

# REINVIGORATING BRAND LOYALTY THROUGH TRUST, PURPOSE & VALUES

How Brands Are Leading With Empathy, Support & Transparency To Meet New Consumer Needs



# RESEARCH PAPER OVERVIEW



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The past 12 months has seen a consumer and marketplace that have been radically altered by mental and physical health crises, racial injustice, economic disparity and supply chain disruption to name a few. In light of these changes, the traditional rulebook for engaging audiences must be reimagined. This starts with understanding what is most important to your consumer. In 2021, it's critical that brands take stock of and assess their core values to ensure they align with consumer needs and expectations. This is by no means a one-off process, but instead must become an ongoing discipline. To successfully meet consumers with products and messaging that is trusted and embraced, authenticity is key, and is achieved when a brand's values are embedded in everything from marketing through manufacturing. Finally, it's important that brands work to pursue a customer and community-first agenda and position themselves as a platform for creating ongoing value and promoting positive change.

Intentionality is vital in a market where consumers are more hyper aware of brand activity than ever before. As noted by Susan Vidler, Managing Director at Toluna UK: "Covid-19 has shaped our lives forever. Our approach to everyday activities, from where we work and how we keep fit to where we spend our money and how we behave has changed. It's helped to show what matters to people and changed their

attitudes to certain behaviors. Now more than ever, how brands act and their social, moral and environmental actions are paramount." Today's consumer is quicker to identify brands that are genuinely invested in and aligned with progressive values, or conversely, call out those that are falling short.

Beyond marketing campaigns and the standard approach to CSR, brands must seize the opportunity to support and grow the communities of which they are a vital part. By listening to the needs of their consumers, prioritizing honest communications and taking meaningful actions, brands can build trust and foster loyalty now and in the future.

In this report created in partnership with Toluna, learn how new consumer expectations are driving brands to pursue a purpose-led agenda and increasingly adopt a people before profit mindset. Explore the trends defining progressive innovation and discover how successful brands are taking part

# ABOUT toluna\*

Toluna delivers real-time consumer insights at the speed of the on-demand economy. By combining global scale and local expertise with innovative technology and award-winning research design, we help clients explore tomorrow, now.

Toluna is the parent company of Harris Interactive Europe and KuRunData. Together, we strive to push the field of market research toward a better tomorrow.

## ABOUT THE TOLUNA GLOBAL BAROMETER

Together Toluna, Harris Interactive and KuRunData have conducted a Global Barometer study covering 18 markets. The report sheds light on consumers and the impact that the Coronavirus has had on daily life, looking at the way consumers purchase and their media consumption. The report began field in March of 2020 and will continue throughout 2021.

Insights span critical business areas, and we've developed sector-specific reports in key verticals.

**To learn more about Toluna, visit:**  
[www.tolunacorporate.com](http://www.tolunacorporate.com)

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# KEY SHIFTS WITHIN THE BRAND LANDSCAPE

**In the midst of a changing marketplace and economy, brands must work harder to truly resonate with their customers. Now more than ever consumers expect brands to understand what is important to them.**

“2020 was a tipping point for stakeholder capitalism. Consumers were watching as brands responded (or lacked response) to the pandemic and social justice movements. You’ve heard of the Attention Economy and the Sharing Economy, 2021 will usher in the era of The Values Economy, where brand values matter to the consumer just as much as price, product, and promotion.”

[“Welcome to the Values Economy,” Study conducted by Vrity, and Toluna, December, 2020](#)

“By solving problems and delivering joy, [General Mills] can create loyalty and better resonance and because we’re doing more for them, we start to attract new people to our brands and categories, it creates a totally different marketing plan.”

[Brad Hiranaga, Chief Brand Officer, General Mills North America](#)

**Brand purpose has become a key differentiating factor for shoppers, while simultaneously acting as a strong north star to guide brands both during and after a crisis. Knowing that consumer loyalty is driven by shared values, having accurate consumer insight is critical.**

When considering brand purpose, 72% of respondents were more likely to be loyal to the company, and 72% also said that they’d be more likely to forgive the company if it made a mistake.

[Purpose Perception. Porter Novelli, 2021](#)

“Purpose will be at the core of every sensible organization adapting to a post-COVID world, taking into account the new reality of employees, their goals, and their redefined relationship with their communities.”

