

Masterbrand Differentiation from MHP Group

Standout campaigns for complex brands



We specialise in creative differentiation campaigns for complex brands.

We tell a single-minded, earned-first story – many times, across many years, on every channel – to multiple audiences that have diverse priorities.

We begin with your audiences' world and take an outside-in approach to your brand challenge.



Our masterbrand differentiation campaigns in action



E.ON

Green Means Go

We identified green cities as a priority theme to unite consumers, Westminster policymakers, local government leaders and industry bodies.

Since 2019, our Green Means Go campaign has highlighted the urgent need for different audiences to work together to create more sustainable urban spaces. Activations have included tackling the threat of toxic air pollution and thought leadership on the streets of the future.



IWG

Hybrid Is Here

For IWG's target audiences of business leaders, opinion formers, corporate partners and young professionals, hybrid working has been a hugely important topic since the pandemic.

In the last four years, our Hybrid Is Here campaign has established the brand as the thought leader in this space, through data-led storytelling, creative photocalls, partnership announcements and executive profiling.



Spotify

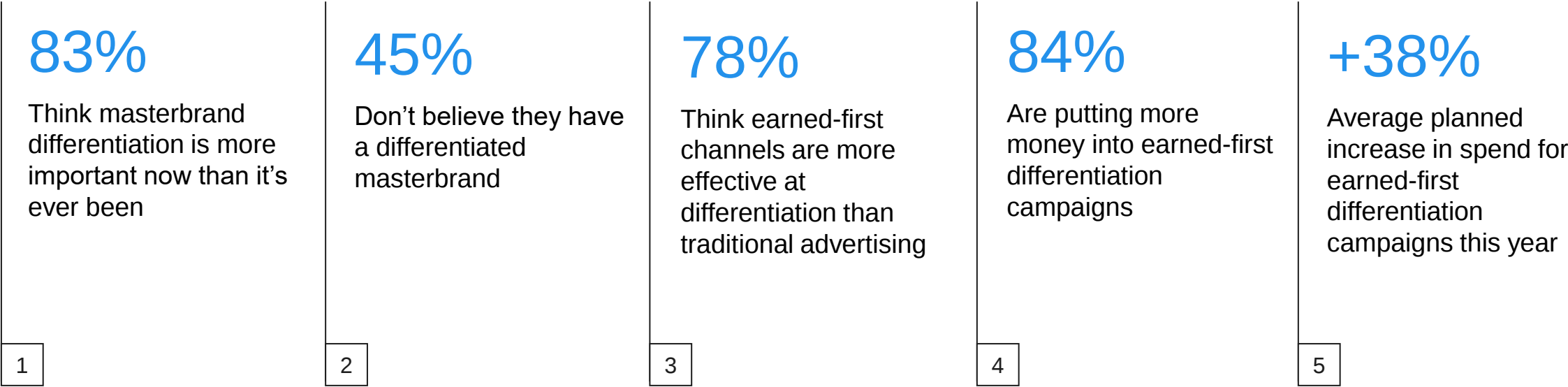
Born In Sweden, Shaped By Europe

For Spotify fans, creators, advertisers and stakeholders including policymakers and regulators, we've leant into the brand's European values to distinguish it from American tech competitors.

Since 2021, this has come to life through maximising key European moments such as Eurovision and the Cannes Festival, and demonstrating the difference in the brand's European values on topics such as parental leave and working from home.

