



HOW TO CREATE LGBTQ+ INCLUSIVE ADVERTISING

Outvertising



Welcome to Outvertsing

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Our guide to producing LGBTQ+ inclusive advertising, aimed at a mainstream audience.

I'm so proud that our team of passionate volunteers has been able to create this for you. It has been designed as a powerful support tool for those creating truly diverse and inclusive marketing communications.

I wrote the first guide myself. That was some years ago when we were a much smaller organisation. This second edition has been a very different process involving many contributors, writers, and researchers. It's bigger, more thorough and more comprehensive.

A big thank you to everyone who has touched this.

So, onto the purpose of this guide: our ultimate aim is to remove LGBTQ+ prejudice as part of a broader and joined-up diversity and inclusion strategy. As LGBTQ+ individuals and straight allies working in advertising and marketing, we believe we're privileged to work in that profession and have a responsibility to use that privilege wisely, specifically in promoting the realistic representation of LGBTQ+ people in mainstream advertising. By doing that we will help create powerful positive LGBTQ+ role models.

If you'd like to get involved in Outvertsing, please do get in touch. We strive to be a welcoming, friendly, informal and inclusive bunch. And if we haven't met already, I hope we get to do that very soon.

Mark Runacus, Chair, Outvertsing
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the business case

Contributing to LGBTQ+ visibility and representation is a socially responsible act, but don't make the mistake of thinking that it must be an exclusively benevolent one, or that it will mean a risk to a business. If handled correctly, LGBTQ+ inclusion in your advertising can be a win/win proposition, promoting the understanding, the rights and well-being of a historically marginalised community and ultimately serving the bottom line.

THE MODERN CONSUMER

Demographics are changing and so are attitudes towards sexuality. Using the Kinsey scale a 2018 YouGov and Universal McCann survey found 56% of 18–24 year-olds no longer identified as 100% heterosexual, a 6% rise from their 2015 survey. But this attitudinal shift doesn't only pertain to young people. In addition to this, only 66% of Generation Z think of themselves as exclusively heterosexual compared with 71% of Millennials, 85% of Gen X and 88% of Baby Boomers.

ALL CONSUMERS DESIRE LGBTQ+ VISIBILITY

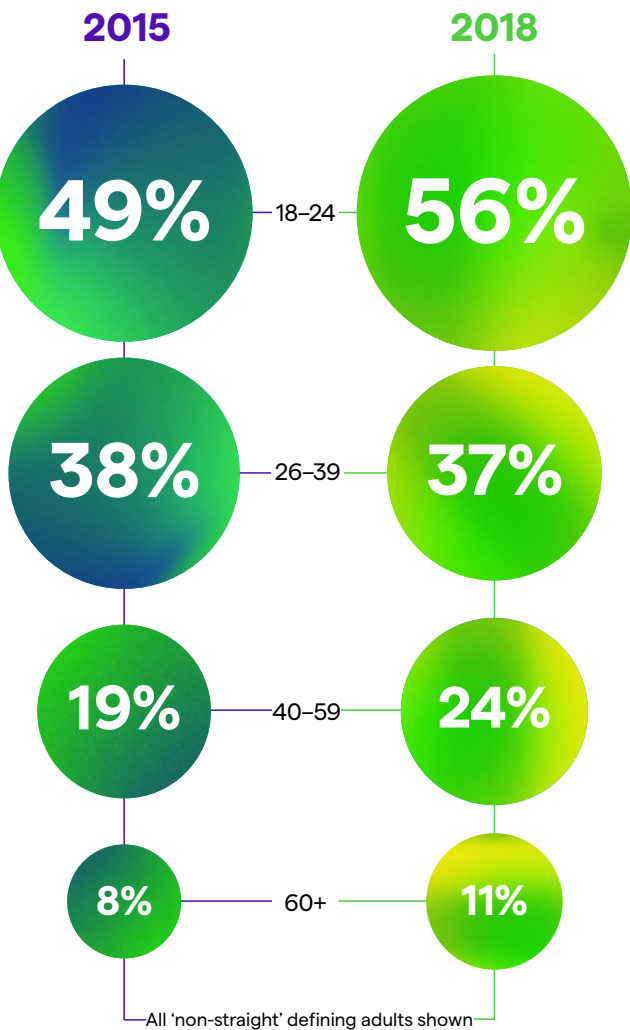
According to LGBT Capital, in 2018 the estimated UK spending power of the LGBTQ+ community reached \$137 billion. But LGBTQ+ representation is not just about appealing to a niche pocket of people; it's about making your brand attractive to a broader audience, an audience which is increasingly open towards LGBTQ+ visibility. In one 2016 Harvard Business Review study, 71% of LGBTQ+ respondents and 82% of allies said they were more likely to purchase from a company that supported LGBTQ+ equality.

LGBTQ+ ADVERTISING IS EFFECTIVE

Progressive ads are on average 25% more likely to generate positive engagement from consumers than less progressive ads, and are 47% more likely to be effective in both the long and the short term when it comes to campaign performance. When coupled with the ability for LGBTQ+ themed ads to outperform generic ads in driving brand recall the effectiveness case is clear.

WE ARE QUEERER THAN WE USED TO BE

Q. Please try to place your sexuality on a scale of 0 to 6, where 0 is 'Completely Heterosexual' and 6 is 'Completely Homosexual' (i.e. gay or lesbian)
Base: All adults



SO IS THE AD INDUSTRY GETTING IT RIGHT?

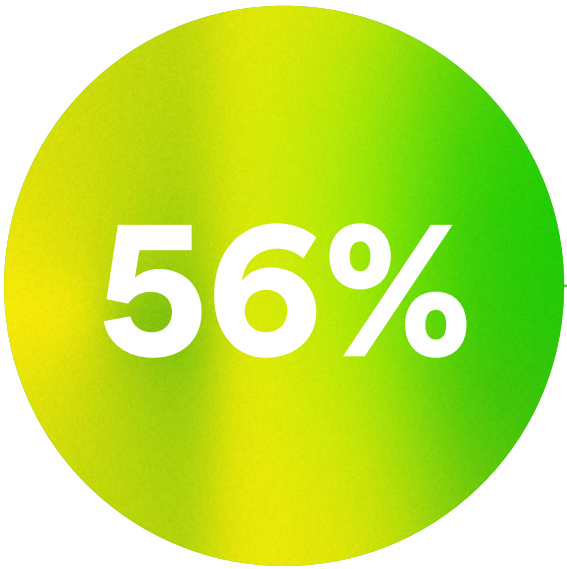
Unfortunately the answer is no. Research by Simpson Carpenter revealed that 31% of the LGBTQ+ population felt that the ad industry was portraying them badly and 40% of the general population believed advertising was failing to portray different gender identities properly.

With advertising failing to accurately represent society it's no wonder 57% of LGBTQ+ individuals agree with the statement: "I don't see my lifestyle represented in advertising".

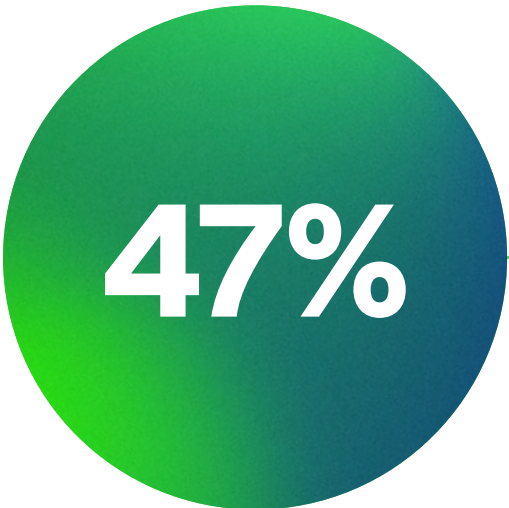
Clearly, this needs to change. It's just good business sense. 🟢



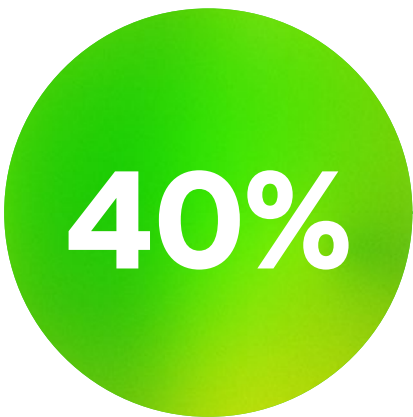
3 out of 4 tested LGBTQ+ themed ads outperform generic ads in driving brand recall.
Kantar Millward Brown.



