

# The Five Fundamental Truths of Values- Driven Brands

# Executive Summary

## We have entered a new era.

Expectations have changed. Consumers and employees no longer tolerate brands that champion initiatives for PR without living these values behind closed doors. But “values” can be a loaded and often misunderstood term. What does it mean for a brand to truly carve out values that are both distinct and applicable? What does it mean for these values to show up—and be measured—across every facet of the brand experience? And ultimately, what impact does this have on a brand’s relationships with its internal and external stakeholders?

Brand Prism explores the answers to these questions through a multi-part methodology that includes a survey among U.S. adults, a poll of readers of Long Dash, interviews with leading

brand and values experts, and an analysis of Fortune 500 brands. This study was conducted by Long Dash, a creative consultancy grown from journalistic roots. At Long Dash, we help brands deliver experiences that build enduring relationships beyond any single product, service, or transaction, making the study of brand values core to our mission.

Our research reveals that consumers are holding brands to higher standards than ever before. They expect to see a brand’s values reflected in everything brands do and say. At the same time, brands are struggling to articulate their values with specificity, to commit to measurable actions, and to develop reporting mechanisms that are both meaningful and transparent.

## Executive Summary

We know that for brands to endure—not only in this tumultuous year but in years to come—they must evolve by embracing several fundamental truths when it comes to how they articulate their values, apply these across their brand experience, and hold themselves accountable. They are:

- 1. Accountability is a practice, not a press pitch.** What you say is meaningless without a transparent commitment to measurable action that can be reported on over time.
- 2. It's product leadership, not thought leadership.** Values should be fully integrated into products and services, not trapped in campaigns or community initiatives.
- 3. Values alone have very little value.** If you can't articulate your brand's values in ways that are distinct, specific, and actionable, your efforts to apply them will disappoint.
- 4. Your employees are your best brand influencers.** Employees are the most trusted source of information on a brand's values, and brands must harness this when engaging consumers.
- 5. With purpose comes profit.** Every brand has room for improvement. Those who put in the hard work are rewarded and celebrated by consumers and employees alike.

We explore each of these in detail here, offering insight into where the biggest gaps are between what stakeholders expect and what brands are saying and doing today, as well as where the biggest opportunities are for meaningful progress. Across each, we highlight how these findings apply to the 10 brands most often identified as having strong values in our survey of consumers\*:

Amazon

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Apple

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Walmart

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Chick-fil-A

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Microsoft

Google

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Ben & Jerry's

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Nike

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Target

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Costco

\*Survey of 1,000 U.S. Adults in September, 2020. See page 34 for research methodology.

# Accountability is a practice, not a press pitch.



# Accountability is a practice, not a press pitch.

**Brands that have been most successful in navigating 2020 are those that have proactively committed to taking concrete actions and reporting on their progress with humility, candor, and transparency. Because consumers don't just want to hear brands' words today—they want to see their actions. Keeping a more watchful eye than ever, consumers today are keen to follow the journey—celebrating those who lead by example and calling out those whose words ring hollow.**

Consumers have a clear bias toward action in 2020. While taking a public stance on an issue or making statements about overarching brand purpose may seem like appropriate responses, they fall short under the savvy and watchful eyes of consumers who want to see measurable commitments. When asked what would indicate that a brand has strong values, consumers favor tangible actions and commitments over statements. Four of the top five answers highlight demonstrable impact or making concrete investments in improving how the brand acts in line with its values.

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How should a company demonstrate its values, according to consumers?

*“Values are best practiced rather than advertised. If a company's values show through its daily actions, they don't need to be advertised.”*

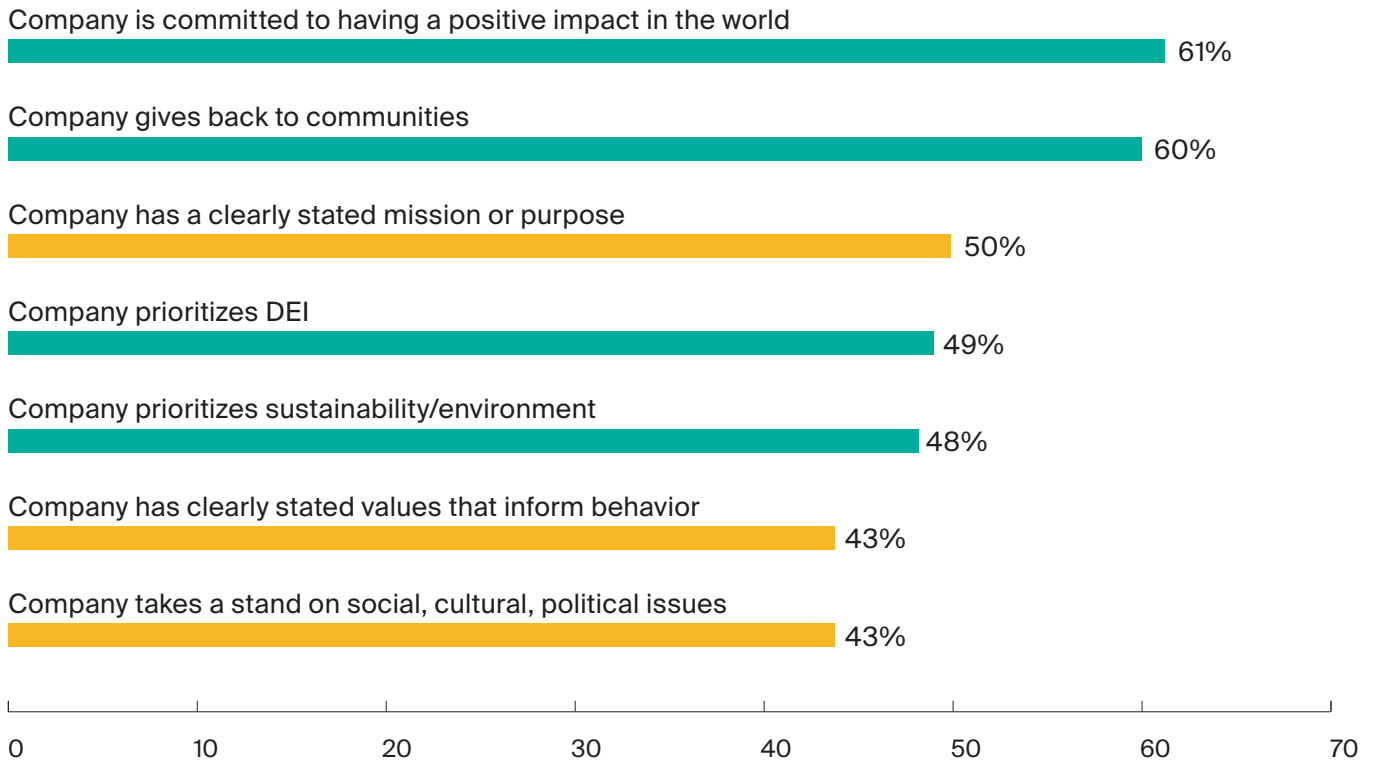
*“Talking about values is the least effective way to express those values. Action is what most companies need to focus on.”*

- Survey respondents

Accountability is a practice, not a press pitch.

## Indicators that a brand has strong values

■ brand actions ■ brand statements



### This isn't easy. Reputations don't change overnight.

Our assessment of Fortune 500 brands rated the degree to which they were able to be proactive in their commitments—anticipating the issues that are important to internal and external stakeholders and formulating a track record of action that earns them the right to be vocal. Of all the variables we assessed, this was on average the lowest score, and brands across all industries struggle nearly equally. And this lack of a proactive track record makes it harder to know what to say when issues arise.

“There’s one of two things you can do [when issues arise]—act quickly and have less substance, or take a little longer and have a more well-thought-out structure and resources behind it,” says a brand expert interviewed for this research. “Would you like to do it instantaneously? Yes—but that’s not how the world works. You have to balance the desire for speed with thoroughness and being respectful of the true obligation.”

