canvas8 Library to prepare activations.



Anchor
Us

Meet the experts

Beauty



Anita Bhagwandas Hiroko Yamano Kayla Greaves



Eating & Drinking

Jessica Southard Cathy Erway Jane Peyton



Natalia Kucirkova Laura Zimmermann Libby Viera-Bland

Shopping



Omar H. Fares Chris Nawrocki Matt Johnson

Careers



Christos Makridis Sonya Barlow Nathaniel Diong



Fashion & Style

Christopher-Jacques Morency Rian Phin Martine Jarlgaard

Luxury



Diana Verde Nieto Nonita Kalra Alex Cheatle

Technology



Christopher Lafayette Herbert Swaniker Reginé Gilbert Joshua Cittarella

Citizenship



Amelia Abraham Dr. Douglas Rushkoff Aphinya Siranart

Getting Around



John Surico Dr. Luna Khirfan Thomas Bräunl

Media & Entertainment



Many Ameri CedarBough Saeji Jay-Ann Lopez

Travel & Leisure



Cassam Looch Jenny Southan Anna Lee

Communications



Stephan Lewandowsky Matt Klein Dr. Francesca Sobande

Health & Fitness



Stephen Mai Chloe Combi Rina Raphael

Money



Paco de Leon Meg Elkins Bola Sol

Macros



Joe Nellis (Economics) Dr. Thomas Greven (Politics) Tessa Khan (Environment)

3

2024 Threat Monitor

*Understand the macro pressure
points set to fuel uncertainty and
learn how to control the rate of drift*



Global Boiling Point

Living with extreme heat is creating a new climate culture war

2024 challenge: climate polarisation

From drought affecting the Panama Canal trade route and halting global supply systems to record summer temperatures and extreme flooding in the Mediterranean, the impact of a boiling climate is more evident than ever. With temperatures rising, we'll see further volatility in 2024 – and not just in the weather. As action is taken to mitigate or halt the impact of global boiling on our collective experience, a fresh climate culture war is also brewing. Even though support for environmental initiatives is strong, people also want to maintain their way of life. From ULEZ protests in London and the UK's rollback of green initiatives to Project 2025 in the US, green action is generating polarising responses as people resist adapting to altered norms. As Stephan Lewandowsky summarises: "The majority of people understand that we have to do something about climate change, for example, but there will be an increasingly radical minority who's going to go the other way, maybe instigating violent action against the establishment."

77% of Gen Yers and Xers, 76% of Gen Zers, and 75% of Boomers all report they're concerned about atypical or unseasonable weather

(Fast Company x Harris Poll, 2023)



01

“

We're going to see more direct action-type movements, where people take to the streets or engage in civil disobedience because there is really a lot of fear and frustration that not enough is being done by political leaders to address the climate crisis.”



—Tessa Khan,
executive director and founder of Uplift



2024 disruptor

Mikaela Loach

Gen Z author of *It's Not that Radical: Climate Action to Transform Our World*, Loach uses an open and accessible form of storytelling to involve people in climate action, using memes and TikTok to link environmentalism to other social issues.

The anchor: break it down

In 2024, environmental concerns need to be delivered in the [context of financial challenges](#). An anchoring strategy will acknowledge climate realities while showing people an affordable path forward. For example, [Farmers Pick](#) addresses food waste while offering people cheaper access to fruit and vegetables. Fostering a sense of continuity amid radical change will also help make people feel calmer. [Asteri Beauty](#), created by interior architect Sara Al-Rashed, allows people to maintain their beauty routines in extreme heat. Meanwhile, tapping into a crowdsourcing culture that celebrates collaboration – as [hyperlocal weather forecasters in India](#) are doing – shows how individuals can be supported in the face of the climate crisis. In the context of rising temperatures, scrutiny of business initiatives will remain high, and greenwashing will continue to be called out. “The best way to prevent greenwashing is for businesses to implement more universal methodologies that assess the long-term climate impact of every product and service, giving consumers a clear, concise, and consistent way to communicate their sustainability credentials,” [explains Aphinya Siranart](#), the head of exploration at the United Nations Development Programme in Thailand.

Economic Polarisation

People are finding it harder to control their finances

2024 challenge: income stress

Across the globe, 89% of people are worried about job loss and 74% are concerned about inflation. As a return to 'normal' pricing remains elusive, more and more people are struggling to maintain their quality of life – an issue that will continue to shape purchasing behaviour in 2024. "The reality is that many people can't afford their normal lifestyles anymore," explains Bola Sol. "It's not just a matter of people spending on unnecessary things. Everyday expenses are starting to weigh on everyone, and people who might not have felt it six to 12 months ago are feeling the financial strain." With stress among BNPL users beginning to show and price surging here to stay, maintaining spending as usual is becoming untenable for many. A critical threat is also the discrepancy of people's experience, meaning it's more important than ever to personalise financial support. Meg Elkins explains that for Gen Zers: "Life strategies are different; they're not just focused on buying houses and working hard." With economic stress seeing people become critical spenders, communicating worth will need to become more holistic to flexibly accommodate alternative concepts of value.

Just 40% of people globally believe they and their families will be better off in five years, a ten-point decline from 2022

(Edelman, 2023)



“

I think Gen Y is equipped with delusion because that's the environment we grew up in – we were told we could do anything, that the world is our oyster, and anything is possible. We reacted to the 2008 housing crisis and the Great Recession through technology and socialism in the private sector with services like Uber and Airbnb. We found ways to make things work and stay helpful.”



—Paco de Leon,
personal finance expert, author, and founder of The Hell Yeah Group



2024 disruptor

This Girl Talks Money

Founded by Ellie Austin-Williams, who previously trained as a lawyer and worked in marketing within the wellbeing space, This Girl Talks Money aims to provide simple money-saving and budgeting tips while shining a light on financial inequalities and the stories of real people who are trying to get by. “I founded This Girl Talks Money in 2019 out of a frustration of not being able to find any content that was applicable or relevant to me,” she says.

The anchor: empower flexible security

In the past, when people have felt insecure, physical possessions have proved comforting. Yet, interestingly, a study examining responses to insecurity has found that “looming uncertainty can render solid consumption a source of vulnerability and an unwanted anchor in turbulent times that call for agility and adaptability.” In short, for some people, having houses, cars, and big-ticket items makes them feel more stressed in an unstable economic environment. In 2024, understanding that traditional stabilising markers are becoming less appealing presents an opportunity to make people feel financially secure in different ways. Given that 51% of Gen Zers and 52% of Yers live paycheck to paycheck, brands are tasked with shifting narratives away from one kind of economic agency. Education is powerful here, with examples such as Mrs. Dow Jones helping to unpack personal finances in accessible ways. Meanwhile, moves towards rental economising – from platforming easy car sharing to Depop’s ‘Old is New’ campaign – show how brands can support liquid consumer security.

03

Cultural Detachment

A feeling of overload is making people less committed to products and places

2024 challenge: shifting priorities

"There has been increased time allocated to leisure and less time allocated to work, which isn't a bad thing necessarily ex-ante – but when you view it within the context of several other forces causing dissatisfaction and disengagement, it paints a collage of a challenged labour market," says Christos Makridis. In 2024, as priorities among the workforce continue to change, there's a growing sense of detachment, with burnout continuing to make it hard for businesses to retain employees. This challenge within the workforce can be tracked against waning loyalty more widely. With an increasing number of factors informing decision-making, people feel less attached to one brand, instead looking for the most affordable and convenient option. Indeed, product and content overwhelm is also generating a sense of purposelessness, manifesting in fad fatigue. This is especially true in beauty, wellness, and fashion, where the speed of releases is causing people to switch off. Businesses will have to work harder to make consumers understand why their product or offer exists and stress deeper value to keep people engaged. In the office, employers will be challenged to counter apathy as people struggle with burnout and making ends meet.

25% of Gen Zers in the US reported that they had joined a social club (e.g. choir sports group, online community) in the first half of 2023

(Canvas8, 2023)



03

“

The age of passive consumption is over. Brands can no longer afford to be monolithic entities that dictate terms to consumers. We're at a tipping point where the luxury consumer is no longer just a buyer but a collaborator. So, businesses looking to gain a competitive edge should fundamentally focus on co-creation with their customers.”



—Nonita Kalra,
editor-in-chief at Tata CliQ Luxury



2024 disruptor

Peoplehood/SoulCycle

Having founded SoulCycle to encourage social connection among spin class attendees, the founders Elizabeth Cutler and Julie Rice have launched Peoplehood – a New York City-based studio offering 60-minute sessions led by trained 'guides' who encourage participants through breathwork, sharing, and listening exercises.

The anchor: a community-first approach

In his research on uncertainty-identity theory, psychologist Michael Hogg explains that: “One of the ways that social identity reduces self-uncertainty is that it anchors self-conception in a consensual world view – it surrounds one with fellow in-groupers who see the world largely in the same way as you do and who thus provide consensual validation of your perceptions, attitudes, behaviours, and ultimately self-concept.” The power of community culture in moments of uncertainty cannot be overstated and represents a key opportunity for businesses to ground their audiences and address feelings of alienation. “Establishing genuine connections with communities is paramount. These connections should transcend the traditional vendor-consumer dynamics and foster collaborative progress,” agrees Many Ameri. “Embracing innovation, nurturing out-of-the-box thinking, and rooting strategies in community insights will distinguish the leaders from the rest.” For example, Nike has collaborated with FitLab to launch its Nike Studios concept, a network of boutique fitness studios addressing physical and social health through group exercise.

Rogue Actors

Volatile leadership is creating a sense of anarchy

2024 challenge: polarised visions

The coming year promises to be full of inconsistent and unpredictable leadership. From governmental shake-ups at general elections impacting climate policy to mercurial individuals with extended reach changing communication norms, the year ahead will challenge everyone to work within shakier operational frameworks. Elon Musk, for example, has [influenced the War in Ukraine](#), has the power to [potentially destabilise China's autocracy](#), and has changed the nature of [communications through Twitter pivots](#). Elsewhere, OpenAI's CEO Sam Altman claims the AI he is developing [could destroy humanity](#) but is also expediting its advancement. In government, populist leaders are creating more volatile ecosystems for businesses. [Take Rishi Sunak's climate change rollback](#) and the implications on car manufacturers, with a Trump-led Republican government likely to do something similar and [Modi's predicted win in 2024 also having global ramifications](#). With power in the hands of influential contrarians, trust, faith in collective endeavour, and social accountability are being replaced by scepticism, anarchism, and conspiracies, causing feelings of powerlessness and frustration.