[Harold Hamana, Managing Partner, Knight & Pawn](#)

“Being authentic in purpose will mean companies leaning into this to guide decisions, allowing their purpose to be tested and challenged. Purpose must be used as a brand’s lens for decision-making, innovation, crisis response, engagement, growth plans, and opportunities.”

[Annie Longsworth, Executive Managing Director, RF|Binder](#)

# KEY SHIFTS WITHIN THE BRAND LANDSCAPE

**The pandemic has made it clear that consumers want meaningful change rather than a return to the status quo. Having redefined their core values—health, family, finances and social causes—consumers are looking to brands to provide solutions and support.**

The silver lining of Covid-19 is that it has accelerated, forced, whatever you call it, marketers to really come forward with solutions. It's leaning into that understanding of the customer, where they're facing problems and what triggers can be there to solve their problems.

[Brad Hiranaga, Chief Brand Officer, General Mills North America](#)

“Six in ten people under age 30 want the post-pandemic recovery to prioritize ‘restructuring our economy so it deals better with challenges like inequality and climate change. Young people are looking for a reset rather than a return to the status quo.’”

[Raphael Bemporad, Founding Partner, BBMG](#)

## PART 1

# NEW DRIVERS OF CUSTOMER LOYALTY

## IN CONVERSATION WITH TOLUNA

### How have consumers' relationship with brands changed? What are the top three things brands need to focus on to remain relevant?

If we've learned anything in the last 12 months, it's what we value. This is especially true when it comes to choosing brands to support and spend money with. We want, and expect, brands to be more environmentally and socially conscious and behave in a compassionate and responsible way. To do this, brands need to understand what consumers expect of them specifically.

57% of consumers are more likely to buy from a brand that aligns to their values. While consumer values are different from consumer to consumer, brands must work to better understand those values. There are two important points to note here. The first is that these values must align with your brand and what consumers expect from your brand. Second is how brand values are communicated and when. Finally, it's critical that brands are authentic. Values need to be present and incorporated in all of the company's strategies consistently.

### How can brands ensure they're listening to and tapped into their audiences?

Research is critical. Probably more so than ever. We've seen brands conduct research on core positioning more than ever before and test everything - especially as consumer sentiment evolves so dramatically over time. Value measurement may be even more important to research given the lack of ROI metrics available, however, when brand values are aligned with consumer values, they can pay off in lower customer acquisition costs, command premium product pricing and drive loyalty.

### Key values we're seeing consumers prioritize in 2021:

Sustainability/environmental - 51%  
Customer support/service - 48%  
Value - 47%

THEME 1

# COMMUNITY CATALYST

**TRENDS:**

- Amplified Voices
- Resource Launchpad
- Digital Literacy



## COMMUNITY CATALYST

# AMPLIFIED VOICES

Committing to a more inclusive reality, businesses are launching initiatives and platforms for a diverse range of consumers to share their experiences, ideas and needs when it comes to representation and creating equitable experiences across retail and beyond. By encouraging a greater range of perspectives to be shared, businesses have the opportunity to then apply these insights to their own internal processes, practices, and future initiatives, and better engage and connect with today's consumers.

**27% of global consumers believe it's important that brands support racial equality, while for 26% support of gender equality is the most sought after brand value.**

*Return of the Consumer: Wave 15 Global Barometer Study. Toluna, Harris Interactive & KuRunData, 2021*

## #HearToBeHeard by Mars Inc

Building on previous efforts to address gender equity within its organization, Mars Inc.'s #HereToBeHeard campaign aims to engage women spanning race, age, sexuality, religion and ability to understand "What needs to change so more women can reach their full potential?" The responses gathered through submission at [behear.mars.com](https://behear.mars.com) will be analyzed by Oxford Future of Marketing Initiative (FOMI) at Oxford University's Saïd Business School, and the results will be applied to Mars Inc.'s next actions and policies to help close the gender opportunity gap and also support a broader range of women's needs within the business community.