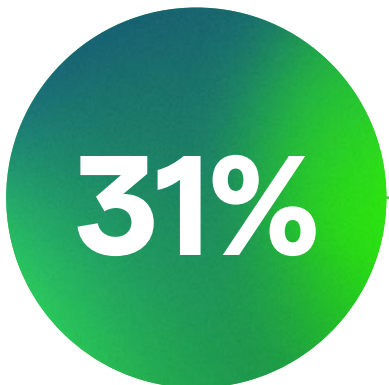
56% of 18-24 year-olds don't identify as 100% heterosexual.
YouGov, 2018 study.



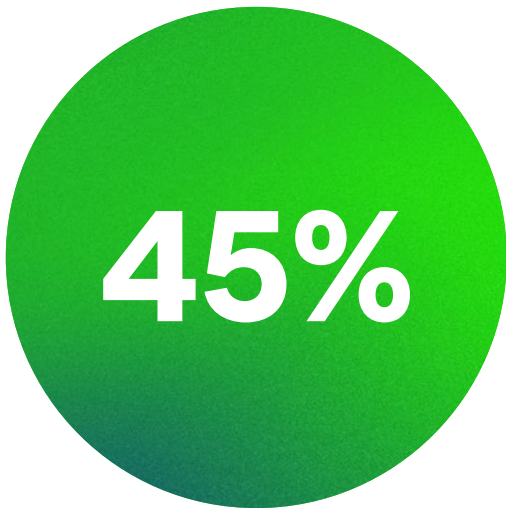
Progressive ads are 47% more likely to be effective in both the long and the short term when it comes to campaign performance.
Kantar Millward Brown.



40% of the general population feel that the advertising industry does not accurately portray people of different gender identities.
Simpson Carpenter.



31% of the LGBTQ+ community feel that marketing portrays them badly.
Simpson Carpenter.



45% of consumers under 34 say they are more likely to do repeat business with an LGBTQ+ friendly company.
Think with Google.




Progressive ads, on average, trigger 25% more positive engagement from consumers than less progressive ads.
Kantar Millward Brown.

the ethical case

The advertising industry has a moral responsibility to represent and reflect the population it communicates with. Yet for most of the 20th century, the LGBTQ+ community had very few visible, positive role models, and while this has begun to change, continuing progress remains under threat.

In recent years, the world has seen greater repression of LGBTQ+ people, be it through state sanctioned imprisonment and torture of LGBTQ+ people, bans on the 'promotion' of LGBTQ+ rights in certain countries, paediatricians denying medical care to the children of LGBTQ+ parents or a ban on trans military personnel. We've even seen preachers blaming LGBTQ+ people for hurricanes and floods.

This needs to change. The work we create, and the messages contained therein are part of the fabric of society and have the potential to impact millions of people. The positive effects of growing up in a society which visibly practices inclusivity can be enormous. For example, the establishment of same-sex marriage is associated with a significant reduction in the rate of attempted suicide among children. An American Medical Association study conducted over 17 years estimated that 134,000 fewer children attempt suicide each year across US states where same-sex marriage has been established. Inclusion saves lives.

Meanwhile, the advertising and marketing industry is at a crossroads. Trust in advertising is at an all-time low and can only be recovered by striving for authenticity. Where the LGBTQ+ population is concerned, an opportunity presents itself to play an important part in encouraging healthy self-actualisation and in breaking down barriers to social acceptance. Even in countries that are hostile to LGBTQ+ rights, advertising has the power to filter through. It's why the work we make is so important and why the advertising and marketing industry has a moral obligation to get involved. 

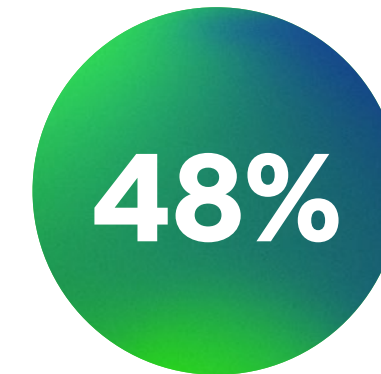
LGB (excluding T) people are twice as likely to experience long-term mental health problems. Combined meta-analysis of 12 UK population health surveys.



Only one in five LGBTQ+ Londoners feels comfortable showing affection. Pride Matters, A report into the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the UK.

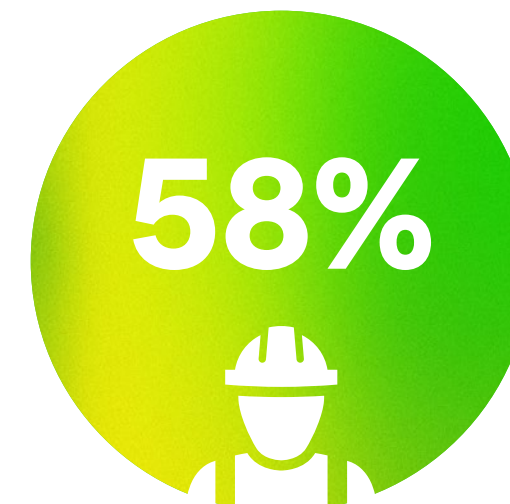
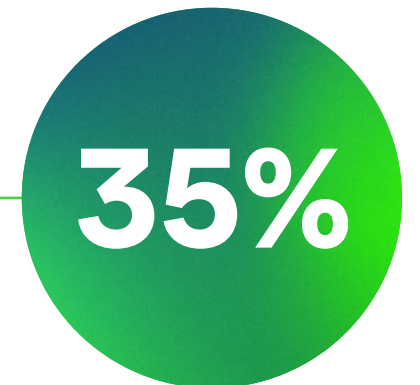


LGBT young people are more likely to find themselves homeless than their non-LGBT peers. LGBT Youth Homelessness Report.



48% of the trans community have attempted suicide. Trans Mental Health, Study 2012.

35% of lesbians are not out to their employers. Pride Matters, A report into the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the UK.



35% of LGBTQ+ workers aged 18–24 have disguised their sexuality at work in the last year because they were afraid of discrimination. LGBT In Britain, Work Report.

19% of gay men are not out to their employers. Pride Matters, A report into the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the UK.





Should my brand

embrace LGBTQ+ diversity?

We're fighting for LGBTQ+ representation in advertising, but we encourage you to embrace all under represented parts of our diverse society including BAME, disabled, and older people. Never forget LGBTQ+ people come in all colours, shapes and sizes. We're black, disabled, Muslim and old too.

As such, we would only encourage brands who have already adopted, or who are adopting a joined-up diversity strategy across their business to include LGBTQ+ people in their advertising. Your inclusion of LGBTQ+ people must be authentic. If it isn't, you will quickly be found out, and at best your advertising won't work, and at worst your brand will suffer a backlash.

LGBTQ+ ADVERTISING IS MARKETING FOR ALL

Never forget that embracing LGBTQ+ diversity isn't simply about speaking to one distinctive sub-set of your audience—the pink pound. Instead, it is about reaching a mainstream audience with a message which is reflective of the modern consumer and of the world in which they inhabit. This is a message which will resonate with everyone.


WILL HETEROSEXUAL AUDIENCES BE INTERESTED IN LGBTQ+ DIVERSITY?