58% of people in the UK and **70%** in the US agree that people are more politically and socially polarised than ever before

(Canvas8, 2023)



04

“

The kind of anti-establishment magic that Trump was able to capture within sectors of the American electorate, all of the key drivers and formative causes behind that are still present. I think he's going to perform much better than most people expect. What I'm anticipating from that is that we have somewhat of a repeat of the culture war of the last few years, but in an extremely heightened state.”



—*Joshua Citarella,
artist and internet culture researcher*



2024 disruptor

Joe's Pizza

Joe's Pizza in New York City has found the ingredient for success is community connection – something that attracts locals and tourists alike. By keeping its old-school business model and aesthetic within a highly gentrified context, it has retained its reputation as a quintessential NYC slice shop.

The anchor: harness localism

With [65% of people globally](#) saying that the ongoing lack of civility and mutual respect is 'the worst I have ever seen', and as more [radical national leaders create challenges for local citizenship](#), business can take a leading role in building engagement, agency, and consensus by platforming collective decision-making and action. "People are turning away from these massive centralised structures and towards smaller, local initiatives," says Dr. Douglas Rushkoff. With connection one of the [most significant determinants of happiness](#), supporting localism can instil agency and confidence in the face of uncertainty. Indeed, [research suggests that decentralising decision-making](#) and giving people a voice in the causes they're invested in can build more robust democracies in the long term – resonating with the [68% of people worldwide](#) who say that brands celebrating what brings people together and emphasising common interests would strengthen the social fabric. As [Christopher Lafayette summarises](#): "To quote the incredible Simon Sinek: 'People don't buy products and services, they buy culture'. We have to start looking at culture as our emotional and value buy-in, and that line meets on the side of humanity as opposed to innovation."

Anti-human

A sense of human devaluation will drive unrest

2024 challenge: innovation tension

While 61% of US employers say they're confident AI could help their companies reach objectives more effectively than traditional means, 22% of workers worry technology will make their jobs obsolete. And across the globe, 47% of people report feeling fearful about the applications of AI. Omar H. Fares, a lecturer at the Ted Rogers School of Retail Management, [explains](#): "As the gap between technology and knowledge keeps expanding, so will fear, meaning companies will need to do a lot of work conveying what these technologies are all about. There will need to be an increased level of education rather than a push for adoption." Left unmanaged, the rollout of AI in businesses and services will exacerbate anti-capitalist sentiment and drive protest culture. While AI has generated existential unease, it has also refocused the spotlight on [poor labour conditions globally](#), and generated heightened tensions – as can be seen at the strikes at Ford – as people advocate for a higher premium of human value worldwide.

83% of American voters believe AI could accidentally cause a catastrophic event, and **72%** want to slow down AI development and usage

(AIPI, 2023)



05

66

While the advancements in AI are undoubtedly groundbreaking, the unique, intangible qualities humans bring to artistic endeavours remain unmatched. We will have to build a healthy relationship with AI that leaves behind the competitive nature of some of the current framing around the technology so we can define its role in our lives.”



—Many Ameri,
co-founder of Yadastar



2024 disruptor

Spotify

Spotify has launched its AI Voice Translation feature – powered by OpenAI – to enable podcasters to automatically translate their content. It aims to enable global listeners to discover content that would previously have been inaccessible.

The anchor: collaborative progress

With one study finding that AI can [boost workforce productivity by 14%](#), ensuring the rollout doesn't leave behind employees is crucial. An approach anchored in [radical transparency](#) about how and where new technologies are being integrated into the workforce and media, coupled with proactive training, can help to bolster external and internal trust. The nature of the relationship with AI means another key anchoring opportunity for businesses is to lean into human value and celebrate it as a USP. As Paco de Leon, a personal finance expert, [explains](#): “Technology is not going to be scarce, so being human, understanding how you make another person feel good, how to approach people, how to make your service something respectful of humanity and of all of us – those soft skills will be critical in the long run.” For example, [Pinterest has launched AI technology](#) to increase the representation of plus-sized bodies within its women’s fashion and wedding-related content, and [Meta](#) is letting people opt out of algorithmic feeds.

DE&I *Rollback*

Failure of DE&I initiatives will see audiences lose faith

2024 challenge: inconsistent action

As economic uncertainty continues, faith in diversity commitments from business is becoming shaky. According to a Canadian survey, 77% of employees report feeling worried that a potential downturn in DE&I progress will hurt their Black colleagues' career and promotion prospects harder than others. With affirmative action being politicised in the US, progress towards a more equitable society could be further stalled. And in fashion and beauty, industries are being called out for failing to maintain progress. Delaying on DE&I is a sure way to lose credibility and audience connection. For younger consumers especially, diversity and inclusive business are essential, and reneging or failing on diversity commitments will lose audience trust – as research has repeatedly demonstrated. "The commitment to inclusivity and what inclusivity really stands for has been forgotten," says Anita Bhagwandas. "More than a threat to the status quo, it's a disservice to people from minority ethnic backgrounds and other minority groups that have been more of a focus over the last couple of years."

52% of Americans agree that brands often fail to acknowledge the diversity within minority or marginalised communities

(Canvas8, 2023)



“

Many brands find themselves in situations where they're just reflecting the existing political views of their consumers. Brands also really need to take a stand, which will hopefully tether them to the beliefs of some of their customers. But they also need to have their own opinions, ideas, and beliefs. They need to be holding those beliefs with sufficient conviction as well.”



—*Matt Johnson,*
writer and researcher specialising in consumer psychology

2024 disruptor

Both & Apparel

Both & Apparel, a US-based clothing brand that creates clothes and intimates for trans-masc bodies, paid homage to cult '90s Calvin Klein ads in its spring 2023 campaign that celebrated trans visibility.



The anchor: stand out as a DE&I leader

Given that Canvas8 research has found that 62% of UK Gen Zers respect brands more if their DE&I initiatives are community-led, building products in collaboration with target audiences is a smart way of developing loyalty. It can also counter the fear of [64%](#) of advertisers who say they're reluctant to fully explore social representation out of 'fear of getting it wrong'. "It has been proven repeatedly that if you have a diverse group of people working on the product, you make a better product, you have a more inclusive product," says [Reginé Gilbert](#). "From localisation and making sure that you are addressing local communities' needs to addressing societal needs, this means also learning what colours, phrasing, and words are appropriate for certain cultures and a broader audience beyond just Western countries." Disney's [intersectional approach](#) to representation in its storytelling and Dr. Martens' generation of fresh narratives with its [Pride Generations](#) series offer learnings around consistency and nuance that define a DE&I leader. As Amelia Abraham [explains](#): "There is an enormous space for brands to highlight underserved members of the LGBTQ+ community, like queer parents, butch and masculine women, and working-class LGBTQ+ people."

Synthetic Reality

AI is accelerating cognitive stress and challenging perceptions of truth

2024 challenge: disinformation spike

Half of Americans believe national news organisations intend to mislead, misinform, or persuade the public, and AI will make it even harder to earn back this trust. Elsewhere, more than 70% of citizens in the UK and Germany who understand AI and deepfake technology say they're concerned about the threat such technology poses to elections. As Jessica Southard, the head of insight at Mars, explains: "Trust is at its lowest level, but how does that play out? It's not just about whether I don't trust my government or traditional institutions. I don't trust marketing, I don't trust businesses, I don't trust brands." With major general elections across the globe happening in 2024 alongside the acceleration of AI-disinformation campaigns, anxiety around fake news and the state of reality will be at an all-time high, resulting in stress as people attempt to read between the lines. In this state of [reality split](#), we can expect heightened expectations around moderation and safeguarding – as well as a more precarious and flammable communications landscape.

Half of Americans believe national news organisations intend to mislead, misinform, or persuade the public

(Gallup/Knight Foundation, 2023)



07

“

If I could push one thing, it's not emerging technologies; it's really the human element at risk right now – our ability to express what's on our mind, hold nuance, and be open and patient with our communications.”



—*Matt Klein,*
cultural theorist, cyberpsychologist, and marketing strategist



2024 disruptor

Ogilvy

To help soothe anxieties and build trust in social media ads, *Ogilvy* is urging platforms to label all AI-generated influencer content with either a watermark or the hashtag #PoweredbyAI. It's also demanding its clients disclose all AI-generated influencer campaigns. The agency believes consumers trust people more than brands, so helping to protect and build that relationship is essential.

The anchor: steward realness

With misinformation set to drive polarisation in a contentious year, being clear on what makes something real for your audience and community will be important. “I envision a world where there's a new emphasis and value placed upon offline, real-time, synchronous events to ensure credibility,” says [Matt Klein](#). “It'll be the evolution of the statement 'seeing is believing' – seeing it with my own eyes, in person, is believing.” [Chloe Combi](#) adds: “The byproduct of that tenuous sense of truth and fact is reflected by this binary nature of almost everything that we are now. This weighs particularly heavily on young people. Now, we're in this era where you have to take sides on every issue, irrespective of what it is.” Brands that demonstrate how they're keeping audiences rooted in what's real – whatever that means to them – and supporting them from being overwhelmed amid an algorithmic apocalypse will resonate. Events like the 2024 Paris Olympics and live music events (such as Taylor Swift's Eras tour) offer a moment to connect people with shared, positive, and tangible narratives.

Cyber Vigilantism

Digital security issues will create technophobia

2024 challenge: vulnerable systems

With attacks on the Australian government, CEO resignations after data leaks, and the biggest theft in Microsoft's history, we're seeing issues of cyber security plague organisations on an increasingly frequent basis. With one in 31 organisations worldwide experiencing a ransomware attack each week during the first quarter of 2023 and the average cost of a cyber security breach costing \$4.45 million, cybersecurity will become increasingly crucial in 2024, even as knowledge about digital safety evades people in their daily lives. As more businesses become reliant on AI in 2024 – for example, Morgan Stanley is introducing AI to support investor decisions – there's a growing threat of 'data poisoning' and adversarial AI, challenging businesses to stringently monitor their models and datasets. While cyber security issues are destabilising the day-to-day operations of organisations, they also have a knock-on effect on audience trust. Francesca Sobande notes that mistrust around security and technology is already driving audience switch off: "Because of people's concerns around data collection, data mining, and facial surveillance-related technology, I think we're gonna see some more alternatives that are positioned as being less visible."