[sbs.ox.ac.uk/news/mars-joins-oxford-future-marketing-initiative](https://sbs.ox.ac.uk/news/mars-joins-oxford-future-marketing-initiative)

## Ulta

The world's first-ever shoppable streaming As part of its \$25 million commitment to diversity and inclusion, beauty chain Ulta has created a multi-part initiative to achieve equality throughout its organization. In addition to store updates and employee training, \$20 million of that pledge will be invested in media platforms including its own, Muse, to engage, connect with and feature LatinX, Black and other underserved communities and their stories. Additionally, the company plans to double the number of Black-owned brands within its assortment by the end of 2021, is dedicating \$4 million to provide them with marketing support, and will work directly with the founders to help grow their brands.

[ulta.com/company/champion-diversity](https://ulta.com/company/champion-diversity)

## We The Culture by Facebook

Facebook's employee-founded program "We The Culture" provides Black content creators with dedicated funding, mentorship and platform-specific guidance and programming to better reach audiences on both Facebook and Instagram. Committing \$25 million to the program, We The Culture aims to amplify Black voices and creators over the age of 18 with a minimum of 10,000 followers. After submitting an application, those selected will receive content funding as well as access to educational resources to better grow their following and reach more social media users.

[facebook.com/creators/new-black-creator-program](https://facebook.com/creators/new-black-creator-program)

## Procter & Gamble

CPG manufacturer Procter & Gamble's "Widen The Screen," is a call to action for both internal teams and partners as well as the industry at large. As a content creation, talent development and partnership platform, Widen The Screen aims to increase inclusion of Black creators, as well as tackle bias and misrepresentation of Black lives across advertising, film and television. Along with the platform's creation, P&G is partnering with and investing in agencies, production companies and mentorship programs that support Black creators entering the ad industry.

[pg.com/widen-the-screen](https://pg.com/widen-the-screen)

# RESOURCE LAUNCHPAD

Consumers are motivated by their passions and commitments, as they've come to highly prioritize what is important to them. From how they keep fit, to the way that they spend (and save), to honing their crafts, individuals today relentlessly pursue their creative and entrepreneurial passions. As they seek out new sources of financial and educational support, brands have a unique opportunity to step in and provide the tools and expertise to support these endeavors. By providing their customers with the resources to achieve their goals, rather than simply marketing to them, brands can build meaningful and lasting relationships.

A majority of consumers agree they feel more positively about brands making an effort to support society at the moment. 77% believe that brands should support their local communities, and 86% of respondents said brands should support vulnerable people in their community.

*Advertising During COVID-19. Twitter, 2020*

## Lowe's

To encourage consumer confidence and reduce addressing social impact and its own role in creating a more equitable retail experience is a priority for home improvement retailer Lowe's. To discover and ultimately amplify the reach of entrepreneurs from a diverse range of backgrounds, the retailer has launched the series Making It With Lowe's, where small businesses will be able to pitch their products for the chance to be featured on Lowe's.com or in-store and receive marketing support and mentoring services. In addition to its accelerator program, Lowe's plans to feature more than 400 products from entrepreneurs in its stores or on its website, and has donated \$30 million in grants for minority-owned businesses. .

[lowes.com/l/making-it-with-lowes](https://lowes.com/l/making-it-with-lowes)

## Walmart

At Walmart's first virtual Open Call event in 2020, more than 800 small businesses were able to pitch their products over a 30-minute, one-on-one meeting. Of those who participated in Walmart's Open Call, 175 businesses' products are heading to the retailer's shelves and website, while 450 more are being given further review. Addressing the virtual crowd prior to the first pitches, Walmart's CEO Doug McMillion detailed the retailer's continued commitment to helping small businesses during the pandemic, from rent relief programs to providing small businesses with more space within its store's shelves. In 2021, the still virtual Open Call event will be one of the ways Walmart plans to support its latest commitment to spend an additional \$350 billion on U.S.-made products, and support an 750,000 new jobs.

[corporate.walmart.com/virtual-open-call](https://corporate.walmart.com/virtual-open-call)

## The Empower Project

The Empower Project invited Black-owned or founded businesses (specifically those with \$150,000 to \$10 million annual revenue) to apply to a competition in which finalists virtually pitched their businesses to sponsors. Winners of the competition receive expert mentorship, as well as \$500,000 worth of business services meant to further their company's goals, such as brand strategy, operations management, and financial guidance. Specialists from nine firms signed on to the competition, and offered their expert support to the winners of The Empower Project.