Differentiation is a big focus for the industry this year

We surveyed 300 marketing and comms leaders in the UK and discovered:



Source: Censuswide, February 2025



What this *presentation covers*

Part one

A new era of
differentiation

Part two

The MHP Group
Masterbrand
Differentiation Model

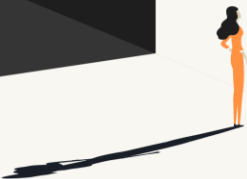
Part three

Case studies of
our work



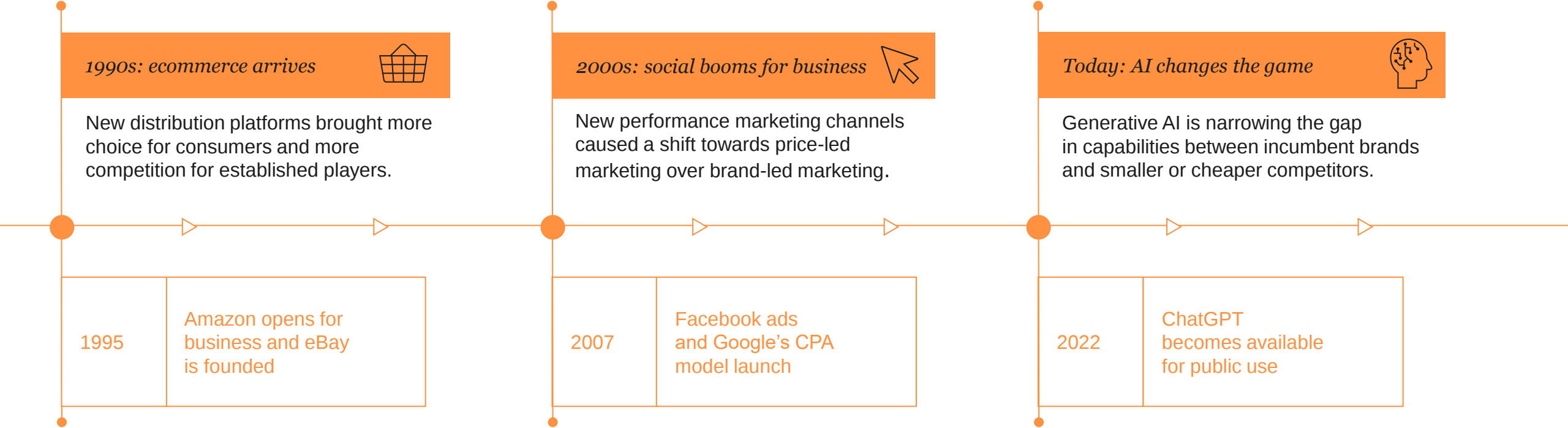
Part one

A new era of differentiation



How we got here

Over the last 30 years, the digital economy has created an explosion of brands swimming in a sea of same-ness.



A new era of differentiation

Today's challenge: how can brands stand out when every organisation looks and feels the same?

“When the world invents a zigging machine, the value of a zag goes into the stratosphere.”

Mark Ritson, Marketing Week



The differentiation dividend

Differentiation creates wins with every major audience

<i>Customers</i>		<i>Stakeholders</i>		<i>Investors</i>		<i>Talent</i>	
Differentiated B2C and B2B brands have 5x the market penetration of those that aren't (source: Kantar)		Differentiated values, that stakeholders share, help to build trust (source: MHP Group / Influence At Work, Trust Analytics)		Differentiated brands have higher pricing power and maintain higher margins (source: Kantar)		Differentiated values, that employees share, increase productivity and satisfaction (source: PwC)	



The formula for achieving differentiation has changed

Traditional advertising is not as effective as it once was

“Advertising is not considered to be shaping popular culture.”

(Source: Ipsos)