Three in four Americans who don't trust social media companies to protect their data say it's too difficult to protect data online, regardless of what platforms and services they use

(Morning Consult, 2023)



“

Another key issue will be privacy. There needs to be an increased discussion that's not backdated, and quite frankly, any discussion at this point is already backdated. There needs to be a lot of strides towards protecting private information in the upcoming year.”



—Omar H. Fares,
lecturer at the Ted Rogers School of Retail Management



2024 disruptor

Apple

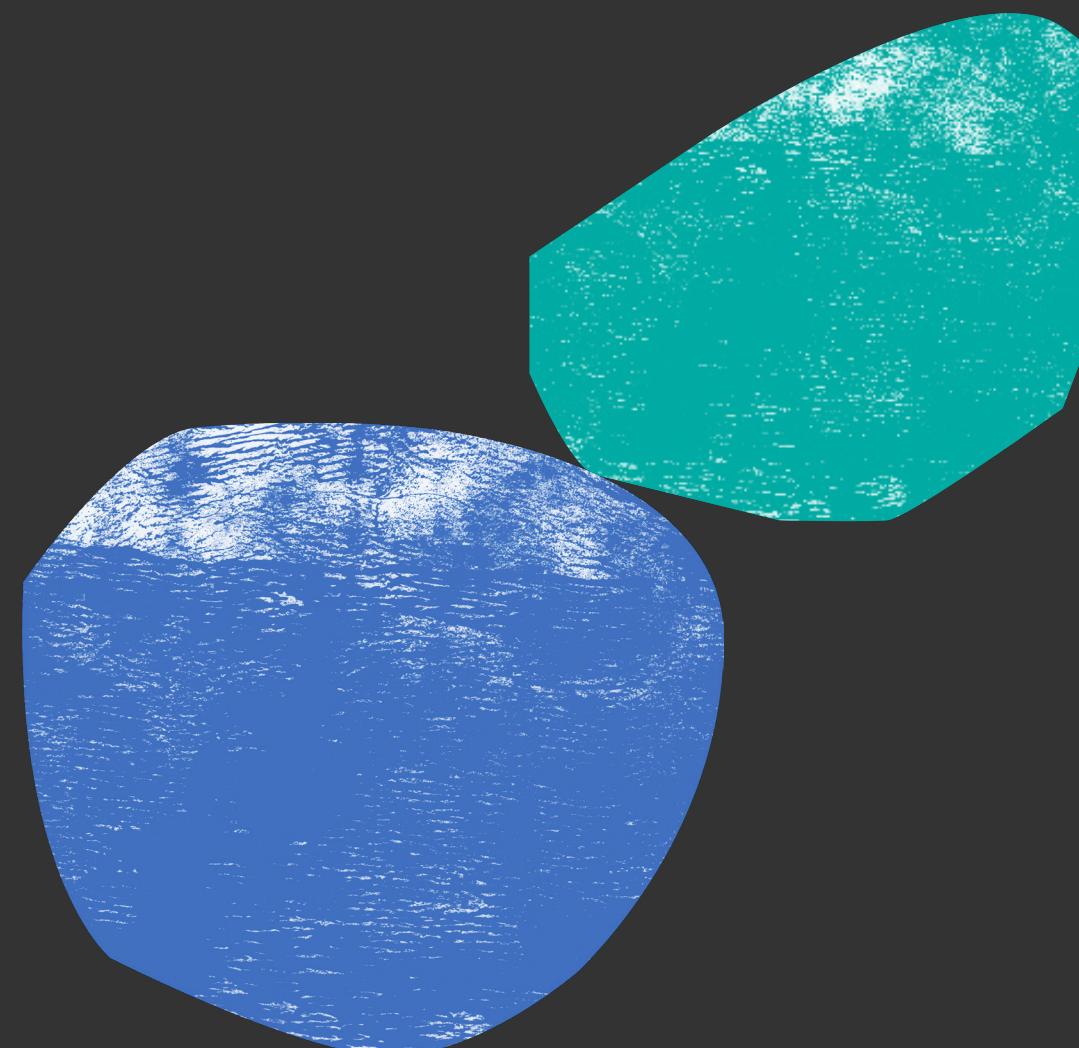
Apple has launched a campaign to promote its Apple Pay service, which seeks to dispel myths about the safety and availability of the payment method. With many still hesitant to rely on contactless payments, focusing on security is a key opportunity to alleviate consumer concerns worldwide.

The anchor: build digital agency

As [adversarial AI](#) and malicious cyber attacks grow in threat, leading on data security is necessary to help people protect their data and support a robust digital infrastructure on which we increasingly rely. “The uptake of connected devices will continue through 2024, but with that, there will be this increased threat from a cyber perspective,” [explains Herbert Swaniker](#). “There will be much more public awareness around this. We'll need to do a lot more education, both for consumers and businesses.” Platforms like the Google-developed [DarkBERT](#) are taking a proactive approach to countering malicious actors on the [dark web](#), aiming to improve cyber security around it. Elsewhere, WhatsApp has been [piloting a payment service](#) with business accounts in Singapore. Customers have to provide their legal name and ID to be eligible, reducing the likelihood of fraud and allowing people to use the service without worrying about losing their money.

Sector *Shifts*

Anticipate the challenges and opportunities in behavioural change across sectors in 2024



Beauty



Stay ahead of:

Diversity disservice

In the US, Black beauty buyers are [three times more likely](#) to experience dissatisfaction than their non-Black counterparts regarding hair care, skincare, and make-up options, while [71% of UK women](#) want to see health and beauty brands promote body positivity. Cuts to DE&I commitments may offer brands short-term financial relief, but they will create much more harm than good in the long run. In previous years, brands like [BeautyBlender](#) and [Tarte](#) have faced damaging backlash for a lack of diversity, with the contrasting of [Fenty Beauty](#) demonstrating the persistence of diversity as a recipe for success. With people more discerning and distrusting than ever, to maintain loyalty and appeal, brands must ensure diversity principles stay front and centre, with any rollbacks detrimental to brand reputation.

“

One of the key things impacting beauty in the US is the desire for greater self-care amid tumultuous times. During the pandemic, we really leaned into beauty and self-care – and I think with how things are going with the upcoming presidential election, things will feel shaky, and people will lean into beauty as a result.”



—Kayla Greaves,
award-winning journalist, beauty expert
and consultant

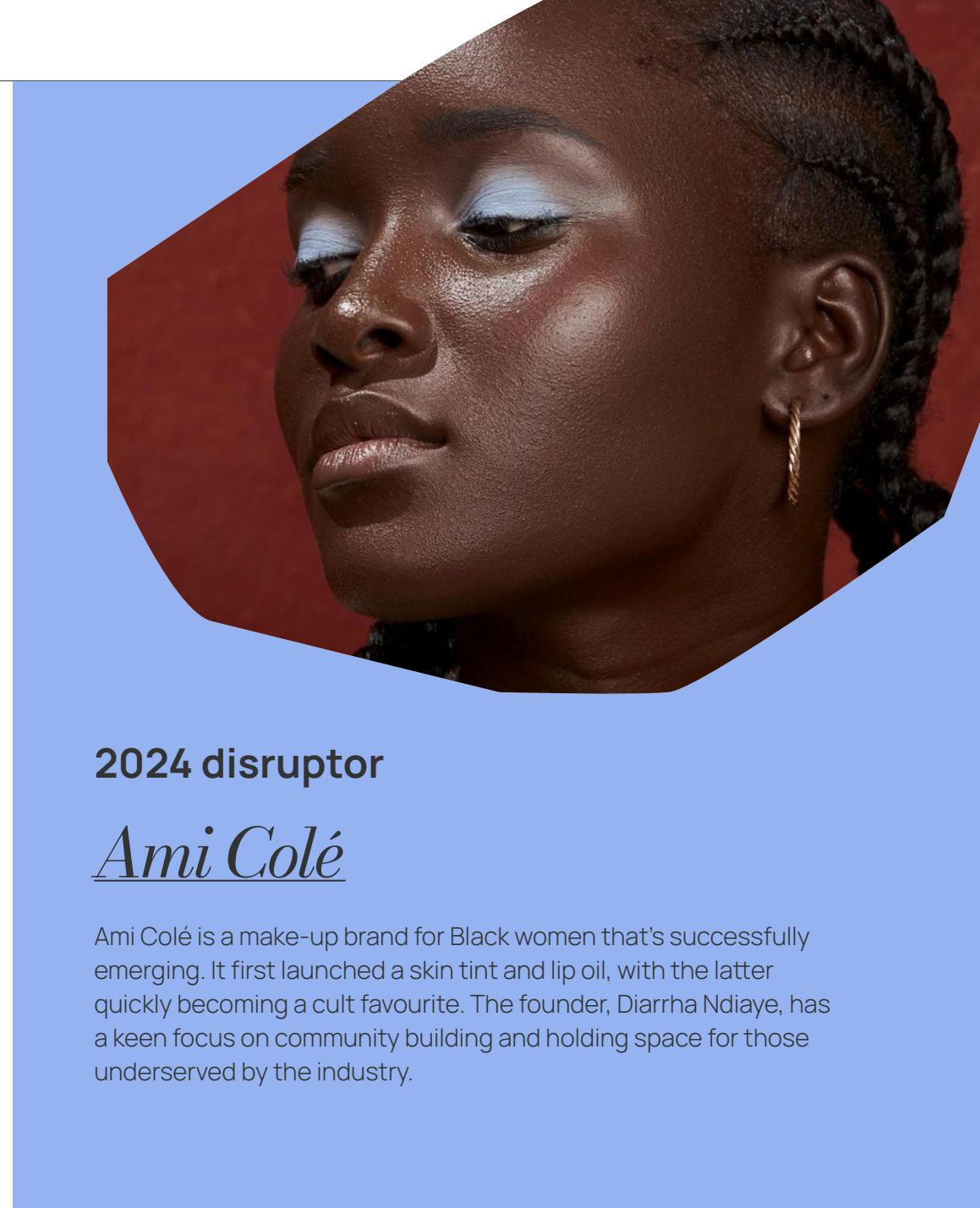
Beauty



Accelerate on:

Multi-functional beauty

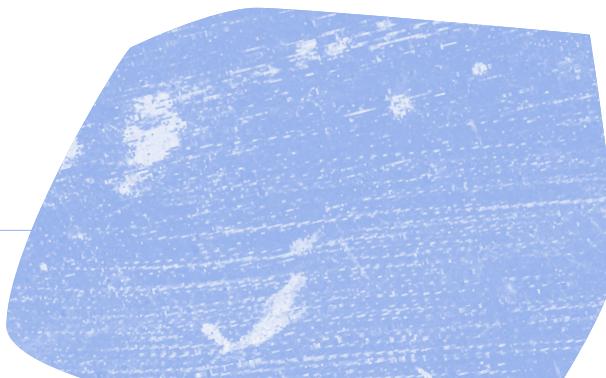
Over half of UK skincare users feel that stores should help them create products that are personalised to their skin types. Moving away from purchasing habits driven by hype and overconsumption and empowered by the greater potential for personalisation that AI presents, people will be pairing back their beauty spending to focus on single products with multiple functions and meet individual skincare needs. More than helping people stick to their budgets, this will empower buyers to feel more tapped in and intentional about their choices. With the global clean beauty industry set to reach almost \$22 billion by 2024, brands are focusing on skincare benefits, acknowledging that people will be aiming to spend less frivolously. Whether infusing anti-ageing properties into make-up, as is increasingly desired by Asian consumers, or offering bespoke foundation through AI like Dcypher, innovation is becoming crucial for brands to meet shifting consumer needs.



2024 disruptor

Ami Colé

Ami Colé is a make-up brand for Black women that's successfully emerging. It first launched a skin tint and lip oil, with the latter quickly becoming a cult favourite. The founder, Diarra Ndiaye, has a keen focus on community building and holding space for those underserved by the industry.



Careers



Stay ahead of:

Employee apathy

As employees butt heads with employers over [three office day rules](#), DE&I commitments are cut back, and generational divides stoke friction within the workplace, employees are opting out of corporate aspirations. With a wider anti-capitalist social attitude growing, spurred on by a growing Gen Y and Z sector of the workforce, people are no longer seeing the rewards of sacrificing for their work, and with no incentive, many are [prioritising doing the bare minimum](#). With a lack of trust and motivation, employees are more likely to leave than attempt to fix the issue. Indeed, [46%](#) of US workers worried about AI making some or all of their duties obsolete plan to look for another job, while inadequate pay is the main motivation for [64%](#) of Canadian Gen Zers looking to quit. As employers struggle amid rising costs, a workforce that is less willing to work, more willing to quit, and unwilling to talk about it has the potential to create massive disruption.

“

On social media, there's encouragement for Gen Z employees to leave their jobs or go out and travel the world and pursue their passions. If companies don't understand how to work with these new generations, they're going to really struggle not just to maintain employees but to create long-term impact and revenue.”



—Nathaniel Diong,
CEO of Future Minds Network

Careers



Accelerate on:

A people-first approach

In the US, 82% of employees want their companies to see them as individuals with goals and aspirations, not just as resources. Committing to open and honest dialogue will help build back trust, ensuring that needs are being met and that companies are meeting the versatility needed to weather the ups and downs employees will experience over the coming year – from continued financial austerity to the uncertainty over AI disruptions. As Gens Y and Z come to dominate the workforce, there will be no room for forgiveness in forgoing a commitment to employee satisfaction, from mental wellbeing to cultural belonging.



2024 disruptor

Pilea

Pilea provides start-up founders with the coaching and guidance they need to ensure emotional and mental wellbeing. Advocating the philosophy that healthier leadership leads to healthier employees and companies, the brand leads with an empathetic anti-burnout approach.

Citizenship



Stay ahead of:

Peak polarisation

According to Pew Research Center, 72% of Republicans and 64% of Democrats say people in the opposing party are more dishonest than other Americans. Fewer than half in each party said this six years ago – and this growing divide is seeping into everyday life. Amid a rise in anti-LGBTQ+, anti-minority ethnic, and anti-women rhetoric and legislation, people of marginalised identities want to be reassured of their safety and belonging. Conversely, others are leaning into fear and the protection that influential right-wing leaders such as Donald Trump offer during uncertain times. As people's personal beliefs alienate them from shared consensus, an inflammatory cultural space is making it more challenging for brands to deliver messages across broad audience bases – as [Bud Light](#) and [Burberry](#) campaigns have illustrated in 2023. Within this context, there's a need to be more transparent than ever about why and how brands deliver on values-based initiatives and be ambitious in uniting people around collective goals.

“

At this particular moment, many LGBTQ+ people feel fatigued with the political and economic situation. While there is a perception that some progress has been made, many queer people feel that things are not improving. From rising hate crimes to never-ending culture war debates, there is a sense of emotional exhaustion.”



—Amelia Abraham,

Author of Queer Intentions: A (Personal) Journey Through LGBTQ+ Culture (Picador, 2019) and We Can Do Better Than This (Vintage, 2021) and brand consultant

Citizenship



Accelerate on:

Collective collaboration

Promoting a more cooperative approach towards collective welfare will help calm tensions by getting people to connect with a shared community. Cultural narratives have an important part to play in shaping public opinions, and this is where marketing, partnerships, and media come in. Political polarisation is creating a gap for new leaders, but this doesn't have to add fuel to the fire. The World Values Survey showed a [ten percentage-point](#) decline in British people's trust in their government between 2018 and 2022. However, this disillusionment with current governing models is paving the way for fresh forms of collaboration – from shared ownership to borrowing and open-source models, we're going to see increased engagement with new ways of doing business, presenting an opportunity for brands to experiment with their business models.



2024 disruptor

Dr. Martens

Dr. Martens is a British heritage brand with a strong track record of authentic campaigning and partnering with LGBTQ+ communities. It has driven fresh and inclusive narratives through the likes of its *Pride Generations* series, allowing people to bond over shared cultural experiences.

Communications



Stay ahead of:

Twitter disruption

The instability of X's (formerly Twitter's) brand image and functionality lays the foundation for disruption to how people will seek and disseminate information in 2024. Once a central platform for communication and information, its constant interruption – from changes to how users are verified and the layout of feeds to a huge branding overhaul – will have lived consequences on the way that news is shared and the ability of a diversity of groups to find safe spaces online. With Twitter predicted to lose [32 million users](#) between 2022 and 2024, this will lead people to move away from bigger platforms and massively disrupt how and where they source information.

“

X exemplifies a general lack of trust in relation to people's search for perceptions of truth, 'realness', or just being upfront. The issue of trust is playing out in a host of different ways. Whether it's people's rightful mistrust of organisations or distrust in educational institutions, organisations are grappling with the fact that they can't simply expect or demand trust.”



*—Dr. Francesca Sobande,
writer and senior lecturer in digital media studies
at JOMEC*

Communications



Accelerate on:

Prioritise realness

As people increasingly distrust legacy platforms, with Twitter's erosion playing a huge role, they will begin to move to more niche communities that prioritise peer communications and IRL interaction to ensure credibility. In 2023, as trust has fallen, people are putting their faith in [smaller spheres of influence](#). Indeed, small businesses top the list of trusted institutions among Americans, with [65%](#) saying they have a 'great deal' or 'fair amount' of confidence in them. Prioritising directness and open discussion in the face of the misinformation crisis, consumers will favour brands that lead with authenticity and realness over performativity or curation. Brands that lean into their fallibility, acknowledge their shortcomings, and prioritise providing consumers with unfiltered reality that connects them with truths will maintain the upper hand.



2024 disruptor



Where Elon Musk will take X next will be crucial to keep an eye on. As he plans to turn the social media platform into an 'everything app', and with [legal debates](#) ensuing around his ownership, how he navigates his personal brand and influence will be highly influential in the world of communications.

Eating & Drinking



Stay ahead of:

The cost of living value shift

With 22% of Americans reporting that food costs are their biggest financial concern, a heightened sense of value is changing behaviour within the sector. "The cost of living crisis is a factor in the reduction in alcohol consumption," says Jane Peyton. "People are cutting down because they can't afford to go to the pub, don't want to drink at home, or have decided that alcohol is not a priority when they have limited disposable income." Amid worries about the price of food, multi-functional products can offer a sense of a better deal, allowing people to meet nutritional aspirations while spending less. Jessica Southard flags an interesting opportunity that, with more people working from home, dining out may become more important to people. This presents an opportunity for a casual dining revival and space for food brands to stress the value of eating out as an escapist, relaxing experience: "It's less about wanting to socialise with friends and more about getting out of the house because they've been indoors for the last nine hours or for five straight days working remotely," Southard explains.

“

We've seen a major shift in who we regard as leaders and the most powerful taste-makers in the world. We're going to see a whole legion of content creators trickle into the at-home cooking space, a lot of whom are proudly owning their American and immigrant heritage with, for example, Taiwanese-American recipes."



—Cathy Erway,

James Beard Award-winning food writer

Eating & Drinking



Accelerate on:

Changing no-alcohol stigma for men

While the low-alcohol trend has made leaps in recent years, there remains a stigma around not drinking for certain audiences. This is especially true in the UK. A shift towards more options on draught will support a change in attitudes, [says Peyton](#). "No- or low-ABV beer on draught is going to be such a game-changer, particularly for men. Men tend to drink pints of beer, and until recently, non-alcoholic beer was only available in cans or bottles, so those who wanted an alcohol-free beer but did not want their friends to know couldn't do it discreetly. Today, if you go to the bar in venues that have no-alcohol beer on draught and say: 'It's my round,' you can now get a pint of Lucky Saint, and your friends will never know."