## Accountability is a practice, not a press pitch.

#1 application challenge for brands

### Being proactive in commitments

Average score: 2.3 / 4.0 ★★☆☆

Best-performing industries

#### Pharma

Average score: 3.2 / 4.0 ★★★★★

#### Financial data services

Average score: 2.7 / 4.0 ★★★★★

#### Household products

Average score: 2.7 / 4.0 ★★★★★

Worst-performing industries

#### Commercial banks

Average score: 1.9 / 4.0 ★★★★★

#### Retail

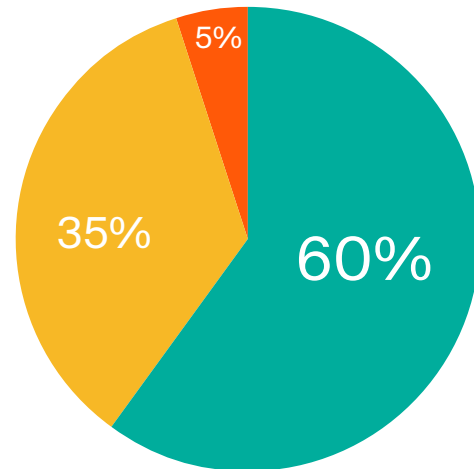
Average score: 1.7 / 4.0 ★★★★★

#### Food consumer

Average score: 1.3 / 4.0 ★★★★★

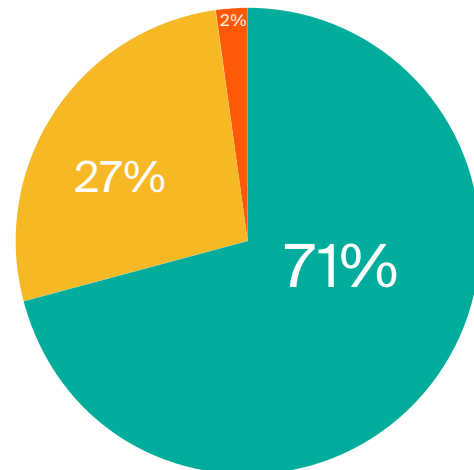
Compared to six months ago, how often do you seek out information on a company's values today?

- more frequently
- same as before
- less frequently



Compared to six months ago, how often do you seek out information on a company's values today?

(Gen Z respondents)



## This say-do gap is critical.

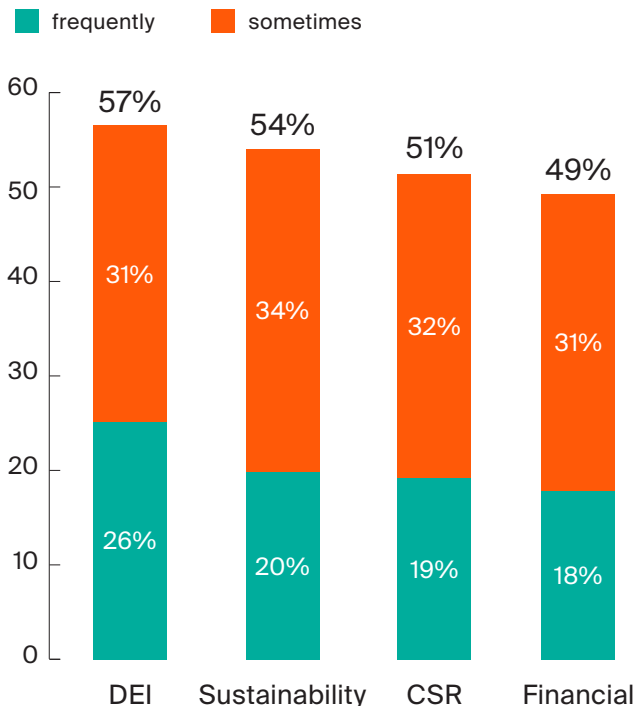
Brands must confront the reality that consumers are keeping up on their reporting now more than ever. So, if you commit to it, you must be ready to report on it—and report on it in ways that consumers can easily access and understand. 60 percent of consumers report that they are seeking out information on a brand's values more frequently now than they were six months ago. Not surprisingly, the youngest generations are even more enthusiastic about tracking brand reporting.

Accountability is a practice, not a press pitch.

## You can't just "Check the Box" when all eyes are on your efforts.

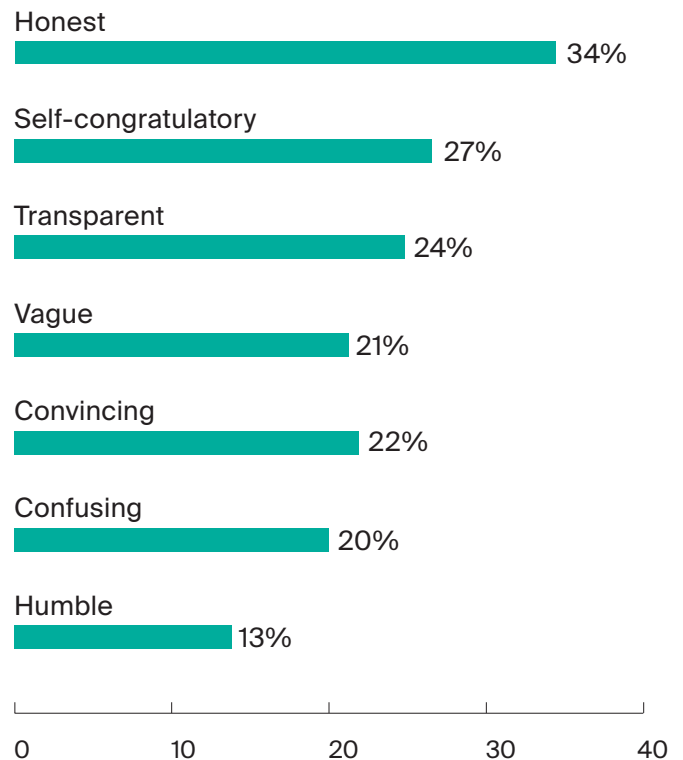
It's common for brands to develop and share annual reporting around their various social, environmental, and diversity commitments with the understanding that these have largely been mandatory exercises in box-checking aimed at industry, peer, and regulatory audiences. However, consumers report that they, too, are following these reports right now—especially reporting committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Nearly six in 10 consumers report seeking DEI reports either frequently or sometimes.

### How often are consumers seeking out key types of brand reporting



But just because consumers are seeking these reports out, it doesn't mean they are getting the information they need. When asked to describe brand reporting, only a third of consumers feel that it's honest, and just over a quarter feel that it's transparent right now. And our own assessment of brands confirmed this. Making reporting candid was among the top challenges for brands we assessed, with many industries—including financial data services, food consumer brands, and retail brands—struggling to be honest and real about their progress.

### Adjectives consumers use to describe the brand reporting they've seen





## Accountability is a practice, not a press pitch.

#1 accountability challenge for brands

### Being candid in reporting

Average score: 2.4 / 4.0 ★★★★★

Best-performing industries

#### Pharma

Average score: 3.3 / 4.0 ★★★★★

Worst-performing industries

#### Financial data services

Average score: 2.2 / 4.0 ★★★★★

#### Food consumer brands

Average score: 2.0 / 4.0 ★★★★★

#### Retail

Average score: 2.0 / 4.0 ★★★★★

#### Consulting

Average score: 1.8 / 4.0 ★★★★★

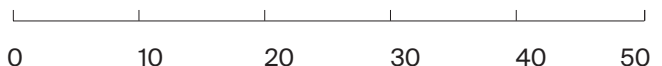
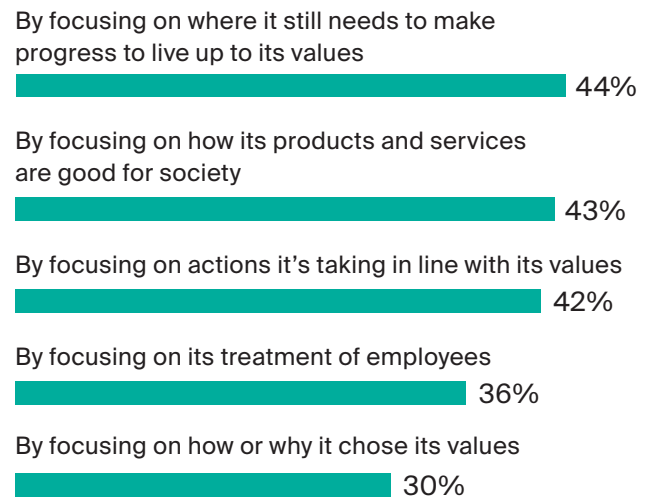
Deciding what, and how much, to report on can often lead to real moments of reckoning inside a brand.

“You have to be honest about the purpose of the reporting. Is it to promote yourself? To see where you need to improve?” asks a brand expert. “If you found things you need to improve, are you still willing to report it? A brand should be able to answer these questions ahead of time before going into this process. Are we going to report it anyway, or fix it, if we don’t get the results we want?”

## It’s much about the journey as much as the destination.

For inspiration on how to do this well, brands can look for guidance from Gen Z. When asked how brands should demonstrate their values in their content and stories, the number one answer from Gen Z is to focus on where the brand still needs to make progress in living up to its values. Gen Z wants to see forward-looking reporting that focuses on the journey, rather than backward-looking, self-congratulatory reporting focused solely on achievements. And brands that do this well—like Target, Google, and Ben & Jerry’s—are among those recognized by consumers as having strong values.