The digital age has seen brand identities become less distinctive

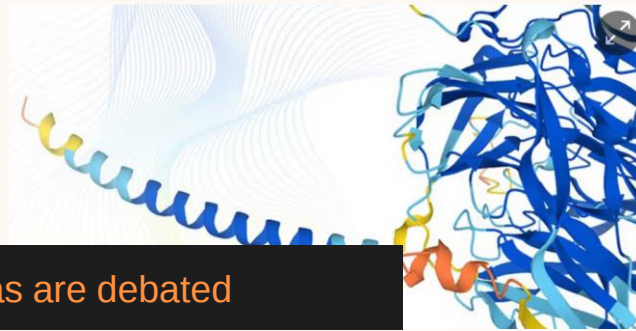
Tech		Fashion	
<i>Revolut</i>	»	Revolut	
facebook.	»	FACEBOOK	
Google	»	Google	
<i>Microsoft</i>	»	Microsoft	
<i>airbnb</i>	»	airbnb	
Spotify	»	Spotify	
Pinterest	»	Pinterest	
ebay	»	ebay	
		BALENCIAGA	» BALENCIAGA
			» BURBERRY LONDON ENGLAND
		YVES SAINT LAURENT	» SAINT LAURENT
		Berluti	» BERLUTI
		BALMAIN PARIS	» BALMAIN PARIS
		RIMOWA	» RIMOWA
			» DIANE VON FURSTENBERG

The future of
differentiation is
earned-first

*Earned-first
spaces
are where...*

The
Guardian

AI is a force for good - and Britain needs to
be a maker of ideas, not a mere taker



Ideas are debated



Fandom grows



Brand image is shaped

James Timpson: Why my company has a 'happiness index'

The boss of the shoe-repair, key-cutting and dry-cleaning group, sets out why the
biggest benchmark for businesses should be staff satisfaction



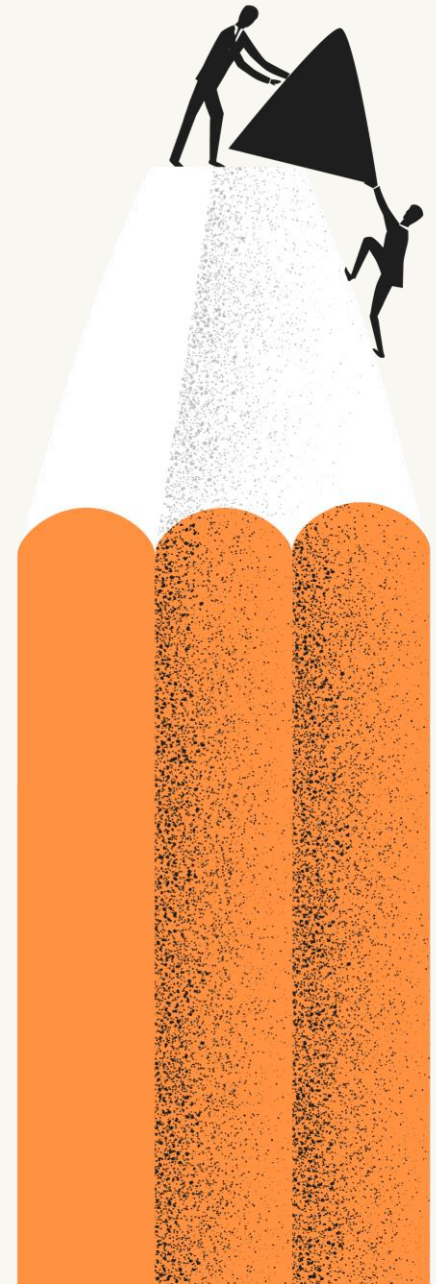
Reputations are built

A new era of differentiation

Decisionmakers are now
doubling down on differentiation

“Moving forward, we will lead with sport and put the athlete at the centre of every decision. The sharpness in each sport is what differentiates our brand, our business and our culture.”