2024 disruptor

Lucky Saint

As young Britons increasingly prioritise sober socialising, they're looking for offerings that enable them to attend social gatherings without the pressure of consuming alcohol. Lucky Saint has stepped in with an on-draught non-alcoholic lager to satisfy the craving for a pint – minus the inebriation.

Fashion & Style



Stay ahead of:

Brand irrelevance

"The biggest threat is brands' lack of understanding of the importance of intercepting the radio waves of culture," [says Christopher-Jacques Morency](#). "In other words, can brands understand, track, and identify what's happening in culture at speed and respond to this with an authentic and value-driven product or message?" With [87%](#) of Indian Gen Zers reporting that their friends have significant influence over their clothing decisions, keeping connected is about fostering, not gatekeeping, culture. People understand that they have the greatest power and access to disrupt the industry – and brands that cannot leverage and enable this power or work against it will fall out of step and favour with their audiences.

“

The most strategic brands are taking advantage of people who have the ability to make movements in real life and bring people from the internet to value real-life communities rather than online communities. I think that that's where it's at. The power is in the hands of people who have the ability to set the agenda in real life – and then the brands that have the ability to take advantage of that power.”



—Rian Phin,
Fashion theorist and writer

Fashion & Style



Accelerate on:

Sustainable innovation

Pushes for [climate transparency in the industry](#) and growing fatigue with [low-quality products](#) will see more people valuing slower production. "Product-origin transparency and supply-chain traceability are vital to understanding a product's planetary impact," [asserts Martine Jarlaad](#). This will become a consumer and legislative demand." For those who don't have the financial means, there's a chance for brands to leverage and encourage minimalist and sustainable mindsets, as well as desires for personalisation by advocating a circular approach. In fact, sustainable and circular businesses are predicted to make up [23%](#) of the global fashion market by 2030.



2024 disruptor

Corteiz

UK streetwear brand Corteiz is redefining the streetwear industry with a winning combination of guerilla marketing tactics and non-conformity. It enables fashionistas to signal their heightened cultural knowledge and insider status through the simple act of owning its clothes.

Getting Around



Stay ahead of:

Local climate tensions

In 2024, as cities look to implement more sustainable infrastructure and public transport, there will be an increase in polarisation, which will threaten the status quo. How responses to climate change impact different groups will also raise questions of social justice and fairness. For instance, climate-themed moves such as Indonesia moving its capital city from [Jakarta to Borneo](#) will have significant [negative consequences](#) on the island's Indigenous communities and threaten its endangered species. Elsewhere, the political [backlash against London's ULEZ expansion](#) speaks to the social ramifications of environmental policies, leaving legislators and brands in a challenging position to cater to the environment in a way that protects vulnerable groups while managing disillusionment from others. While [58%](#) of Londoners support the move and 24% oppose it, the initiative has become a political football that threatens to entrench climate-related tensions.

“

The biggest threat to the status quo in 2024 is climate change. It's affecting our cities – from air pollution caused by wildfires to floods – and threatening urbanites' livelihood and quality of life in general. We're going to keep noticing a tension between this global phenomenon and local responses, such as bringing more green spaces into the urban landscape or encouraging cycling and electric vehicle usage.”



—Dr. Luna Khirfan,

lecturer in urban planning at the University of Waterloo

Getting Around



Accelerate on:

EV culture

In the first half of 2023, [a total of six million](#) new battery electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles hit the road worldwide, with countries such as Romania taking steps to make this a more accessible option by offering subsidies of up to [€10,000](#). EV ownership is being made [more convenient and appealing](#), with charging being built into public infrastructure and drivers being able to use the electricity in their vehicles to power their homes. However, adoption remains [slow](#), and prices are still too high. While [regulatory rollbacks may challenge the industry](#), building the EV culture will keep interest and adoption moving in the right direction. Brands such as Tesla changed perceptions of EVs as [a stylish choice](#) when first released, but they're still out of reach for the average consumer. In 2024, there's an opportunity to shift away from these luxury perceptions, helping to make environmentally friendly EVs the standard option for new purchases.



2024 disruptor

Kia

Kia has become a popular EV maker in the US because of its 'average look', resonating with people who want a sturdy, affordable car that isn't necessarily futuristic-looking like a Tesla. Alongside six other automakers, it's helping develop a high-powered charging network across North America.

Health & Fitness



Stay ahead of:

Option overwhelm

In 2024, the rising cost of living combined with growing scepticism of influencer culture is creating a behaviour described as wellness fatigue. In a study by Accenture Song, almost 24% of 25- to 34-year-olds and nearly 19% of 16- to 24-year-olds reported unfollowing accounts that they felt presented a lifestyle that wasn't relatable to them due to their content feeling out of touch with their reality amid soaring living costs. Within this context, people are tired of having to look a certain way or strive to attain the next big thing, instead looking to simplify their lives and wellbeing routines.

“

There's been so much talk about personalisation, and now I think it's actually happening. An example is fitness trackers, where before it wasn't really personalised. You couldn't exactly tell it when to stop tracking you on weekends or that it was making you more nervous or anxious about if you were getting enough steps or sleep sometimes. But I think we're finally seeing an age where personalisation is working a bit more, which is maybe tied to AI's effect as well.”



—Rina Raphael,
wellness industry reporter

Health & Fitness



Accelerate on:

Personalised offerings

"We're finally seeing an age where personalisation is working a bit more, which is maybe tied to AI's effect as well," says Rina Raphael. "We're seeing a lot more of the tech companies be more intentional about their technology and letting people tweak the software a little bit more." Across the globe, 62% of consumers are interested in products or services that can be customised to meet their specific health needs. As such, enabling people to track their exercise regimes and biometrics and offering tailored workout or wellness programmes will resonate with those wanting to elevate and take control of their health. There's also room for emphasising playfulness and indulgence as an extension of health and fitness as people seek out comforts to help them cope with the uncertainty of the social landscape.



2024 disruptor

Flipper's

The American roller skating rink gained popularity in 2023 after opening a London location in collaboration with R&B musician Usher. Interest in roller skating was reignited during the pandemic as people looked for enjoyable ways to get their exercise in. With celebrity DJ skate nights, lessons, parties, and an American-style diner, Flipper's is a good example of blending fitness and entertainment to create an immersive and enjoyable experience.

Home & Relationships



Stay ahead of:

Housing crisis

As a consequence of higher mortgage rates and energy costs, housing has become more expensive. For example, in London, average rents increased by [17.2%](#) in April 2023 compared to 2022, leading to record highs and [calls for a rent freeze from Mayor Sadiq Khan](#). A lack of affordable housing is leading to income discrimination, as people move further and further out of cities to be able to afford their lifestyles – also [making commutes harder and longer](#). In the US, [49%](#) of American adults reported the availability of affordable housing in their local community as a major problem in early 2022, up from 39% in 2018. This sentiment will likely continue into 2024, with high living costs and pushbacks against DE&I initiatives negatively impacting housing access.

“

For businesses to win around housing in 2024, they need to portray the interrelatedness of housing with other issues – all of the things that build the fabric of a community. They have to be honest but also optimistic about what can be provided in those areas. If you’re trying to appeal to minorities, people want to see a more interrelated and integrated community. They want to see a space where they feel like they can belong.”



*—Libby Viera-Bland,
neighbourhood development project manager
for Row House CDC*

Home & Relationships



Accelerate on:

Creative development

UK research conducted in 2022 pointed to lockdowns as having slowed childhood development, impacting the children of lower-income families harder, with brands and educators struggling to understand how to serve those whose formative early years were spent on screens. For brands, there's an opportunity to leverage technology to engage children's learning – even drawing on other senses, such as touch or smell, to support families in creating the best possible space for development. "There are innovations we're seeing under the radar wherein AI is used to generate olfactory output, triggering a way to make you pay more attention to specific content," says [Natalia Kucirkova](#). "This can be used for studying, specifically for learning new concepts. From this, digital and print book publishers can think about how to strategically include smells in their products more than scratch-and-sniff books, which don't last very long or tend not to be specific enough to the content in the book."



2024 disruptor

Vika Living

Vika Living has developed a 144-square-foot foldable home with weather-resistant, insulated panels as well as wiring, plumbing, and other amenities. It's one of many companies attempting to solve the US housing crisis by creating portable, affordable, and sustainable homes.

Luxury



Stay ahead of:

New status symbols

With 'eat the rich' sentiments flooding online discourse and popular culture, luxury buyers are moving towards more discreet ways of spending their money. Status symbols are evolving beyond flashy visible brand names, now seen as a tacky display of wealth, and towards exclusive comforts – also known as '[quiet luxury](#)'. Indeed, Google searches for the phrase 'old-money style' grew by [568%](#) between 2022 and 2023, and searches for 'quiet luxury' rose by 373%. While this is not deterring people from luxury, it is fundamentally altering the aesthetics of high-end goods through covert signalling. Brands in the sector not attuned to this shift risk potential disconnect with their target audiences. Aspirational consumers are also searching for a taste of the high life, from 'once in a lifetime' adventure trips to experiential shopping or the ultimate flex: one-of-a-kind products.

“

Take, for example, a luxury fashion brand – it can create limited-edition pieces co-designed by its most engaged customers. Or consider a high-end travel experience company that allows customers to tailor-make their trips down to the smallest details, perhaps even suggesting new destinations. These experiences make consumers feel empowered, giving them a sense of ownership, which in turn engenders a brand loyalty that's nearly impossible to break.”



—*Nonita Kalra,*
editor-in-chief at Tata CliQ Luxury

Luxury

Accelerate on:

Cultural experiences

As people redefine their relationships with luxury, the demand for exclusive experiences grows, offering something rare that only a few get to be a part of. Among Gen Zers in China, 88% show a strong interest in products incorporating *guochao* cultural elements, which speaks to the importance of celebrating cultural identity. In 2024, Louis Vuitton looks to capitalise on an experience-first approach by sponsoring the Paris Olympics, a first-of-its-kind collaboration. “Another thing that will impact the sector is the decision of LVMH to sponsor the 2024 Paris Olympics,” says Diana Verde Nieto. “It’s the first time a luxury brand conglomerate is interacting with virtually every global market through a single event. From a branding perspective, it’s fantastic.”