### *How Gen Z wants brands to demonstrate values in the stories they share, ranked in top three answers by % of respondents*



## Accountability is a practice, not a press pitch.

Brands that are candid and consistent in reporting are among those recognized by consumers as having strong values.

Top 10 brands, as identified by consumers:

■ Top identified brands for Truth #1

**Amazon**

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**Apple**

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**Walmart**

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**Chick-fil-A**

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**Microsoft**

**Google**

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**Ben & Jerry's**

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**Nike**

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**Target**

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**Costco**

Fundamental Truth No.2

# It's product leadership, not thought leadership.



# It's product leadership, not thought leadership.

**Consumers expect a brand's values to show up in the very products and services they offer today, rather than being limited to thought leadership or corporate responsibility initiatives. And in turn, brands that successfully infuse their products and services with their values are more successful at infusing them across the entire spectrum of the brand experience.**

Gone are the days that a brand can invest in social responsibility or values-based initiatives that are entirely divorced from—or, in extreme cases, attempting to offset—their core product and service offerings.

## **Expectations demand action.**

Consumers today expect a brand's values to show up not only in their interactions with customers, but increasingly in the products they develop and market. More than six in 10 consumers report that it's most important right now for a brand to demonstrate its values in its products and services. And among Gen Z and Millennial consumers, this is the number one place for brands to demonstrate their values.

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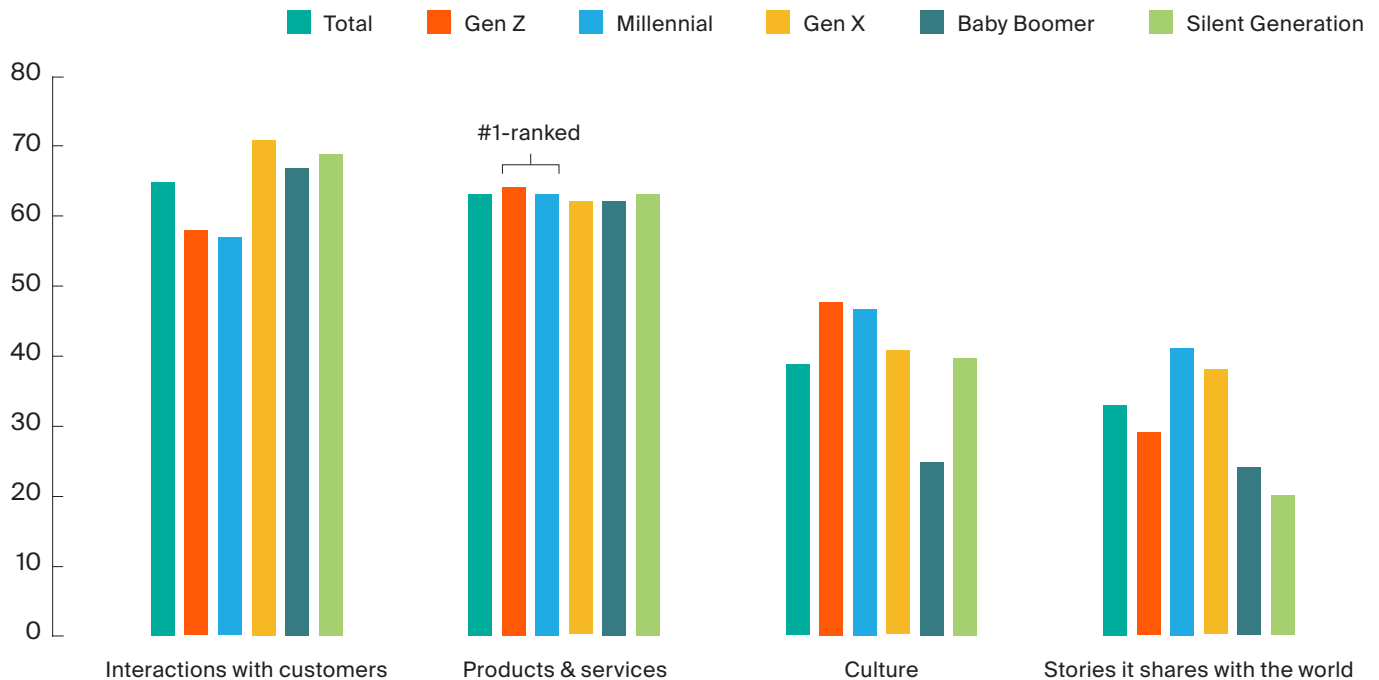
How should a company demonstrate its values?

*“For an authentic demonstration of brand values, it can't be siloed to HR or PR, which it often is. The ultimate step would be: are your values infused with the very product that you're putting out there?”*

- Brand Expert

It's product leadership, not thought leadership.

## Most important ways brands can demonstrate their values right now



According to consumers, a brand's values can influence its products and services in a number of ways. Chief among these are creating products that benefit society and the environment directly, or that contribute to consumers living healthier lives.

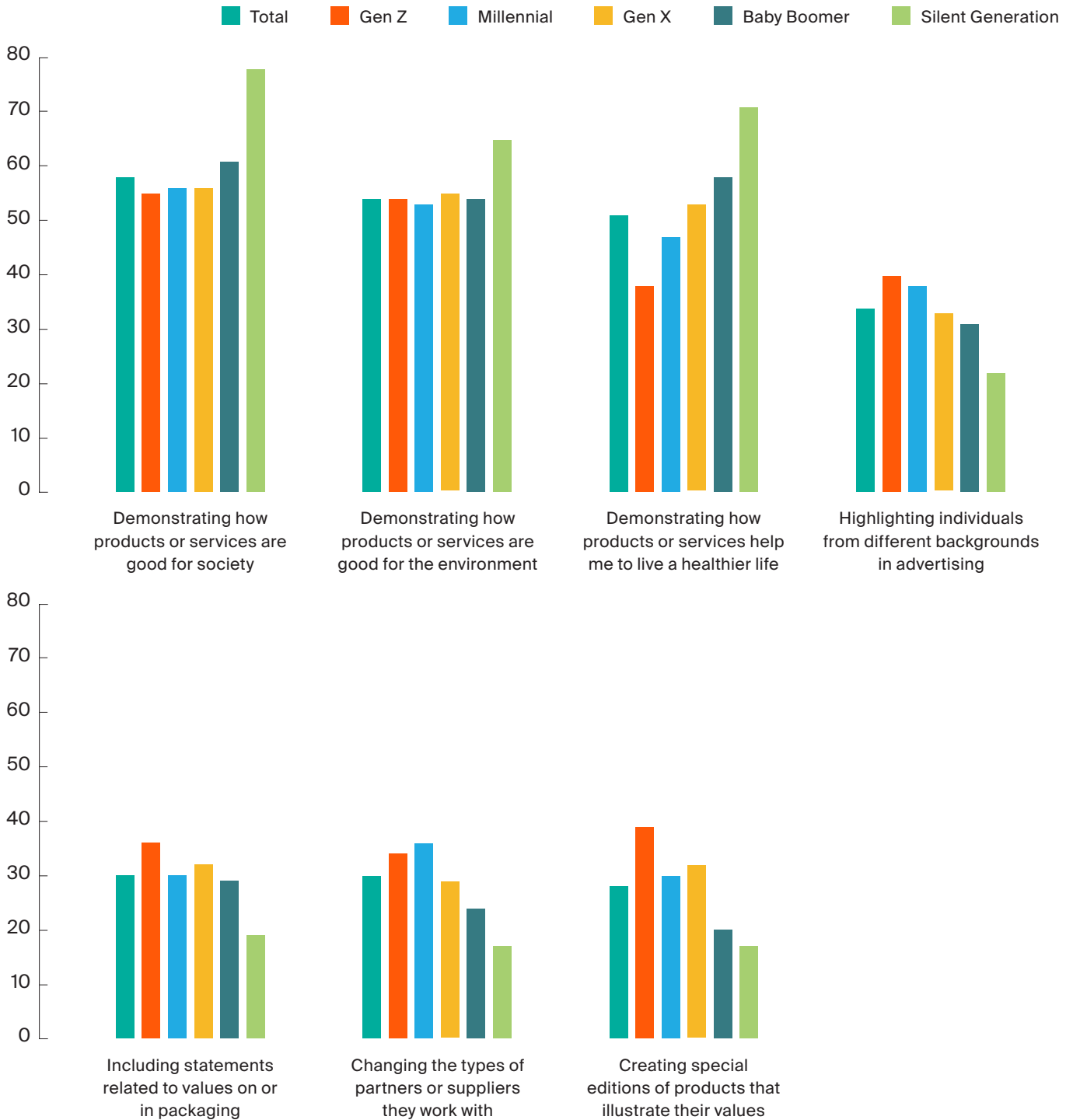
"If [a pharmaceutical company] doesn't care about the values behind its products, it's something that consumers should care about [because it will affect our health and well-being]," says a brand expert. "Values are important insofar as they have an impact on the products."