You can be forgiven for thinking that by featuring LGBTQ+ stories in your campaign, you will make heterosexual audiences less willing to buy your brand. But this simply isn't the case. In fact, the opposite is true. When your brand embraces all strands of diversity, consumers are more likely to remember your ad and feel emotionally engaged.

WHERE SHOULD I BEGIN?

Working out how your brand can embrace LGBTQ+ diversity can seem like a daunting and off-putting prospect; however, it needn't be. Weaving LGBTQ+ lifestyles into your advertising can be scaled depending on your ambitions and the opportunities available.

How your brand embraces diversity can take many forms. You could support specific LGBTQ+ pride events as per the hugely successful Dublin Bus campaign—Proud Dads. Or you can look to feature LGBTQ+ lifestyles as a normal part of Modern Britain as McCain Foods achieved with their campaign—Here's To Love.

If you believe diversity is a core component of your brand purpose you can take a more assertive position and seek to take on a societal problem and follow the example set down by brands including Axe and Smirnoff with their campaigns 'Is It OK for Guys?' and 'We're Open'. 

Isn't it time for advertising to catch up?



BY JAMES PAGE

Popular culture is embracing LGBTQ+ diversity more than ever, with 2019's awards season reflecting a queerer accepting landscape through its celebration of films, such as *The Favourite*, and artists such as Sam Smith. However, despite a mainstream platform for queer discussions and characters, fewer than 1% of people featured in British advertising are LGBTQ+, according to a recent survey from Ogilvy & Mather. It seems whilst popular media is taking its (long overdue) strides in representation, advertising is struggling to keep up. Reece Jackson from Blue State Digital explained how

"88% of people feel that there is a lack of year-round support from brand..."

...It doesn't have to be about putting minorities front and centre of everything; it's about ensuring it's a year-round consideration that's organic, rather than forced." Shoehorning an organisation into a queer discourse can lead to backlash rather than positive engagement, with many brands coming under fire during Pride season for showing lacklustre support.

Covering a social page with rainbow colours, after being quiet on LGBTQ+ issues for the rest of the year, can often look like a desperate attempt to cash in on the pink pound. It could

be argued that many companies are still failing to realise that representing LGBTQ+ voices year-round can have a positive impact on their commercial success, with Lloyds stating

that 65% of consumers respond favourably to diversity.

According to Wunderman Thompson UK's Jo Wallace, the first step to improving diversity in advertising is by having an open and accepting workplace. She explained that

"The best way I can personally help representation is by not hiding my sexuality."

I'm open about being gay in a way that is just a fact, no drama. In a wider sense, I mention it

during talks about improving diversity. As a group, we are all clear that better diversity in people will lead to better creativity." With creativity being essential to any successful campaign, diversity within the office is arguably crucial for any agency, and an environment in which this isn't being celebrated could have a direct impact on the work. Stonewall published the shocking statistic that 62% of graduates go back into the closet when they start their first job, so how can agencies help prevent this from happening?

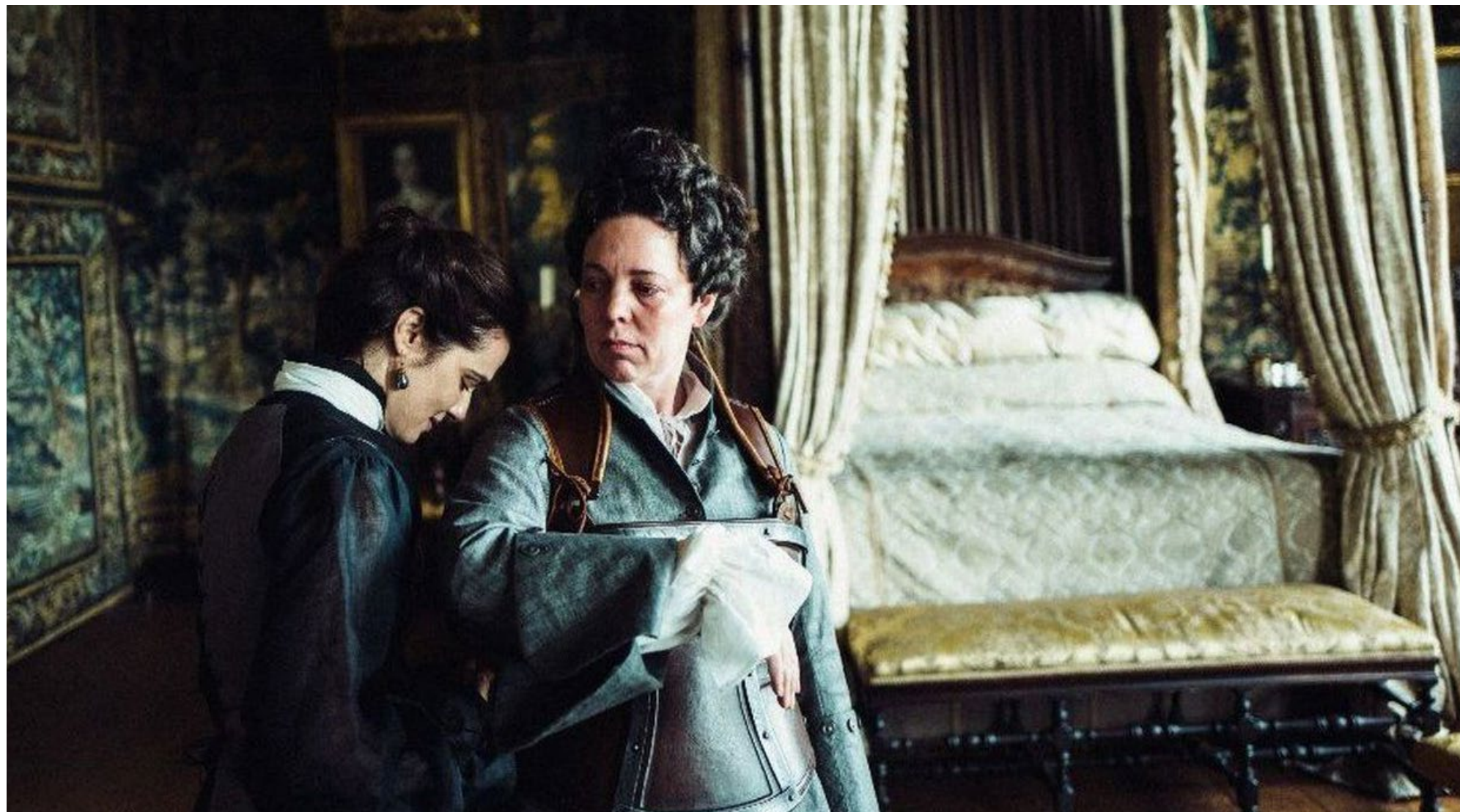
Katie Stanley, formerly of AMV

BBDO, said: "We'd like to think our environment is welcoming to LGBTQ+ employees, clients and guests thanks to a number of long-term initiatives already in motion and the agency's recently formed partnership with Stonewall." This supports the importance of agencies being proactive in reaching out to charities and NGOs such as Stonewall, to ensure an accepting workspace for all.

Stanley went on to explain some specific changes AMV BBDO underwent, describing how "All internal toilet signage was changed at the beginning of 2018 to recognise the nonexistence of the gender binary. Signs encourage people to use whichever facilities best fit their gender identity or expression—lasting reminders, we hope, that associated discrimination will not be tolerated."

Arguably, a more LGBTQ+ friendly office space allows employees to openly discuss the importance of including queer inclusivity in the work they produce.

