

Thought paper

WARC



Unlocking the value of Values-Driven Marketing

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Purpose of this report

As a relatively new discipline, some readers may not be familiar with either the theory or practice of Values-Driven Marketing. This paper is intended as an introduction to what we see as a valuable addition to the marketing toolbox.

Behavioral Science defines Values as what matters most to someone in life. Examples include Tradition (embracing motivations such as family, heritage and stability) and Achievement (which includes motivations such as success, recognition and luxury).

At a subconscious level, we're all impelled to affirm or protect the Values we hold most strongly. As a result, Values are predictive of how individuals will think and act in response to marketing stimuli, enabling brands to make more accurate media choices and better-informed messaging decisions.

Primary research commissioned for this report highlights the potential. It demonstrates how Values-Driven Marketing leads to meaningful lifts in ad preference, likability, perceived relevance and performance. It also shows that using Values as a targeting parameter is significantly more effective than relying solely on demographics.

Thanks to advances in AI and clustering technologies, Values-driven media plans can now be deployed at scale. The relevant buying filters are already available on many demand-side platforms (DSPs). AI is also powering increasingly sophisticated messaging analysis and content generation tools.

With the conditions in place for Values-Driven Marketing to be fully operationalized, we believe it's the right time for brands to take a closer look at the opportunity.

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Foreword from LIONS Advisory & WARC



Imaad Ahmed

Principal Strategist, LIONS Advisory
and Head of Advisory, WARC

Marketers across the globe are tasked with influencing behavior, whether that's encouraging people to buy more, to pay more or to use more (or differently). Understanding the motivations behind audience behavior and finding ways to inspire action is critical.

As the psychologist Daniel Kahneman famously wrote, "Thinking is to humans as swimming is to cats." We instinctively veer towards cognitive ease. But how do an audience's underlying goals and characterizing motivations – their Values – steer them towards certain decisions?

And when we use Values as the focus of our marketing strategy, can they enable us to better align with our audience's biases? These are the questions behind Values-Driven Marketing (VDM).

VDM can help identify audience signals, right-fit media contexts, resonant messaging and insightful measurement. And now, alongside our partners at Aletheia, we have the evidence to show what a Values-driven approach can offer and how to apply it in the real world.

As part of our research, we surveyed over 5,000 US adults to examine effects on ad preference, likability and relevance from Values-aligned ads.

Not only does VDM deliver uplift in ad preference and predict impact, it also complements demographic data to enhance targeting.

We hope this VDM effectiveness study and playbook will help marketers see the value of applying Values-driven thinking across audiences, media, messaging and measurement. The opportunity is compelling.



The view from Aletheia



Alisa Miller

Chief AI Officer, Aletheia
Co-Founder, Pluralytics
Lead Inventor, [AI VDM Patent](#)



Colleen Howell, PhD

Research Director and Behavioral Scientist,
Aletheia

Across decades of marketing practice, we've seen the rise and fall of countless targeting tactics and creative approaches. Yet one truth has remained constant: the most effective marketing is built on deep human understanding. What's changed is *how we get there*.

At Aletheia, we believe we are standing at the threshold of a profound shift – one that reshapes how we define audiences, craft messaging, plan and place media, and ultimately drive brand growth. This report marks a critical step forward in the establishment of Values-Driven Marketing (VDM) as not just a theory, but a scalable, repeatable, and performance-proven discipline.

For years, marketers have tried to bridge the gap between brand purpose, audience insight, messaging and media strategy. Until now, the pieces rarely clicked into place in a way that drove both meaning and

measurable performance. Today, with the integration of advanced AI, patented analytics, and a Behavioral-Science-backed model of Values, that gap has closed.

This research, conducted in collaboration with WARC and LIONS Advisory, demonstrates what's possible when you move beyond demographics alone and instead target individuals and integrate the motivational forces that drive human behavior, combined with AI. The evidence is clear: when audiences are defined by their Values and motivations – and when messaging is precisely aligned in both substance and tone – ads perform significantly better. We're seeing double-digit lifts in ad preference, click-through rates, and relevance perception. In other words: better targeting and better ad creative, delivered through smarter strategy.

Importantly, this isn't just theory. It's a new kind of marketing science that is field-tested, AI-enabled, and ready for scale.

Values-Driven Marketing brings together the "Who" (your target audiences), the "How" (messaging that resonates), and the "Where" (media delivery and measurement) into a unified framework of impact. It provides marketers with a sharper bullseye, not only for brand-building but also for performance-driven efforts. And it allows us to connect with consumers in a way that is more authentic, emotionally resonant, and ultimately, more effective.

We are proud to contribute to this foundational report – and even prouder of what it represents: the emergence of Values-Driven Marketing as a new and necessary discipline for modern marketers in an era of Agentic AI and beyond.

We hope this sparks as much curiosity, possibility, and innovation in your organization as it has within ours and our clients, who have experienced significant benefits.

Experts interviewed for this report



Rex Briggs

Chief AI Officer,
Claritas



Chris Bryan

Associate Professor of Business,
Government, and Society,
McCombs School of Business, University of Texas (Austin)



Ravi Iyer

Managing Director,
USC Marshall School Neely Center



Chris Marchegiani

Worldwide Head of Brand Planning,
Insights, and Creative Strategy,
Amazon



Jennifer Posnikoff

SVP,
Global Brand Growth and Experience,
Virgin

Key takeaways

Throughout this report, we use the word 'Values' as defined by Behavioral Science. Values refer to desirable – although often unarticulated – goals that motivate how people think and act, and which form an ordered system of priorities that characterize us as individuals.

This precise meaning should not be confused with 'values' as moral or ethical principles. Our focus here is on the deep-rooted drivers of consumer behavior, not organizations' stance on ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) or other operating credos. Having established this important distinction, we can crystallize what Values-Driven Marketing is and why it's commercially relevant.



Values-Driven Marketing enables brands to define target audiences more tightly, identify each segment's underlying motivations, then leverage the resulting insights across every media and messaging decision.

- **Chapter 1** examines how Values-Driven Marketing addresses common pain-points, including the need for more accurate targeting, more resonant messaging and greater brand coherence.
- **Chapter 2** explores why Values-Driven Marketing helps brands respond to shifting consumer, shopper and media environments.



New research quantifies the impact of Values-Driven Marketing, including uplifts in ad preference (up to +23 points) and CTRs (up to +100 points). It also demonstrates the advantages of combining Values-based targeting with traditional demographics.

- The detailed findings can be found in **Chapters 3 & 4**. Our research shows that Values-Driven Marketing is effective across multiple categories, boosting ad preference, likability, perceived relevance and key performance metrics.
- **Chapter 5** provides a step-by-step playbook to help brands capitalize on the benefits of Values-Driven Marketing.

Chapter 1

What is Values-Driven Marketing?



Values-Driven Marketing informs strategic decision making

As Mark Ritson points out (in typically forthright style),¹ building a robust brand strategy boils down to three key questions:

 Who are we targeting? • How should we segment the category audience? • Which are our priority segments? Do they differ for demand-creation versus demand-capture?	 What do we want to stand for? • Above functional attributes, what outcomes and higher-order benefits should we promise? How do these reflect our audience's core motivations? • How do we want priority segments to think and feel about our brand, especially in buying situations?	 How will we achieve this? • What uplifts are required in perceptions and / or response levels among priority segments? • What media and messaging strategies (not tactics) will be most relevant and effective for each segment?
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Other inputs will be required, but Values-Driven Marketing is specifically designed to answer these pivotal questions. It also provides the diagnostic, evaluative and measurement tools needed to track progress and optimize as necessary.

To understand how Values-Driven Marketing delivers these advantages, let's start by defining our terms. What exactly do we mean by Values and how do they differ from moral or ethical beliefs?

¹ Mark Ritson, January 2021: "Three axioms and three questions that summarise all of brand strategy."

Values in Behavioral Science

When marketers think about Behavioral Science, there's a tendency to focus either on heuristics (the mental shortcuts and rules-of-thumb we use to simplify decision making), or the 'nudges' and other interventions that help drive behavior change.²

But the discipline goes much wider and deeper than that. It's grounded in understanding the psychological, cultural and emotional factors that shape our behaviors and responses.

One of the foundations of modern Behavioral Science is the Theory of Basic Values, developed by Professor Shalom Schwartz.

In his words, Values are “what is most important to us in life. Each of us holds numerous values (e.g., achievement, security, benevolence) with varying degrees of importance... **Values refer to desirable goals that motivate action and form an ordered system of priorities that characterize people as individuals.**”³

Schwartz's theory applies universally. Multiple studies have found that the same Values, in a similar hierarchical order, recur across diverse geographies, cultures, languages, religions, ages, genders and occupational groups. That's because Values are hard-wired into the human species.

Shalom H. Schwartz

Shalom H. Schwartz is Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Recipient of a distinguished Career Award from the American Sociological Association, he has been a member of the European Social Survey scientific board since 1997 and authored its Human Values Scale. His Value theories have been used in research in over 80 countries.



² An example would be this recent article describing '10 pricing hacks'

³ "An Overview of the Schwartz Theory of Basic Values."

Expert viewpoints

What pokes through the noise are the things that feel most directly connected to our highest priorities. That's where we devote our scarce time, attention and energy. Ultimately, we're talking about Values.



Chris Bryan

Associate Professor of Business, Government, and Society, McCombs School of Business, University of Texas (Austin)

Brands no longer exist to serve basic needs, but aspirational needs. It's about helping people buy things that indicate who they really are. Increasingly, brands are going to have to serve people's Values.



Ravi Iyer

Managing Director, USC Marshall School Neely Center

There is a continuum of differences in how people perceive the world, how they interact with brands, and how they make decisions. The challenge for a marketer is being able to determine who has different Values and to align the creative messages with those Values.



Rex Briggs

Chief AI Officer, Claritas

Values enhance audience segmentation and targeting

Values are the motivational foundations for attitudes and behaviors. We are all driven to affirm or protect the Values that matter most to us in life. Our research supported this link – transmitting the right Signals to the right ValuesType drives performance uplifts of 1.8X to 2X on average.

As with other aspects of Behavioral Science, this usually happens subconsciously. The exception is when a decision brings two opposing Values, both of which are of high importance to the individual, into direct conflict.

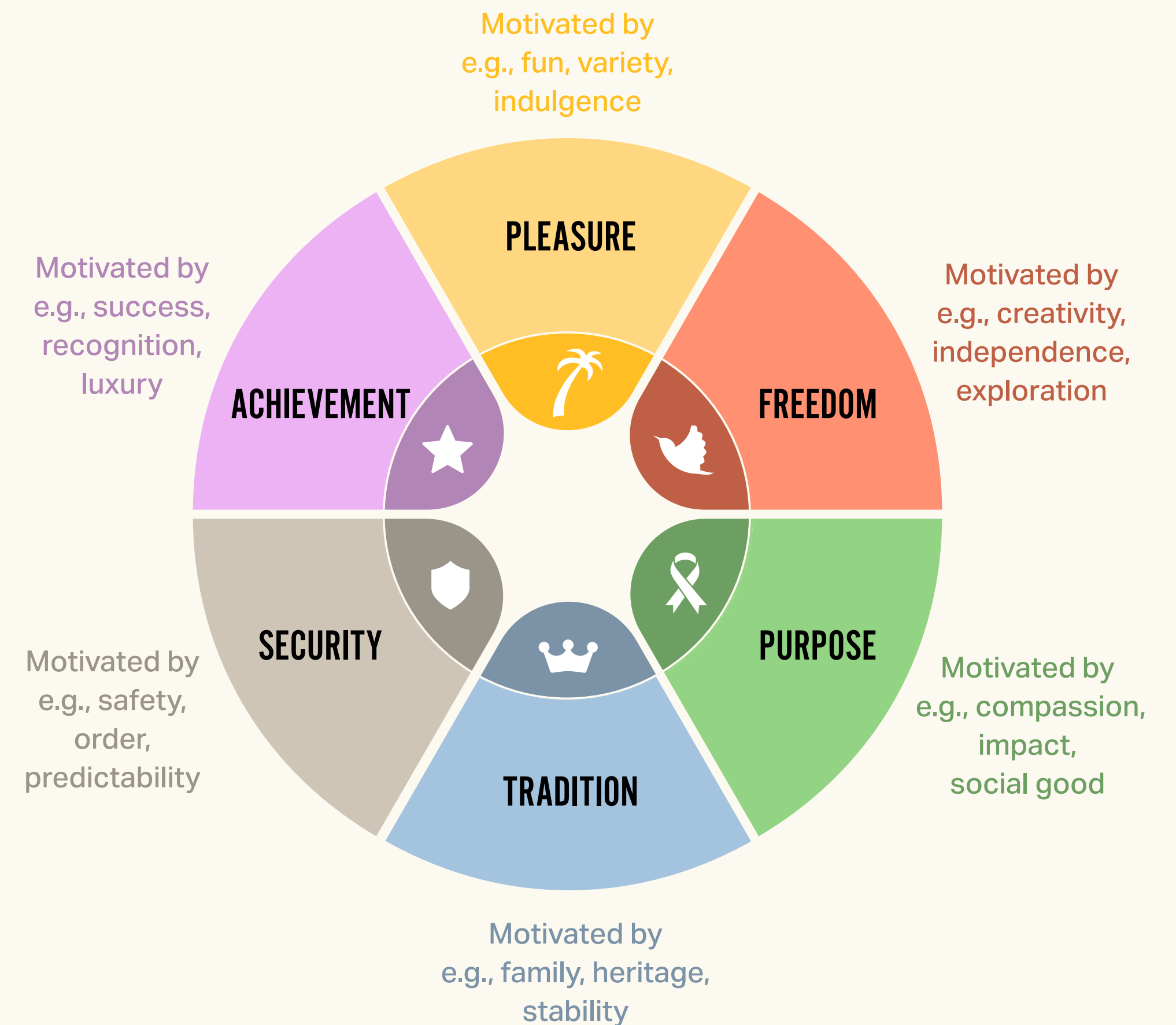
Because people reflexively think and act in ways that align with their dominant Values, Values are strongly predictive of attitudes, behaviors and responses to stimuli. This

presents a significant opportunity for brands. By adding a layer of insight beyond demographics, Values-Driven Marketing provides powerful answers to the fundamental question of “who should we target?”

Schwartz identified ten discrete Values. Subsequent work has refined these to the six that are of greatest relevance to marketers. These are the Values that most directly influence brand affinity, purchasing decisions and loyalty. Each can be embodied as a distinct ValuesType.

In Chapter 5, we will examine how advanced research techniques support segmentation of any brand or category by ValuesType.

The Six ValuesTypes



Knowing that someone says a particular Value is important tells you very little about whether it's a high enough priority to drive their behavior... You need to know whether it's central to their Values system, whether it's their focus.

Chris Bryan

Associate Professor of Business, Government, and Society,
McCombs School of Business, University of Texas (Austin)



Values-driven audience insights inform brand positioning

The second imperative that marketers must address is what their brand currently stands for and how that should evolve moving forward.

