



Media Reactions 2026

Your guide to the media landscape

KANTAR

More and more signals. Clearer media decisions.

Media Reactions 2026 is Kantar’s annual ad equity study, offering a holistic view of the media landscape with intelligence from consumers and senior marketers around the world. This report covers the key priorities, trends and data points to help CMOs and planners make confident, evidence-based decisions to inform their 2027 media strategy.

Campaigns are seven times more impactful among more receptive audiences. Understanding consumer and marketer attitudes is the foundation to unlock the full potential of your media strategy. This means that consumer preference should be one of the key factors considered for planning.



What CMOs need to get ready for 2027 media planning:

01 Be meaningfully different to both humans and machines:

73% of 23,000 consumers across 33 markets use AI assistants and 33% already research brands and products through them. Brands that don’t engage with AI in the right way will be filtered out of the machine mind by AI assistants.

02 Test and learn how AI is changing the fundamentals:

A net 75% of marketers plan to increase their investment in visibility in AI assistants in 2027, but only 24% of consumers trust AI assistants’ recommendations.

03 Partner with creators, don’t control them:

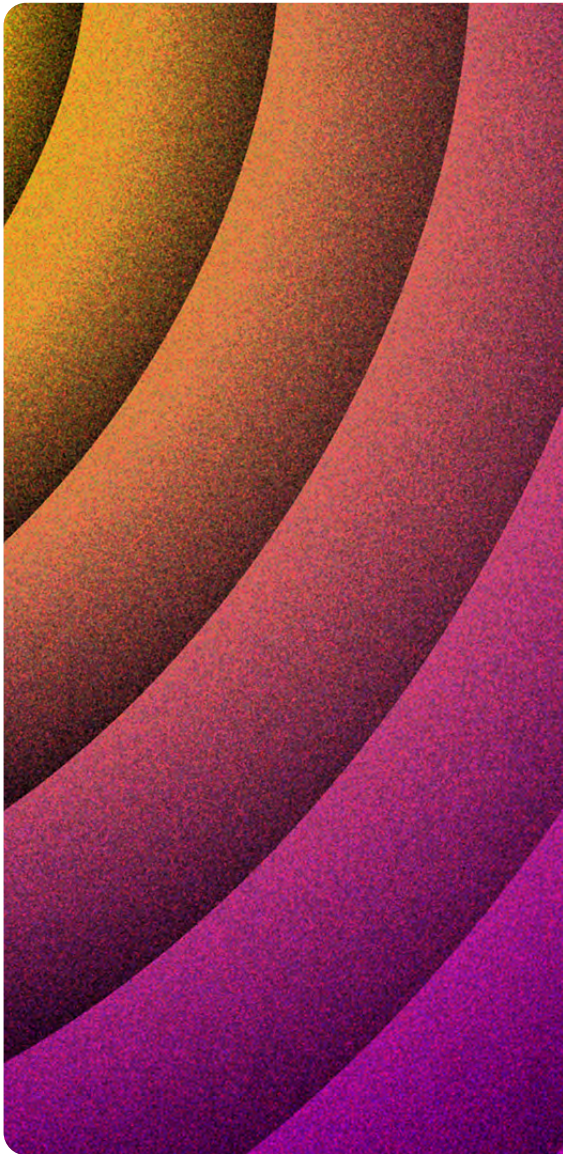
62% of marketers say brands should guide, rather than control creators, and almost half see them as storytelling partners. Creators’ role is shifting from reach to relevance.

04 Treat shopping as a layer across touchpoints:

32% of consumers now use social media to browse or shop for products, and 17% would trust an AI assistant to shop for them in the future. The path to purchase now runs through channels you may not be measuring as commerce.

05 Balance consumer preference and presence with marketer trust:

Google, Amazon, and YouTube have the highest advertising equity among consumers, while Twitch, Disney+ and Pinterest are preferred among narrower audiences. Marketers trust Instagram, YouTube and Google the most.



TALK TO US



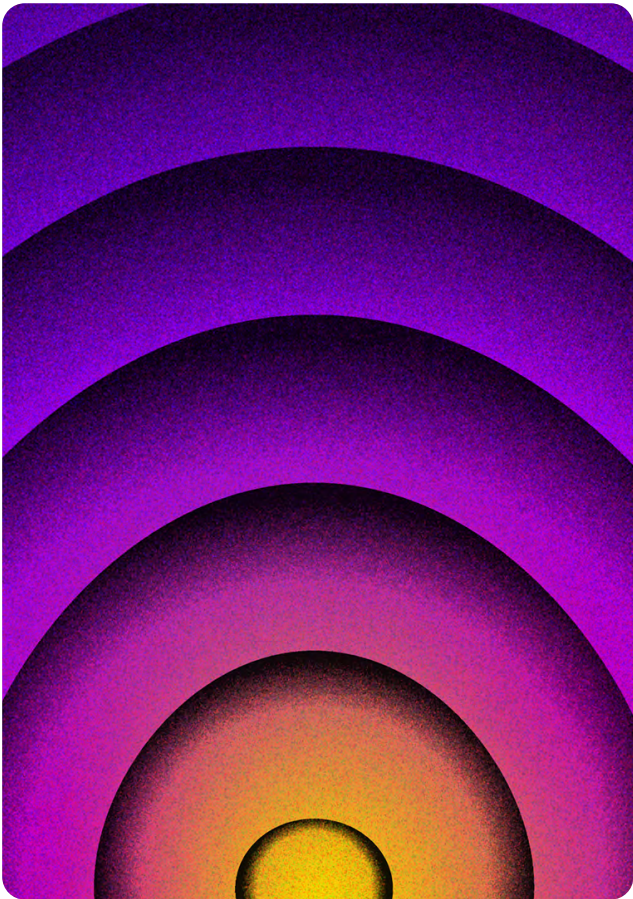
about your 2027 plans and find out what decision intelligence you need for your brand.