"Advertising has the power to shape and influence the way people see the world and we all need to get far better at making sure that more of society feels included in that representation," explained Charlotte Bunyan from Collider. With 56% of 18–24-year-olds no longer identifying as 100% heterosexual, it's clear that the community is heavily under-represented in most brand campaigns. Bunyan adds, "Brands who aren't doing this, or are making clumsy, ill-informed attempts, are already feeling the wrath of consumers when they





and core to the creative idea), rather than using diversity to shock or create headlines.” This embracing of LGBTQ+ diversity, which would come from research and input from queer people, should help agencies and brands avoid risks of tokenism and merely ticking boxes. Jo Wallace says this:

“No one wants tokenism or for a brand to just jump on a bandwagon because they think it makes them ‘cool’, but gay characters should just feature in ads without it even being the big story. That’s the future we all want to be working towards.”

In the UK, the barriers seem far less complicated and threatening than many other markets. Jackson from Blue State Digital concludes that

“The goal’s to have an organic approach to representation that accurately reflects the society in which we live.”



get it wrong. This is not just bad news for their reputation, but it also affects the bottom line by losing valued customers.”

This relates to the fear many brands have of causing offence to the community they’re trying to support and value. Despite

many ads having good intentions, a lack of education about this demographic can cause serious backlash to a campaign.

“We all, agencies and brand owners, need to get much better at

questioning diversity from the start, as well as calling out lazy stereotyping.”

Bunyan explained. To avoid this risk of stereotyping, it could be suggested that agencies should

apply a significant amount of time to educating their whole team on the community they wish to reach.

Campaigns have also received backlash for including inauthentic LGBTQ+ characters. Sarah Clarke, Managing Director of The & Partnership, explained

that “The communication industry and the wider marketing community has a huge responsibility to provide a true and real representation of the LGBTQ+ community. Attitudes are changing and there are more campaigns that embrace diversity for the right reasons (as reflective of the community

He then goes on to remind brands that focusing only on times when pride events are taking place isn’t enough as it “only leads to the perception that brands are ‘pink-washing’ or trying to get a share of the £6bn pink pound.”

With this in mind, isn’t it time for advertising to catch up? ●

guide to



We are constantly analysing the industry and media to understand what makes a successful LGBTQ+ campaign and are committed to helping others learn from these efforts.

We know that launching your brand's first LGBTQ+ campaign can seem like a daunting challenge. However, there is no need to fear. To help you on this journey we have prepared the following steps in order to mitigate the risks and allow you to produce something that benefits the LGBTQ+ community and your brand too.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BRAND

Creating ads which address diversity isn't just about speaking to that specific community. It's about setting up your brand as being representative of a changing world which encompasses different ages, races, sexualities and disabilities. It's an approach which consumers are calling out for with brands that embrace diversity scoring more positively in brand perception tracking according to one 2016 study by Lloyds Banking Group.

Before you begin this journey don't just analyse how your current customers think and feel about this issue, but what the wider perception of your brand is when it comes to LGBTQ+ issues. Is your brand alienating to LGBTQ+ people? Is it perceived as old-fashioned and stuffy? Has it been called out before for its lack of diversity?

DEPICTING THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

Depictions of LGBTQ+ people have evolved over the last century. Where once the media was dominated by examples of tokenism and stereotypes, today we are seeing a more authentic representation of the broader community. A representation which isn't solely reliant on featuring gay men in advertising, but one that covers the full spectrum of sexuality. As Linda Riley, owner of Diva magazine once explained "Lesbians buy toothpaste too".

best practice

DEFINE YOUR TONE

When setting your tone, it's important that you convey authenticity. Consider not just the unusual but the everyday scenarios. Remember LGBTQ+ people can and do live very normal lives. They get public transport, they order takeaway with friends, and they binge watch TV. In fact, you don't even have to rely on their sexuality being the key message, often the best LGBTQ+ adverts are those which just have authentic, everyday narratives.

While using humour is a great way to build an emotional connection, it's an area that can often characterise LGBTQ+ people in a misguided attempt to get a laugh. Don't make sexuality the punchline and ensure your humour is applied fairly and equally.

WRITING A BRIEF

Embracing LGBTQ+ diversity doesn't always mean activating your brand at a pride event or placing LGBTQ+ characters front and centre of your campaign. Instead it can be something as simple as considering slice of life situations where you can feature LGBTQ+ inclusion.

However, it's important that the perspective isn't of an outsider looking in, but one which understands the nuances and experiences of the LGBTQ+ community. Consider bringing LGBTQ+ people into the team or if that isn't possible, get out onto the street and speak to community leaders, youth workers and LGBTQ+ charities and organisations. Make sure you weave their experiences into the brief as this will help you deliver something truly reflective of LGBTQ+ people today.

And don't forget to be brave and avoid copping out. Don't let the advertising be sexually ambiguous ("Are they or aren't they?") and instead find ways to explore the unexpected. Allow your LGBTQ+ people to be different and surprising in a positive way. Ditch the clichés and the "coming out narrative" which has been covered thoroughly in media.

CREATE AN INTEGRATED PLAN

Even if the main ads in your campaign don't include LGBTQ+ people, you should consider including them in other parts of your multi-channel integrated activity. When it comes to channels consider the message and what you are trying to communicate. For example, in America social is key with one in four Americans (25%) reporting social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) as a source that has provided information about whether a brand/business is LGBTQ+ inclusive.

And don't forget your own employees. Use your own internal communications to celebrate your diversity and work with your colleagues and the LGBTQ+ networks they have created.

TESTING

When tackling LGBTQ+ diversity, it's important to not fall into a group think mentality. Too often advertising which has been created for a positive purpose can instead do harm by playing on stereotypes, portraying inauthentic experiences or simply misjudging humour.

In order to understand if you have hit the right mark consider bringing in external voices who can provide their experiences as context to your campaign. Consider LGBTQ+ organisations like Stonewall, Mosaic (a London based charity supporting and educating young people), or simply undertake focus groups from those outside the immediate team to ensure you get an honest perspective.

Remember you may never get it 100% right but it's important to engage and speak to those you are trying to represent in order to create work which is a fair representation of the LGBTQ+ community.

GOING INTO PRODUCTION

You've got approval on your creative idea and it's performed well in testing. It's now time to go into

“Marketing communications must not contain anything that’s likely to cause serious or widespread offence. Particular care must be taken to avoid causing offence on grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age.”

— The Committee of Advertising Practice

production. But that doesn’t mean the need for diversity stops there. In fact, casting is often cited as one of the most challenging parts of the process and if a casting agency doesn’t offer a diverse set of talent you won’t be able to fulfil the initial brief. Consider the brief you send out to casting agencies and encourage them to use blind casting for your campaign.

The challenge exists for stock too. Libraries like Getty and Shutterstock rely on algorithms that too often show stereotypical images of LGBTQ+ people. While initiatives like ‘The Gender Spectrum Collection’ (a stock photo library featuring trans and non-binary models) have set out to address this, there is much more work which needs to be done.

BE COMPLIANT

In recent years an increasing number of steps have been taken to improve the portrayal of gender and sexuality within advertising. In one 2017 study by the ASA it was revealed that harmful gender stereotypes in ads can negatively influence how people see themselves and their role in society. This can hold some people back from fulfilling their potential, or from aspiring to certain jobs and industries.

As such it’s important that you are always respectful of the codes of conduct set out by The Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) that states: “Marketing communications must not contain anything that is likely to cause serious or widespread offence. Particular care must be taken to avoid causing offence on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age.”

Always ensure you are putting your care and attention into ensuring that your portrayal of non-straight or non-cis-gender characters is not based upon negative stereotypes, even when the intention is to be humorous or light-hearted, as these are often likely to be considered offensive or harmful.

At Outvertising we monitor and work closely with CAP and the ASA to ensure that LGBTQ+ representation is progressing effectively. If you have a concern over your campaign and are unsure if it is compliant then get in touch with us for guidance.

MEASURE

This isn’t a marketing text book so forgive us if we only make fleeting reference to some basics like starting with SMART objectives for your campaign.