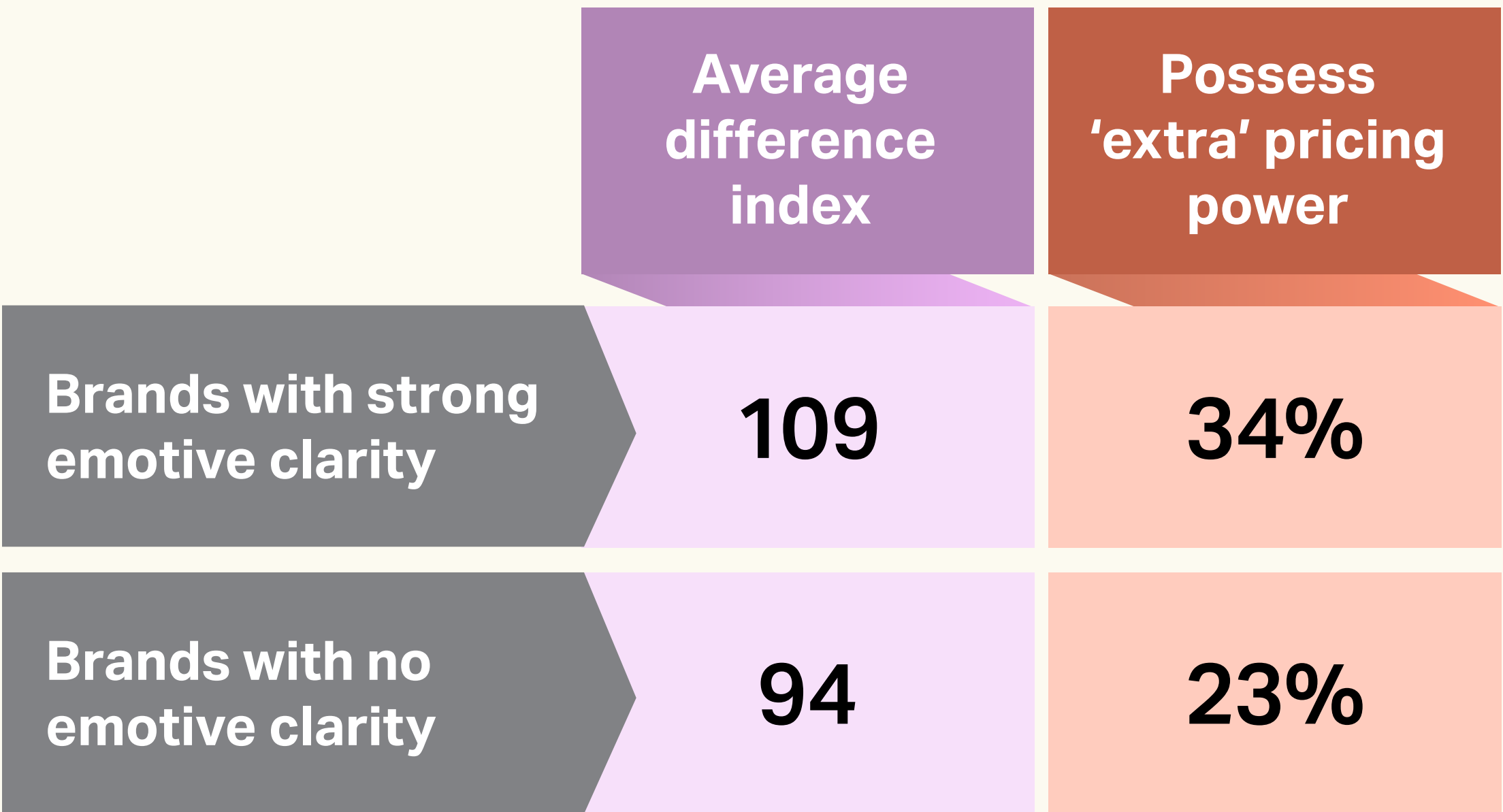
Mark Ritson makes the important point that this should be decided after priority segments have been defined. To be truly customer-centric, brands need to understand their audience’s needs and wants before determining how best to meet them.

How a brand positions itself will dictate the extent to which it resonates with different ValuesTypes. Brands that are strongly aligned with the Values that matter most to their primary audience have an in-built advantage in building trust and fostering deeper, more lasting connections.

Kantar has a term for this alignment: **emotive clarity**.⁴ Its research shows how clearly expressed Values imbue a brand with a “distinct, emotionally driven personality type” that is highly attractive to consumers who share the same Values.

This brings tangible commercial benefits. Analysis of Kantar’s BrandZ database indicates that brands with strong emotive clarity are perceived as meaningfully different – and are hence likely to possess extra pricing power.⁵

Emotive clarity drives brand advantage



Source: Kantar

⁴ Kantar, July 2023: “Imbuing brands with a sense of difference.”

⁵ ‘Pricing Power’ is a metric used by Kantar to describe “the ability of a brand to retain choice at a higher price”.

Values-Driven Marketing helps create brand distinction

Brands can leverage Values in different ways to identify the optimal positioning.

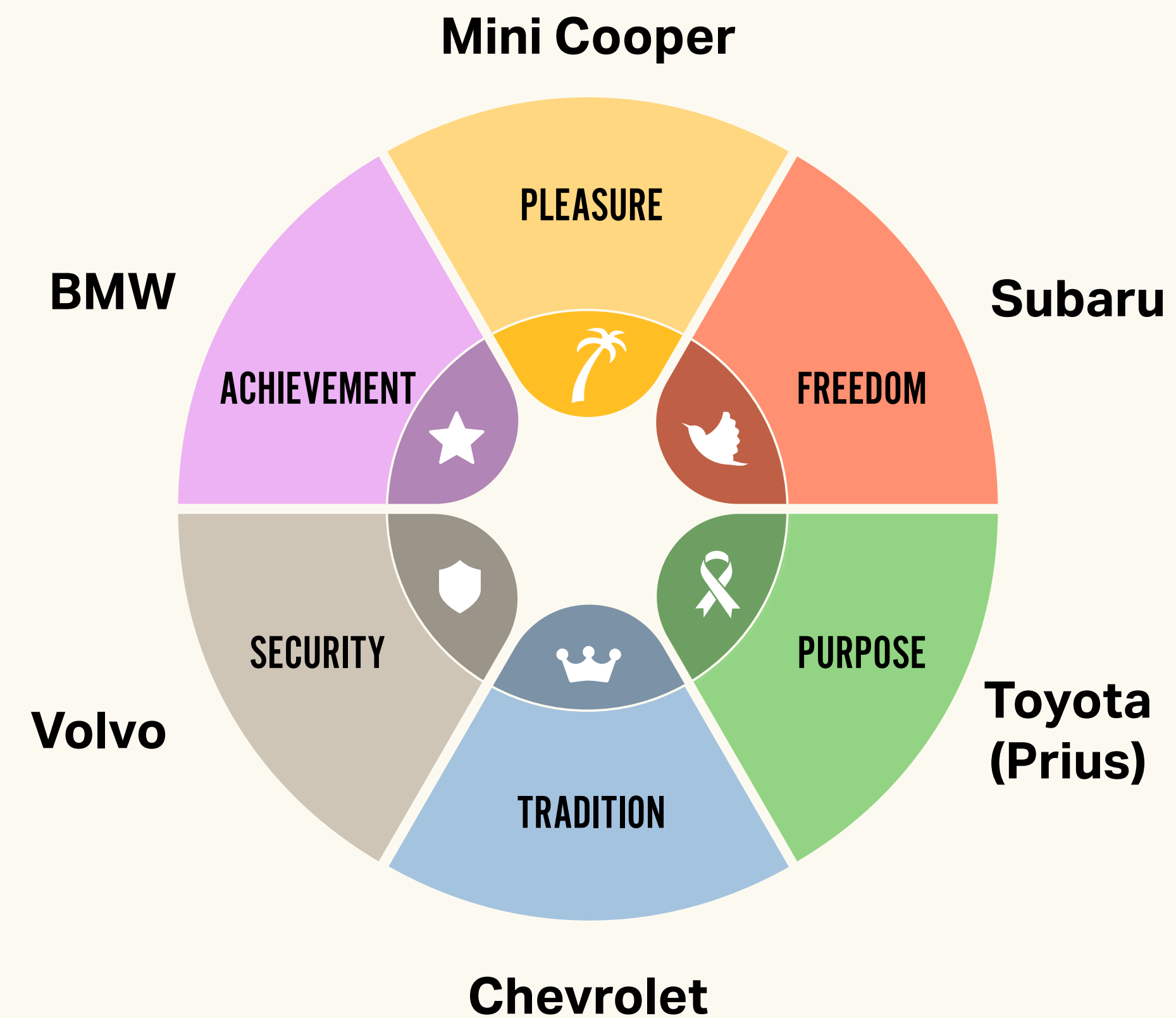
Some will choose to align themselves directly with the motivations of the dominant Value Type within their sector. Others will seek competitive advantage by addressing a Value Type that has a sizeable category presence but is currently underserved by the market.

Either way, brands need to stand for something. They must also find meaningful ways to stand out in crowded, noisy markets.

The Values that a brand is seen to signify – especially when supported by ownable, memorable brand assets⁶ – can help establish the necessary distinctiveness.

As an example, consider the automotive sector. Many marques offer comparable design, performance and pricing. Yet each resonates differently in the audience's hearts and minds – in large part because of the Values it is seen to embody.

How automotive brands embody distinct Values



⁶ WARC: "What we know about brand identity and brand assets."

Values-Driven Marketing aids consistency and cut-through

In the fragmented, low-attention environments that characterize the modern media landscape, it's more challenging than ever for brands to maintain a clear identity.

WARC's report on effectiveness trends from the 2025 Cannes Lions emphasized the importance of having a system for showing up coherently across all touchpoints.

Values-Driven Marketing offers an actionable framework. Focusing on the Values that matter most to the specified audience and prioritizing those Values in messaging and every other aspect of the brand experience help ensure all activities are aimed at the same strategic goal and delivered with maximum consistency.

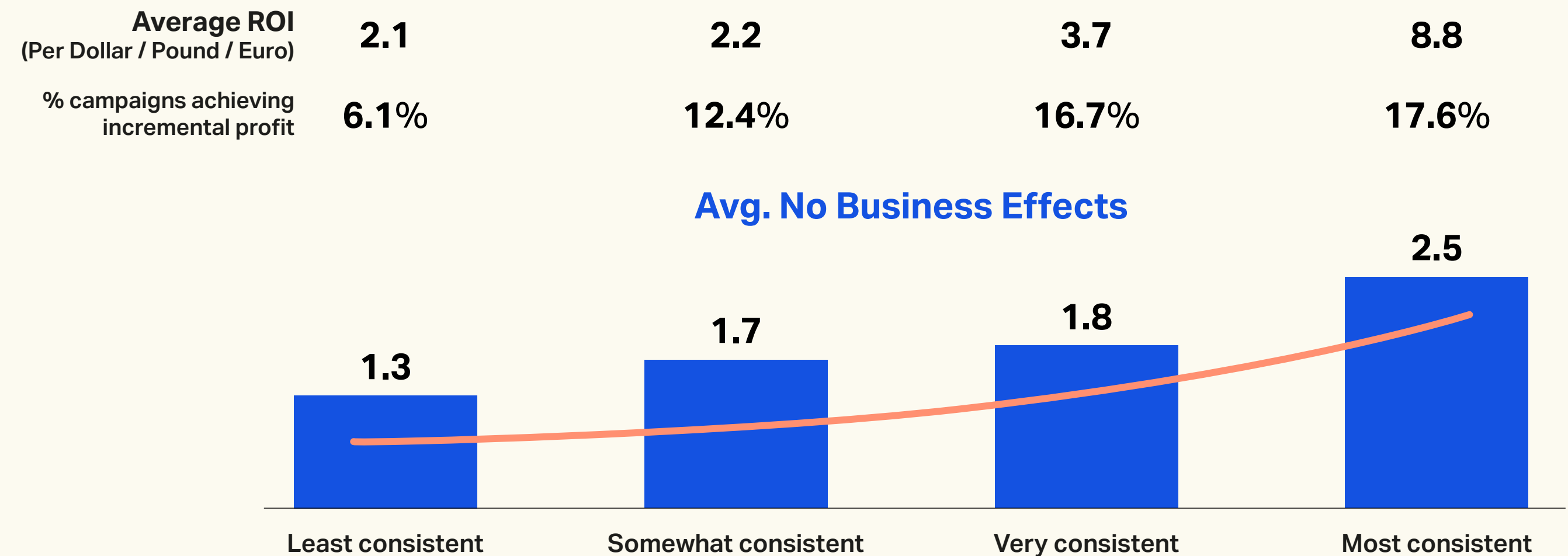
This delivers an additional advantage. Brands that are recognizably consistent in word and deed are more likely to be seen as authentic, an attribute that 90% of consumers⁸ say influences their perceptions and buying decisions.

Values-Driven Marketing can also help brands to cut through. Insight into the underlying motivations of different ValuesTypes allows advertisers to craft more relevant, action-inspiring messages, then place them in the channels and contexts which are likely to deliver the greatest impact.

⁷ WARC x LIONS: "Creative Impact Unpacked. 11 effectiveness trends from Cannes Lions 2025."

⁸ Forbes, January 2023

Consistency drives business outcomes



Brands split into Creative Consistency Score quartiles, matched to the UK and US Effie case library (measured over 5 years, 136 UK & US brands)

Source: System1, Effie: The Creative Dividend

We've found a lot of benefit in combining Values and motivations. What does it look like when someone values Security, but as a result feels they're missing out on excitement? Combining values that don't quite seem to go together can lead to really interesting work.

Chris Marchegiani

Worldwide Head of Brand Planning, Insights, and Creative Strategy, Amazon



Values-Driven Marketing delivers strategic *and* executional benefits

Applying Values Theory, and the insights from Behavioral Science that underpin it, is still an emerging practice in marketing. But the potential advantages are clear. It can help provide a unified answer to the fundamental questions of "who are we targeting?", "what do we want to stand for?" and "how will we achieve our goals?"

Audience

Values-Driven Marketing helps inform brand positioning by pinpointing the core motivations of different ValuesTypes, and the extent to which the category and/or specific competitors are currently satisfying those needs and wants. It can also flag whether targeting adjacent ValuesTypes (for instance, Tradition and Security) is likely to generate incremental growth.

Media

Values-Driven Marketing helps identify the most effective and efficient channels to reach different ValuesTypes, and which touchpoints are most likely to generate a positive response. This extends beyond paid media, guiding the selection of sponsorships, brand partnerships and creators / influencers.

Message

Values-Driven Marketing helps define which messages will be most motivating to different ValuesTypes, and the language, imagery and tone that will be most effective. It establishes content guidelines, maximizing messaging consistency across campaigns and channels. It also generates content benchmarks, allowing ongoing optimization.

Impact

Values-Driven Marketing can provide a yardstick to measure actual vs. predicted response by audience, channel, content type and execution across both 'brand' and 'performance' investments. Models that combine brand, segment and messaging metrics can be used to uncover deeper performance patterns and drive further uplifts in affinity and conversion.

These strategic benefits can now be translated into day-to-day execution. With AI powering advances in audience profiling, media targeting, messaging analysis and impact measurement, there are increasing opportunities for brands to operationalize Values-Driven Marketing at scale.

Expert viewpoints

If you get Values right, you build long-term brand equity while still delivering short-term performance.



Jennifer Posnikoff
SVP,
Global Brand Growth and Experience,
Virgin

We use Values and motivations to better understand the role we might play in someone's life and what they want out of an experience.



Chris Marchegiani
Worldwide Head of Brand
Planning, Insights, and Creative
Strategy, Amazon

Every marketer has their own ideas about what their audience cares about. But when you ask yourself what Values that audience has, you can start thinking about things you might not have considered before: new influencers you might approach; new stores or TV shows you might want to place your product in; and new products that might appeal.



Ravi Iyer
Managing Director,
USC Marshall School Neely Center

Chapter 2

Why Values-Driven Marketing is more relevant than ever

Knowing where the bullseye is

Heightened competition, growing ROI pressures and the constant requirement to do more with less mean marketers need to make more accurate media choices and better-informed messaging decisions.

While Values-Driven Marketing obviously doesn't guarantee instant success, it can help brands get closer to the center of the bullseye. Advertisers can then recalibrate by deploying the evaluation and measurement tools that support the discipline, achieving increased precision over time.

From a wider perspective, Values-Driven Marketing is a strategically intelligent response to changes in the consumer, shopper and media landscapes.

It helps brands navigate three important shifts.

#1

Shifts in consumers' decision-making criteria

#2

Shifts in shopper behaviors

#3

Shifts in media environments



#1. Shifts in consumers' decision-making criteria

Chapter 1 described how Values motivate attitudes and behaviors. This process often happens subconsciously, meaning people can struggle to explain why they think or act in a particular way.