Younger consumers are more likely to also want to see a brand's commitment to values

extend to how its products are sourced and marketed. More than a third of Gen Z and Millennial consumers ranked "changing the types of partners or suppliers they work with" among the top three ways that brands can demonstrate their values in their products and services. And Gen Z consumers, in particular, want to see products marketed through the use of more diverse voices and special editions of products that align with issues they care about. Nearly 40 percent of Gen Z respondents ranked these among the top three ways that brands can demonstrate their values through their products.

It's product leadership, not thought leadership.

*How a brand should demonstrate its values in products and services, top three answers by % of respondents*



It's product leadership, not thought leadership.

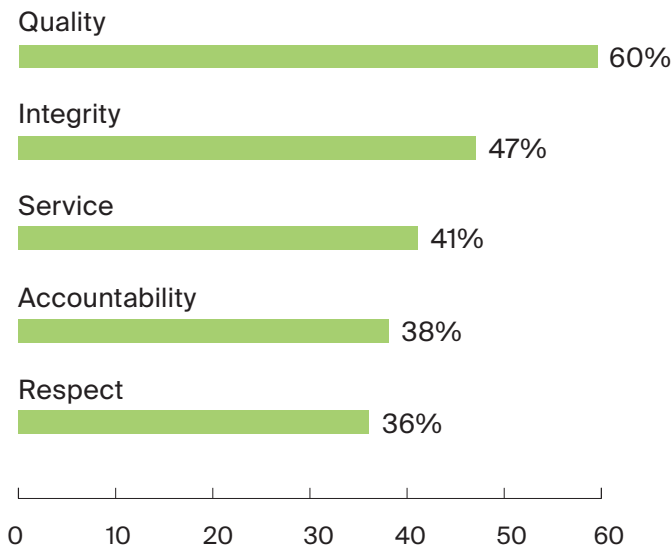
## Consumers value quality most of all.

Fundamentally—and perhaps moreso than a product's impact on society, the environment, or personal health, or how it's marketed—consumers still strongly equate product quality with a brand's values today. In fact, “quality” is far and away the core value that consumers believe brands should most embody. 60 percent of consumers ranked this among the top three values that are most important for brands to have, and this was consistent across consumers of all ages.

Brands that can consistently demonstrate quality in their products and services are at a huge advantage with consumers right now. This is also the factor that most influences consumers' overall opinions of a brand—especially older consumers.

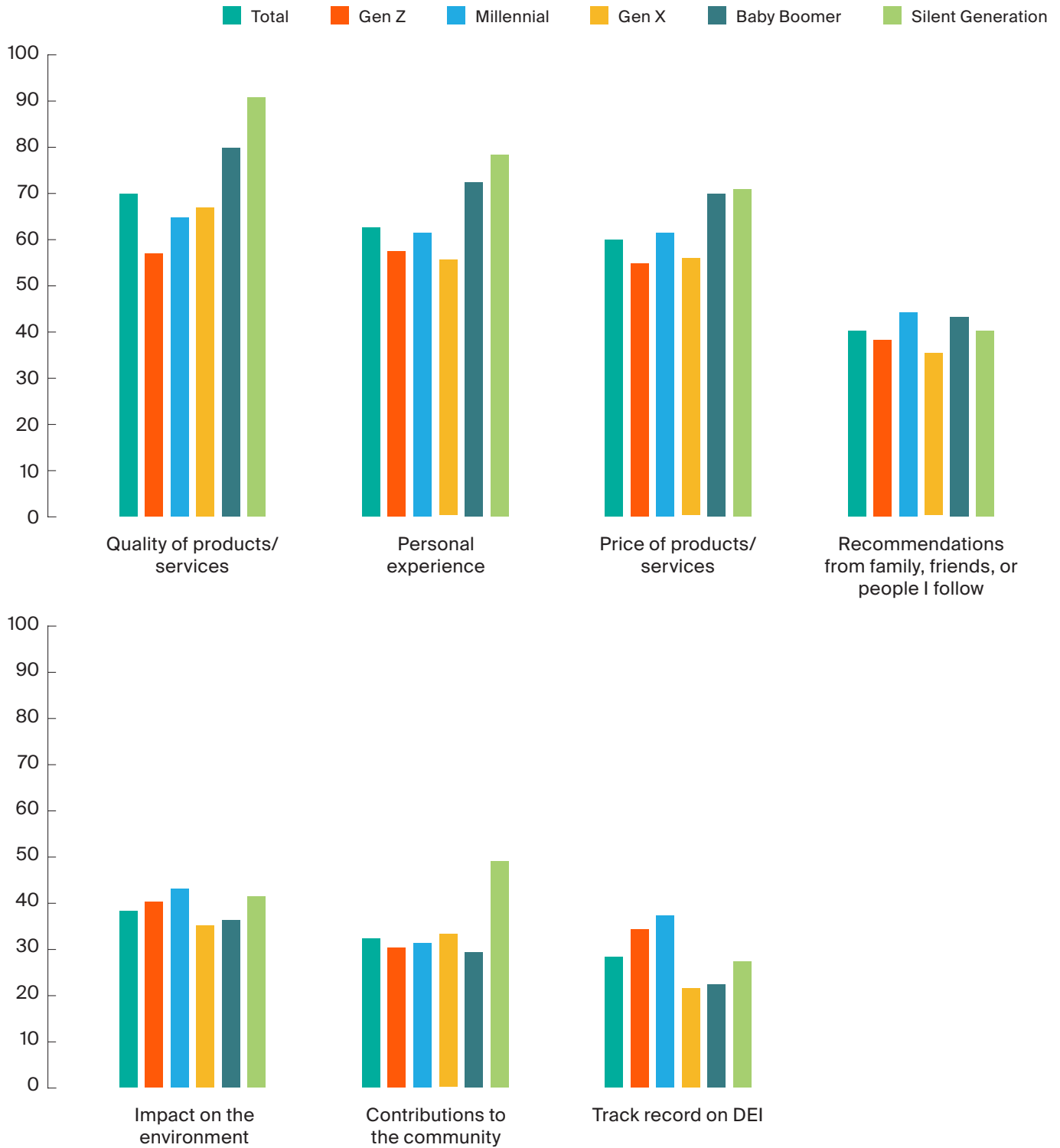
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### *The brand values that are most important to consumers, top three answers by % of respondents*



It's product leadership, not thought leadership.

*Factors that most influence consumers' opinions of a brand*





It's product leadership, not thought leadership.

## Your products are your foundation.

The good news for brands: it all starts with what you do best—your products. If you get it right in your products, you're more likely to succeed at infusing your values across the other parts of your brand experience as well, according to our research. Our assessment of brands rated the degree to which values are infused across products and services, internal culture, physical and digital touchpoints with consumers, and content and stories. On average, Product was the highest-rated category across all brands and scores dropped off from there. In fact, for two-thirds of the brands we rated, Product was the highest individual rating. This reinforces that if your brand's products don't align with your values, it's much harder to successfully infuse them into the other aspects of your brand and touchpoints with consumers.

This seems to be more intuitive for brands in certain industries right now. Some industries in our analysis—including household products, tech brands, and consulting firms—are able to more seamlessly wed their values to their products, while others—including commercial banks, retail, and food consumer products—struggle to fully connect their products to their values. Consumers recognize this. Among the top ten brands named by consumers as having strong values, a handful of tech brands—including Amazon, Apple, Microsoft, and Google—stand out for their ability to infuse their values into their products, first and foremost.

“Who you are as a brand and the values you espouse must manifest in your products. If they're not aligned, you're not going to produce products that are consistent or guided in any sort of meaningful way,” says a brand expert. “It makes certain tradeoffs tough, but if you have divergent product and core values strategies, it's hard to be successful.”

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# 66% of brands

Scored highest on the Product rating

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Best-performing industries

## Household products

Average score: 3.7 / 4.0 ★★★★★

## Consulting

Average score: 3.5 / 4.0 ★★★★★

## Internet services

Average score: 3.3 / 4.0 ★★★★★

## Financial data services

Average score: 3.3 / 4.0 ★★★★★

Worst-performing industries

## Commercial banks

Average score: 2.3 / 4.0 ★★★★★

## Food consumer products

Average score: 2.3 / 4.0 ★★★★★

## Retail

Average score: 2.2 / 4.0 ★★★★★

## It's product leadership, not thought leadership.

Brands that think product-first are among those recognized by consumers as having strong values.