Before your campaign goes live, ensure you have included specific measurement work streams like pre and post brand tracking to understand in more detail the impact that your campaign has had on the audience. Also consider what impact your brand and campaign has on various segments including gender, age and sexual orientation.

Most importantly, never forget the value trackable results have to the wider advertising industry and those wishing to create work which embraces LGBTQ+ diversity. Best-in-class measurements and reporting is important for our industry as it will help others undertaking such initiatives.

BE PREPARED

Even in the 21st century, embracing LGBTQ+ diversity can still be fraught with challenges and there are those who will always be uncomfortable with your brand embracing such a stance. This bigoted section of society may choose to react against your inclusive campaign, but it’s important to remain consistent and confident in your approach.

Ensure you have a PR and social response ready which sets out your company’s and brand’s commitment to diversity and be prepared to call upon your LGBTQ+ networks to publicly support you.

Never forget to stay true to your purpose and draw upon the insights that inspired your campaign at the very beginning. While there will always be those upset by your decision, there will be an even bigger audience who will look favourably on such initiatives.

Be brave and know that the work you do is helping to improve the experiences of many within the LGBTQ+ community.

You should now be ready to start work on your very own LGBTQ+ friendly advertising. But before you do, we've prepared some key watch outs in order to help you create the very best campaign possible.

watch outs

DON'T FALL INTO STEREOTYPES

Too often LGBTQ+ representation in the media is reliant on outdated and damaging stereotypes. Think beyond effeminate gay men, butch lesbians, or obvious coming out sagas and instead explore real human scenarios with everyday situations that LGBTQ+ people, just like their heterosexual colleagues and friends, experience.

CONSIDER HETERONORMATIVITY

Heteronormativity is the system that sets out to normalise behaviours and societal expectations that are tied to the presumption of heterosexuality and an adherence to a strict gender binary. In Layman's terms it's the belief that women prefer to stay at home, men enjoy working and that all LGBTQ+ people aspire to get married, have children and assign themselves roles based on gender. With gender increasingly becoming fluid it's important that the experience you set out to detail isn't exclusively of men and women (boys and girls) and nothing else.

BE AUTHENTIC

Authenticity is central to everything we believe in at Outvertising and inauthentic brands will be called out quickly by consumers. Ensure your business is consistent in the way you approach LGBTQ+ diversity and take time to check that your own HR and hiring policies are supportive of minorities. You will be called out if you are externally embracing of diversity but internally have a regressive environment.

BEWARE OF TOKENISM

Don't fall into the trap of simply seeing diversity as a box ticking exercise, especially when it comes to minority communities of any kind. This inauthentic approach will be called out by consumers who are astute enough to pick up on when they're being used for this purpose.

PINK-WASHING

In recent years brands have been accused of 'pink-washing'—the promotion of the LGBTQ+ friendly nature of your brand for the cynical attempt to only make money. To avoid this, it's important that you aren't shoehorning your brand into conversations that aren't relevant or simply uploading a rainbow flag during Pride Month in order to tick a box. If that's all you are doing for LGBTQ+ diversity it will be seen simply as a marketing ploy for attention and will be looked down upon by consumers.

LOOK INTO THE FUTURE

Consider the long-term mission of your brand and look beyond this campaign by considering how to integrate LGBTQ+ diversity within your future campaigns and marketing activity. This also shouldn't be about doing a one-off campaign to ensure you've ticked the right boxes. Instead ask yourself how you can continue to push forward with each additional campaign and look at embracing any other spectrum of diversity including gender, race, disability and age.

BEING PREPARED

When you're focussing on embracing LGBTQ+ diversity, it can be easy to forget there are those strongly opposed to it. You almost become blinkered, and forget that no matter the huge strides forward, or the encouraging support, there will unfortunately always be those keen to oppose progression.

With this in mind, it's essential for anyone looking to better their diversity and inclusion to be prepared. The flip side of having a great, progressive idea is knowing how to defend it, and by doing so, ensuring it can flourish. This will mean you're confident and consistent in your approach.



braving
the
backlash

watch outs

1 CREATE A SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Don't be caught napping. Whilst, done right, there will be positive sentiment, it's incredibly likely there will be negativity and abuse too. It's just the world we live in. It's essential to prepare yourself for these and to draw up a plan on how to deal with them so your communications are consistent and you don't risk undermining your campaign with sloppy crisis control.

In the whitepaper 'Braving the Backlash' by We Are Social, the social media agency set out their 'Three R's' model:

- **Remain:** let comments that are critical of the brand's campaign but not in any way unlawful or hateful remain on the page.
- **Reply:** hateful comments that should be publicly challenged. The type of reply your brand uses should be guided by your brand's anti-hate policy.
- **Report:** screenshot and report any comments that are in breach of the platform's community guidelines to the platform themselves and, in extreme cases, local law enforcement.

It's important to remain consistent and transparent with your team. Consider publishing your social media guidelines or making them available to your team so everyone knows where you stand and how to deal with any problems.

2 RESPONDING TO COMMENTS

The more you commit to promoting one idea, the more you'll inflame those opposed to it. And this is especially the case with LGBTQ+ diversity. When you launch a new campaign, or commit your backing to a cause, make sure you're regularly checking your social feed. There will likely be comments looking to attack such a decision. When a brand commits to a point of view, certain members of your consumer make-up will assume they have a stake in what you say. And if they don't like it, they'll say as much. Ensure you're prepared to deal with these comments, referring to the 'Three R's' above. Most importantly, don't allow any vitriol to overshadow your stance.

3 LEVERAGE PR

Ensure you know why you're committing to LGBTQ+ diversity. Don't allow it to slip into simply participation. Have your own unique and personal reasoning and put work into LGBTQ+ networks that can support you and any campaigns or ideas. Constantly refer back to what inspired you to take this stance in the first place, never losing sight of your motivations and what you set out to change.

4 STICK TO YOUR CONVICTIONS

Keep the idea alive. Longevity is key. Diversity is not disposable, and if you set out with the right intent then it should never pale, let alone fizzle out after the initial buzz. If you're assured in your comment, and approach then don't back down at the first sign of trouble. Find that middle ground between passivity and hysteria and ensure your conviction is stronger than the haters.

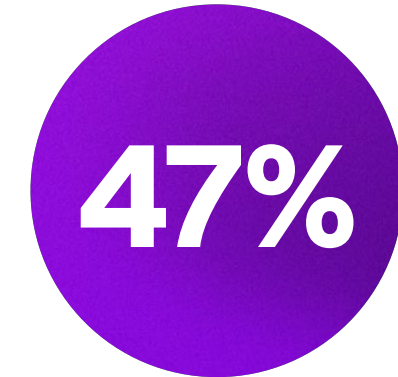
5 NEVER FORGET

There will always be those who take issue with a strong point of view. We don't live in a 100% tolerant world, and it's unlikely we ever will. But never forget what got you started. Stick to your principles and return to them frequently. Tend to your work and ensure it updates with the world around us. Be brave and remember that what you are doing, through all the backlash and abuse, is helping the LGBTQ+ community.

For more information on how to create your own social media policy and address online hate visit the 'We Are Social' website and download their whitepaper 'Braving the backlash'.

<https://bravingthebacklash.wearesocial.com>

the bigger diversity picture



Today, only 47% of people feel accurately portrayed in the media.
Lloyds research.

Outvertising encourages agencies and brands to think more broadly when representing the LGBTQ+ community in our advertising. To make sure that we represent our society at its truest, best and most diverse, it's important to also understand the bigger cultural context.

Intersectionality is more than a buzzword. It's a way of understanding that consumers don't just fit into one box. So many of us are diverse in more than one way. Being truly inclusive means recognising how people's identity cuts across the categories that we like to cling to: BAME, age, gender, disability and states of neuro-diversity and well-being. It is possible to be disabled, lesbian and BAME. LGBTQ+ people represent a cross section of the country.