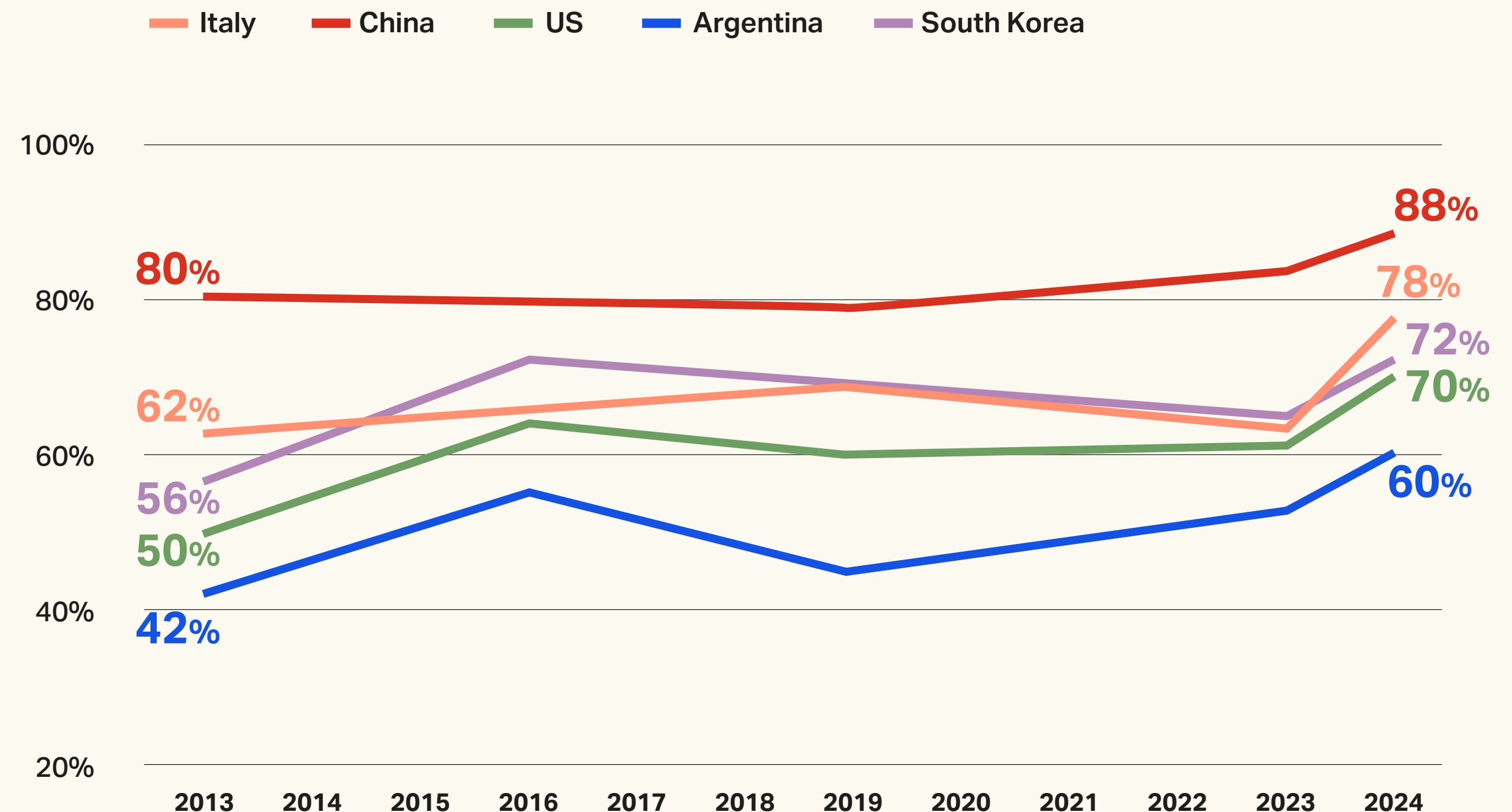
However, there is a set of more overt 'values' that consumers can articulate. These include both externally focused beliefs like 'climate responsibility' and 'wealth redistribution,' and internally focused ones such as 'personal autonomy' and 'living in the moment.'

Since 2013, Ipsos has tracked the extent to which people agree with the statement "I tend to buy brands that reflect my personal values." Over the period, agreement across 19 major countries has risen from 53% to 69%.

Other studies show the same trend. Research by Google Cloud and Harris Poll found that "82% of shoppers now prefer a brand whose values align with their own."⁹

It's important not to confuse the deep-rooted, underlying motivations on which Values-Driven Marketing is predicated with more consciously held beliefs. But in a world where consumers are eager for brands to "reflect who I am and what I stand for" (as Ipsos puts it), there may be opportunities to connect the two.

% agree "I tend to buy brands that reflect my personal values"



Source: Ipsos Global Trends 2024

⁹ Google Cloud / Harris Poll: "Data shows shoppers prioritize sustainability and values."

Brand Trust sharpens insights into how decisions are made

Emotion is the tissue that binds Values to attitudes and behaviors.* How we feel about brands, and which we choose to buy and use, are often expressions of an emotional need to affirm the Values that matter most to us.

This makes 'Brand Trust' a useful lens to examine the drivers of consumers' purchasing decisions. As a measure, it's emotionally oriented, individualized and less prone to over-rationalization by survey respondents.

Edelman's 'Trust Barometer' demonstrates the accelerating importance of brand trust, especially among Gen Z (who overall are suffering from an "epidemic of distrust"). Globally, 59% of consumers – regardless of age – would buy a brand they trusted even if it was more expensive; and 67% would recommend it to others.¹⁰

Many factors determine the level of trust enjoyed by individual brands, including perceived competence, dependability, integrity and sheer familiarity.¹¹ But a key component is the extent to which the brand resonates emotionally.

By creating that resonance, Values-Driven Marketing helps build the trust brands need to win.

* Schwartz is explicit in drawing this connection. As he puts it, "Values are linked inextricably to affect. When values are activated, they become infused with feeling. People for whom independence is an important value become aroused if their independence is threatened, despair when they are helpless to protect it, and are happy when they can enjoy it."¹²

A guiding principle of Values-Driven Marketing, therefore, is that the most effective way to trigger a genuine emotional response from consumers is to activate deeply held Values rather than appeal to a particular emotion overtly.

"It is more important to trust the brands I buy or use today than it was in the past"

	% Agreeing	Change since 2021
Ages 18 – 26	79%	+8
Ages 27 – 42	76%	+2
Ages 43 – 58	69%	+5
Ages 59+	61%	+5

10 Edelman Trust Barometer, 2023

11 WARC, 2024: "What we know about brand trust."

12 "An Overview of the Schwartz Theory of Basic Values."

#2. Shifts in shopper behaviors

In a digital-first world, people often find themselves confronted by abundant information and seemingly unlimited choice.

The result is what Google and The Behavioural Architects call 'the messy middle,' that critical space on the path-to-purchase where shoppers cycle between complementary states of exploration and evaluation. To reduce cognitive effort and manage information overload, people employ a range of mental shortcuts.

Google's main focus is the impact 'nudges' and other interventions drawn from Behavioral Science have on shopper choice.¹³ In addition to availability (i.e., simply being present during the decision-making process), it explores how Social Proof, Category Heuristics, Authority Bias, Scarcity Bias, the Power of Free, and the Power of Now drive uplifts in purchase intent.

This prioritization isn't surprising: Google wants marketers to test a wider range of signals through increased investment in search advertising. But the research highlights an equally important truth. As it reports: "In every category, many shoppers remained

loyal to their favorite brand even when the alternative offered a vastly superior proposition."

Google is clear on why this happens. It's the result of brands forging an emotional connection with shoppers and leveraging associations that are "bound up in our sense of self." In other words, precisely the sort of advantage that Values-Driven Marketing is designed to create.

Marketers are fundamentally interested in moving people to action. But they recognize there are all kinds of steps that need to happen before someone will pull the trigger. That's where Values-Driven Marketing comes in.

Chris Bryan

Associate Professor of Business, Government, and Society, McCombs School of Business, University of Texas (Austin)



Our decision-making apparatus comprises both reason and emotion... Brands seek to cultivate an emotional connection with consumers.

The resulting associations, often bound up in our sense of ourselves and who we want to be, are a powerful source of behavioral change.

Source: Google, "Decoding Decisions – making sense of the messy middle."

¹³ Google, "Decoding Decisions – making sense of the messy middle."

Values-Driven Marketing is also effective in ‘fast shopping’ contexts

Implicit to the notion of 'the messy middle' is that there's a significant time gap between a need being recognized and a purchase being completed. But not all online shopping decisions are 'slow'.

Social platforms and retail media networks alike are intent on collapsing the path-to-purchase. Both want discovery and purchase to be connected by a few seconds and a couple of clicks. And both want the entire process to happen within the confines of their site.

In 2024, social commerce sales reached \$913 billion. In-stream purchases on TikTok alone grew by 120%, with many buyers new to brand.¹⁴ Globally, 73% of shoppers claim to have already bought something through a social media platform.¹⁵

Meanwhile, Amazon has doubled upper-funnel ad revenues over the last four years. Such spend now represents a meaningful slice of the \$60 billion in advertising dollars it's projected to attract in 2025.¹⁶

Values-Driven Marketing delivers important advantages in spontaneous, 'fast shopping' situations as well as more considered ones. By providing clear and compelling signals tailored to the motivations of a specific ValuesType, brands can more readily trigger an emotional response, stimulate interest and de-risk the purchase decision.

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Jing Daily, July 2025

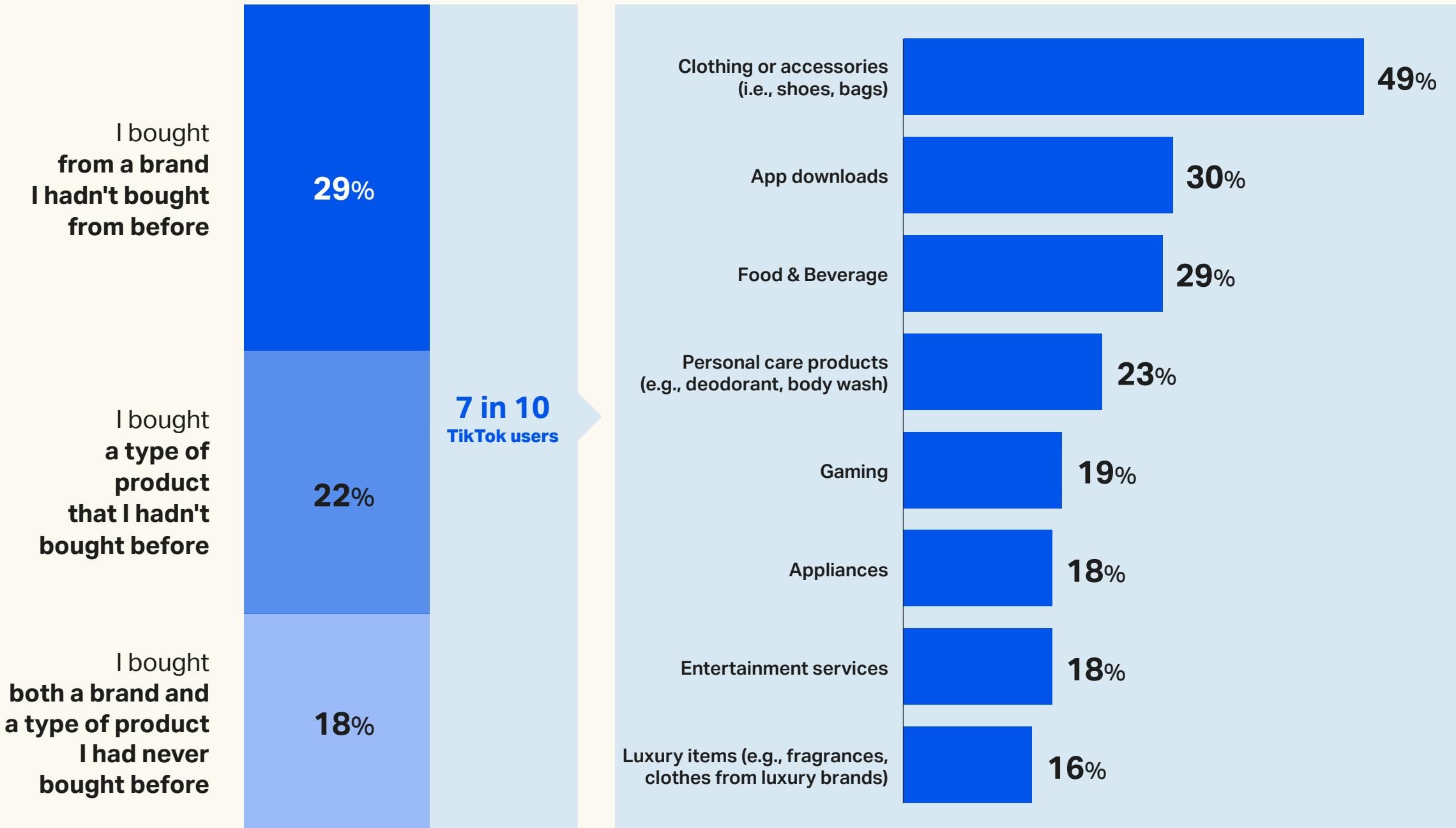
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WARC, "The Future of Media 2025."

16

WARC, May 2025

Impact of TikTok content on first-time purchases



Q: Thinking about products you have purchased after seeing content on TikTok, have you ever bought from a brand or bought a type of product that you've never bought before?

Q: Which of the following product categories did you purchase for the first time after seeing content on TikTok?

Source: [WARC, November 2024](#)

#3. Shifts in media environments

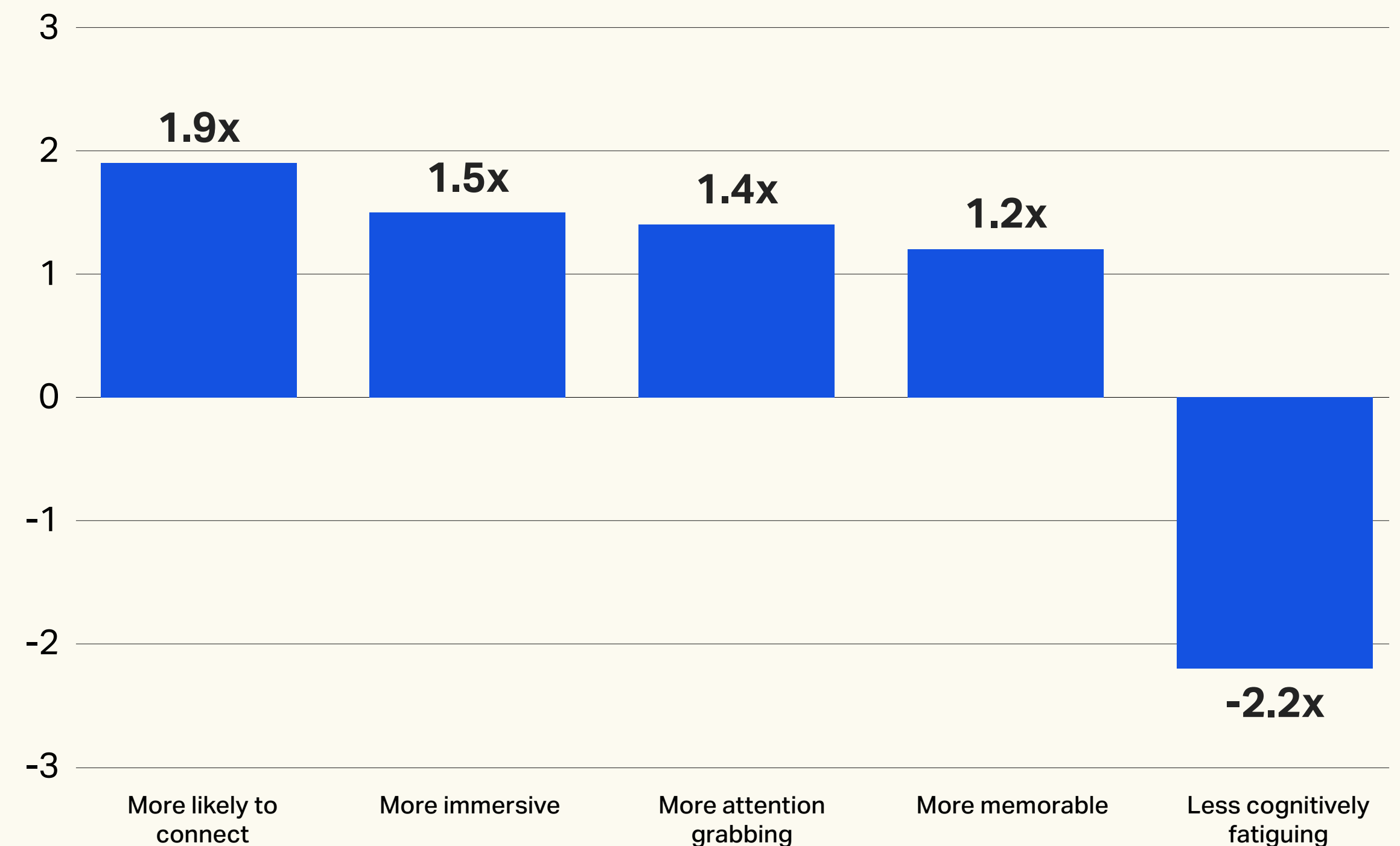
Fragmentation has made it more difficult and more expensive to build reach. One consequence is that the average campaign now spans nine different channels.¹⁷

Multi-channel campaigns pose obvious challenges for media planning, including de-duplicating reach, capping frequency to minimize waste and measuring cross-channel effects. It also has implications for content creation.