2024 disruptor

Rolex

Rolex announced a collection of ‘off-catalogue’ watches made using the same high-quality materials and craftsmanship that the brand is known for but with designs personalised for customers. By offering customisation and even co-creation with high-end shoppers, brands can involve their biggest spenders in developing services and products that meet their needs and signal luxury in new ways.

Media & Entertainment



Stay ahead of:

AI creation

While AI opens up new creative opportunities for people to sample, mix, and create their own output, it also raises questions surrounding copyright, ownership, and remuneration and an underpinning anxiety that AI could replace creators. “The anxiety surrounding AI’s role in the industry is not unfounded, as demonstrated by the writers’ and actors’ strikes, with concerns about the potential loss of jobs and credit and control of actors’ lucrative likenesses,” says Many Ameri. “Yet, it’s important to note how tools such as Midjourney, Runway, and Adobe Firefly are revolutionising the field by granting a wider audience the means to express themselves through visual mediums.” With new products such as Meta’s [AudioCraft](#) and [Stability AI](#) offering more possibilities for people to experiment with AI audio, content fatigue will also be an area to keep an eye on as people begin to feel overwhelmed by infinite choices. The bias in AI datasets represents another concern, potentially disrupting a push for diverse faces and narratives in mainstream media.

“

A trend that I do see growing is having older audiences for these idol groups. In the past, people stopped becoming fans as they got older, which meant K-pop groups eventually stopped being active. But that’s not happening anymore. Some people have been fans of the same artist for 20 years. That changes the industry because it’s not just about what teenagers like anymore but also about what older audiences like.



—Cedar Bough Saeji,

researcher of contemporary culture in media
and performance contexts

Media & Entertainment



Accelerate on:

Fan community

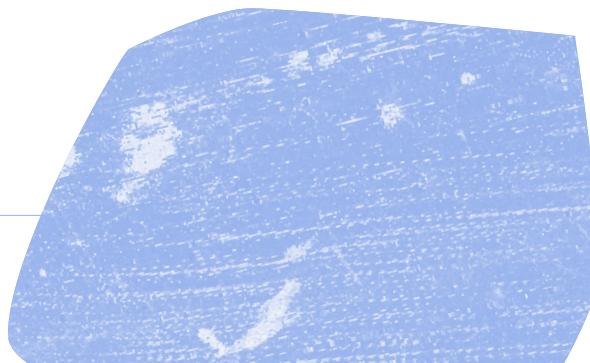
With 47% of Gen Zers watching videos made by fans of specific content, artists, or public figures, and [AI making it easier to extend fandom](#) through personalisation, communities hold significant influence over the trajectory and longevity of products and their idols. “Community has always been important to gaming – they’re intertwined,” [says Jay-Ann Lopez](#). “Each game has its own community and subculture within the industry. I don’t think that’s going to change. Companies need to understand that gaming costs a lot of money for its users to enjoy, so they should also have the same level of interest to be successful. They need to think outside the box and support those working in the industry, not just those with large social media followings.” When planning for significant entertainment events in 2024 – whether the Paris Olympics or the Asia leg of Taylor Swift’s Eras tour – mobilising fan engagement and championing communities over products can make fandoms feel supported in their passion while generating deeper loyalty in the long term.



2024 disruptor

KQ Entertainment

South Korean record label KQ Entertainment ensures that the stars on its roster are treated with respect – allowing deeper and more authentic self-expression, which has led to success for groups like ATEEZ. By placing a greater focus on quality and less on quantity, the label encourages creative growth among its artists.



Money



Stay ahead of:

Financial nihilism

The effects of rising costs globally will continue to impact the way people view, spend, and make money in 2024. Economic uncertainty will lead to the further decline of investment in properties alongside rising mortgage rates, stifling the achievement of traditional ownership milestones. For some, this is leading to the emergence of 'financial nihilism', where people forgo thinking of their future and instead engage in hedonistic, self-indulgent spending. This will impact brands in the long run by reducing the spending power of younger generations. Indeed, Fidelity Investments 2022 State of Retirement Planning report highlighted [that half of Gen Z](#) no longer see a point in saving. While this may benefit brands in the short term by freeing up cash for immediate splurging, this behaviour could curb long-term spending power and brand loyalty and drive anxiety.

“

Inflation doesn't hit everyone the same way. Older Boomers, for instance, are driving a lot of the spending because they've paid off their houses and aren't impacted by interest rates. Younger people are absorbing these costs themselves but are also not subscribing to traditional lifestyles.”



—*Meg Elkins,*
behavioural and applied economist

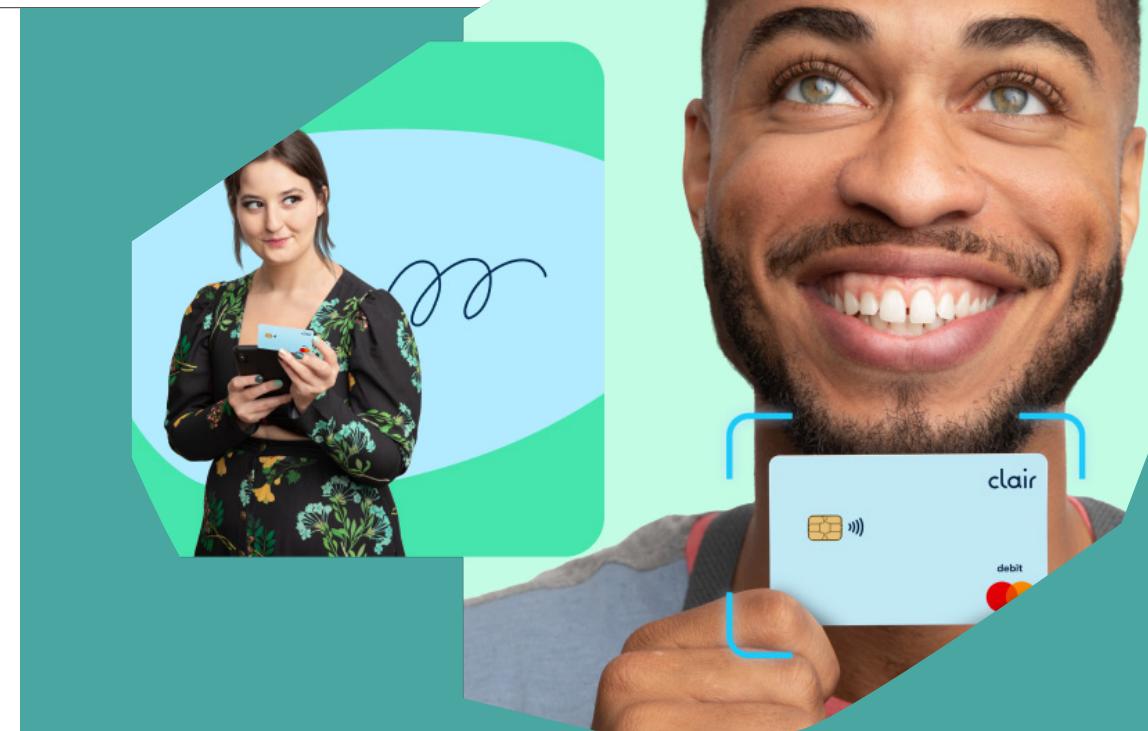
Money



Accelerate on:

Financial openness

Within a static economy, people are beginning to redefine their relationships with money – a shift that began during the pandemic, emphasising slowness and bringing about a widespread rejection of hustle culture. According to 2023 research from Deloitte, [work-life balance](#) is the top trait that Gen Yers and Zers admire in their peers and their primary consideration when looking for work. As people reconsider their values and lean into their communities for support amid a tough financial atmosphere, brands have an opportunity to leverage the power of peer-to-peer recommendations, creating ways that money management can be a social experience and thus less intimidating. This will help to create long-term financial stability.



2024 disruptor

Clair

Clair is a digital bank targeting cash-starved Gen Zers caught in a volatile economy and lacking financial literacy. Positioned as an antidote to shady payday lenders and financial missteps, Clair offers immediate wage access without the tricks and traps of hidden fees.

Shopping



Stay ahead of:

Elevated expectations

AI personal assistants will allow consumers to engage in more personalised routes to shopping discovery. This will enable people to use AI to curate their own, personalised product offerings and experiences. Simultaneously, brands are being forced to cut back on expenses and employees amid the cost of living crisis. Inflation rates have [soared across the globe](#) in 2023, and while they're set to drop by 2024, prices will not join them. This has the potential to lock companies in a bind, whereby consumers are expecting more but need to spend less. In the coming year, shoppers will want evidence they're getting bang for their buck, meaning brands will work harder to prove their continued value. This route will require them to work alongside and leverage technology and find their competitive edge.

“

I'm more optimistic than ever that we will see more interactive customer experiences. Some companies are already integrating chatbots that are educated on their internal data sets and able to answer questions in a personalised, effective way. Customers will be able to ask questions any time of the day in different languages and receive instant answers.”