Nike CEO, Elliott Hill, announces a differentiation-led brand rebuild



A new era of differentiation

Decisionmakers are now
doubling down on differentiation

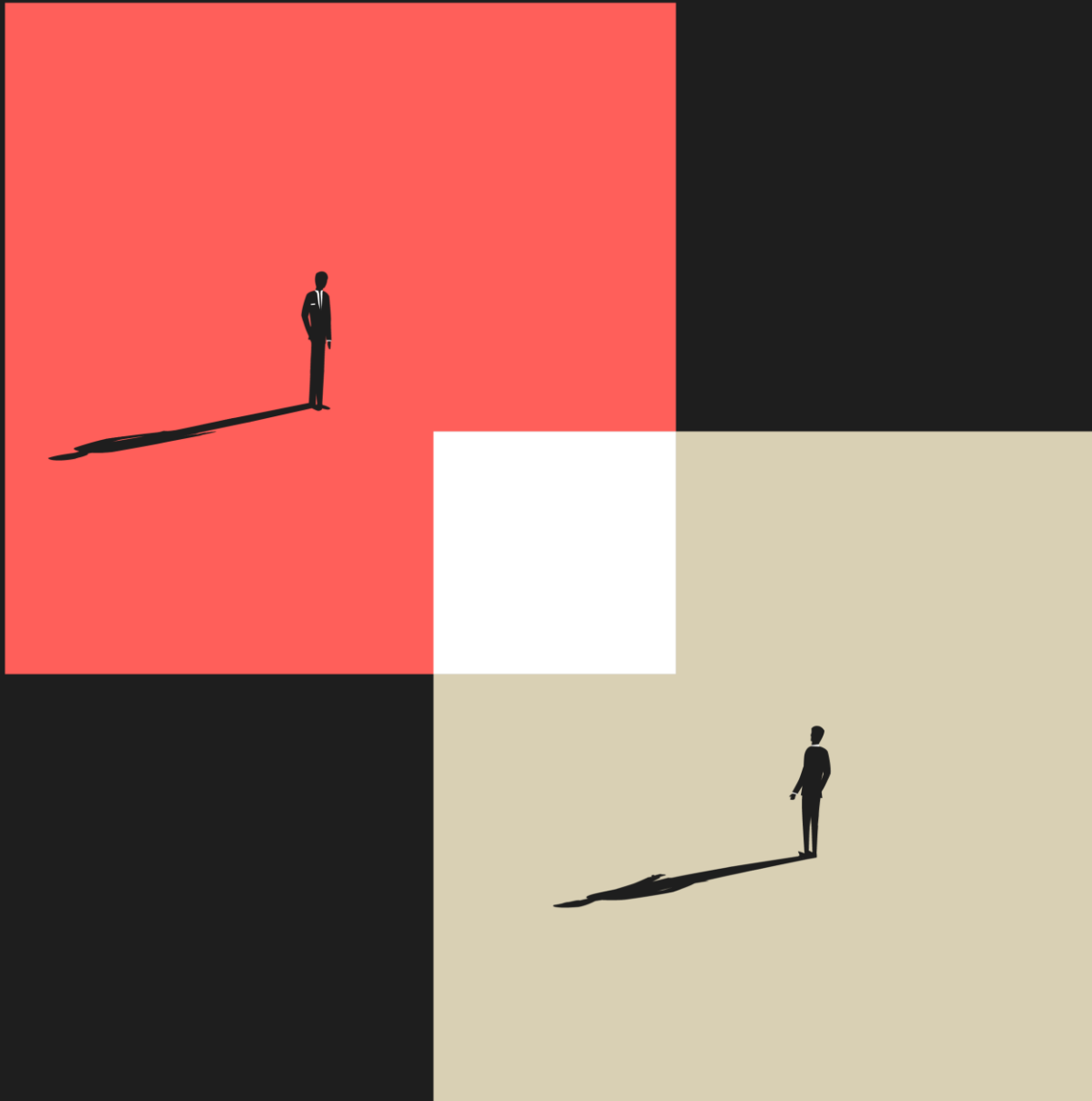
*“Brand differentiation is not a
mere marketing tactic; it’s a
strategic imperative.”*

Scott Somerville, Director of External Affairs, E.ON UK



Part two

The MHP Group Masterbrand Differentiation Model



1. Identify

Establishing your differentiation theme through audience analysis and competitor benchmarking

2. Create

Developing a compelling campaign platform, narrative and multi-channel content

3. Evolve

Telling your differentiation story in new ways over the long-term

1. Identify

Establishing your differentiation theme through audience analysis and competitor benchmarking