[caempowerproject.org](https://caempowerproject.org)

## COMMUNITY CATALYST

# DIGITAL LITERACY

An increasingly digital-first world has created new challenges - personal privacy concerns, misinformation, proper behaviors, community engagement, etc. - for audiences of all ages. To interact responsibly and thrive within these online environments and platforms, people need an entirely new set of skills and code of conduct. To help consumers navigate these ever changing rules, companies are developing interactive guides and educational resources.

**44% of consumers expect the brands and influencers they interact with to provide educational content and virtual learning ideas.**

*Online Content Consumers Value Most Right Now. Influence Central, 2020*

## Lego x DQ Institute

Partnering with educational think tank DQ Institute, Lego has created an online quiz for children to empower them to be good digital citizens, and develop their own online empathy skills. Within the quiz, kids follow Lego character Captain Safety through a series of scenarios meant to help them understand how online bullying and misinformation spread works. Players are rewarded for standing up to “meanies” with the game or for comforting a Lego character that has been harassed online. Players are also asked to think about a time they may have been a bully, and are provided with prompts on how to apologize when that occurs. At the end of the quiz, each player is revealed to be one of four Lego heroes they’re most like, Sir Hug A Lot, AeroVision, Butterclops, or Admiral High Five.

[lego.com/en-gb/campaigns/kids/safer-internet-day](https://lego.com/en-gb/campaigns/kids/safer-internet-day)

## Samsung

“Not A School” from electronics company Samsung is an online learning platform created for UK-based Gen Z students to build skills around networking, collaborating and building their own businesses. Billed as an unorthodox learning experience, 100 young people between the ages of 18-25 from a diverse background were selected to participate in one-one mentoring with a range of activists, entrepreneurs and business leaders. In addition to the private course, self-lead classes are available to all around topics including topics like “Turning Climate Anxiety into Positive Action: how can technology unlock activism in everyone” and “Building human connection in a digital world.”

[samsung.com/uk/explore/kings-cross/not-a-school](https://samsung.com/uk/explore/kings-cross/not-a-school)

## Snapchat

Image and video-based social media app SnapChat has developed a program to educate users on data security and help inform data literacy. Launched on Data Privacy Day, Safety Snapshot is a dedicated Discovery channel within the app, consisting of content from privacy experts and monthly safety tips around account protection measures both online and within SnapChat.

[newsroom.snap.com/global-privacy-day](https://newsroom.snap.com/global-privacy-day)

## PART 2

# NEW DRIVERS OF CUSTOMER LOYALTY

## IN CONVERSATION WITH TOLUNA

### **Moving beyond Corporate Social Responsibility, how else can brands create value, community and trust for consumers?**

Brand health metrics need to be agile enough to keep pace with consumer change and also be able to inform your future decision making. Brands need to understand the following:

**Future relevance and vitality.** Determine how your brand is performing against consumer expectations moving forward including creating a sense of excitement and belonging for consumers.

**Engagement.** Create a two-way dialogue and take on consumer feedback and ideas for messaging, and offerings.

**Competition.** Benchmark against key competitors to ensure that you're differentiated and have a clear position in the market.

By developing a more strategic view of your brand, positioning and desired future position, you'll ensure that you're not looking back at past performance, but ensuring that your brand is fit for the future and strong enough to combat competitive forces in the market.

### **Throughout the pandemic and the social upheaval taking place, we've seen empathy be a defining characteristic of marketing. What were some of the most impactful ways that message was communicated?**

Another impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and social changes we've seen in 2020, has been the need for brands to ensure that communications are empathetic. As brands communicate, it's critical that they understand the current market and how their consumers may be feeling.

We think about the height of the pandemic. During this time, we saw advertisers quickly shift their focus. We saw brands like Nike pivot by creating a movement around their 'Just do it' slogan, by replacing it with 'For once, just don't do it...' "Don't pretend there's not a problem in America." This campaign caused many others to follow suit, from Facebook to Citibank. We're seeing successful messages of empathy go beyond a subtle repositioning, or watering down of a commercial message into actually communicating about issues and providing support to consumers.