Brands today simply need to produce more content. Maximizing effectiveness requires fit-for-platform assets: creative performs better when specifically tailored to channel.¹⁸ In parallel, the platforms themselves are asking for more content to deliver AI-powered 'optimization by outcome'. To feed its algorithm, Meta already requests 20+ creative treatments per campaign.¹⁹ While AI can help accelerate origination and production, marketers are still left with more content to manage.

As Dr Grace Kite has pointed out, modern brand-building involves mastering "lots of littles... where marketers make something big out of all the small exposures they deliver."²⁰ This can only be achieved if a brand's communications are truly coherent. Messaging that transmits clear and consistent signals across multiple channels drives attention and engagement. Consumers also find such messages easier to process, and therefore more memorable.

Coherent omnichannel campaigns score better on all metrics



Note: Data from The Trade Desk Intelligence and PA Consulting, The Untapped Opportunity of Omnichannel, October 2024. The study includes quantitative surveys (in the US, UK and Germany), ethnographic media diary (in the US, UK, Germany), and controlled tests (in the US, the UK).

¹⁷ World Federation of Advertisers, February 2025

¹⁸ Tom Roach of Jellyfish, July 2023

¹⁹ WARC, February 2025: "How to get the most out of AI-enabled marketing platforms."

²⁰ Magic Numbers: "In brand building now, it's the little things that count."

Source: WARC, "The Future of Media, 2025."

Values-Driven Marketing helps unify ‘brand’ and ‘performance’ investments

Recent years have seen an inexorable shift towards 'performance' channels. The CMO Survey, published by Deloitte, Duke University's Fuqua School of Business and the American Marketing Association, shows that 68.8% of US advertising budgets were allocated to short-term performance tactics in 2024. That's an increase of nine percentage points over the 2023 figures.²¹

Under pressure to show quarter-to-quarter growth, many organizations have deprioritized long-term brand building. WARC's 'The Multiplier Effect'²² highlights the commercial cost of this decision. Switching from a performance-only strategy to a combined approach boosts total revenue returns by 25% to 100%. The median uplift is an incredible 90%.

One of the main reasons for these results is that strengthening equity improves brands' ability to convert through performance-driven advertising. Hence the report's title: 'brand' and 'performance' investments multiply each other. Rather than being treated separately, they should be thought of as twin drivers of a growth strategy.

The paper recommends that marketers concentrate on developing "expansive communications platforms that integrate brand and performance messaging." Such platforms are hallmarked by their use of distinctive brand assets and (ideally) a guiding idea that mitigates the threat of creative fragmentation. Through a laser focus on the audience's underlying motivations, Values-Driven Marketing can provide a further unifying force.

²¹ Source: [The CMO Survey, Fall 2024](#)

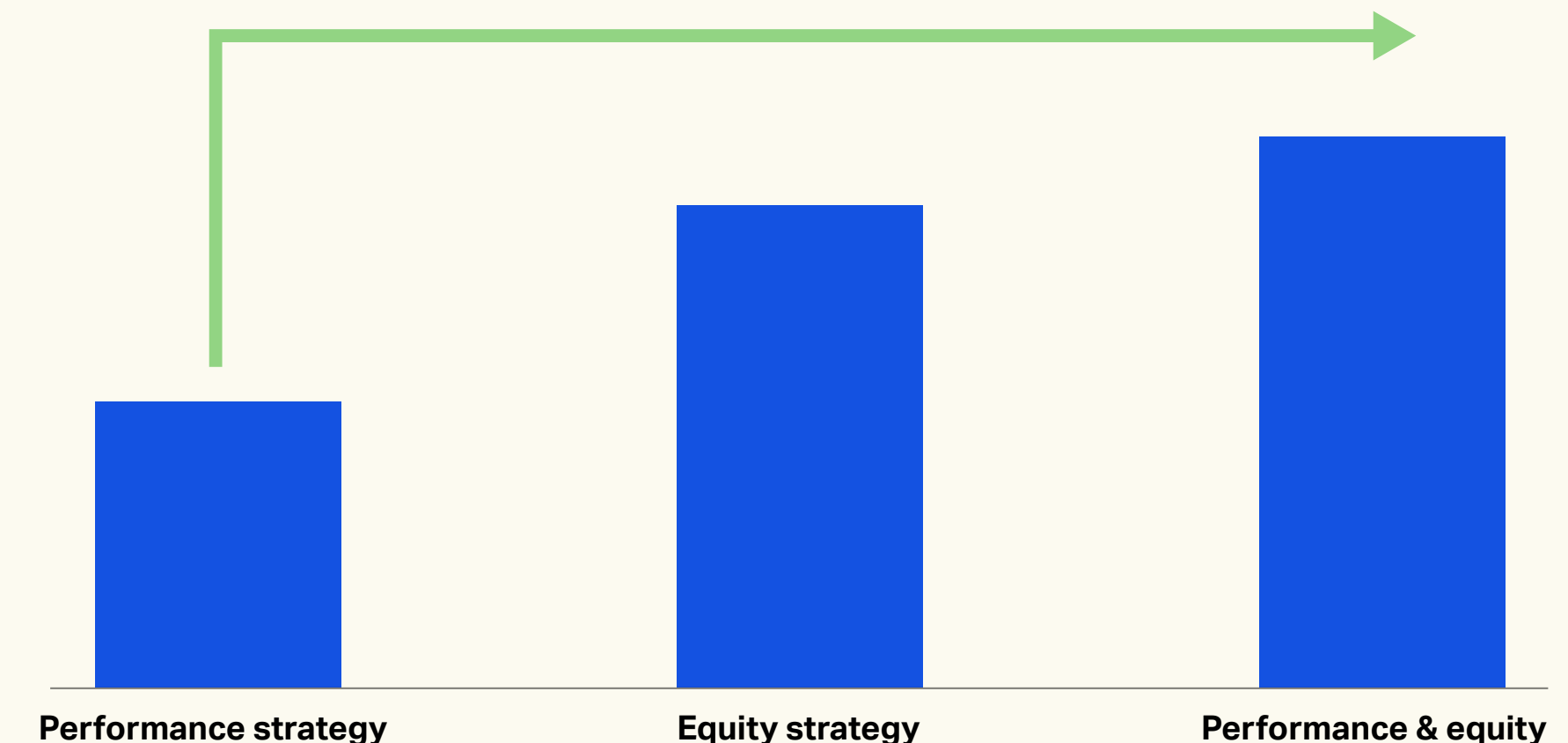
²² Source: WARC, ["The Multiplier Effect."](#)

Performance and brand advertising work better together

The Brand Advantage

Median revenue ROI increase when moving from a performance strategy to a mixed approach

+90%



-40%

The Performance Penalty

Median revenue ROI decrease when moving from a mixed to a performance strategy

Source: Analytic Partners ROI Genome
WARC, ["The Multiplier Effect."](#)

Expert viewpoints

Values matter in both buying and creating content, and authenticity is essential. If your Values don't align, audiences will know immediately.



Jennifer Posnikoff
SVP,
Global Brand Growth and Experience,
Virgin

It might be applied a little bit differently from one end of the continuum to the other, but Values-Driven Marketing is a universally valuable concept.



Rex Briggs
Chief AI Officer,
Claritas

There's a role for motivations and Values irrespective of whether you're brand building or doing performance-driving activities. If Values are deeply ingrained, they're not likely to be given up just because someone is in or out of the market at that particular time.



Chris Marchegiani
Worldwide Head of Brand Planning,
Insights, and Creative Strategy,
Amazon

Chapter 3

Values-Driven Marketing and the performance advantage



Decoding brand messaging

We’ve already examined what Values-Driven Marketing is, its foundations in Behavioral Science, and why it’s an effective response to shifts in the consumer, shopper and media landscapes.

The key question marketers will be asking now is: "Does Values-Driven Marketing deliver positive, commercially measurable outcomes?"

Answering that requires understanding how Values are communicated and how they can be objectively measured.

Nearly every piece of communication – deliberately or otherwise – emits Values cues through its language, imagery, tone-of-voice and style. This holds true for almost all messaging, including websites, in-store signage, packaging, creator content and every form of advertising.

Analysis of millions of messages has identified five Values Signals. Each has a focus, containing specific cues and motivators that are largely unique to that Signal.

The extent to which a message contains these Signals, alone or in combination, predicts whether it is more (or less) likely to appeal to a particular ValuesType.

The five Values Signals and what each signifies

Signal 1	Signal 2	Signal 3												
• Make the most of now • Ignore the hype • Experience life, not theories • Live on own terms • Collecting passions • Game on, always • Fun-first • Say what you mean • Build something • Known brands, smart deals	• Global lens • Expression matters • Seek deeper meaning • Get involved, make impact • Move ideas forward • Protect the planet, every day • Stand up for fairness • Stay informed • Forge own path • Explore what's new	• Faith as guide • Celebrate tradition • Honor and duty • Invest in community • Make home special • Embrace the outdoors • Trust in time-tested • Simplicity is joy • Preserve and protect • Spend wisely												
Signal 4	Signal 5													
• Chart success • Build Influence • Status cues • On trend • No risk, no reward • Shopping is an experience • Brands matter • Signal environmental protection • Faith influences outlook	• Home is where the heart is • Safety matters • Avoid risk • Cherish the good old days • Look ahead with caution • Rely on oneself • Neighbors and family first • Keep life practical • Make every dollar count	<table><tr><th>Signal</th><th>Focus</th></tr><tr><td>1</td><td>Living for today, experiential</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>Expression and exploration</td></tr><tr><td>3</td><td>Simplicity, time-tested, duty</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>Success and influence</td></tr><tr><td>5</td><td>Safety and frugality</td></tr></table>	Signal	Focus	1	Living for today, experiential	2	Expression and exploration	3	Simplicity, time-tested, duty	4	Success and influence	5	Safety and frugality
Signal	Focus													
1	Living for today, experiential													
2	Expression and exploration													
3	Simplicity, time-tested, duty													
4	Success and influence													
5	Safety and frugality													

Systems and models exist to recognize the presence of Values Signals

An example is Pluralytics, Aletheia’s patented Messaging + Audience Intelligence platform, which uses AI to analyze any piece of marketing communication to measure the Values Signals it contains.

The result is the ValuesVoice Index level, which shows the strength of all five Values Signals on a scale of 1 – 250. Scores above 100 mean the Signal is likely to be perceived and received by the audience.

The resulting profile pinpoints which ValuesTypes will be attracted by the message. For example: when a message scores over 100 for Signals 2 and 4, the model predicts a high probability of appeal to the Purpose ValuesType.

The absolute strength of individual Signals (relative to the others) is also highly predictive of likely response rates.

Messaging can be evaluated either on a per-message basis or in aggregate to determine how effectively and consistently the desired Values Signals are being communicated.

Values Signal emphasis by ValuesType

ValuesType	Primary Signals	Con-signals (Low Value)
 Tradition	High Signal 3 & 5	Low signal 2
 Purpose	High Signal 2 & 4	—
 Achievement	High Signal 4	—

Note: Low ValuesVoice Index numbers can also provide relevant indicators. For the Tradition type, a low score for Signal 2 – which focuses on ‘self-expression’ and ‘exploration’ – is a powerful marker when it appears in conjunction with high scores for Signals 3 and 5

Values Signals in practice

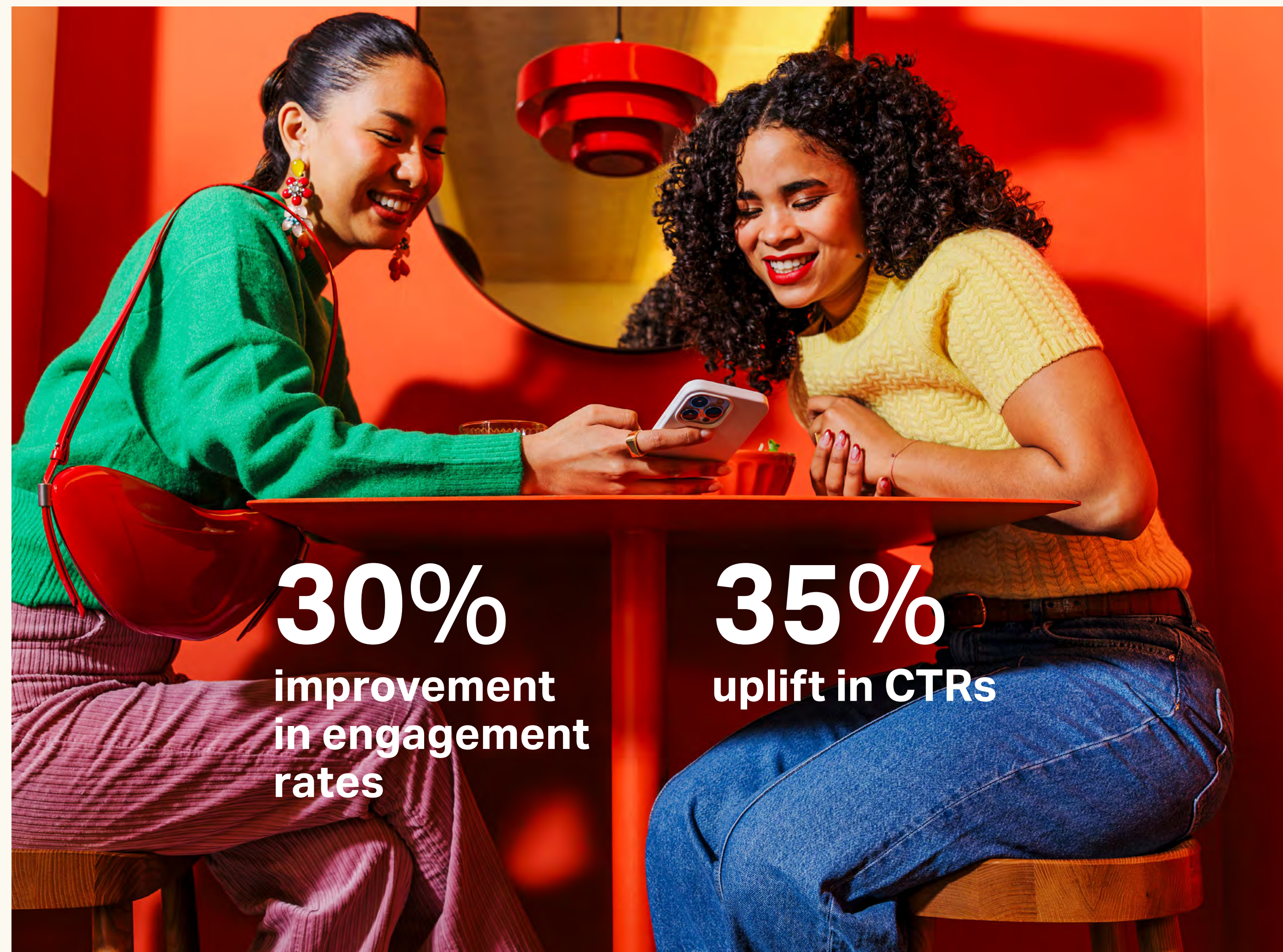
A leading global science and technology company wanted to make its Facebook budget work harder. Analysis had revealed significant differences in how individual messages were performing... but the company did not have a strong understanding of why it was seeing these results, nor how to improve them.

After audience and messaging intelligence analysis of Facebook activity over the previous 12 months, ValuesVoice indexing identified clear patterns: the best performing executions contained a consistent set of Values Signals, expressed in similar language, tone-of-voice and style.

This learning led to the creation of new content benchmarks. Every subsequent social ad was scored against these metrics, with AI used to optimize executions as necessary. The results of the analysis also underscored a strategic challenge at the brand level: the need for more warmth and connection in all communications. Benchmarking allowed the company to establish and scale this best practice.