Top 10 brands, as identified by consumers:

■ Top identified brands for Truth #2

**Amazon**

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**Apple**

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**Walmart**

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**Chick-fil-A**

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**Microsoft**

**Google**

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**Ben & Jerry's**

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**Nike**

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**Target**

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**Costco**

Fundamental Truth No.3

**Values alone have  
very little value.**



# Values alone have very little value.

**Most brands fundamentally share versions of the same values—innovation, integrity, trust, etc.—and have arrived at these single-word values through carefully constructed exercises and consultant-built narratives. However, this is where far too many brands stop. They don’t take the time to define what these words truly mean in the context of their brand—and their brand alone. At best, this results in a brand’s values being relegated to job descriptions and hollow “we care” statements. At worst, values fall completely by the wayside. But when done right, a brand can more successfully and consistently apply these values across the entirety of its experience.**

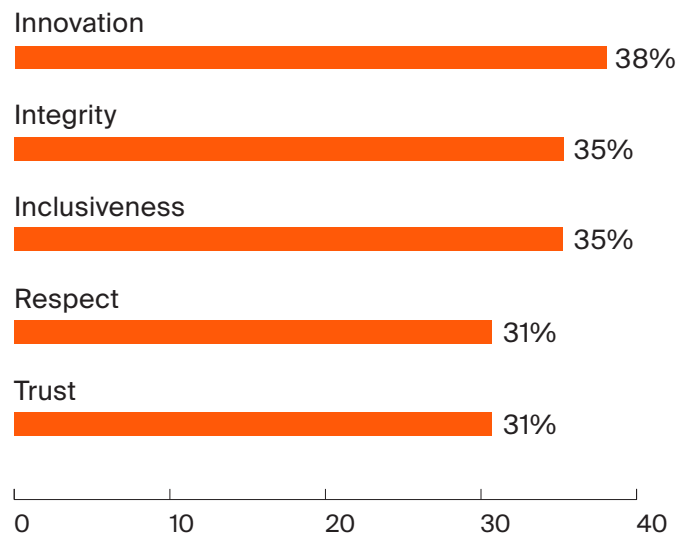
## Your values can’t be vague.

It comes as no surprise that, at their very core, most brands want to stand for very

similar values. What brand wouldn’t want to be innovative today? Or to have integrity? In fact, our analysis of brands reveals the extent to which they have overlapping values. In addition to innovation and integrity, more than one in three of the brands we assessed also articulated inclusiveness, respect, and trust as core values.

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### *Most commonly articulated brand values*



## Values alone have very little value.

This isn't in itself a bad thing. However, the risk of defining values as single words or phrases is that without taking the time to make them feel specific and distinct, internal or external stakeholders will not know what to make of them or how to apply them.

We observed the challenge that this poses for brands in our assessment. When it comes to articulating values, making them feel distinct is the number one challenge for brands, especially consumer packaged goods, software, and consulting.

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#1 articulation challenge for brands

### Making values feel distinct

Average score: 2.7 / 4.0 ★★☆☆

Best-performing industries

#### Pharma

Average score: 3.8 / 4.0 ★★★★★

#### Internet services

Average score: 3.2 / 4.0 ★★★★★

Worst-performing industries

#### Software

Average score: 2.5 / 4.0 ★★★★★

#### Consulting

Average score: 2.5 / 4.0 ★★★★★

#### Household products

Average score: 2.3 / 4.0 ★★★★★

#### Food consumer products

Average score: 1.7 / 4.0 ★★★★★

“Most [brands] have a lot of vagueness within their values,” says a brand expert. “There’s not a lot of specificity. Values can be understood and pursued with subjectivity, which leads to them falling by the wayside. There are different definitions—no way to observe it without specificity.”

“I’m not sure that every brand is clear about what their values are, or has taken the time to articulate and be strategic and thorough about how the values penetrate every part of their organization,” says a brand expert. “And if you’re not clear about who you are and what you stand for, it is very easy to make decisions or do things that would not track back to what those values are.”

Our research shows a strong link between being able to articulate values with specificity, and being able to more easily and consistently apply these values across all parts of the brand experience. We rated brands across two dimensions: the specificity of their values, which considers the degree to which they have defined them beyond single words and made them feel unique to the brand; and the extensibility of their values, or the degree to which they have consistently applied them across products and services, internal culture, touchpoints, and content. The result is a set of four brand archetypes: Niche, Integrated, Nascent, and Diffuse.

Values alone have very little value.

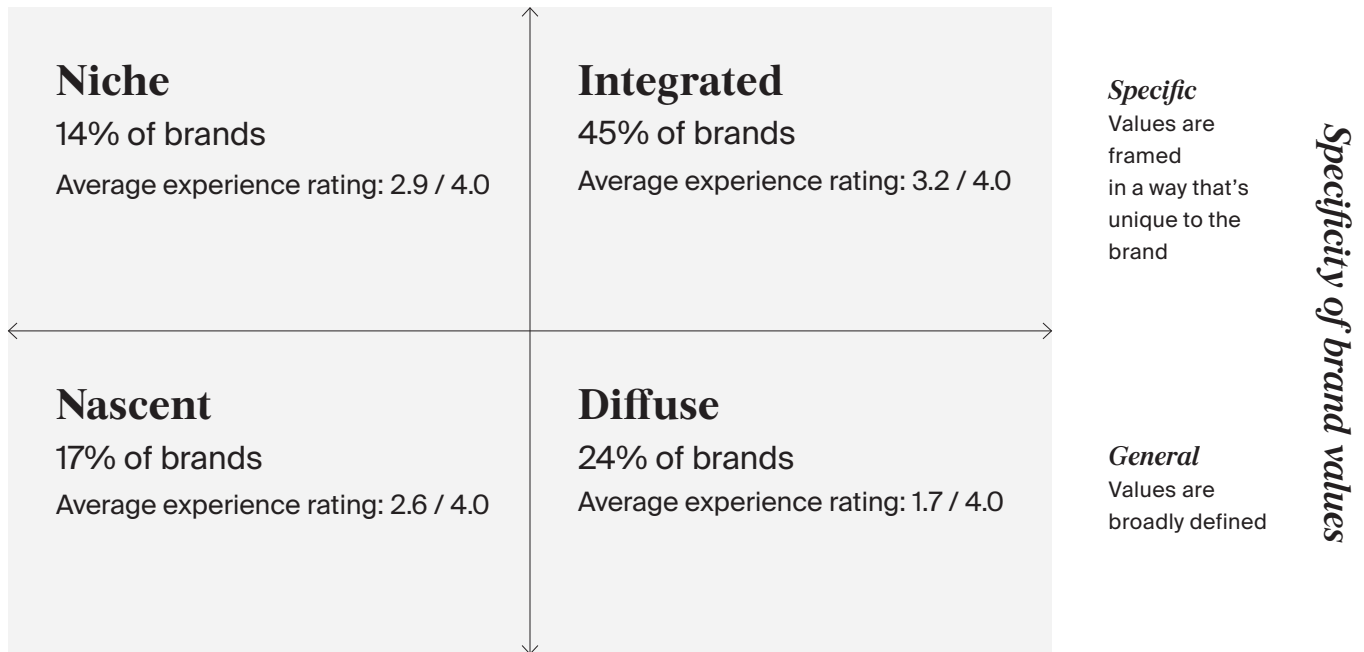
## *Extensibility across brand experience*

### *Concentrated*

Values are strongly infused across just 1-2 areas of the experience

### *Ubiquitous*

Values are infused across all areas of the brand experience equally



The good news: of the brands we rated, nearly half (45 percent) fall into the Integrated archetype, meaning they have relatively specific values and are consistent in their application. The second most common archetype is Diffuse, at about a quarter of brands rated (24 percent). Worth noting is that Diffuse brands, while consistent in their application, generally scored the lowest across each facet of their brand experience. On average, brands in this category scored just 1.7 out of 4.0, compared with 3.2 out of 4.0 for Integrated brands. This reinforces that the

more specific your brand's values, the more you'll be able to be consistently excellent in their application. Lending even more credence to the importance of specificity is the fact that half of the top 10 brands named by consumers in our survey reside in the upper two quadrants, while only two reside in the bottom.

Of the brands with more concentrated application of their values, these are nearly evenly split among two archetypes: Niche, at 14 percent of those we rated, and Nascent, at 17 percent. Within both of these archetypes,

## Values alone have very little value.

brands generally focused the application of their values on their products. Niche brands stand a good chance of becoming Integrated by merely focusing more on how their values come to life in their content and touchpoints with consumers. Nascent brands, on the other hand, appear to be earlier in their values journeys and therefore must also work at defining their values with greater specificity.