THEME 2

# WELLNESS CENTERED

## TRENDS:

- Mental Health Support
- Facilitating Connection
- Curated Escapes

# MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

An extended period of social distancing and lack of interaction is taking a toll on consumers and their mental health. To provide consumers with support, brands are partnering with health professionals and platforms, and using their own social channels, apps, and websites to connect consumers with the guidance and resources they may need.

Approaching a year of social distancing and lockdowns, 40% of global consumers report having concerns about mental health.

*Return of the Consumer: Wave 15 Global Barometer Study. Toluna, Harris Interactive & KuRunData, 2021*

## Whole Foods x Headspace

Popular supermarket chain Whole Foods is partnering with wellness and meditation app Headspace to offer consumers access to cross-platform mental health support and tools. Through the partnership, visitors to the Whole Foods Instagram page can access a IGTV series deemed “Food for Mood,” where experts demonstrate recipes that feature spring-centric foods while explaining the ways to “mindfully connect” with foods as well as the importance of making time for self-care--specifically how to tap into joy, feel energy, focus, and relaxation moods. The initiative additionally includes an offering of three meditations that explore mindfulness in everyday occasions like shopping, cooking and eating as well as free trial of one-month of Headspace Plus. [wholefoodsmarket.com/whole-foods-market-and-headspace-team-up](https://wholefoodsmarket.com/whole-foods-market-and-headspace-team-up)

## Clean & Clear x Frame

To mark its arrival in the US, live streaming Recognizing a need among its consumer base for support in terms of their mental health, creativity, and self-care, Johnson & Johnson-owned skincare brand Clean & Clear partnered with therapy matching startup Frame to host an ongoing series of Instagram Live sessions. Therapists from Frame’s network held weekly discussions on topics like “Feeling Your Feelings–What to Do with These Emotions,” “How to Stay Creative During Quarantine,” and “Navigating the New Normal of School.” [instagram.com/stories/highlights](https://instagram.com/stories/highlights)

## Walmart Launches ‘Safe & Well’

Through working with D.C. based social-impact education innovator, Everfi Inc., retail giant Walmart has rolled out a website they’re calling “Safe & Well.” The site, which is free to all, includes videos, interactive scenarios and self-guided activities that explore the topics of prescription medication safety, opioid misuse, mental health awareness, mental wellness, coping techniques, and more. Through the platform and its content, Walmart aims to provide wide access to vital and actionable information during a time when personal stressors and feelings of isolation are pervasive across communities. [walmart.everfi-next.net](https://walmart.everfi-next.net)

# FACILITATING CONNECTION

Innovating within socially-distanced guidelines, brands and retailers are creating shared experiences by leveraging their products, resources and communities to safely connect consumers with one another. Through remote events and virtual platforms, brands are ensuring consumer interaction remains possible, while generating brand affinity and creating additional points of positive engagement.

**84% of consumers want brands' social channels to facilitate a sense of community and offer support to those in need during these hard times..**

*Trust Barometer Special Report: Brand Trust And The Coronavirus Pandemic. Edelman, 2020*

## O'Doul's x Match

As in-person interactions went online, dating site and app Match partnered with the non-alcoholic brand O'Doul's to create a virtual dating experience for non-drinkers. Up to 100 Match users were able to sign up to win an at-home kit to share on their virtual date, which contained a selection of O'Doul's alcohol-free beverages, socks, a candle, conversational cards, a smartphone stand and a selfie light.

[anheuser-busch.com/o-doul-s-and-match-partnership](https://anheuser-busch.com/o-doul-s-and-match-partnership)

## Xbox

After finding that in the UK alone, an average of 200,000 seniors will go a week without talking to another person, Xbox developed Xbox: Beyond Generations to help younger and older generations connect through live gaming. To participate, gamers with a spare Xbox console and controller download a reboxing kit that guides users through resetting and packaging their Xbox, and includes setup direction for the older relative meant to receive the console as well. Once the Xbox arrives, the reboxing kit's direction makes it easy for the intended relative to quickly set up and log online to interact and play along with their family member.

[xbox.com/xbox-beyond-generations](https://xbox.com/xbox-beyond-generations)

## Obé Fitness

Online fitness platform Obé initially created its stream-with-friends feature to allow groups to participate in the same livestream class, and remotely interact with each other and the instructor. Now, groups are using the workout parties tool to check in with each other before and after each workout, similar to the in-studio experience, and even remaining online together to share a coffee or cocktail and socialize once classes are complete.