The results were immediate: the company saw a 30% improvement in engagement rates and a 35% uplift in CTRs when content and audience were fully aligned. Better yet, it now possessed a robust and repeatable methodology for generating higher returns from its significant social media budget.

You can read more about the case study [here](#).



Putting Values-Driven Marketing to the test

GoHealth Urgent Care is a national on-demand care network that partners with leading health systems to operate co-branded urgent care centers across the United States. While GoHealth Urgent Care itself does not provide medical services (this is the responsibility of the health systems' partners), it supplies the retail, technology, operations, and marketing services that enable its joint venture partners to expand patient access and enhance the overall urgent care experience.

Historically, it has targeted by age and life stage. Key segments are college students, families with children and new movers.

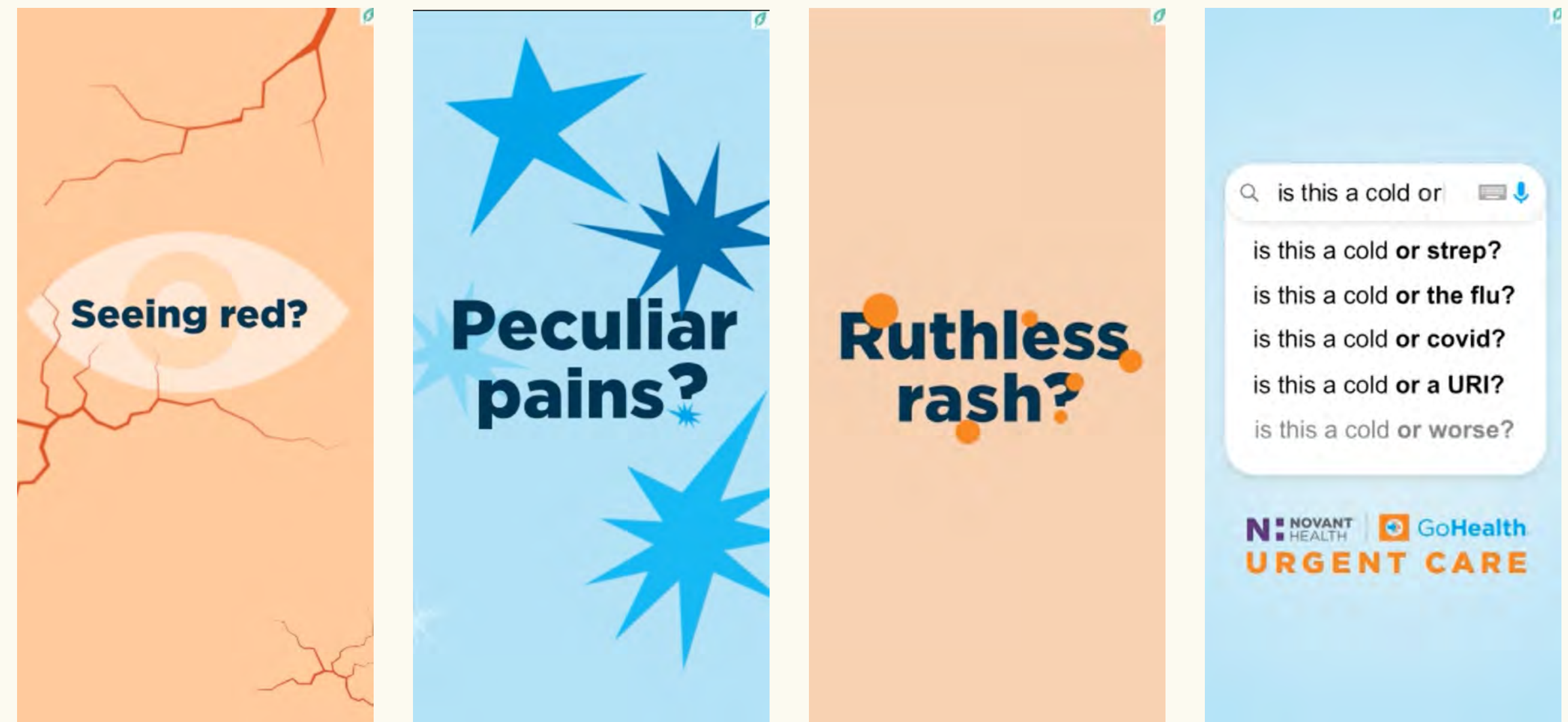
GoHealth Urgent Care commissioned Aletheia to conduct Values-Driven audience research. The national study identified Achievement and Freedom ValuesTypes as the priority targets:

- **Achievement:** values career success, high social status, public recognition and being on-trend.
- **Freedom:** values independence, non-conformity, exploration, creativity and curiosity.

These findings were validated (and in some instances refined) by a regional survey.

GoHealth Urgent Care's existing pool of creative (display, video, etc.) was analyzed using ValuesVoice indexing. Most units contained sufficient signaling cues to appeal to the priority Values-driven audiences, but four were identified as having particularly high potential. None of the executions were modified in any way.

Four ads were identified as having particularly high potential



Transmitting the right Signals to the right ValueSType drives performance uplifts

To assess the impact of aligning Values-driven messaging with Values-driven targeting, GoHealth Urgent Care and Aletheia conducted an A/B test.

The selected ads were run against three defined audiences:

- GoHealth’s standard audiences of college students, families with children and new movers (n = 42.9 million total impressions).
- An audience profiled as matching the Achievement ValueSType (n = 413K total impressions).
- An audience profiled as matching the Freedom ValueSType (n = 479K total impressions).

As the chart shows, ads targeted at the Freedom ValueSType outperformed those targeted at the standard audience by 82%. With 100% uplift in CTR, those targeted at the Achievement ValueSType performed even better.

The maximum CTR achieved by an ad targeting the standard audience was 0.15%. In every instance, ads targeting ValueSType audiences equaled or bettered this figure.

Based on this test, the evidence is clear. When creative is properly aligned, targeting ValueSType audiences results in significantly higher levels of engagement and interest compared to targeting by demographics alone.

	Average CTR	Lowest CTR	Highest CTR
✓ Standard target	0.11%	0.09%	0.15%
★ Achievement target	0.22%	0.18%	0.25%
🕊 Freedom target	0.20%	0.15%	0.25%

Research by Amazon Ads reinforces the point

An approach that combines demographics with consumers' values, communities and behaviors can help you reach more customers that are relevant to your brand – without preemptively excluding valuable audiences.

That is the main finding from a recent study by Amazon Ads and Strat7 Crowd.DNA, a cultural insights and strategy consultancy.²³

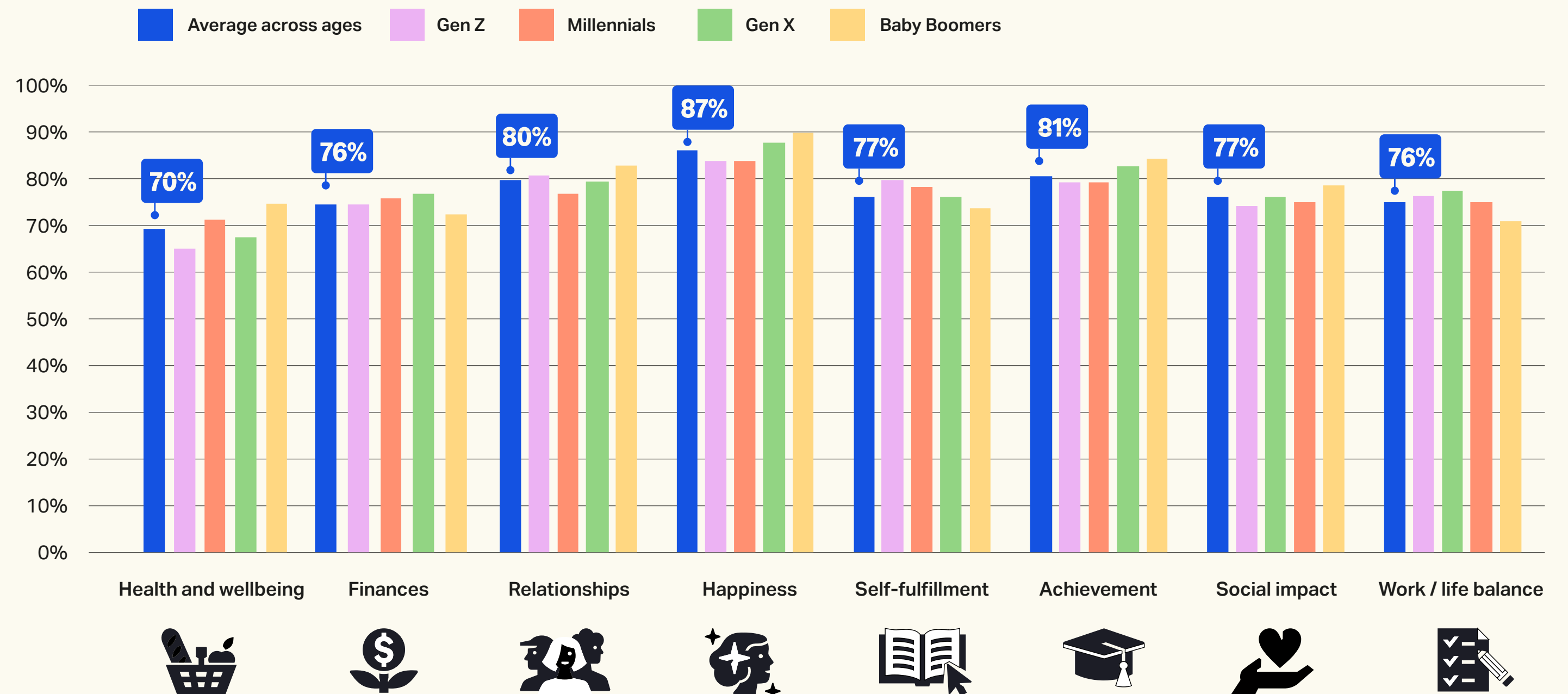
The research shows that audiences are **1.4X** more unified by shared values than by age group alone. (We recognize that the values statements used in the study are not identical to Values as defined in this report. However, there are clear areas of commonality.)

Amazon Ads is demonstrating that targeting solely by age inevitably results in missed opportunities. By combining demographic data with segments based on values, interests and behaviors, brands can achieve a **1.5X** increase in page views and a **2.2X** uplift in conversion rates.

²³ Amazon Ads, June 2025: "Beyond the generational divide."

Values that consumers hold are largely age-agnostic

Percentage of survey respondents who agree with values statements below*



Health and wellbeing

I try to lead a physically healthy lifestyle

Finances

I believe it is more important than ever to save money

Relationships

It's important to have a supportive network of friends and / or family

Happiness

I strive to build a life that makes me happy

Self-fulfillment

I strive to be a better person everyday

Achievement

Success should be defined by an individual, not by what society expects

Social impact

I wish to leave the world better than I found it

Work / life balance

It's important to have the flexibility to work on my terms

Chapter 4

New research: The dynamics of Values-Driven Marketing



Research objectives

The theory behind Values-Driven Marketing is clear. Behavioral Science tells us that people’s attitudes and behaviors are shaped by a deep-seated, usually subconscious need to affirm or protect the Values that matter most to them in life.

Messaging that is strongly aligned with those Values and accurately targeted is therefore more likely to drive a response.

We’ve already seen evidence that this is true. Values-driven messages targeted by ValueType deliver significant uplifts in performance metrics like CTR.

But in preparing this paper, we wanted to dive deeper into how audiences perceive and react to Values-driven creative.

Using controlled testing, we sought to answer four important questions:

1

Do people respond to Values-Driven Marketing in similar ways, regardless of category?

2

Is the degree to which someone holds a particular Value (relative to other Values) predictive of response levels?

3

Is it possible to isolate the different creative factors contributing to the effectiveness of Values-Driven Marketing?

4

Do these factors suggest that Values-Driven Marketing has high potential for long-term demand creation as well as short-term demand capture?

To answer these questions, LIONS Advisory and Aletheia partnered on a large-scale research project.

Methodology

To cover a variety of consumer needs and wants, we selected three very different categories: CPG (represented by toothpaste); QSR (a pizza restaurant); and Financial Services (investment brokerage / advisory).

For simplicity’s sake, we focused on three of the six possible ValuesTypes: **Tradition, Purpose and Achievement**.

For each category and each ValuesType, we then crafted three separate ads using AI-generated imagery and messaging. Aletheia’s Pluralitytics platform was used to ensure the ads conveyed appropriately strong Values Signals. Examples of the AI analyses conducted can be found in the appendix to this report.

In sum: 27 unique ads were created and tested (i.e., 3 categories x 3 ValuesTypes x 3 variations per ValuesType). All were unbranded to remove prior brand knowledge or other biases from the equation.

The nine ads for the Financial Services are shown opposite, with the full set available in the [appendix](#).

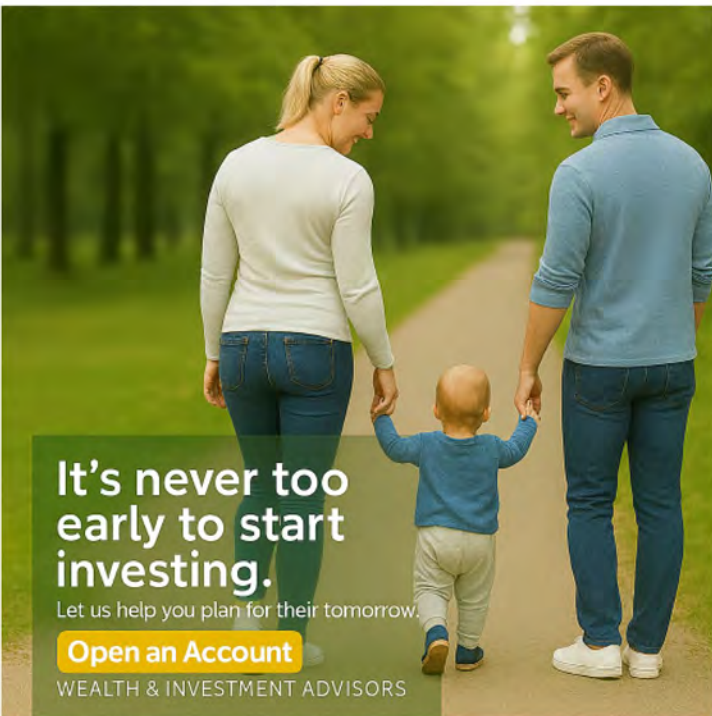
Achievement



Purpose



Tradition



Methodology (cont.)

A nationally representative sample of 5,016 US adults was recruited to complete an 8-minute online survey in July 2025.

Participants were screened by demographics. They also responded to Aletheia’s Audience Values Scale, a proprietary questionnaire that was used to assign each respondent to a primary ValuesType. 58% of respondents fell into the Tradition, Purpose or Achievement ValuesTypes.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of the three categories and shown:

- One Achievement-aligned ad from that category.
- One Purpose-aligned ad from that category.
- One Tradition-aligned ad from that category.

The ads shown for each Value and the order in which they were presented were randomized to eliminate ordering effects and ensure balanced exposure.

Respondents were then asked a range of questions, including how likable they found the image in each ad; how much the ad’s message reflected what they care about in life; their overall opinion of each ad; their preferred ad; and (for the ad they preferred) the extent to which the ad felt personally relevant.

Sample weighting by ValuesType

	%	Count
★ Achievement	25%	1,254
👑 Tradition	17%	852
🎗️ Purpose	16%	803
🛡️ Security	18%	903
🕊️ Freedom	13%	652
🌴 Pleasure	11%	552

Source: "The Values Influence Study". Research study by LIONS Advisory & Aletheia, July 2025

Finding #1: Ads that align with an individual’s dominant Values are consistently preferred

Our research demonstrated that people respond more favorably to messages that reflect their core Values and sense of self.