The bottom line for brands is this: words alone won't ensure that your values truly come to life for internal or external audiences. They must be operationalized at every level of the brand.

"[Values have] to come to life in behaviors," says a brand expert. "So it has to be activated. It has to affect daily work. It has to be in companies' processes, it has to be in people's work plans. It has to be in performance reviews."

Brands that define their values with specificity and infuse them consistently are recognized by consumers as having strong values.

Top 10 brands, as identified by consumers:

■ Top identified brands for Truth #3

**Amazon**

**Google**

**Apple**

**Ben & Jerry's**

**Walmart**

**Nike**

**Chick-fil-A**

**Target**

**Microsoft**

**Costco**

# Your employees are your best brand influencers.





# Your employees are your best brand influencers.

**If 2020 has taught us anything, it's this: the stakeholders most likely to experience—and draw attention to—any gaps between what your brand says its values are and how you act are your brand's employees. Employees are now the most trusted public source of information on a brand's values, and consumers are strongly attuned to what they say and how they're treated.**

Since March 2020 and throughout the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement, there have been many high-profile examples of brands that have been called out for inconsistencies in how they tout their values publicly and how they treat their employees internally. Employees themselves have taken to social media and other channels to share their perspectives—and consumers are listening.

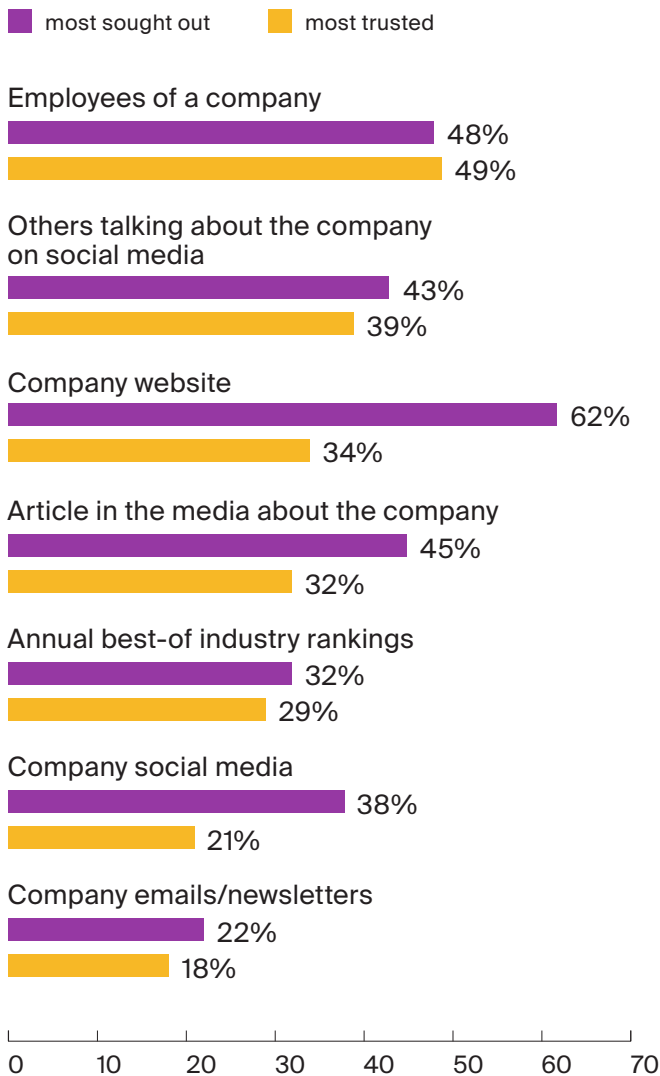
“Employees are the best advocates and ambassadors for the brand, and can also be the worst. If they're happy they'll tell everybody, if they're not happy they'll tell everybody,” says a brand expert. “It's the responsibility of the organization to fuel what they can tell.”

## **They can become your champions or your whistleblowers.**

Our research shows that while consumers may go directly to a brand first to learn about their values, when it comes to the sources they actually trust, they look to a brand's employees. Nearly five in 10 consumers report that a brand's employees are their most trusted sources of information on a brand's values, outpacing other sources including brands' websites and social media, and articles in the media.

## Your employees are your best brand influencers.

### *The most sought out—and most trusted—sources of information on a brand’s values, according to consumers*

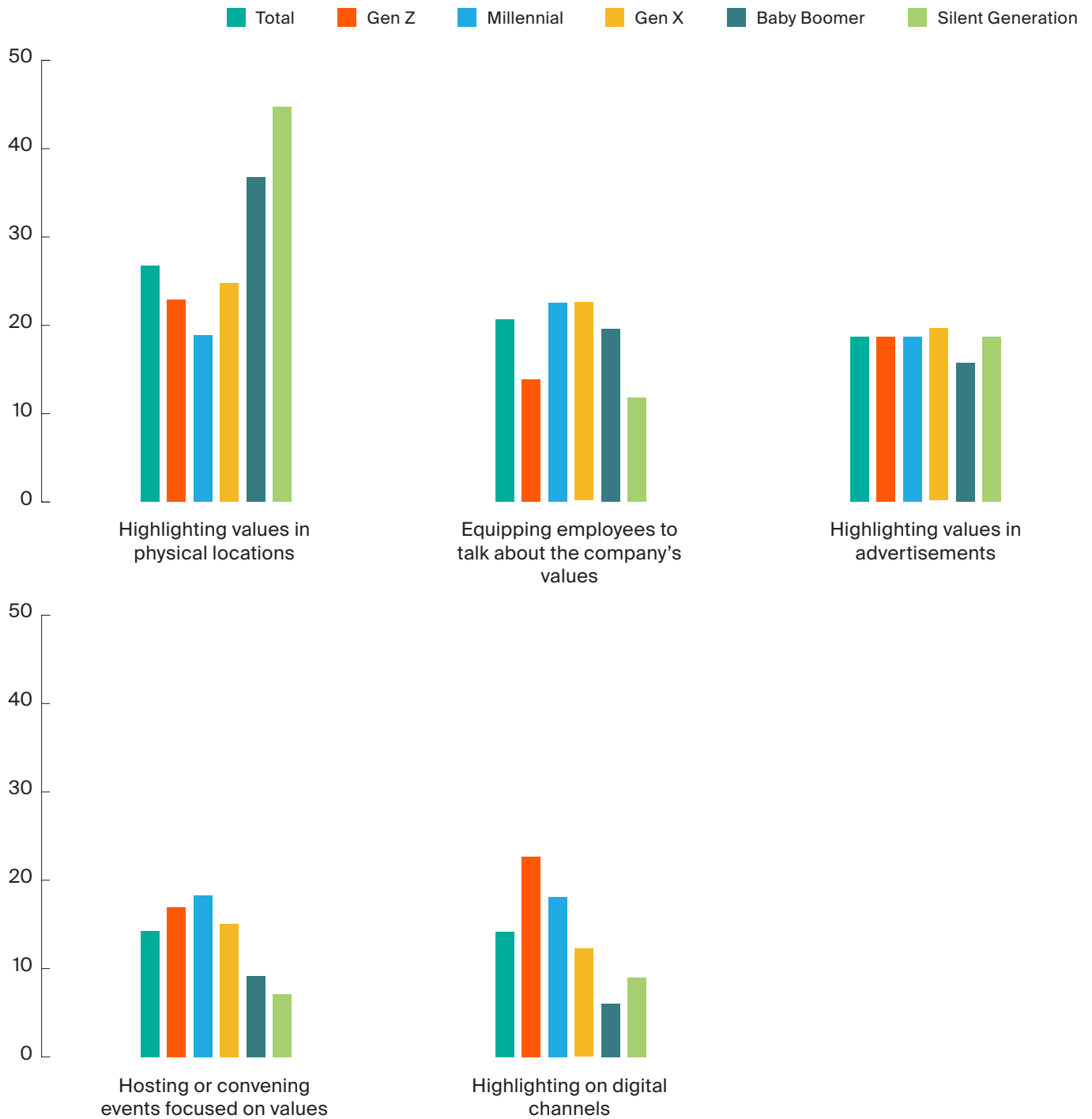


And consumers today also expect brands to enable their employees to share the story of their values. Of the ways in which brands demonstrate their values through their many touchpoints with consumers, equipping employees to talk about them with consumers was ranked number one by more than one in five consumers. Among Millennial consumers in particular, employees are a powerful vehicle for connecting with a brand’s values.