[obefitness.com/blog/workout-parties-obe-fitness](https://obefitness.com/blog/workout-parties-obe-fitness)

## WELLNESS CENTERED

# CURATED ESCAPES

With consumers' day-to-day lives largely relegated to the home, activities like travel, spa and salon visits and public events have been put on pause. To help consumers take time for themselves, even if just from home, brands and retailers are redeploing their resources and designing branded kits to fulfill new consumer needs centered around novelty, exploration and self-care. Having prioritized wellness and new forms of 'escape' during this extended period at home, consumers are likely to carry these new habits into the future.

While 49% of consumers are most looking forward to going on holiday in their country, 27% of consumers expect to spend more on personal care and hygiene, 26% expect to spend more on leisure activities.

*Return of the Consumer: Wave 15 Global Barometer Study. Toluna, Harris Interactive & KuRunData, 2021*

## IKEA

Swedish home furnishings company IKEA's Vacations in a Box were designed with the goal of helping customers to at least feel as they're on vacation, even if they're still in their living room. The four boxes and their contents revolve around four different destinations, Cappadocia, Tokyo, Maldives, and Paris, and include items like throw pillows and decor items, artificial plants, traditional recipes from each of the cities, music and movie suggestions and at-home activity suggestions. While the boxes are only available for consumers in the United Arab Emirates, the music, movie and activity suggestions are all free to download at [Ikea.com](https://www.ikea.com).

[ikea.com//campaigns/vacations-in-a-box](https://www.ikea.com//campaigns/vacations-in-a-box)

## Starburst

Mars Wrigley-owned brand Starburst designed an at-home self-care kit to coincide with National Self-Care day on July 24th. The box's theme was designed around the brand's best-selling flavor, Pink, and included a gratitude journal, a succulent, a yoga towel, a jade roller, sleep mask, all in shades of pink, as well as Pink Starbursts.

[prnewswire.com/starburst](https://www.prnewswire.com/starburst)

## Pepsi Co.

To encourage self-care during the holiday season, beverage company Pepsi Co. created a limited edition spa-themed kit consumers could enter to win by engaging with the brand on Twitter. After tweeting #PepsiSpa and #Sweepstakes and tagging a friend, select participants were eligible to receive a Pepsi-scented scrub, bath bomb and Pepsi blue facemask.

[twitter.com/pepsi](https://twitter.com/pepsi)



## PART 3

# NEW DRIVERS OF CUSTOMER LOYALTY

## IN CONVERSATION WITH TOLUNA

### **What are a few standout examples of brands promoting change and providing real impact within their communities?**

We look at brands like Dove. Their position is very clear. The company's resulting success is attributed to their focus on empowering women of all shapes, sizes, nationalities, etc. In addition to launching successful campaigns including their "Campaign for Real Beauty", which featured women of all ages, sizes and nationalities, the company has actually launched initiatives focused on supporting the brand's consumers, namely the "Dove movement for self-esteem" campaign, that inspired discussions with young girls to frame their feelings about what it means to be beautiful.

Dove's investments have paid off, and the reason that it has can be attributed in a few ways. Dove truly understands the ongoing sentiment of its target audience. It's clear that the company does its research and homework. The brand consistently states KPIs that they want to measure themselves against. For example, in one campaign, the brand starts by saying "Only 2% of women consider themselves beautiful...(and we want to change that)." Further, Dove has actually evolved the conversation which initially focused on redefining beauty to include broader issues of gender and racial equality, as well as the need to uplift underrepresented groups of all kinds.

Impossible Foods, the plant-based meat company, has a different approach but one that is especially relevant in 2021. As consumers are focused both on their health and sustainability, the company's commitment to developing tasty products is reflected in their mission statement to 'drastically reduce humanity's destructive impact on the global environment by replacing the use of animals as food production.' The company's brand promise that consumers can 'eat what they love, and save the planet,' which has resonated well, has also created a sense of community by rewarding consumers with points that can be redeemed for merchandise and experiences. It's this additional community element that has helped to further build the brand and foster a social component to brand purchase.