We analyse common themes and passions that unite your disparate audiences, and carve out a unique voice for you on the topic that resonates most. Insight is gathered through:

Earned and social media conversation analysis



Qual and quant primary research



Behavioural science expertise



2. Create

Developing a compelling campaign platform, narrative and multi-channel content

Our creative campaigns are built on the 5Ps of masterbrand differentiation campaign planning:

Proposition	We define your brand's differentiation end-game in one sentence – what you should be known for, amongst whom, and how this will be different from your peers and competitors
Proof-points	We identify three long-term objectives for your brand to deliver on its differentiation proposition
Point-of-view	We find ways for you to contribute to, or advance, cultural or political conversation around your differentiation theme
Partnerships	We identify campaign allies to share, advocate for and amplify your beliefs and viewpoints
Personality	We give campaign content a distinctive look, feel and tone-of-voice

3. *Evolve*

Telling your differentiation story
in new ways over the long-term

We believe that all great stories have many chapters. This is even more important with earned-first campaigns, to stay fresh, relevant and compelling as part of evolving conversation.

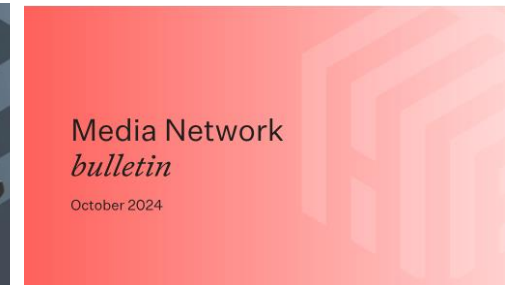
From the outset, we develop a long-term campaign roadmap and populate and refine it over time based on new analysis, including:



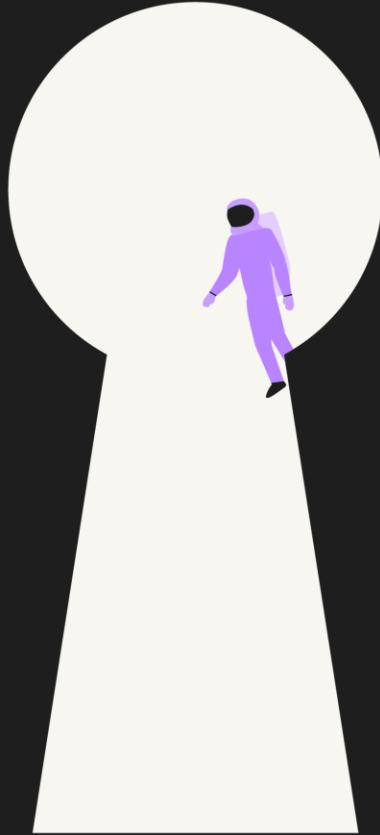
*Annual trends
forecasts*



*Polarisation
data*



*Journalist and
influencer insight*



Part three

Case studies of our work

GoDaddy *Venture Forward*

Audiences

Current entrepreneurs, aspiring entrepreneurs, policymakers, opinion leaders.

Campaign

Our Venture Forward campaign positioned GoDaddy as the voice of microbusinesses (companies with under 10 employees).

Very few research studies or discussions in Whitehall had previously catered to their needs.

Results

GoDaddy has a 98% share-of-voice against the term 'microbusiness' vs its three main competitors.

The masterbrand differentiation journey

Chapter 1

Inspiring People



We profiled inspiring microbusiness owners who transformed their firms during the tough economic climates of Brexit, Covid and the cost-of-living crisis.

Chapter 2

Inspiring Places



We championed unexpected hotspots such as seaside towns and rural communities, and the economic value that local microbusinesses provide to them.

Chapter 3

Inspiring Progress



We stood up for struggling parts of the microbusiness economy including independent theatres and small museums.



Barclays *Barclays Spend*

Audiences

Consumers, policymakers, customers, industry, analysts, internal colleagues.