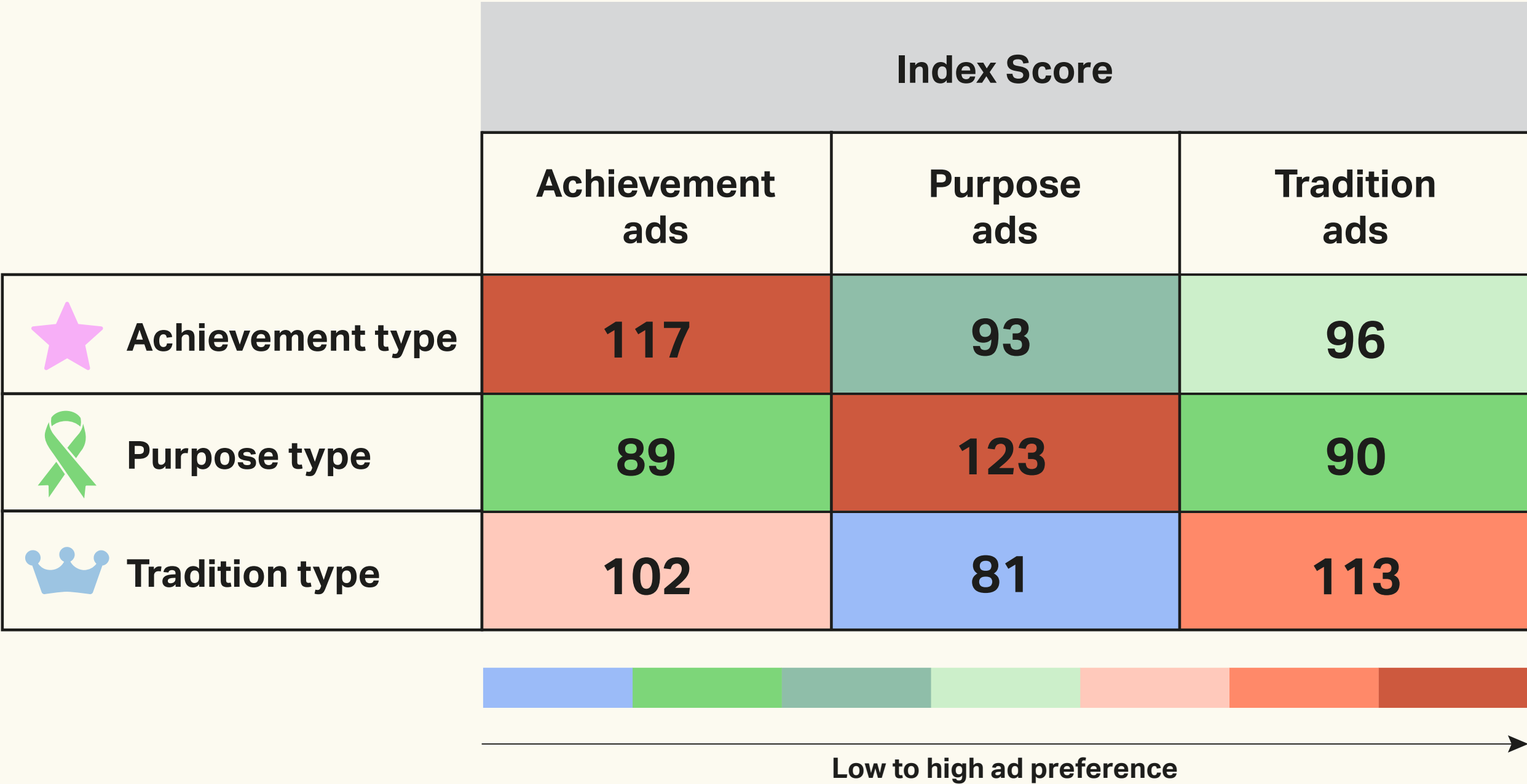
The indices in the chart show Achievement ValuesTypes were significantly more likely to prefer the Achievement-aligned ad than the other executions they were exposed to (+17 points versus the average of 100).

The same pattern was repeated by Purpose (+23 points) and Tradition (+13 points) types.

Although exposure was forced in the study, it was also relatively brief. The presence of relevant Values Signals within an ad seems to be detected ‘at a glance,’ heightening resonance and thereby increasing attention and engagement.

Respondents also showed signs of actively avoiding misaligned content. Tradition types, for example, were markedly less likely to prefer Purpose ads (-19 points). This double effect – preference for aligned content and rejection of misaligned content – is central to the persuasive power of Values-Driven Marketing.

Ad preference (all categories)



Source: "The Values Influence Study". Research study by LIONS Advisory & Aletheia, July 2025

Finding #2: Values-Driven Marketing is effective across categories

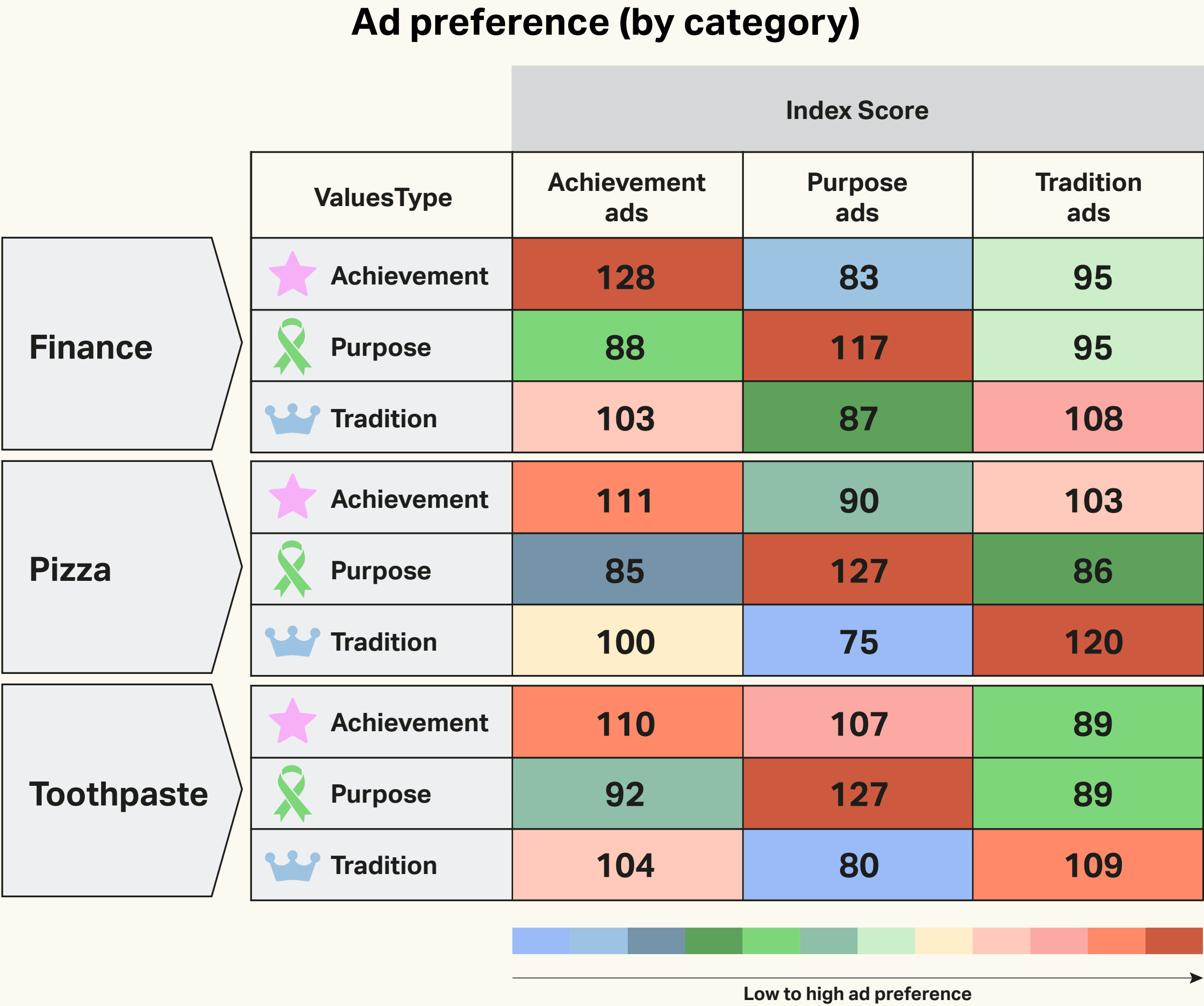
Financial Services, QSR and CPG are very different sectors. One might assume that certain Signals – say, 'Achievement' in Financial Services – would resonate with all ValuesTypes.

Our research refutes that assumption. While Achievement-aligned Financial Services messages did resonate slightly above average with Tradition types (+3 points), Tradition-aligned ads were more likely to be preferred (+8 points).

Meanwhile, Purpose ValuesTypes – who can be defined as prioritizing compassion and social good – actively rejected Financial Services ads that were Achievement-oriented (-12 points).

While there are nuances in the data, the overall picture is clear. Across all three categories, the preferred ads for each ValuesType were those that most strongly reflected their core Value.

Some of these preferences were particularly pronounced: for instance, Purpose within QSR and CPG (+27 points in both cases).



Source: "The Values Influence Study". Research study by LIONS Advisory & Aletheia, July 2025

Finding #3: The strength of Values held by someone predicts the level of response

Aletheia's Audience Values Scale not only allowed for segmentation of respondents by ValuesType, but also measurement of how strongly an individual held their dominant Value relative to other Values.

One hypothesis we were keen to test was whether the intensity with which someone holds particular Values is predictive of higher response levels. If so, it would enable marketers to further refine the targeting bullseye. Within each ValuesType, they could prioritize the sub-segment that is most likely to respond to Values-driven messaging.

Our findings support the hypothesis. The more strongly Achievement and Purpose types were oriented towards those Values, the more likely they were to select the matching ad.

We did not observe quite the same correlation with Tradition types – but we did find something equally relevant. The most Tradition-oriented respondents were the most likely to avoid ads that conflict with those Values.



Source: "The Values Influence Study". Research study by LIONS Advisory & Aletheia, July 2025

Finding #4: Values-aligned messaging increases ad likability and perceived relevance

A key research goal was to uncover the 'why.' Beyond demonstrating lifts in ad preference, we wanted to isolate the specific factors influencing people's choice.

Our findings point to two key elements:

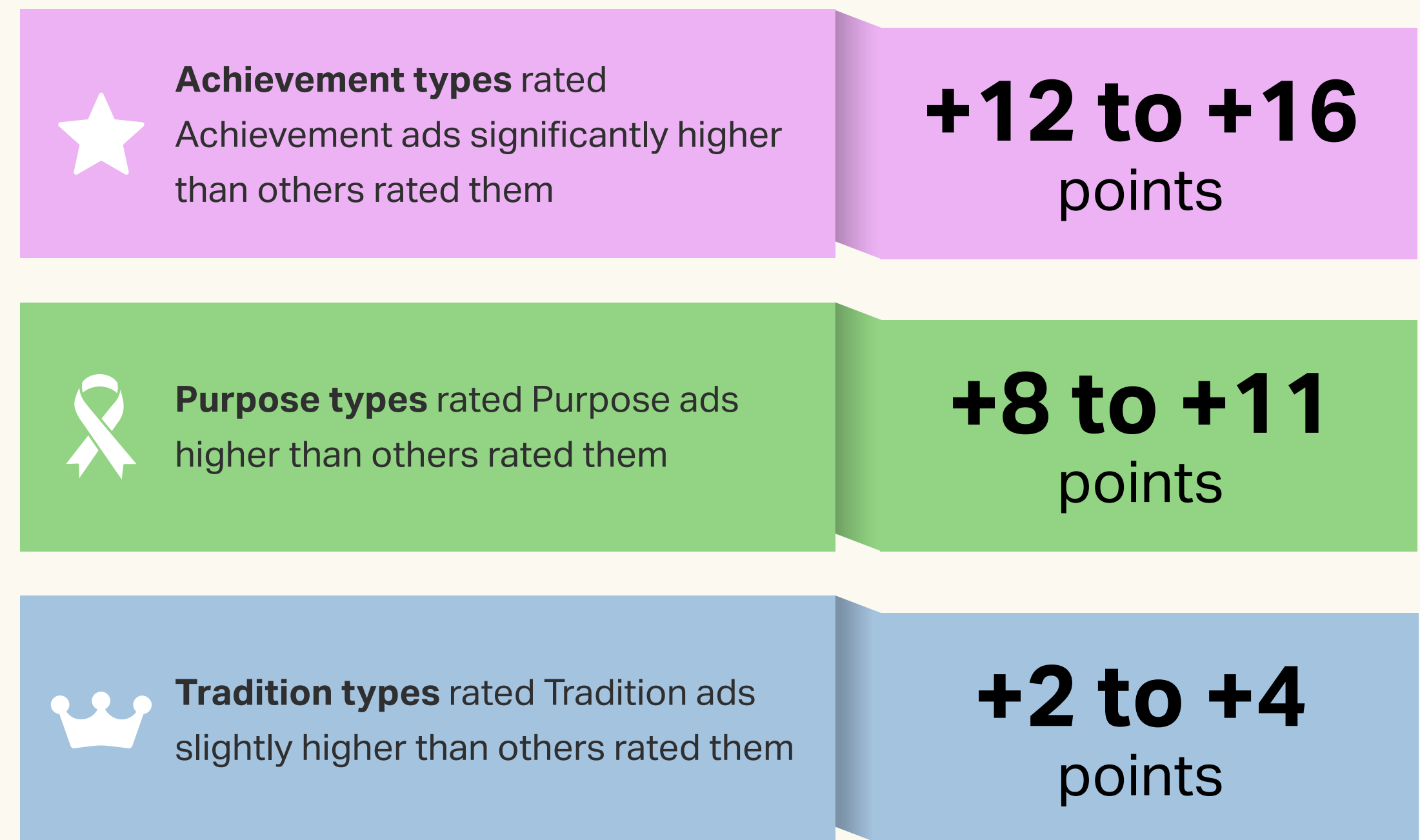
- **Values-aligned ads were perceived as more likable.** This suggests they succeeded in creating an emotional connection with respondents.
- **Values-aligned ads were perceived as more personally relevant.** This suggests respondents saw a better fit between the message communicated and their underlying motivations.

The combined impact of these two factors, plus overall opinion of the ad, can be most clearly seen in a composite metric: Ad Resonance, which measures the overall rating participants gave to individual ads.

Achievement and Purpose types rated ads aligned to their dominant Values much more favorably than others did. Likability and perceived relevance appear to have translated to increased levels of engagement.

The outlier was Tradition types. Even though the findings on ad preference were clear-cut, this segment only gave a marginally higher rating to Tradition-aligned ads. This may be a statistical quirk caused by the fact that the Tradition ads created were generally well-liked by respondents, regardless of ValuesType.

Ad resonance ratings



Source: "The Values Influence Study". Research study by LIONS Advisory & Aletheia, July 2025

Finding #5: Including Values in the targeting mix increases media effectiveness

The Amazon Ads study referenced earlier shows that combining different parameters and data inputs improves media precision and outcomes. Our research supports that finding.

In designing the executions for testing, a wide variety of visual demographic cues were included: men, women, families, affluent young professionals, middle-aged adults and different ethnicities. This systematic approach was applied across categories and ValuesTypes to ensure each batch contained a representative mix.