THEME 3

# SHARED BUSINESS MODELS

**TRENDS:**

- Localized Impact
- Fan Ownership
- Sustainable Lifecycle

## SHARED BUSINESS MODELS

# LOCALIZED IMPACT

Consumers are refocusing on their local communities and economies, looking for ways to support both small businesses and individuals. Established companies and emerging platforms are helping consumers convert this growing passion into action by offering access to programs, initiatives and tools that allow consumers to connect and participate in incremental actions that have broader impact within their communities.

**56% of respondents said that the pandemic has caused them to shop neighborhood stores, with 79% planning to continue to do so long-term. 56% said they're buying more locally sourced products, with 84% planning to continue to do so long-term.**

*Decade of the Home, Accenture, 2020*

## Carlsberg

To help the bars and restaurants that stock its product, Denmark-based brewer Carlsberg is rewarding consumers for their in-store purchases with virtual tokens that will be redeemable for in-bar pints post-lockdown. To participate in the Adopt A Keg campaign, consumers are able to sign up online to receive their own virtual keg, which can be filled by scanning the labels of Carlsberg bottles or cans that are purchased within a store. For every four beers bought and scanned, consumers will be able to redeem two pints when they visit one of the 600 participating bars or restaurants once they're re-opened.

[adoptakeg.carlsberg.com](https://adoptakeg.carlsberg.com)

## Burger King

With restaurants operating at diminished capacity throughout France, the country's farmers have been left with a surplus of crops. To help account for lost sales, Burger King in France has purchased an additional 200,000 kg or 440,925 lbs of potatoes to hand out to their drive-thru customers. Each customer is able to receive a 1kg bag of raw potatoes, and can try out any of the three different recipes Burger King is sharing on its website to go along with the give-away.

[burgerking.fr/patates](https://burgerking.fr/patates)

## Cinch Market

Online marketplace Cinch Market is helping local stores in Brooklyn, NY better serve their neighborhood customers, while also reaching other Brooklyn and Manhattan-based shoppers. Through the marketplace, locals are able to browse items from 50 Brooklyn-based stores at once. Once an order is placed, each store receives an alert to fulfill the order. That same day, a Cinch employee is able to pick up each store's orders and bring them to a central sorting facility, where all of a shopper's items from various retailers can then be delivered in one package.

[cinchmarket.nyc/how\\_it\\_works](https://cinchmarket.nyc/how_it_works)

# FAN OWNERSHIP

Consumers feel a sense of ownership over their favored brands and want to contribute their own ideas and feedback for collaborative products and services that better meet their needs. Brands have the opportunity to both make consumers feel included in the creation of new products, as well as assess the current consumer landscape, by actively pursuing and updating their own consumer data and resulting insights. To do so, companies are creating online platforms where communities of like-minded consumers can gather, exchange ideas, and offer opinions, as a way to contribute to the brands' success.

**78% of consumers indicated they feel it is important that brands have a strong sense of community.**

*Return of the Consumer: Wave 15 Global Barometer Study. Toluna, Harris Interactive & KuRunData, 2021*

## Nothing but Gold by Nike

To develop its shopping app, Nothing But Gold, sportswear brand Nike is tapping its community of Gen Z girls to help determine everything from UX within the app to product selection, curation and design. Still in private beta, Nike superfans are able to DM the brand on Instagram and describe what makes them “Nothing but Gold” for a chance to inform how the sport, style and self-care focused app can best serve its intended audience.

[nike.com/nbg](https://nike.com/nbg)

## Lego World Builder

For toymaker Lego, digital content has become central to creating play experiences that vie for children's attention against video games, YouTube, or social media. To help generate and solicit customers' interest, Lego is asking people to imagine new storylines and toy environments and share their ideas on its social media platform, Lego World Builder. On Lego World Builder, users can propose story words, create characters, and upload concept art, videos, and descriptions. Lego will monitor the digital community on World Builder and buy ideas that it likes directly from its customer-creators.

[worldbuilder.tongal.com](https://worldbuilder.tongal.com)

## Lexus x Twitch

Within a two-hour livestream hosted on streaming platform Twitch, luxury auto brand Lexus invited gamers to weigh in on final design elements for a customized version of its 2021 IS sedan, the Gamers' IS. Designed by and for gamers, a poll feature within the stream allowed the 23,000 viewers to vote on everything from interior and exterior modifications like gaming consoles, a controller and monitor, lighting, and the middle console design. The finished product is an immersive gaming vehicle, with neon interior lighting, and a fully integrated gaming system on the passenger side.