Not surprisingly, consumers are on high alert right now for examples of how employees are being treated. They report judging the degree to which brands have infused their values into their culture by the benefits and support brands offer employees as well as how they invest in diversity and inclusion. Again, it’s more about the actual actions brands are taking here than it is about the statements they’re making. In the minds of consumers, a brand saying it takes care of its employees is much different than actually taking care of them.

Your employees are your best brand influencers.

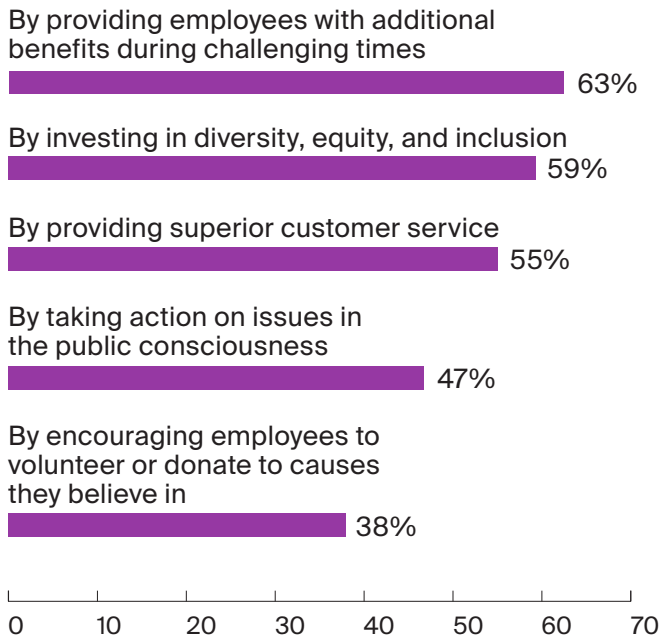
*Number one ranked way to demonstrate a brand's values through its touchpoints with consumers*



Your employees are your best brand influencers.

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***Ways brands should demonstrate their values in their culture, top three answers by % of respondents***



Perhaps no industry has been more visible in taking steps to ensure safety and support for its employees during the pandemic than retail, and this in part explains why nearly a third of the top ten brands named by consumers as having strong values right now are retail brands. Consumers offer explanations that shed light on their rationale for recognizing these brands, many of which focus on fair wages, treatment of employees, commitment to diversity and inclusion—clearly all top-of-mind actions for consumers right now.

For brands, this is a tremendous opportunity to rethink how they engage with their employees

and their consumers simultaneously, and how to use the former to more intentionally engage the latter.

“Your employees also are your consumers. They’re not necessarily two separate groups,” says a brand expert. “Everything is public, anything you do will go public, you’re putting yourself out there—the public will engage the same way your employees would.”

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***Why do certain brands come to mind as having strong values, according to consumers?***

*“I think Target does. They seem to be very focused on their employees and making sure they are paid a fair amount no matter what the average rate usually is.”*

*“Chick-fil-A. They seem to treat their employees well. Better pay. Good morals.”*

*“Lowe’s. They seem to have it together and their employees seldom if ever complain.”*

*“Walmart comes to mind. The way they treat their employees is probably the best of values.”*

- Survey respondents

## Your employees are your best brand influencers.

Brands that publicly prioritize treatment of employees right now are recognized by consumers as having strong values.

Top 10 brands, as identified by consumers:

■ Top identified brands for Truth #4

**Amazon**

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**Apple**

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**Walmart**

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**Chick-fil-A**

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**Microsoft**

**Google**

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**Ben & Jerry's**

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**Nike**

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**Target**

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**Costco**

Fundamental Truth No.5

**With purpose  
comes profit.**



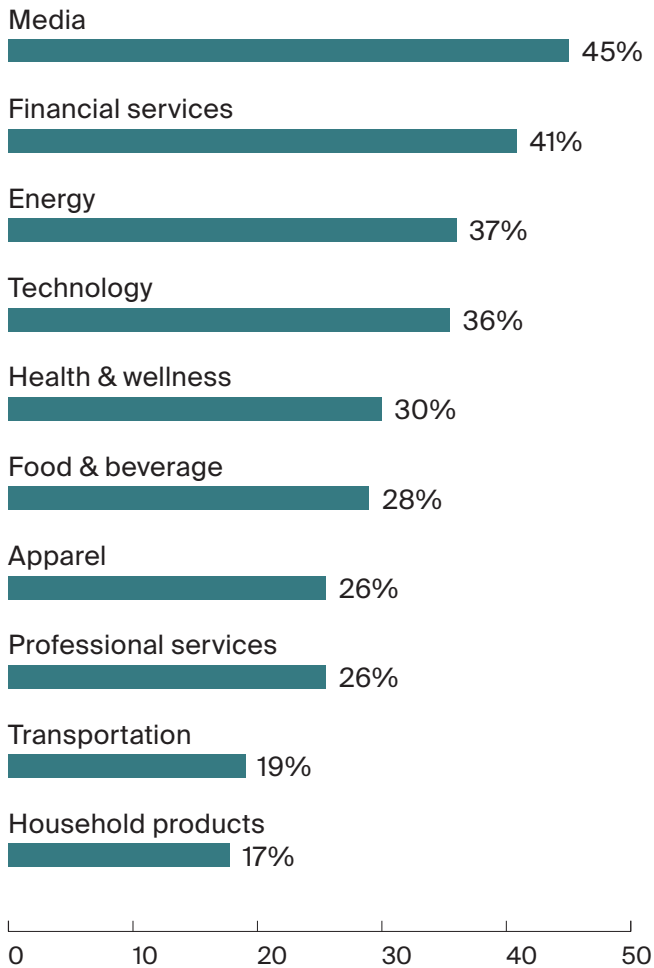
# With purpose comes profit.

**The events of 2020 have resulted in greater skepticism across all industries—not just those that have traditionally been subject to consumer scrutiny. But, they have also created tremendous opportunities for purpose-driven—and purposeful—brands that do the work to ensure their values show up everywhere across their brand experience. Consumers increasingly want to purchase from, work for, and build enduring relationships with brands that have strong values.**

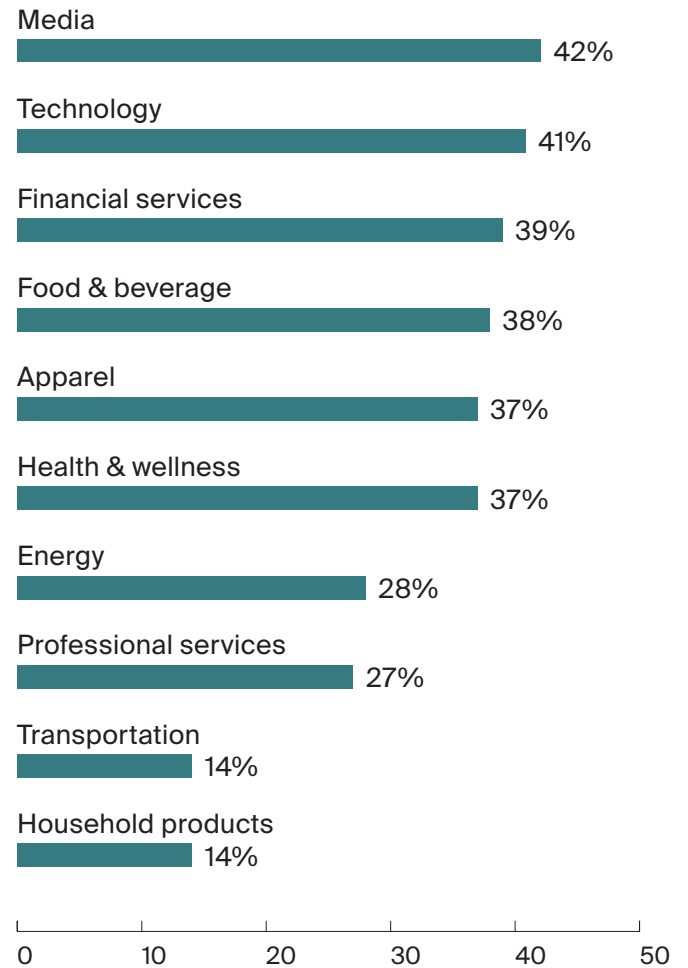
Brands, take note: no matter what industry you're in, you're not safe from consumer skepticism. Media tops the list of industries with the most work to do when it comes to living their values, according to consumers, but nearly every other industry is called out by at least a quarter of consumers. Younger consumers in particular are more likely to be skeptical about consumer packaged goods. Gen Z is significantly more likely than older generations to name food and beverage brands, apparel brands, and health and wellness brands among those with the most work to do.

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*Industries with the most work to do, according to consumers*



*Industries with the most work to do, according to Gen Z consumers*





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## This awakening is an opportunity.