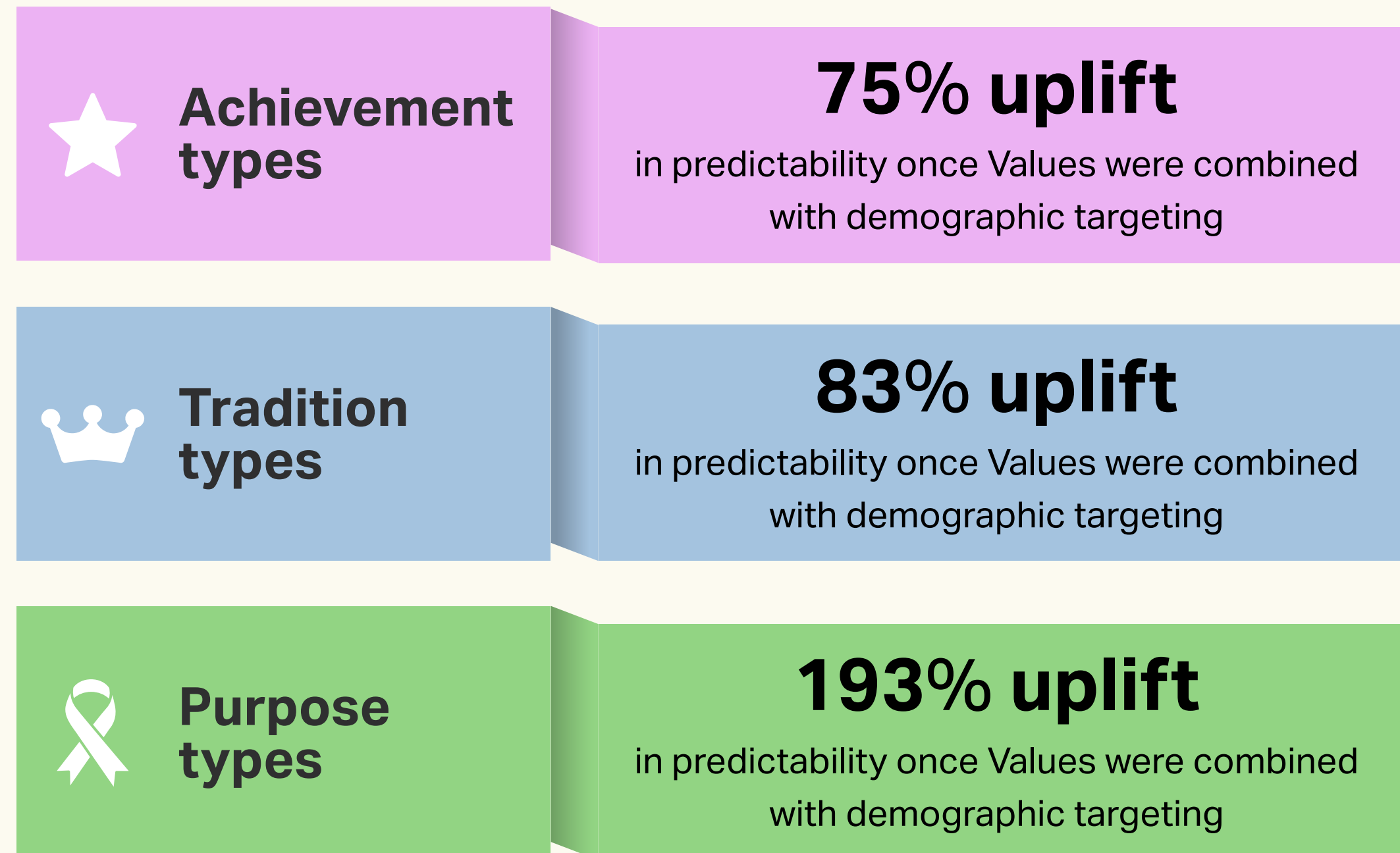
Analysis of the results shows that demographics did have some predictive power. Men were more likely to prefer an Achievement ad. People under 45 were more likely to choose a Purpose ad, but less likely to select a Tradition one.

While these demographic effects were clear, they were not as predictively strong as Values. In every instance, someone's ValuesType proved to be a far more accurate predictor of ad preference.

As in most areas of marketing, this is not an either / or choice. Demographics and life stages often play an important role in targeting. The learning is not that Values should replace these parameters, but that their integration enhances precision.

As demonstrated by the GoHealth Urgent Care case study, this can significantly improve ROAS.

Our research showed the power of Values in predicting ad preference



Source: "The Values Influence Study". Research study by LIONS Advisory & Aletheia, July 2025

Key learnings from research

Our study found:

- Values-Driven Marketing delivers meaningful lift in ad preference across a range of categories and ValuesTypes.
- The more strongly someone is oriented towards specific Values, the more this effect is magnified.
- The primary factors driving preference are likability (a measure of an ad's ability to create emotional connection) and perceived relevance (a measure of an ad's persuasive power).
- Combining Values with demographic data enables media plans to be more accurately targeted.

These findings allow us to create a simplified model of how Values-Driven Marketing improves advertising effectiveness:



Our research was not methodologically well-suited to examining brand lift (not least because the ads were unbranded, meaning we had no baseline to work from). However, the results imply that Values-Driven Marketing will be just as effective in 'brand' as it is in 'performance' contexts.

Overcoming attention scarcity, establishing relevance, sparking emotional resonance and targeting with precision are all prerequisites for successful brand building in today's fragmented media landscape.

Expert viewpoints

Gone are the days when you have one insight and one massive campaign. Now it's about creating platforms. All the tools available give us the ability to really listen to our audiences. In turn, that means we can build on what's important to people at an individual level.



Jennifer Posnikoff
SVP,
Global Brand Growth and Experience,
Virgin

Consumers have a lot of choices. Not everyone is going to be your customer. You have to pick: 'My customer is X, so I'm going to appeal to these Values and go to market with these messages and strategies.' If you're not intentional about it, it's easy to end up just blending in – and that's not what brands want to do.



Ravi Iyer
Managing Director,
USC Marshall School Neely Center

Values-Driven Marketing is about who we are and how we make choices. The media choices we make oftentimes follow our Values. So you will see different values-driven segments concentrating on different types of content that people consume, whether you're talking about news or sports, entertainment, etc.



Rex Briggs
Chief AI Officer,
Claritas.

Samsung: Unfold Your World

While they may not have leveraged Values-Driven Marketing in full, brands have often used Values as a source of insight and competitive advantage. Samsung is a case in point.



The problem:

In developing the Galaxy Foldables range, Samsung's specific objective was to win share from the iPhone. But after a promising start, momentum stalled.

Could Behavioral Science uncover why this breakthrough product was failing to gain traction?

The solution:

In-depth interviews conducted by a behavioral scientist revealed exactly how Values were impacting smartphone buying decisions:

- Apple fans were highly 'promotion-focused.' Key motivations included self-expression and realizing their creative potential. Both are defining characteristics of Freedom ValuesTypes.
- By contrast, Samsung fans were overwhelmingly 'prevention-focused.' Treasuring certainty and the avoidance of risk, they mapped closely to Security ValuesTypes.

Following Samsung's standard playbook at the time, the launch advertising for Galaxy Foldables had concentrated on features and functions. This appealed to the brand's existing base but lacked the resonance needed to convert 'promotion-focused' iPhone users.

Armed with the learnings from research, Samsung pivoted 180°. The original tagline of "The Future Unfolds" was replaced by the more open-ended, emotionally-charged "Unfold Your World." In deliberate imitation of Apple, this new positioning was supported by ads featuring slice-of-life vignettes that dramatized how Foldables enable users to 'do more.'

Results:

The relaunched Foldables attracted 3X more iPhone switchers than any previous Samsung product.

Powered by its new strategy, annual sales grew from **2.8m units in 2020 to 11.5m units in 2022**, well ahead of stretch forecasts.

The full case study is available on WARC:
["Samsung: Unfold your world"](#)

Case study

Magnum: True to Pleasure

Launched in 1989 as 'the first premium adult ice cream on a stick,' Magnum exemplifies the role of Values in building powerful brands.



A Values-based mission:

Magnum believes that a day without pleasure is a day lost. Its target audience is Pleasure Seekers, "individuals who seek out rich, complete and intense moments of pleasure." Everything Magnum does is designed to satisfy this motivation and strengthen the brand's positioning as 'True to Pleasure.'

²⁵ "Magnum: Stick to the Original"

²⁶ "Magnum: Find Your Summer"

²⁷ "Magnum: "Classics can be remixed"

Flexing 'Pleasure':

A relentless focus on Pleasure has imbued Magnum with a distinctive, highly coherent identity. It's also provided a robust communications platform that the brand can flex to ward off threats or seize opportunities. Examples include:

- Combating private label imitators by reminding consumers that only a Magnum delivers true pleasure.²⁵
- Countering seasonality by promising a moment of pleasure during the dark winter months.²⁶
- Attracting younger users by leaning into the pleasure that comes from discovering iconic moments in culture. ²⁷

Results:

While we are not suggesting Magnum has used Values-Driven Marketing specifically, its success demonstrates what can be achieved through a Values-based approach.

With global revenues approaching €2 billion, **Magnum has grown to be the second largest ice cream brand in the world.** Just as importantly, its obsession with being 'True to Pleasure' has created a wide moat. In many countries, Magnum is seen by consumers as the most 'meaningful, different and relevant' brand in the category.²⁸

²⁸ Meaningfulness, difference and relevance are the three components used by Kantar to quantify 'brand power', a measure that correlates directly to sales success.

Chapter 5

Putting Values-Driven Marketing to work: A playbook for brands



Operationalizing Values-Driven Marketing

At the start of this report, we said Values-Driven Marketing serves as a powerful framework for strategic decision-making.

It casts fresh light on the three fundamental questions:

Who are we targeting?

Applying Values-driven segmentation in combination with demographic and behavioral data offers richer insights into priority audiences.

What do we want to stand for?

Understanding how Values motivate attitudes and behaviors helps ensure the chosen positioning fits with the audience's underlying needs and wants, and is expressed in the most effective way possible.

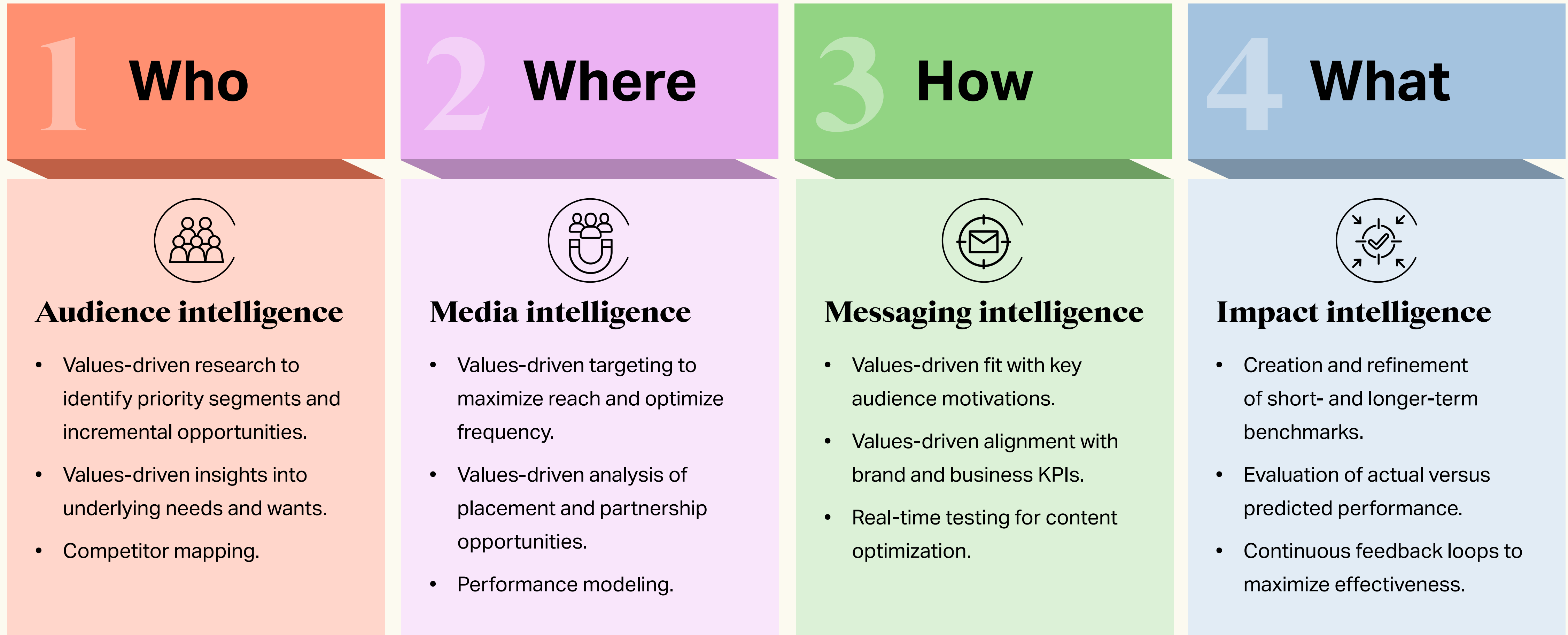
How will we achieve this?

Developing media and messaging strategies that are explicitly Values-driven helps generate the required uplifts in brand equity and response.

Strategy is critical... but it needs to be turned into execution.

The purpose of this final chapter is to give marketers a step-by-step guide to operationalizing Values-Driven Marketing, together with an introduction to the tools and practices that will help drive success.

Four areas of focus



Step #1: Audience intelligence

Any truly customer-centric marketing strategy starts with the "who": who is currently attracted to your brand, who is currently buying your brand and who will be most persuadable in the future.

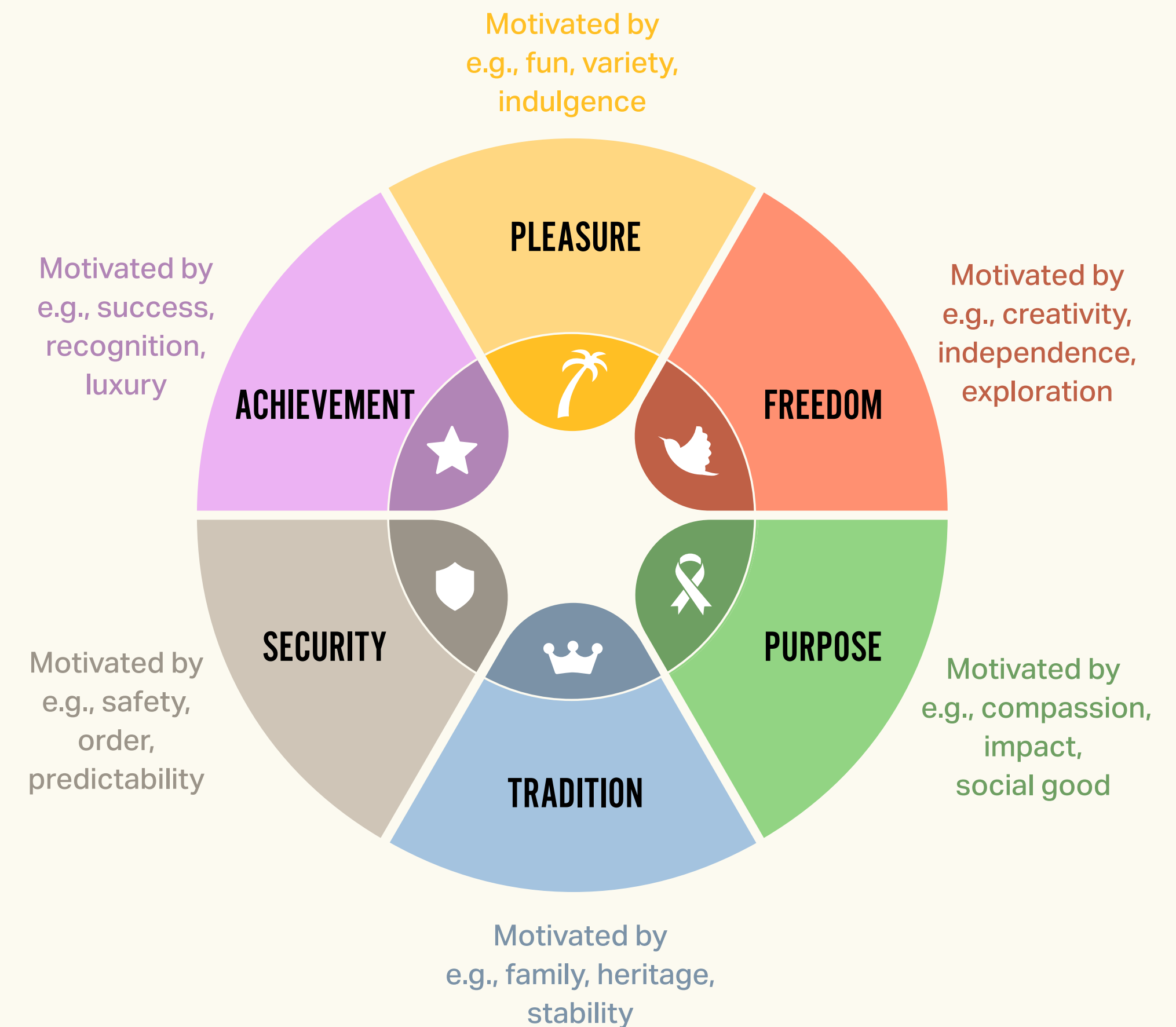
Applying insights from Behavioral Science, Aletheia uses its proprietary Audience Values Scale along with quantitative and qualitative research to identify the levels of appeal a brand enjoys among the six different ValuesTypes. The findings can be refined to accommodate particular sector characteristics, regionality and other relevant factors. The process can also be applied to competitors, enabling brands to see where consumers position them in the category landscape.