—Omar H. Fares,
lecturer at the Ted Rogers School of Retail Management

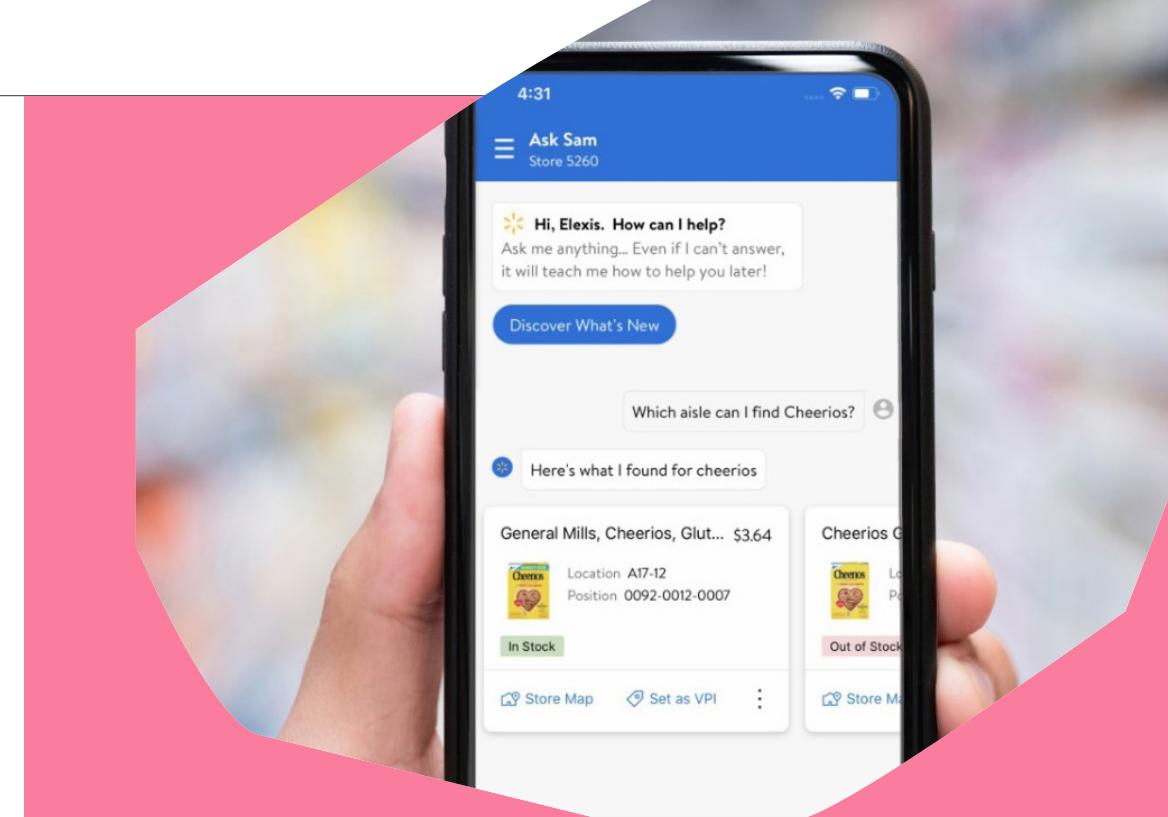
Shopping



Accelerate on:

Human-based services

As new technologies are integrated into brand offerings, open and informative discussions with customers and employees will be key, rather than launching ahead with tech adoption and addressing fears and reservations as they arise. People want clarity on how AI will change customer experiences, from the opportunities and limits of personalisation to the anxieties that come with unfamiliar technological territory. While AI has the potential to drive consumer expectations to new heights, people will still be looking for trusted human figures and services to rely on for information and support throughout the customer journey. Indeed, **70% of US shoppers** say they trust human sellers more than tech, and 74% say industries have become too reliant on algorithms. Therefore, investing in human-centric customer services will help generate brand loyalty and satisfaction.



2024 disruptor

Walmart

Walmart has begun integrating AI into some of its processes already – something set to drastically improve over the coming year. It has massive data sets to draw from that can power its AI systems, enabling the retailer to enhance both customer and employee experiences.

Technology



Stay ahead of:

AI regulation

With 2024 bringing elections across the US, UK, India, and multiple other countries, technology will play a massive role in generating political discourse – creating a responsibility for brands to mitigate negative consequences. The acceleration of generative AI, particularly deepfakes, has people concerned about the [potential impact of misinformation](#). Both individuals and governments will expect technology corporations to proactively ensure that their tools are not being used to propagate falsehoods – from AI watermarks to improved content moderation – and soothe growing algorithmic anxiety. In the EU, [the Digital Services Act](#) will come into order from February 2024, bringing with it obligations to prevent harmful content from spreading, ban or limit certain user-targeting practices, and share some internal data with regulators and associated researchers.

“

It's really clear that people want appropriate guardrails and standards for AI, so I'm expecting more collaboration between government and industry to develop these rules. We've seen a lot of that in the social discourse, like companies wanting to provide their input, to be able to make sure that rules are fit for purpose, and understand how they can design AI in a safe way.”



—*Herbert Swaniker,*
senior lawyer at Clifford Chance
and member of EU AI Alliance

Technology



Accelerate on:

Soft tech

With Sony's [adaptable Playstation controller](#), L'Oréal's [computerised lipstick application tool](#), Microsoft's [Seeing AI](#) narration feature, and XRAI Glass' AR specs that generate real-time subtitles with spatial tech, there are plenty of examples of how technology is creating positive connections by promoting social good. And given that [64% of consumers](#) feel exhausted by too much screen time, there's an opportunity to develop empathetic tech designed to support people in their softer goals and counter the burnout generated by a hyper-connected world. Innovation in the space is also being geared towards the nuanced human condition. Pi, for example, is a [chatbot designed to express empathy](#) and give the impression of a friendly conversation, offering direction on how to blend innovation with supportive, human-centred development.



2024 disruptor

Nothing

With many experiencing digital burnout in a hyper-connected world, Nothing has developed affordable and sustainable smartphones to help people break tech addiction. Its operating software steers clear of the gamified lures that usually ensnare people's attention.

Travel & Leisure



Stay ahead of:

Widening wealth gaps

With the average UK household renewing a mortgage in 2023/24 facing a £3,000 increase in their annual rate, homeowners nationwide are bracing for a challenging financial period. As a result, travel and leisure will become increasingly inaccessible for lower-income individuals and especially families, who bear the brunt of both the costs of raising a family and less access to off-peak travel times. With demands for travel high but purses being pinched, people are spending *three times longer* planning, booking, and daydreaming about their trip than they do on the trip itself. At the other end of the spectrum, high earners will increasingly prioritise luxurious and fully immersive travel experiences, with adventure tourism projected to reach a market size of \$1 trillion by 2030. Within this context, continued awareness of changes in preferences is vital to avoid alienating customers at either end of the spectrum.

“

People don't necessarily want an off-the-shelf package holiday. If you're a same-sex couple travelling with a child, you're going to need reliable advice on safety and where you're going to feel most comfortable. If generative AI can filter information and suggest three destinations with things to do, that is going to be really exciting.”



*—Jenny Southan,
editor, founder, and CEO of Globetrender*

Travel & Leisure



Accelerate on:

Deeper personalisation

In 2024, AI developments will enable the travel and leisure industry to offer consumers a more personalised experience. OpenAI integrations and wider use of the technology to curate recommendations will allow travellers to discover trips and activities that suit their individual needs, be it personal interests, price parameters, or even aiding minority groups in finding safe, comfortable, and hospitable places to go. As people experience fatigue at endless options and booking platforms, they will look for more centralised and tailored solutions, with 32% of American travellers already likely to use ChatGPT to help plan a trip. Brands that can leverage this will enable customers to engage in tourism and leisure on their own terms, attending to both the luxury market and those looking for experiences on a budget.



2024 disruptor

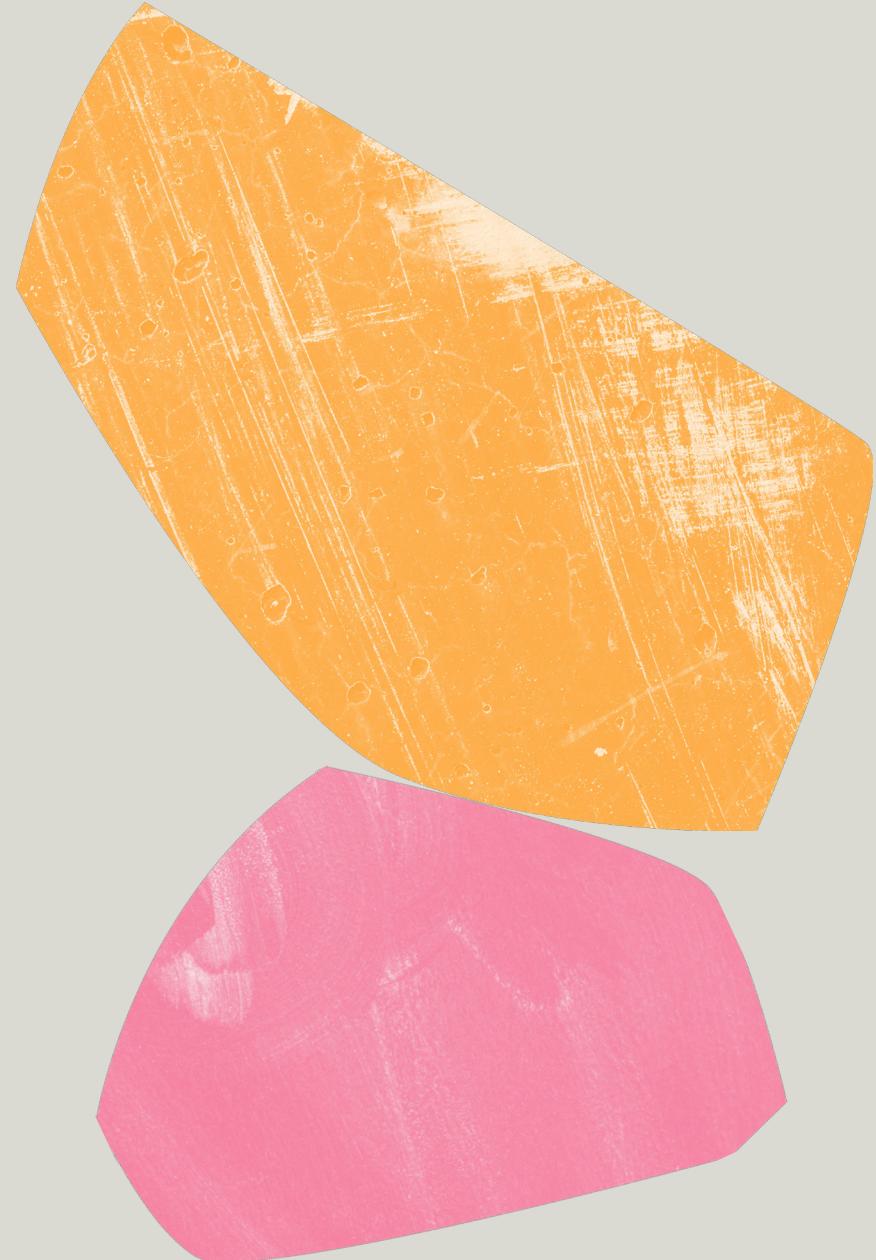
Expedia

Having launched an OpenAI-powered chatbot to its app in April 2023, Expedia has continued adding generative AI features to its platform. Project Explorer, an updated iteration of the original chatbot, can curate trips based on different budgets, locations, time of year, and traveller interests.