There's proof of a tremendous upside for values-driven brands, which is only increasing with the events of 2020. Our research confirms that purchase intent is strongly tied to feelings of alignment with a brand's values, and this has increased over the past six months.

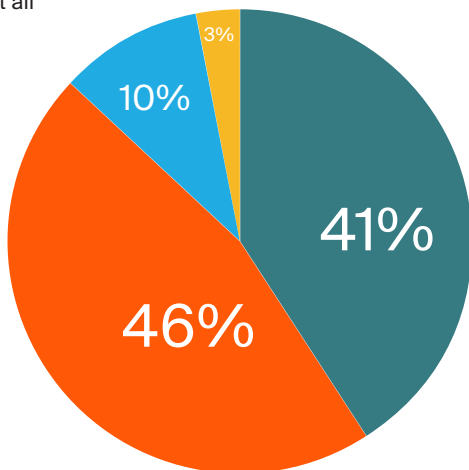
"[Gen Z is] so woke and smart when it comes to brands and what they're doing," says a brand expert. "They are the next generation of customers who are shopping with and

putting their money with and doing business with companies who are doing the right things."

But it's not just Gen Z—the overwhelming majority of consumers consider a brand's values either a lot or some when deciding whether to purchase its products or services. And, nearly three-quarters of consumers report that it's more important to them now than it was six months ago.

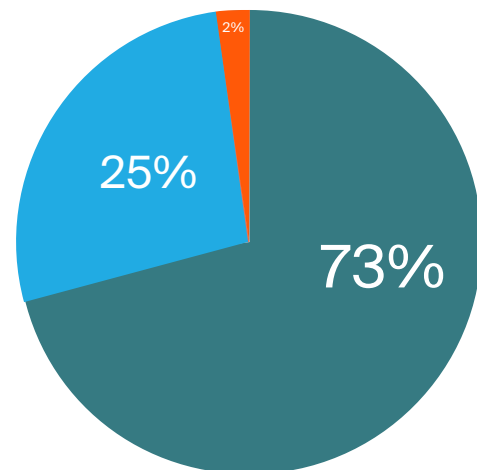
*To what extent do you consider whether a company has strong values when deciding to purchase its products?*

- a lot
- some
- a little
- not at all



*Compared to six months ago, does it feel more or less important to purchase a product from a company with strong values?*

- more important
- same importance
- less important



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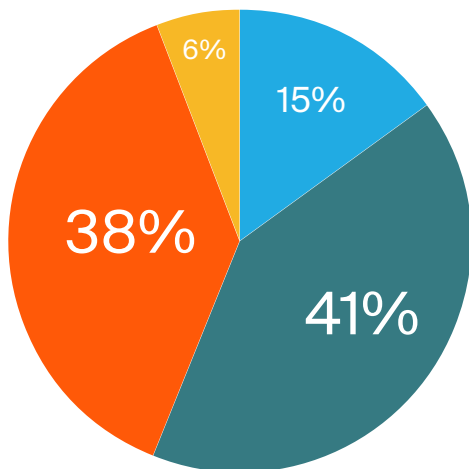
### Readers of *The Atlantic* agree.

Our proprietary research among readers of *The Atlantic* is also consistent with the idea that values alignment and purchase intent go hand-in-hand. Among respondents in an *Atlantic* reader poll, 56 percent said they wouldn't consider purchasing from a brand if its values didn't align with their own.

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### *How much Atlantic readers would consider purchasing a product if the values don't align with their own*

- strongly consider
- somewhat consider
- not really consider
- not consider at all



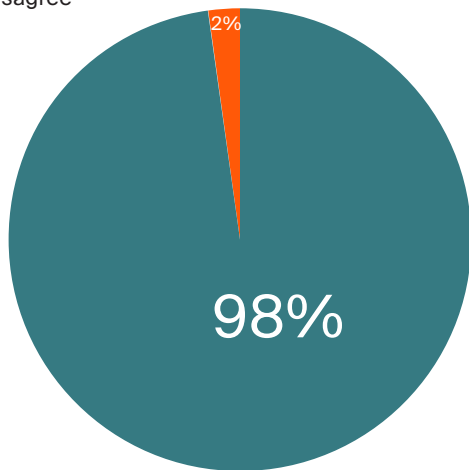
Consumers reward brands with strong values in more ways than just purchasing products from them. They also confer greater trust, desire to work there, and higher expectations of profitability. Ultimately, the mandate is clear for brands. There is a strong throughline between articulating values, applying them with consistency across the brand experience, demonstrating accountability to these values—and being recognized and rewarded by stakeholders.

“I’ve seen organizations stepping up in a way that has impressed me,” says a brand expert. “It’s forced us to take more declarative action around values and commit more capital and resources that are uncomfortable even if we weren’t in lean times.”

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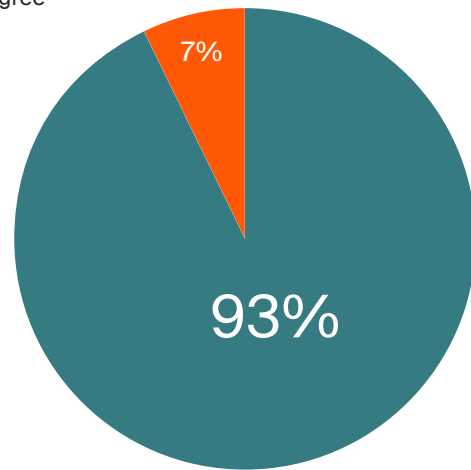
*Consumers who agree that they're more likely to trust a brand with strong values*

- agree
- disagree



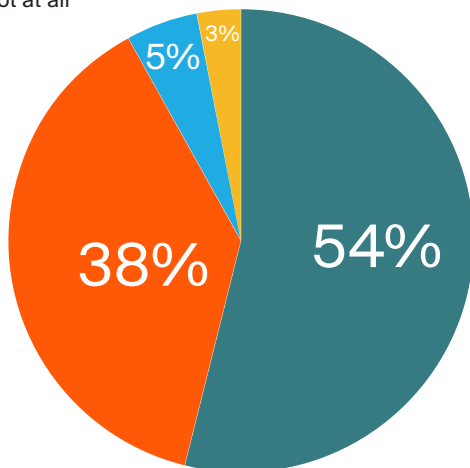
*Consumers who agree that a company with strong values is more likely to be profitable today*

- agree
- disagree



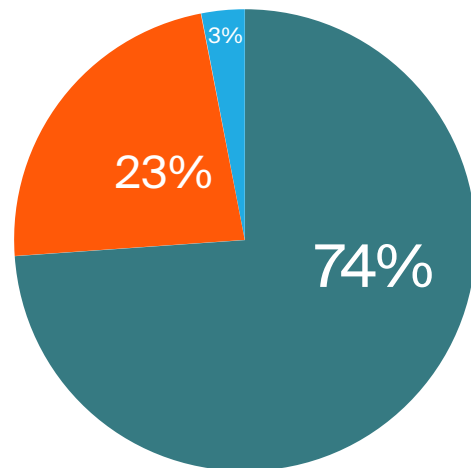
*To what extent do you consider whether a company has strong values when deciding to work for that organization?*

- a lot
- some
- a little
- not at all



*Compared to six months ago, does it feel more or less important to you to work for an organization with strong values?*

- more important
- same importance
- less important



# About Brand Prism

Brand Prism is a proprietary approach from Long Dash designed to help brands identify blind spots and design a more values-driven brand experience. Our quantitative and qualitative research provides a foundation to help diagnose and benchmark organizational performance across the proven pillars of a values-driven brand.

Long Dash is a creative consultancy grown from journalistic roots. We work with brands to envision, elevate, and evolve their entire brand experience while honoring their core purpose. To learn more about how Long Dash partners with brands to address gaps and strengthen how values are expressed across the brand experience, contact us today at [hello@longdash.co](mailto:hello@longdash.co).

## **Brand Prism Methodology.**

Brand Prism employs a multi-part methodology that includes both quantitative and qualitative research. Long Dash fielded an online survey among 1,121 U.S. adults between August and October 2020. The data were weighted to U.S. Census population estimates with a margin of error of +/- 2.5% at a 95% confidence level. Researchers also fielded a short email poll among 638 readers of The Atlantic in October 2020 to complement findings among the general population.

In addition to the consumer and reader surveys, researchers conducted an in-depth analysis of 30 Fortune 500 brands, relying on publicly available information including website, annual reporting, social media, and news media content, along with public ratings by employees on Glassdoor, Indeed, and Career Bliss. Findings from quantitative and qualitative research were supplemented by interviews with brand experts, DEI experts and consultants, and journalists.