[lexus.com/lexus-puts-gamers-in-the-drivers-seat](https://lexus.com/lexus-puts-gamers-in-the-drivers-seat)

## SHARED BUSINESS MODELS

# SUSTAINABLE LIFECYCLE

As the conversations around sustainability, eco-conscious practices and climate continue to grow in importance, leading brands and retailers are considering the post-purchase impact of their products. By building circularity into the full product lifecycle, from design and delivery to post-purchase and end-use, companies are reducing waste, while encouraging consumers to continuously interact with their brand.

**Sustainability and being environmentally friendly are supremely vital to today's consumer, as 51% of those surveyed indicated they are the most sought after values in brands.**

*Return of the Consumer: Wave 15 Global Barometer Study. Toluna, Harris Interactive & KuRunData, 2021*

## Dell

To develop its shopping app, Nothing But Gold, To address the growing e-waste crisis, computer electronics company Dell is rethinking its product lifecycles to move from linear to circular. Along with a prototype laptop that can be disassembled within two minutes, the company is also exploring how to extend the lifespan of each of their products by incorporating AI and machine learning into the product to make energy efficiency changes over time, and being able to update software through the cloud. Currently, Dell is incorporating recyclable materials into its products, including carbon fiber from the aerospace industry and plastics that would otherwise end up in oceans and landfills, while also testing e-recycling and device rental programs. [delltechnologies.com/social-impact/advancing-sustainability](https://delltechnologies.com/social-impact/advancing-sustainability)

## IKEA

As part of an overall commitment to more sustainable policies and practices, home furnishing brand IKEA is rolling out a series of initiatives aimed to reduce waste and encourage environmentally friendly practices. IKEA now allows customers to purchase spare furniture parts on an ongoing basis, rather than throw away broken furniture and items, and has released disassembly guides for six of their most popular items, in an effort to encourage reuse, donation, or reselling. In addition to spare parts and disassembly, the Swedish company is also exploring a furniture buy-back program to encourage repeat customer purchases. [ikea.com/customer-service/services/buyback](https://ikea.com/customer-service/services/buyback)

## Samsung

To create a simplified tech recycling process and encourage consumers to become lifelong Samsung brand supporters, the electronics brand developed its own upcycling program. Galaxing Upcycling at Home takes a new approach to phone upgrades, and provides consumers with additional options to repurpose their phones as a variety of IoT products, including a baby monitor or a pet care sensor to turn on lights remotely. [sammobile.com/upcycling-at-home-repurpose-galaxy-phones-iot-devices](https://sammobile.com/upcycling-at-home-repurpose-galaxy-phones-iot-devices)

# KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Lead with purpose.** Within a values-driven economy, brand purpose provides an opportunity to meaningfully impact consumers on a personal, community, environmental and global scale.
- 2 Inclusivity is more than a campaign.** There is a growing expectation for brands to embrace diversity and inclusion beyond messaging by taking meaningful steps to promote representation within internal practices, community initiatives, and customer experiences.
- 3 Customer support expands to holistic health.** As conversations around mental health and wellbeing continue to grow, there is an opportunity for brands to extend their support into daily life with 1:1 and community-led initiatives.
- 4 Brand building equals community.** The need for community and connection is more important than ever, with consumers increasingly seeking out opportunities for shared experiences within existing and new social circles.
- 5 Refocusing on local.** Despite a global marketplace, local engagement and relevance has shown renewed importance, creating opportunities for brands to find ways to connect on a smaller scale.
- 6 Embracing new touchpoints.** During times of disruption, there is an opportunity for organizations to experiment with new business models and innovations to meet the needs of customers in new and exciting ways.
- 7 See purpose as a competitive advantage.** Brands can lead and differentiate themselves by investing resources into progressive initiatives, taking a test and learn approach to determine alignment and effectiveness.

# ABOUT PSFK

## ABOUT PSFK

PSFK is the home of what's next in Retail and CX. Our integrated approach to research, content, events and our network provides you with the knowledge and savvy you need to get ahead of the trends.

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