Despite the rich diversity of today's society, a recent study conducted by Lloyds showed that only 47% of people felt accurately portrayed in the media. More than half of us have no reflection or role modeling in the advertising around them.

This is not about tokenism. This is about a commitment to not just representing, but celebrating, the rich diversity of life. Look at how people really are and think about the impact you can make on them. Don't be afraid to question who is not being represented and look to other sources for advice on making a positive change.

Diversity and inclusion start within our own company culture. Does your team have a varied make-up of members? Do you have an in-house D&I representative or group that you could approach? Is your business aware of diverse initiatives and groups outside of your company?

Examples of useful industry organisations and initiatives are NABS, Creative Equals, the IPA's Annual Diversity Survey and BAME 2020.

O

We've found the best way to inspire our colleagues is by sharing case histories. The following five examples represent different verticals, budgets and objectives but are united by one theme, they showcase the very best in LGBTQ+ inclusive marketing.

We hope you find these campaigns not only helpful but a useful beginning to your own steps in addressing a more progressive world.

case

studies

BACKGROUND

Since 1860, Smirnoff has been the first quality vodka made for everyone and this has formed the basis for Smirnoff's strategy of inclusivity, which seeks to champion those who open up good times for the many. Partnering with true inclusive cultures, like the Voguing scene, the deaf dancing community, multicultural scenes and the gender queer community, in order to encourage everyone to be more open. In 2017, they set their sights on a new audience, Millennials, creating a campaign which would not only be distinctive but would have meaning to a generation known for being the most liberal, open-minded and inclusive ever.

STRATEGY

When everyone feels included and accepted for who they are, it doesn't just make the party more fun, it makes the world better. Yet for many, daily acceptance is still a long way off. Despite 12% of millennials identifying as transgender or gender non-conforming, research found society lacked an understanding of them, with three out of four trans people reporting being a victim of a hate crime.

IDEA

"We're Open" brought together transgender and non-binary artists and performers with the LGBT Foundation in a movement aimed at making nightlife culture more open-minded and inclusive. The campaign was activated by a series of films, both short (15") and long (5 minutes), ongoing social content

and influencer partnerships, as well as actions in the world from festival appearances to on-trade events. The brand's partnership with the LGBT Foundation saw them share guidance for a bartender-training programme that raised awareness of non-binary issues. Smirnoff also supported the organisation's Village Angels project, a team of volunteers who assist people in need in Manchester's Gay Village.

RESULTS

"We're Open" reached over 12 million people across multiple platforms, helping ignite brand growth for the first time in a decade. The campaign

also highlighted the variety, diversity and awesomeness of different LGBTQ+ people. By creating a platform for people to tell their own stories, they ensured their portrayal was as genuine as possible.

ADVICE

"We would humbly advise to stay real. To portray real people in their real lives. LGBTQ+ people have been subject to stereotypes and discriminations. As brands supporting them, we should

avoid spreading those archetypes and show real individuals."



72&sunny. Amsterdam. Smirnoff. We're open.

BACKGROUND

Kellogg's Corn Flakes, once the UK's favourite cereal, and category leader, had slipped off people's radar and out of breakfast repertoires. As the one-time nation's favourite, the brand was now dogged by bland and old-fashioned perceptions, losing out to newer, more modern and exciting breakfast offerings. To grow they needed to reclaim lapsed users by reigniting brand salience and bringing Corn Flakes into the lives of modern Britain.

STRATEGY

To restore their treasured standing as the nation's favourite Kellogg's needed to talk to the widest audience possible—the nation. At the heart of this approach was a behavioural insight around consumption: even within one family or household, between friends, across streets, let alone across the whole nation, people had very strong, differing opinions about the best way to enjoy Kellogg's Corn Flakes. This insight set out

an approach which celebrated the nation's idiosyncrasies and consumption rituals, to trigger and to curate a national debate about the best ways to enjoy the simple pleasure of Kellogg's Corn Flakes.

IDEA

The idea was #myperfectbowl, a simple celebration of how each person eats their Kellogg's Corn

Flakes. The brand set out to fuel the hot topic of the diverse consumption rituals and idiosyncrasies of a nation of Kellogg's Corn Flakes lovers—celebrating difference across the nation. Acceptance of difference naturally included showing everyone, from children to siblings, flatmates, parents, same-sex partners, various ethnicities, and drag queens. All were featured in the campaign which ran over 3 phases across TV and social.

RESULTS

The campaign exceeded expectations and generated a phenomenal 17 million views online. Across the different video assets used, the LGBTQ+ cast far outperformed the generic assets by +20%, demonstrating people's engagement in real stories from real humans across the nation. Not only did the campaign generate amazing soft metrics but it also helped Kellogg's see a 2018 Net Sales uplift across the UK and Ireland by +5.8% vs the previous year and a Media ROI of +13% vs the previous year. With such amazing results Kellogg's have shown that embracing diversity not only delivers social good but can improve the bottom line too.

ADVICE

"There's no big secret.

Advertisers have a duty to foster a culture of inclusivity and acceptance.

We don't need to call out LGBTQ+, we simply need to normalise diversity. And a strong insight can transcend differences to bring people together."

Leo Kellogg's. My perfect bowl. Burnett.



Adam & Eve DDB.

McCain Foods. Here's to love.

BACKGROUND

For over 50 years, McCain Foods have been feeding families from across the country. In 2018 they set out to drive awareness of their premium chips (both frozen and chilled) and build an emotional connection with an audience that McCain hadn't targeted in previous communications, positioning their products as perfect for those nicer meals that you have at home.

STRATEGY

As a brand, McCain are committed to celebrating the difference and diversity of people across the UK—reflecting the reality of everyday life. In order to accomplish this, they tapped into the universal and uniting love and relationship dynamics that many couples share—regardless

of who they are, where they're from, their gender, or who they identify as—as well as the more special and romantic meals they connect over.

IDEA

'Here's To Love' shines the spotlight onto relationships and love by celebrating how a wide range of different couples connect nowadays. To ensure this message felt authentic they featured real diverse couples from across the UK (including lesbian couple Kimberley and Molly). Running across Cinema, TV, VOD, Radio, OOH and Social the campaign celebrated the fact that regardless of your background love comes in all forms and everyone loves connecting over a special meal at the end of the day.

RESULTS

As a result of the campaign, McCain saw a positive shift in brand metrics, in particular with McCain being perceived as modern, honest and generous. The campaign also contributed to a significant increase in consideration, ensuring McCain became the first choice for consumers. And by featuring a real gay couple, the brand helped improve the portrayal of LGBTQ+ people by making a powerful point about the uniting power of love.