The end-result is a Values-driven segmentation, complete with insights into key category motivators for each ValuesType, that can be actioned across the media and messaging mix.

These audience, brand and sector-specific learnings can be scaled by using national consumer survey data. Clustering techniques allow Values-defined segments to be targeted on a broad range of additional attributes, including income, age, life stage, media consumption and geography (down to Nielsen DMAs).

Targeting can also be cross-referenced against proven levels of brand and / or product engagement.

The Six ValuesTypes



Step #2: Media intelligence

Knowing the targeting sweet spot is the first step. Next, marketers need to determine how to engage that audience as effectively and efficiently as possible.

To enable brands to customize and activate mass-reach Values-driven media plans, Aletheia’s six ValuesType segments – called 'Zenzi Audiences' – are now available for multichannel execution, attribution, measurement and optimization.

Via the LiveRamp Data Marketplace, advertisers can target specific ValuesTypes by life stage across social networks and DSPs. Some 40 options are available, including Achievement x Affluent Empty Nesters; Purpose x Young Strivers; and Tradition x Upscale Professionals.

Aletheia also has a data curation partnership with Magnite, allowing marketers to evaluate how strongly individual publishers index against the different Zenzi Audiences.

Values-Driven Marketing offers additional advantages to media planners:

- Identify new channels and touchpoints that can provide incremental coverage of priority segments.
- Identify smaller, more ownable media opportunities (including sponsorships and other partnerships) that have the potential to scale.
- Identify the most on-brand and audience-relevant creators and influencers through Values-driven messaging analysis. Given that 93% of brands anticipate investing more in creator marketing going forward,²⁹ this is a substantial benefit.

With AI creating ever more powerful media delivery and measurement models, the ability to impact Values-defined audiences is accelerating fast.



By leveraging Aletheia and Claritas’ joint solution, a leading amusement park achieved:



²⁹ WARC, October 2024

Source: Aletheia and Claritas, May 2025

Step #3: Messaging intelligence

We’ve already discussed how virtually every piece of marketing communication contains Values Signals (either intentionally or accidentally).

AI-powered tools like Aletheia’s Pluralitytics platform can analyze messages, individually or in aggregate, to determine the presence and intensity of these Signals.

The system decodes messages by tone, imagery and language – right down to individual elements like the call-to-action.

The results show which target audiences, including ValuesTypes, are most likely to find the message appealing and motivating. Such platforms can also be employed post-campaign.

By cross-referencing the presence of particular Values Signals with known results, brands can identify the most effective messaging 'ingredients' and adjust future executions accordingly.

Messaging Intelligence of this sophistication can give brands a significant competitive advantage. It enables marketers to:

- 1 Drive deeper, more emotional customer connections by aligning messaging with Values-driven motivations. In A/B testing, optimized content delivered a 33% uplift in preference among target types.³⁰
- 2 Develop benchmarks for content evaluation and optimization.
- 3 Weed out less effective messaging to reduce waste and make ad spend go further.
- 4 Maximize messaging coherence and consistency. Leverage the Mere Exposure Effect* to drive familiarity and liking.
- 5 Uncover actionable, repeatable performance patterns. Gain new insights into what’s working and why.
- 6 Analyze competitor strategies using objective, numerically based measures.

*Note: The Mere Exposure Effect is a psychological principle that is widely used in Behavioral Science. It suggests that repeated exposure to a stimulus – such as the words or images in an ad – increases familiarity and influences people’s response to the stimulus. It is thought to stem from a cognitive bias where the brain perceives familiar things as safe and trustworthy

30 Source: Momentive Research, May 2023

Step #4: Impact intelligence

Marketers who choose to follow the first three steps in this playbook can gain: new insights into brand and category segmentation; additional understanding of their audience's motivations; fresh perspectives on media planning and targeting; and a consistent methodology for evaluating and optimizing messaging.

Values-Driven Marketing also helps organizations track progress against brand and performance KPIs. It enables marketers to double-down on strategies and tactics that are working well, while adjusting or discontinuing initiatives that are under-performing. Impact Intelligence can be applied against both short and longer-term objectives:

Short-term goals

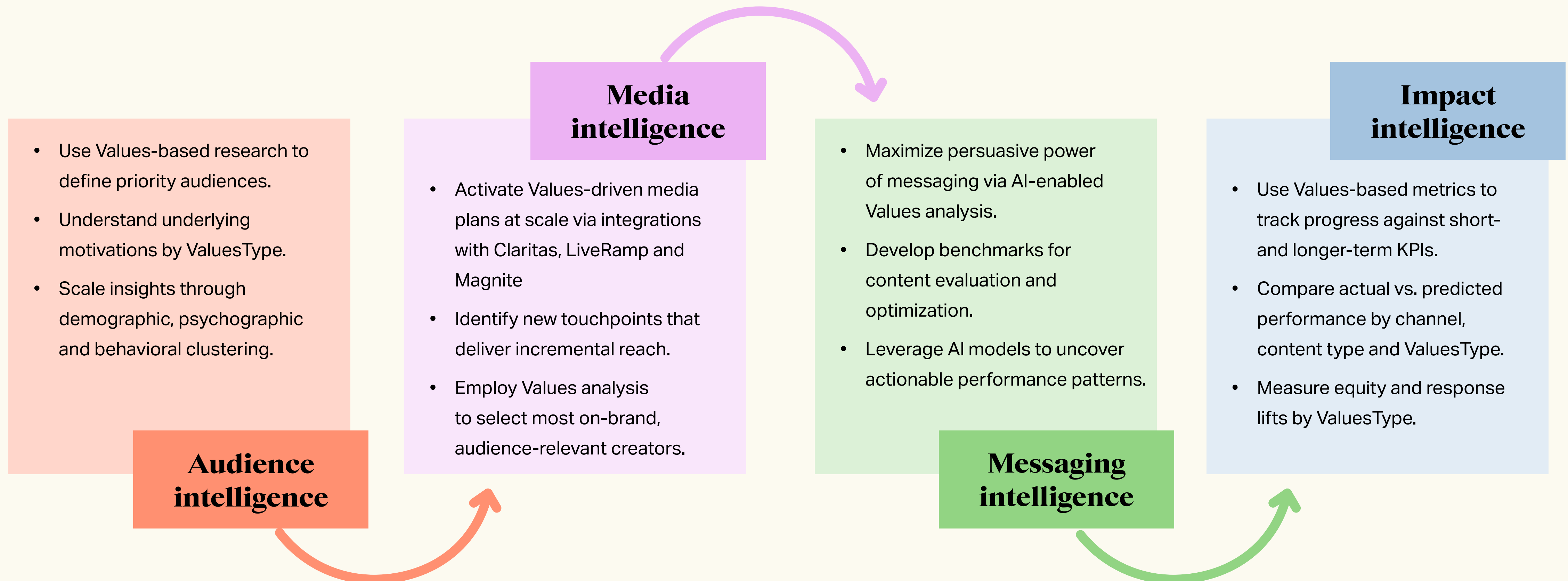
- Define performance benchmarks by channel, content type and ValuesType.
- Compare actual versus predicted performance.
- Deploy dashboards like Aletheia's ValuesFinder for real-time reporting and performance analysis.

Longer-term goals

- Measure equity and / or response lifts by ValuesType.
- Use AI modeling to detect performance patterns and trends.
- Analyze brands targeting the same ValuesType(s) and adopt best practices.

Rather than silo these efforts, marketers should use performance learnings to inform longer-term strategy and vice versa. By providing a common lens and a standardized measurement framework, Values-Driven Marketing can help unite the two.

Values-Driven Marketing: The Playbook summarized



Appendix

Some readers may be interested in digging deeper into "The Values Influence Study," the primary research we conducted for this report.

The following pages contain:

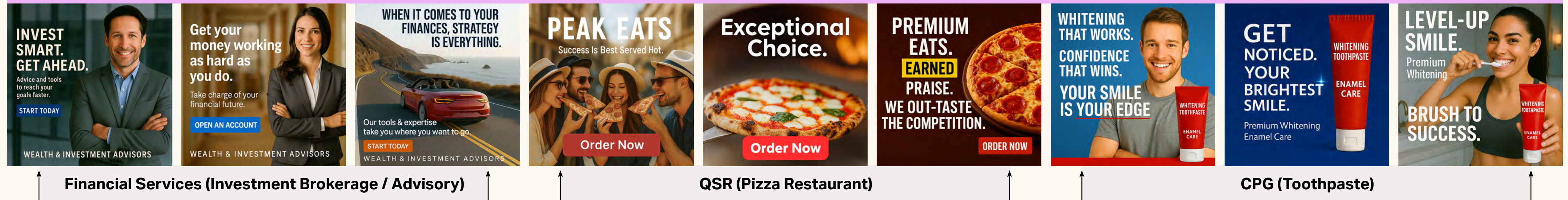
- **The 27 ads covered in the study.**
- **Example analyses by Pluralytics, illustrating how the copy, imagery and tone of each ad was measured for Values-Driven alignment.**

For further information, please contact Rick Byrne at rbyrne@aletheia.com.

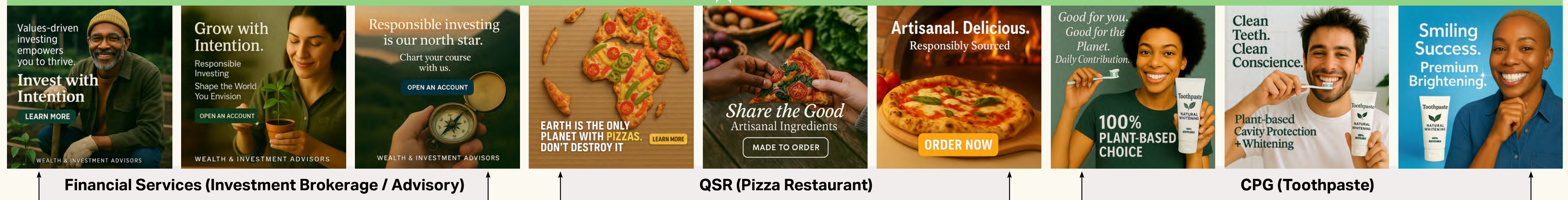


Ads researched

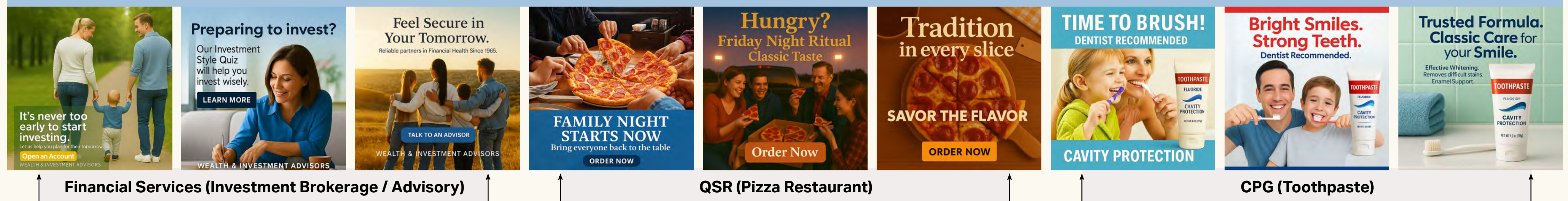
★ Achievement ads



 Purpose ads



 Traditional ads



Example analysis: Financial Services x Achievement



Image and text				
Signal 1	Signal 2	Signal 3	Signal 4	Signal 5
80	46	63	292	19

Text only				
Signal 1	Signal 2	Signal 3	Signal 4	Signal 5
118	36	103	163	93

High impact words:		Tones:
Wealth	Reach	• INVEST SMART. • GET AHEAD • Advice and tools to reach your goals faster • START TODAY • WEALTH AND INVESTMENT ADVISORS 40% Bold • 40% Informative • 20% Encouraging
Invest	Faster	
Tool	Ahead	
Goal	Advice	

Values Signals insights

Overall:

The image most strongly resonates with ambition and the pursuit of success, appealing to those driven by achievement and influence. The aesthetics and messaging align with values of striving to rise in social status and brand awareness, making it particularly attractive to go-getters.

Values Signal 1:

The emphasis on personal agency, tools, the straightforward copy, focused on speed-to-results resonates with the experiential, value-to-effort motivations.

Values Signal 4:

The image exudes ambition and the desire for social mobility, embodying the pursuit of success, influence, which resonates with achievement-driven mindsets.

Example analysis: QSR x Purpose



Image and text				
Signal 1	Signal 2	Signal 3	Signal 4	Signal 5
90	119	116	91	85

Text only				
Signal 1	Signal 2	Signal 3	Signal 4	Signal 5
104	146	92	10	37

High impact words:	
Artisanal	Ingredients
Good	Made

Green color palette more likely to connect with PURPOSE

Tones:

- Share the Good
- Artisanal Ingredients
- MADE TO ORDER

33% Warm • 33% Bold • 33% Informative

Values Signals insights

Overall:

This image aligns most with Values Signals 2 and 3, emphasizing creativity, inclusion and undertones of eco-friendly, while also appealing to simplicity and "freshness".

Values Signal 2:

The imagery strongly connects with global themes of creativity, diversity, and environmental concerns. The idea of shared goodness resonates with standing up for fairness and self-expression.

Values Signal 3:

The image promotes values of simplicity, tradition, and the home, focusing on shared moments and honest ingredients, appealing to senses of nostalgia and frugality.

Example analysis: CPG x Tradition



Image and text				
Signal 1	Signal 2	Signal 3	Signal 4	Signal 5
52	32	167	38	212

Text only				
Signal 1	Signal 2	Signal 3	Signal 4	Signal 5
18	23	297	108	217

High impact words:		Tones:
Brush	Time	• TIME TO BRUSH! • DENTIST RECOMMENDED • CAVITY PROTECTION 33% Bold • 66% Informative
Protection	Dentist	
Recommended	Cavity	
Blue color palette more likely to connect with TRADITION.		

Values Signals insights

Overall:

Signal 3 resonates well due to its emphasis on safety and family care. While Signal 5 also scores high with protection and cost awareness elements. Both echo strong values recognition in health promotion.

Values Signal 2:

The lack of Signal 2 presence is a positive predictor of alignment for Tradition seeking audiences.

Values Signal 3:

Shows care, safety, and health-oriented messaging that resonates with traditional values of family and order.

Values Signal 5:

Strong focus on safety and cost-effective purchase but lacks foresight about future risks or concerns.

Who we are

WARC

The global authority on marketing effectiveness

For nearly 40 years, WARC has been powering the marketing segment by providing rigorous and unbiased evidence, expertise and guidance to make marketers more effective. Across several platforms – WARC Strategy, WARC Creative, WARC Media – its services include 100,000+ case studies, best practice guides, research papers, special reports, advertising trend data, news and opinion articles, as well as awards, events and advisory services.

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LIONS Advisory

LIONS Advisory helps ambitious CMOs establish marketing as a business growth engine – fueling cultures of creative effectiveness with the industry’s leading consultants.

The LIONS Advisory team is made up of strategists with expertise in activating creative transformation based across EMEA, the Americas and APAC. We establish deep and enduring partnerships with marketers at some of the world’s largest, most influential and most successful marketing organizations.

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WARC X  LIONS | ADVISORY

Our Offices

London

5 Howick Place,
London SW1P 1WG
United Kingdom
enquiries@warc.com

New York

Floor 20-22,
605 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10158
United States
americas@warc.com

Singapore

230 Victoria Street,
#04-6, Bugis Junction Towers
Singapore, 188024
asiapacific@warc.com

Aletheia Marketing & Media

Aletheia is the leading Values-Driven Marketing and media intelligence company in the US. We combine Behavioral Science, advanced analytics, and patented AI technology to uncover what truly drives people and push the boundaries of brand growth and performance.

These breakthrough insights, along with our cutting-edge SaaS platforms, enable brands to target audiences more precisely, craft more resonant messages, and place media more strategically, resulting in more efficient, impactful campaigns. With deep expertise in media strategy, planning, and execution, we equip brands with an innovative, future-ready approach that drives measurable success.

If you're looking for a partner who understands both the soul and the science of influence, we'd love to connect.

Learn more about **Aletheia** [here](#).