5

Horizon Planner

Use Canvas8's 2024 planner to anticipate key events next year and explore related research



2024 Events

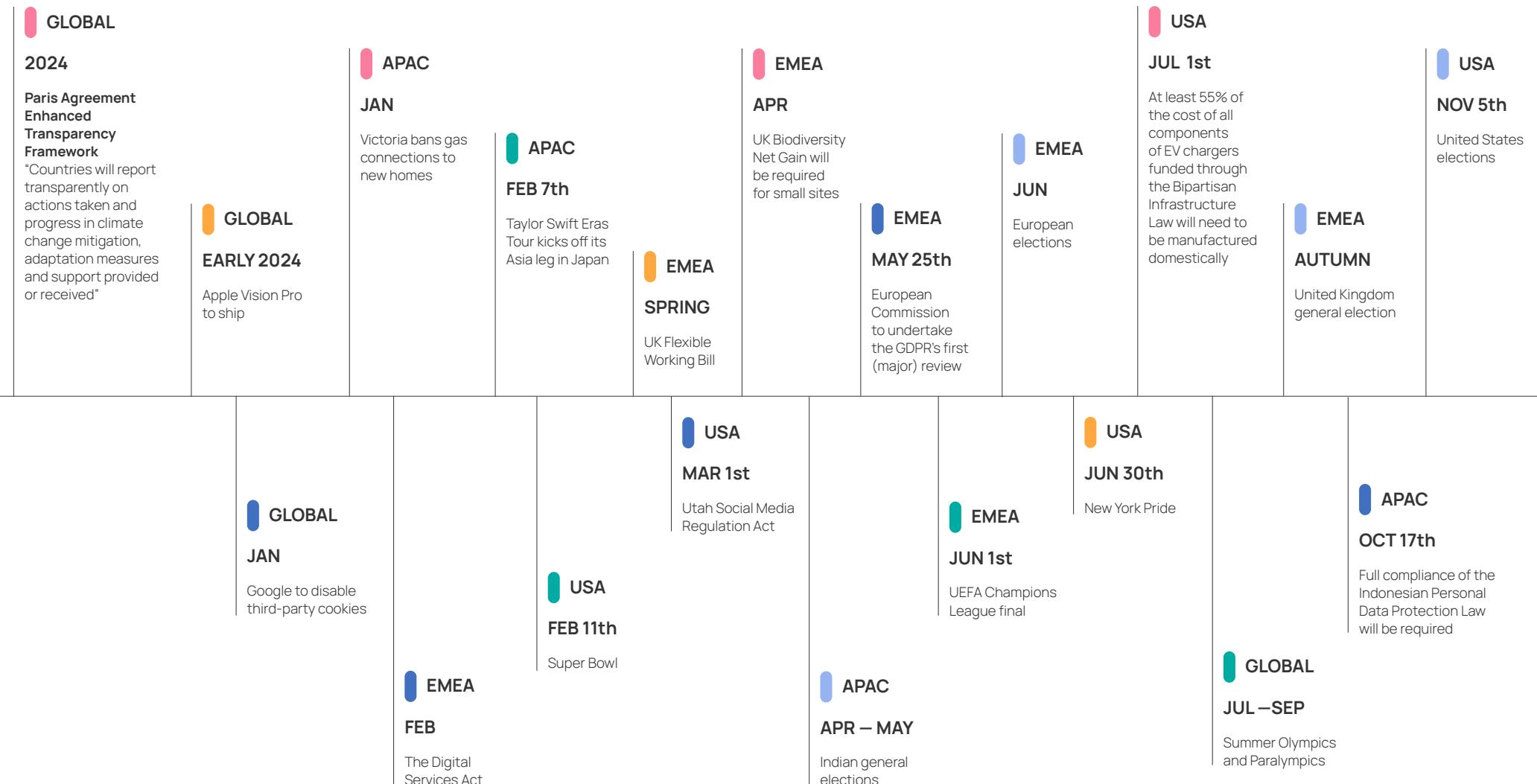
Cultural

Legislative

Political

Environmental

Societal



GLOBAL

EARLY 2024

Apple Vision Pro to ship early 2024

Following a highly talked about reveal in 2023, the Apple Vision Pro is [on track to ship](#) in early 2024. While the exact date is yet to be confirmed, this innovative hardware will spark greater interest in mixed-reality content and immersive entertainment and evolve the future of hybrid work.

How can you tap into desires for personalised entertainment?

Behaviour Tracker: Personal Worlds

APAC

JAN

Victoria to ban gas connections to new homes

As part of its [plan to reach net zero emissions by 2045](#), the Victoria government will [ban gas](#) from new homes and government buildings from 2024 to reduce energy bills and pollution. The success of the move and the opposition it has generated will be important to watch.

How can you make people see the value of eco switches?

GLOBAL

JAN

Google to disable third-party cookies

Google will [disable third-party cookies](#) for 1% of Chrome users and migrate them to [Privacy Sandbox](#), with plans to remove third-party cookies altogether in the second half of 2024. This move will force marketers to drastically rework the way they target consumers.

How will you deliver personalisation and match audience expectations?

Behaviour Tracker: Malicious Machines

EMEA

FEB

The Digital Services Act

The [Digital Services Act](#) will bring stricter rules to large social media platforms and search engines to create a safer online environment. This act will change the way that platforms are required to disclose information and restrict the use of targeted advertising as well as the type of content available.

What is an empowering digital environment for your users?



FEB 7th

Taylor Swift's Eras Tour comes to Asia

Taylor Swift's Eras Tour kicks off its Asia leg in Tokyo. After generating a roaring success with its US dates, the tour's international concerts are set to be huge events for brands to leverage and market.

Behaviour Tracker: The power of superfandom

How can you support superfandom authentically?



SPRING

UK Flexible Working Bill

This legislation will allow employees to make two flexible working requests within a 12-month period, and the government indicates it will create a day-one right to request flexible working in the future. As people's expectations of hybridity evolve, it's important for businesses to pay attention to changing rules.

Behaviour Tracker: Remote Rework

Where can you show proactive leadership around child protection online?



FEB 11th

Super Bowl

Super Bowl Sunday is a significant annual cultural and sporting event that brings buzz and cultural movement for brands to tap into. As speculation already begins about who could be performing, excitement is months in the making.

Behaviour Tracker: Sports fans' values

What is the most powerful moment for your community within event TV?



MAR 1st

Utah Social Media Regulation Act

The legislation will introduce several regulations for minors' use of social media. While the rules are state-wide, a number of other governments are also considering stricter regulations to protect children from harm online.

Behaviour Tracker: Anti-sharenting apps

Where can you show proactive leadership around child protection online?

EMEA

Behaviour Tracker: Eco Rethink

APR

UK Biodiversity Net Gain will be required for small sites

Aimed at [improving the conditions of the natural environment](#), small residential sites will be required to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain targets from April. This move signals an expectation of business commitment to environmental responsibility.

How can you bring openness to environmental commitments?

EMEA

Behaviour Tracker: Data Detachment

MAY 25th

European Commission to undertake the GDPR's first major review

Aiming to make [improvements to enforcement](#), the European Commission will undertake its first major review of the GDPR. With concerns including how effectively the framework is being enforced with Big Tech, this review could lead to changes in the functioning of the regulation.

Where can you win trust by proactively addressing concerns?

APAC

Behaviour Tracker: A Cultural Snapshot of India 2023

APR – MAY

Indian general elections

As polarisation and ethnic clashes lead to [dangerous violence in Manipur](#) and [opposition parties contest the elections](#) to prevent a BJP victory, India's general elections are a politically critical event to watch in the coming year.

How can you prepare for local nuances across a global strategy?

EMEA

Behaviour Tracker: All-access Entertainment

JUN 1st

UEFA Champions League final

The UEFA Champions League Final 2024 will be hosted at [Wembley Stadium](#) in London. With key sporting significance, this event will speak to the growing popularity of sports and fandom culture driven by a desire for connection.

How can you champion desires for deeper connectedness?

EMEA

Behaviour Tracker: Gen Z political engagement

AUTUMN

United Kingdom general election

The UK's next general election is expected to take place in November. With the introduction of [new ID laws](#), there's a [massive threat to the accessibility](#) of this election, with the legislation disproportionately excluding ethnic minorities, poorer individuals, and those with disabilities.

How can brands authentically show up for the disadvantaged amid polarisation?

APAC

Behaviour Tracker: Digital Armour

OCT 17th

Full compliance with the Indonesian Personal Data Protection Law

Digital data protection acts are rolling out across APAC. In June 2024, India will introduce its 'DPDP'. In October, Indonesia's data protection law will take effect in 2024, with requirements including providing users with a privacy notice and obtaining explicit consent for data processing.

How can platforms balance demands for personalisation with a desire for privacy?

EMEA

Behaviour Tracker: Collective Equity

OCT

Black History Month

Black History Month will happen in February in the US and October in the UK. As polarisation increases, it has become increasingly crucial for businesses to recommit to DE&I pledges. Showing up authentically all year round for events like BHM is essential.

How can businesses re-prioritise and future-proof commitments to DE&I?

USA

Behaviour Tracker: AI-generated misinformation

NOV 5th

United States elections

In an already polarised landscape, the US elections are set to be a huge political event, with Trump's controversial return to campaigning marking [uncharted territory](#) and AI's potential to cause a [disinformation crisis](#) creating widespread concern.

How can brands be stewards of truth in the face of damaging misinformation?

Explore more with your Canvas8 membership

Live event series

Sign up for our Expert Outlook 2024 panel series where Canvas8's editorial director will be exploring key themes from the report with an expert panel.

Toolkit

What does Anchor Us mean for your business? Launched in June 2023 as one of our five [Toolkit research solutions](#), Trend Snapshots offer a quick and affordable way to stay current and safeguard your future. Use them to understand how new shifts in culture will impact your business.

Access

Want to spend more time with a brilliant mind? Explore Expert Outlook research in more depth by connecting with the experts behind the report. We have over 800 Access experts available to help start your 2024 planning now.