ADVICE

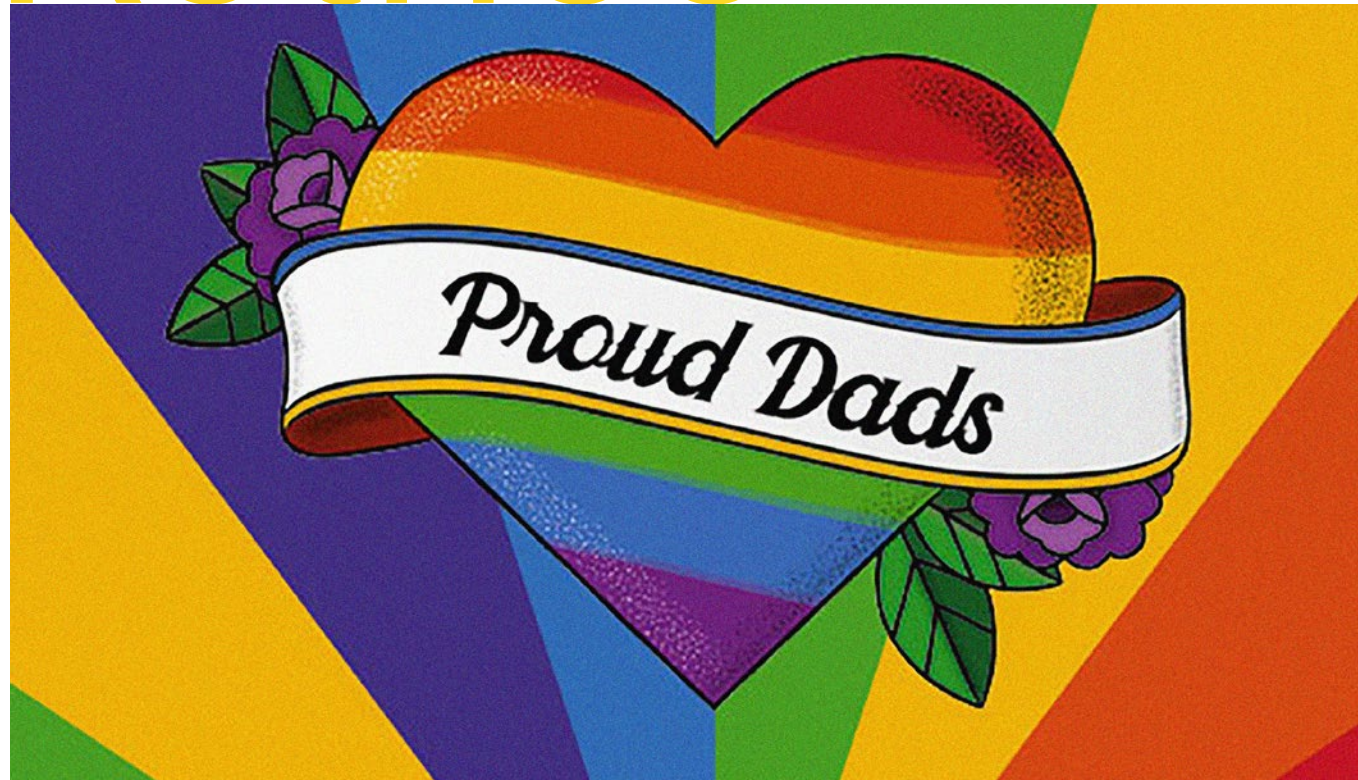
"For a mass brand like McCain—it feels nice and truthful if the point of the campaign isn't solely to make LGBTQ+ advertising,

but rather to make advertising that connects with fundamental emotive human truths—

which happens to be true of the LGBTQ+ community as well as others!"



Dublin bus. Proud dads. Rothco



BACKGROUND

As one of Europe's best in class LGBTQ+ employers, Dublin Bus wanted to do something special to mark their 10th year supporting Dublin Pride. However, with many brands jumping on the Pride bandwagon, showing genuine support had become a more challenging task. In order to support Pride in a meaningful way Dublin Bus had to ensure they delivered a genuine positive impact on the LGBTQ+ community.

STRATEGY

Over Dublin Bus's 10 years of Pride sponsorship, Ireland has transformed, with same-sex marriage legalised in 2015. Yet while the LGBTQ+ community now walk in Pride with their legal rights, many walk without something equally important: the support of their father. Research unveiled the fact that while many Dublin dads wanted to support Pride, they didn't feel it was their place to be at the festival. This needed to change. With the theme for the 2018 Dublin Pride festival announced as 'We Are Family', the stage was set to make Dublin Pride 2018 the proudest one yet.

IDEA

At Pride 2018, Dublin Bus set out to create the Proudest bus at Pride — not the one with the most rainbow flags or glitter, but the one with the proudest people, Proud Dads. Hundreds of dads from all over Ireland got on board to support

their children and Dublin Buses were turned into vehicles for love and support. To share the message of equality and inclusivity the experience was captured on film and later shared on Social.

RESULTS

The presence of the Proud Dads had a profound impact on their kids, the LGBTQ+ community and people around the world. The video was viewed 7.5 million times in the first week and the campaign was covered in 17 countries; 90 articles appeared in 70 publications. All of this led to approximately 136 million impressions across the globe. The most powerful result was opening up an immensely meaningful conversation within the LGBTQ+ community. Proud Dads showed that the LGBTQ+ people of Ireland are loved and accepted, even by the people who are notoriously the hardest ones to crack, dads.

ADVICE

"Don't just jump on the bandwagon, earn your place and

do something of real meaning or benefit for the LGBTQ+ community.

You have the opportunity to make a real impact, do not just use it as a branding opportunity."

72 & sunny. Amsterdam.

Axe. Is it OK for guys?

BACKGROUND

As a brand promoting self-expression AXE fights the labels that limit guys from being themselves. For its first social mission, the brand decided to fight guys' biggest enemy: Toxic Masculinity. From the pressure to be muscular, tough and sometimes violent, to repressing their emotions as proof of being in control, to — above all — demonstrating heterosexuality, many guys suffer from the constraints of gender stereotyping every day.

STRATEGY

Through analysing search engine data, AXE discovered a pattern among young guys aged 14–21. There were many queries under the same question: 'is it ok for guys'. These ranged from the lighthearted "...to be the little spoon?" to "...to experiment with other guys?" and the heavier "...to be depressed?" To launch the brand's first social mission AXE wanted to make this invisible problem visible, in order to open up the conversation around toxic masculinity.