Campaign

We combine Barclays' monthly card transaction data with consumer polling to uncover the consumer spending behaviours that drive economic trends.

Our campaign delivers hundreds of pieces of coverage each month, demonstrating how Barclays is helping build confidence in the UK economy.

Results

Our campaign is consistently the lead contributor to Barclays' independent Reputation Sentiment Tracker (Onclusive).

The masterbrand differentiation journey



Chapter 1

Spending Index



We established *Barclays Spend* as the definitive monthly snapshot of consumer spending, with our monthly data drops becoming a fixture in journalists' calendars.

Chapter 2

Spending Moments



Building on our monthly storytelling programme, we launched bespoke "deep dive" reports on specific themes, such as the economic impact of the Taylor Swift Eras tour.

Chapter 3

Spending Sectors



We have now evolved the Spend campaign model into a second monthly storytelling programme focused on the Property sector, *Barclays Property Insights*.

E.ON *Green Means Go*

Audiences

National government, local government, business leaders, think tanks, opinion formers, informed publics.

Campaign

Our Green Means Go campaign gave E.ON a clear, differentiated voice around the urgent need to make UK cities more sustainable.

Our research showed that all audiences had a strong interest in the future of the nation's urban spaces.

Results

E.ON received over 300% more media mentions for "green cities" than its closest competitor in a 12-month period.



The masterbrand differentiation journey

Chapter 1

City Air



We launched a new campaign to tackle toxic air pollution in UK cities, including policy asks and a photo stunt outside London's City Hall.

Chapter 2

City Streets



We partnered with the UK Green Building Council to imagine the city streets of the future and plot out a roadmap to ensure the vision could become reality.

Chapter 3

City Voices



We teamed up with regional poet laureates in key cities including Birmingham and Coventry, to deliver a message of change and hope to local audiences.



Spotify

Born in Sweden, Shaped by Europe

Audiences

European Parliament, EU Commissioners, local governments and policymakers, fans, creators, opinion formers, advertisers, employees

Campaign

'Born in Sweden, Shaped by Europe' plays to Spotify's unique heritage in contrast with 'big tech' firms from the US..

Our research showed that trust in American organisations had fallen, leading us to a campaign proposition which 'dialled up' Spotify's European culture and values.

Results

Mentions of Spotify being European have increased 20% since our campaign began.

The masterbrand differentiation journey



Chapter 1

European Moments



We gave Spotify ownership over key European music moments such as Eurovision, launching an international, multi-channel campaign that turned the brand's data and insights into cultural talking-points.

Chapter 2

European Leadership



We lead comms around Spotify's annual Open House thought leadership summit, including the launch of a new pan-European trends report about music listenership across the continent.

Chapter 3

European Fairness



We helped Spotify take on US tech firms' anti-competitive practices through the 'Time To Play Fair' international lobbying campaign. The initiative resulted in Apple being fined €1.8 billion by the European Commission.

IWG *Hybrid Is Here*

Audiences

Business leaders, office workers, young professionals, corporate partners, opinion formers.

Campaign

Since 2021, we have established flexible workspace provider, IWG, as the leading voice on hybrid working.

In a post-pandemic world, all of the organisation's target audiences were grappling with what changes to working patterns meant for them and for the wider world.

Results

IWG's CEO, Mark Dixon, has become the UK's most prominent commentator on hybrid working.



The masterbrand differentiation journey

Chapter 1

Hybrid Communities



We created thought leadership on how suburbs, towns and villages were benefiting from the shift to hybrid working, including the impact on local economies and amenities.

Chapter 2

Hybrid Health



We proved that hybrid workers are healthier workers, revealing that people not commuting every day sleep better, eat better and do more exercise.

Chapter 3

Hybrid Travel



We uncovered travel trends linked to the hybrid economy, including a boom in flexible workspaces at airports and train stations, and an increase in young professionals working from different cities across the world.





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Thank you.

