

César Vacchiano - Sustainability and DE&I will gain relevance

 By [César Vacchiano](#)

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Two trends, already huge in the US and the UK, that will gain relevance in the rest of the world are sustainability and Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DE&I).



Source: © Scopen [Scopen](#) Two huge trends in the US and the UK that will gain relevance in the rest of the world are sustainability and DE&I says César Vacchiano, president & CEO at Scopen

Our industry will increase its focus on sustainability, and reducing its carbon footprint.

This affects all - brands, agencies, and media owners - and they are starting to calculate carbon emissions, establish positive impact initiatives and identify the most sustainable partners.

Companies that demonstrate their sustainability will grow more in the coming years.

DE&I are the other huge objectives in our industry. Agencies are showing how they are focused on solving this issue in their credentials.

Brands win more and more awards with campaigns that show their commitment to achieving these objectives.

Awards now have very balanced positions among jury members, and the Jury Presidents of different categories show just how diverse our industry is.



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Artificial Intelligence

When 2022 was coming to an end, everyone in our industry was thinking about Artificial Intelligence (AI), and it certainly proved to be the hottest topic in 2023 - and will continue to be in 2024.

Nearly 50% of marketers in South Africa (and other countries) believe this is one of the biggest challenges for agencies.

One year ago, we were feeling a mixture of sceptical, worried and, especially, uncertain, about what AI would mean for our industry.

Today, we are all more aware of the opportunities and help AI provides when properly used.

As with all new technologies, it requires understanding and training, and the best output comes when experts use it, and creativity is amplified.

Agencies have invested in creating security walls and training their teams in legal issues, and now AI is being used as a practical and useful tool to save time on mundane tasks.

It is already utilised to produce and distribute content at scale, quickly explore creative territories, and help clients refine briefs.

AI will increasingly also bring benefits for clients, especially efficiencies.



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Growth of digital investment

Understanding and engaging with consumers is becoming more and more complex since we are all distracted, watching multiple screens.

The ability to connect with Gen Z is even more complicated, especially when encouraging younger audiences to engage

with brands.

Brands are investing less in Paid Media in favour of organic strategies. The creation of precise and creative content is becoming crucial to reach specific targets (particularly Gen Z).

The growth of social media, influencers, KOLs... etc. is highly impressive.

Digital investment is approaching 50% of brands' total investment. And 30% of that Digital investment is going towards social media and Influencers.

Consumers are increasingly relying on influence. Influencer specialist agencies are growing fast, not only working with brands but also closely with influencers, becoming their agents and advisors. Influencers represent a large percentage of their income.



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Agencies trends

Marketers want ideas coming from any type of company they work with.

Globally marketers work with 15 different partners to solve their communications needs (five of those being digital platforms).

Orchestrating those partners is becoming more and more complex, which is why we see an increase in the significance of leading agencies.

A Lead Agency is not only an agency that comes up with the big ideas; it is the agency that identifies insights and builds solid strategies that become the base to create those solid ideas.

Marketers are increasingly considering Strategic Planning as the most important skill when selecting agencies and defining the 'ideal' agency.

Media agencies keep reinforcing their position in this territory, which is easy for them due to their strengths in research, data and analytics, combined with the economic resources to hire the best planners.



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Marketers trends

More than 70% of marketers invest in and use marketing tools.

Salesforce is the leading tool, and, with 40%, Adobe Marketing Cloud is the runner-up.

Using these marketing tools is a challenge for marketers and, once they have them, they do not know how to use them properly.

This is a big opportunity for agencies, who can help their clients in the use of these tools and more and more agencies have certified employees to help brands.

When reflecting on these trends, we realise how agencies are reinforcing their capabilities, leading to a dramatic increase in the contribution to their clients' growth, and how all companies operating in our industry are focused on building a better world.

Gradually, we will achieve it. The talent and passion in our industry are difficult to find in others.

ABOUT CÉSAR VACCHIANO

Vacchiano graduated from Madrid Complutense University in Economics and Tourism. After participating in several seminars in Business Administration and Management in USA (UCLA and YALE) he started working as a consultant...

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