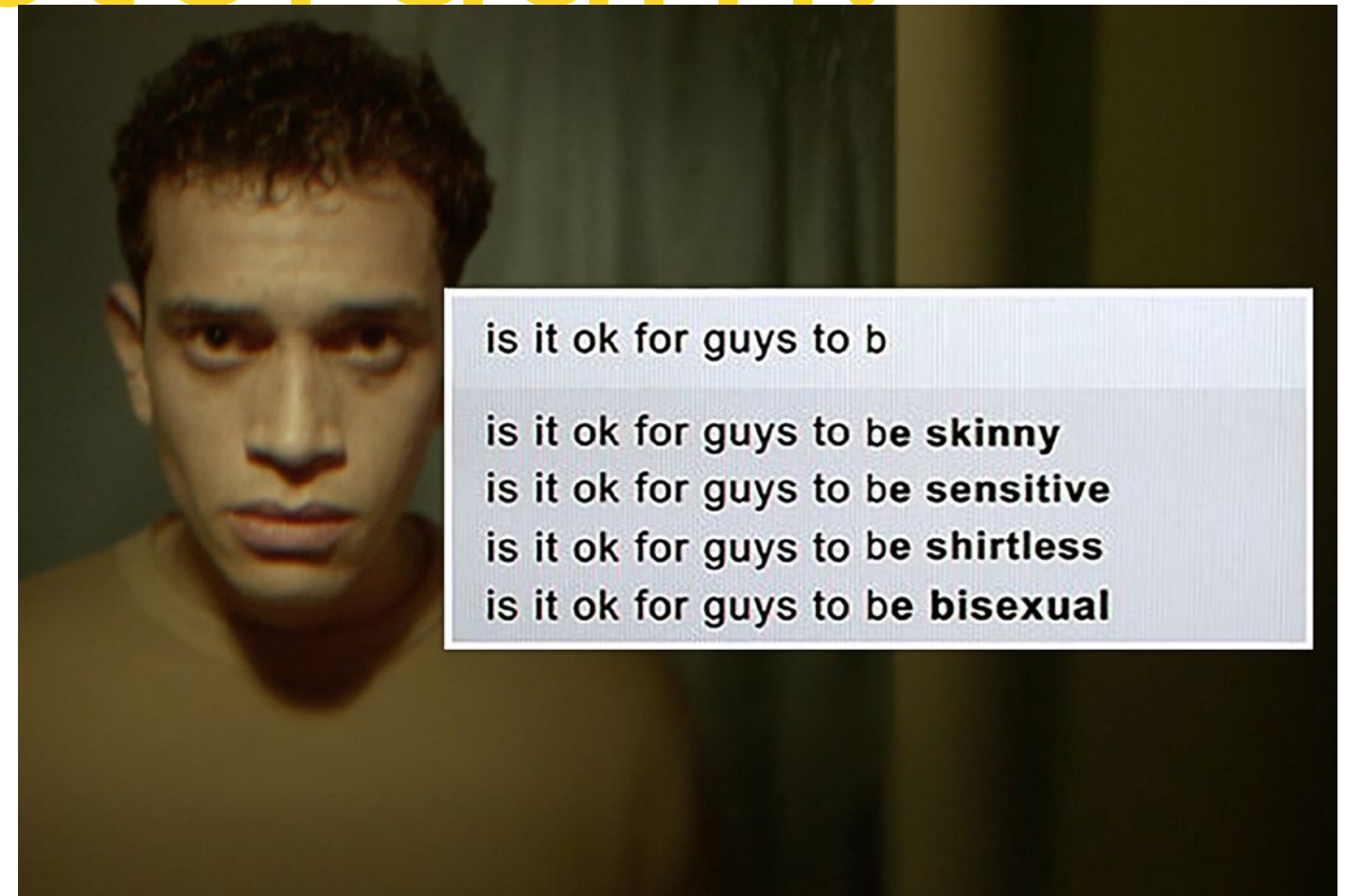
IDEA

'Is it OK for guys' sought to provide real answers to address these concerns and ultimately help young men who silently suffer under outdated gender labels.

The campaign was launched in both the UK and US with a 60" anthem film on YouTube revealing the most common search queries, leaving them unanswered to highlight the private internal struggles that can contribute to bullying, violence and even suicide. Online, 25 different influencers including Anthony Joshua and Will Poulter gave their own answers to these personal questions while partnerships with three non-profits — Promundo, Ditch the Label and The Representation Project — provided guys with resources to support those struggling with toxic masculinity.

RESULTS

#isitokforguys opened a global conversation on what masculinity means. In two weeks, the campaign had made 1.3 billion media impressions. Publications like The New York Times and The Huffington Post covered the story, and men and women everywhere were mobilising themselves, sharing over 154K articles and even educating children as young as eight-years-old in school on the previously taboo topic of toxic masculinity. By putting real guys forward to share a positive message, AXE decided to portray what today's masculinity is: diverse men, free to look and behave the way they want, beyond outdated norms.



about



Outvertising came into being in 2015 when Nick Bailey, Jan Gooding, Scott Knox, and Matt Scarff created an LGBTQ+ leadership group. It was originally called PrideAM. At the time Scott Knox told Campaign:

“Outvertising aims to ensure that anyone who is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender in our industry is supported and represented at the highest level. No one should ever feel they need to hide who they are at work, and particularly not when they work in an industry as vibrant and progressive as advertising.”

It grew and changed from being a networking and support group to an advocacy organisation.

Today the organisation continues to evolve and its aims are:

- To promote the fair and accurate representation of LGBTQ+ people in advertising and marketing communications.
- To remove any LGBTQ+ prejudice from the advertising and marketing workplace and promote an open and inclusive creative environment.
- To promote positive LGBTQ+ role models in the advertising and marketing sector.
- To provide support and information to LGBTQ+ people working or seeking to work in the advertising and marketing sector.

Outvertising is entirely volunteer run, not-for-profit, and survives on just a few thousand pounds each year to pay for essentials like web hosting. The organisation is non-commercial to preserve its editorial independence.

For over 4 years Outvertising has been helping brands and agencies embrace LGBTQ+ diversity. With members from across the globe, we've been proud to undertake a whole host of different initiatives including role model workshops, panel discussions and competitions.

Our members represent not only LGBTQ+ people but straight allies too. Together we work to promote a better future while providing the support and network to help the next generation prosper.

Anyone is welcome to volunteer and get involved in Outvertising, you don't even have to work in marketing and advertising, though some experience or understanding of the sector would be useful. In aiming to be as accessible as possible there's no membership fees to pay; we just welcome your active support.

If you would like to find more about us and discover how you can get involved, simply visit us at our website: www.Outvertising.org

Outvertising



“No one should ever feel they need to hide who they are at work”

— Scott Knox

statistics

Throughout this guide we've used statistics from a multitude of different studies undertaken both in the UK and internationally. We hope these provide the starting point in evidencing your own LGBTQ+ strategy.

Albert Kennedy Trust,
LGBT Youth Homelessness Report.

LGBT young people are more likely to find themselves homeless than their non-LGBT peers, comprising up to **24%** of the youth homeless population.

Gareth Hagger-Johnson, Michael King, Joanna Semlyen
and Justin Varney,
Combined meta-analysis of 12 UK population health surveys.

LGB people are twice as likely to experience long-term mental health problems.

Hornet & Nielsen, 2018 study.

3 out of 4 tested LGBTQ+ themed ads outperform generic ads in driving brand recall.

Journal of the American Medical Association,
Pediatrics: Difference-in-Differences Analysis
of the Association Between State Same-Sex Marriage
Policies and Adolescent Suicide Attempts.

An American Medical Association study conducted over 17 years estimated that **134,000** fewer children attempt suicide each year across US states where same-sex marriage has been established.

Kantar Millward Brown.

Progressive ads are on average **25%** more likely to generate positive engagement from consumers than less progressive ads.

Progressive ads are **47%** more likely to be effective in both the long and the short term when it comes to campaign performance.

LGBT Capital, 2018 study.

The estimated UK spending power of the LGBTQ+ community reached **\$137 billion** in 2018.

Nielsen Media Lab,
LGBT Ad Format Effectiveness Study .

When coupled with the ability for LGBTQ+ themed ads to outperform generic ads in driving brand recall the effectiveness case is clear.

Out Equal,
Best Practices For Non-Binary Inclusion in the Workplace.

71% of LGBTQ+ respondents and **82%** of allies said they were more likely to purchase from a company that supported LGBTQ+ equality.

Pride in London,
Pride Matters. A report into the lives of LGBT+ people in UK.

Just **1 in 5** LGBT+ Londoners feels comfortable showing affection to their partner.

19% of gay men and **35%** of lesbians are not out to their employers.

Simpson Carpenter Research,
Diversity matters to people. There is no downside to diversity.

31% of the LGBTQ+ population felt that the ad industry was portraying them badly.

40% of the general population feel that the advertising industry does not accurately portray people of different gender identities.

Stonewall,
LGBT in Britain Work, Health and Trans Reports.

58% of LGBT workers aged 18–24 have disguised their sexuality at work in the last year because they were afraid of discrimination.

According to one 2018 study, **61%** of LGBT people have experienced anxiety and **52%** have experienced depression within the last year.

Two in five trans people and three in ten non-binary people have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their gender identity in the last 12 months.

Stonewall,
Trans Mental Health Study 2012.

48% of the trans community have attempted suicide.

Think with Google.

45% of consumers under the age of 34 say they are more likely to do repeat business with a LGBTQ+ friendly company.

YouGov,
2017 LGBT brand rankings.

57% of LGBTQ+ individuals say: "I don't see my lifestyle represented in advertising".

YouGov/UM,
A way to go presentation by Michael Brown.

2018 YouGov survey found **56%** of 18–24 year olds no longer identified as 100% heterosexual, **7%** increase from 2015.

Every age range is showing increased openness to a broader understanding of sexuality, with more than a tenth of people 60+ now also opting to identify as not completely heterosexual.

1 in 4 people have shown heightened openness and sensitivity to LGBTQ+ visibility.



The & Partnership

Leo Burnett
LONDON

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» blue state digital

b BRAND
ADVANCE

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THOMPSON

J. WALTER THOMPSON
WORLDWIDE

COLLIDER

AMV BBDO

MULLENLOWE
GROUP

ROTHCO

we
are
social

Thanks to the Outvertising team who produced this guide.

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