

World Media Group survey identifies activism as key campaign benefit

A new content-led marketing-focused survey found that there is an increased interest in brand activism.

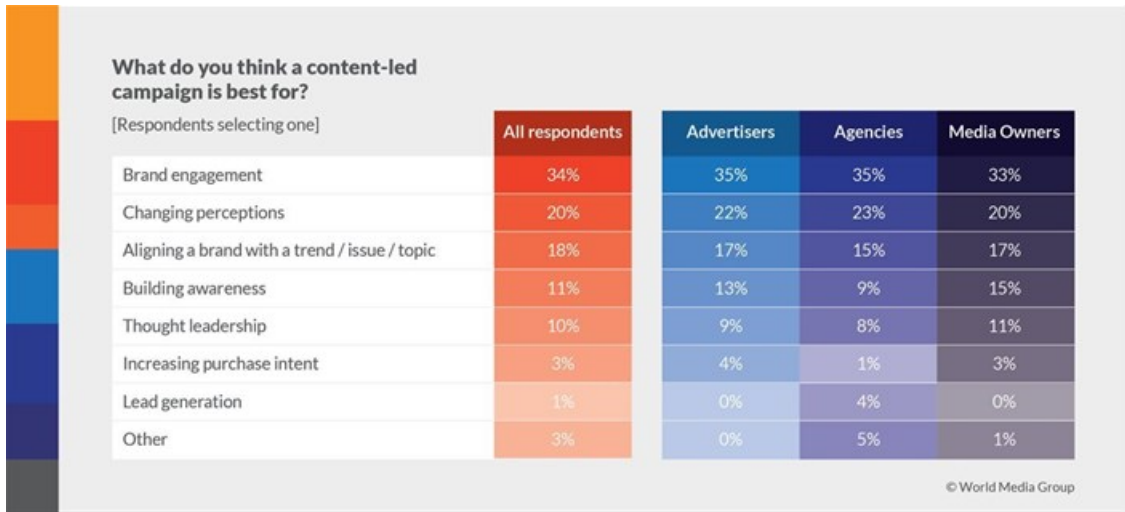
Particularly with advertisers using content campaigns to align themselves with social and environmental issues.

“ When Nike said "Just Do It", they meant it.

They've just gone ahead and done another  ad featuring Women's 800m World Champion Caster Semenya.  pic.twitter.com/nHNORIVDmd— Deji Faremi (@deejayfaremi) [September 11, 2018](#) ”

The survey – which questioned key influencers across advertisers, agencies, media brands and consultancies – asked respondents to list the most exciting trends in branded content campaigns.

Brand or content activism was one of the clear themes to emerge as a real opportunity for brands to engage with consumers on the issues that matter to them most. Almost one-fifth of those surveyed rated 'aligning a brand with a trend, issue or topic' as one of the key benefits of a content campaign.



The research was carried out by the World Media Group – whose members include the *Atlantic*, Bloomberg Media Group, *Business Insider*, *The Economist*, *Forbes*, *Fortune*, *National Geographic*, *Reuters*, *The New York Times*, *Time*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Post* – to provide context for the World Media Awards for cross-border, cross-channel content campaigns – which close for entry on 6 February 2020.



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18 Sep 2019



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Lynn Erasmus 15 Apr 2019



High on tech

The research also revealed the technology trends that marketers are most excited about and plan to use over the next 12 months. Audio/podcasts lead the way with 90% of respondents indicating they will use the technology in future campaigns.

Voice technology and AR (augmented reality) came joint-second (89%), closely followed by increased personalisation (88%), events (85%), and VR (virtual reality) at 84%. While respondents expected to see growth in live video and 360° video, they anticipated a reduction in traditional long-form and short-form video.



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The demand for brand purpose

Respondents continue to view 'brand engagement' as the key strength of a content-driven campaign at 34%, followed by 'changing perceptions' at 20%. In third place, 'aligning a brand with a trend, issue or topic' is increasing in significance, with 18% of those surveyed emphasising its value.

This sentiment reflects the broader trend towards brand activism and the increased importance of brand purpose in maintaining consumer loyalty.

When looking at KPIs for content-led marketing campaigns, last year's survey revealed that while brand engagement was the most popular objective, the most popular metric was increased brand awareness.

This year's survey demonstrates a better match between content-led marketing's perceived strengths and the KPIs used for measurement. Whilst brand awareness is still important (27%), the most popular KPIs are a shift in brand perceptions (31%) and time spent with content (28%).



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'Glocal' thinking

When sharing their views on the secrets of success for content-driven campaigns, respondents consistently emphasised

the importance of global themes made local. The survey shows that 71% of respondents adapt the global story for local markets, and 61% create content in a combination of the local language and English (compared to 23% creating all in English and 16% using only local language).

To implement a 'think global, act local' approach, 80% of those surveyed use an international network agency rather than multiple local agencies.



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Content-driven marketing still leads

The survey results indicate that content-driven marketing will continue its ascendancy with almost 80% of respondents believing it will grow over the next two years and 19% feeling that it will stabilise.

Fewer than 2% suspect it will decline, down 3% compared with last year's survey. At least 41% of respondents stated that in the projects they work on, a branded content element now makes up more than 50% of the campaign.



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High demand for credibility

While the excitement around new visualisation techniques such as AR and VR is tangible, it doesn't top the agenda when selecting a lead media partner. In fact, their ability to offer such technology came last, named only by 1% of respondents.



Key findings from Wan-Ifra's 30th World Press Trends report

6 Nov 2019



At the top of the list was the provision of a credible editorial environment (57%), followed by audience profile (52%) and quality of audience engagement (49%).

The full report is available to download [here](#).

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