Media landscape trends that will shape 2027

Consumers complain less about ads, marketers doubt more

In recent years, marketers have been exposed to an unprecedented number of signals that need to go into their media planning as input. With AI fast becoming a fundamental aspect of the media landscape, their confidence is shaken even further. Four in ten marketers now doubt they are getting the fundamentals of the media mix right, such as campaign integration across channels and tailoring creative content.

But consumers are complaining less in 2026: those saying there is too much advertising fell from 25% to 21%, those finding it repetitive from 24% to 20%, and those who actively try to ignore it from 21% to 18%. Consumers are more content with the ads they are exposed to, meaning marketers have been doing their job better. The many channels they need to use work well in combination, with 43% of campaign impact coming from channels working together, compared to 18% pre-2014, according to Kantar's LIFT+ database. As AI and the creator economy mature, and commercialisation of previously indirectly commercial channels continues, marketers need to take note of the right signals to avoid going back to the days where consumers actively avoided ads at scale.



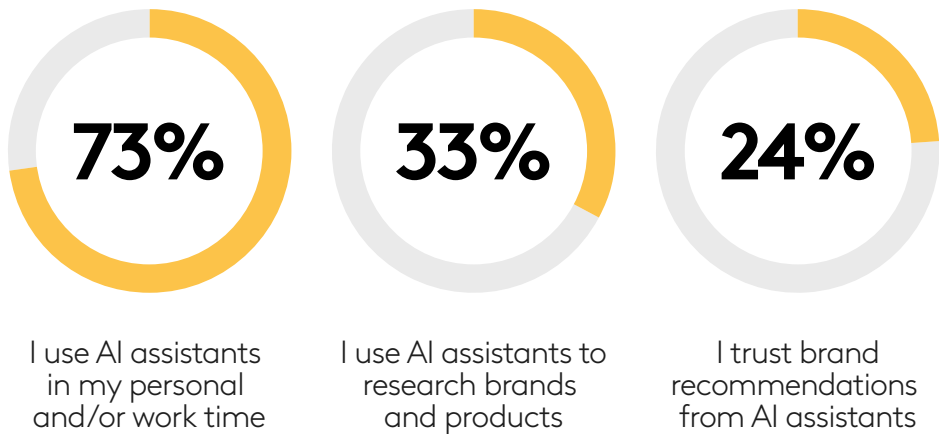
Three shifts are reshaping media: AI, creators and commerce

AI assistants: high usage, trust not yet earned.

Almost three quarters of consumers (73%) use AI assistants in their personal or working lives, and a third already started to research brands and products on them. But only 24% trust brand recommendations from AI assistants, and as a channel AI assistants rank 20th of 27 in advertising equity, which measures consumers' preference and presence on each channel. A net 75% of marketers are planning to increase their investment in visibility in AI assistants in 2027, including paid ads. And many marketers know that this is where meaningfully different brands will shine. Over six in ten (62%) believe the future of AI for brands lies in recommendations and guidance. This means that being meaningfully different to both humans and machines is key.

a net **75%** of marketers plan to increase their investment in visibility in AI assistants in 2027

Consumer attitudes towards AI



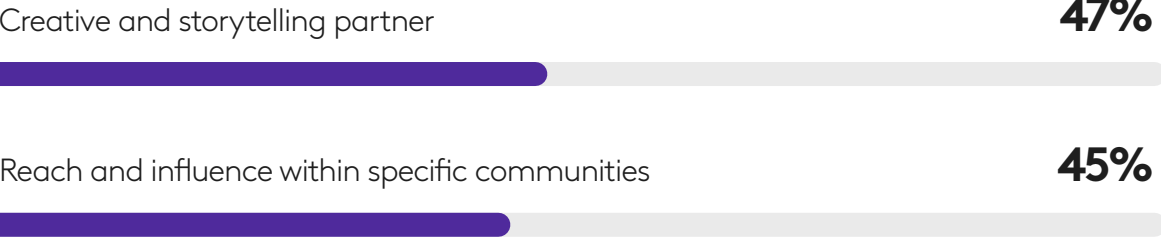
Among 23,000 consumers across 33 markets

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Creators: from follower count to relevance to communities.

Marketers have been increasing their investment in creator/influencers for years now but the relationship between them wasn't always so mature. 62% of marketers now believe brands should guide creators rather than control them, and planned investment increases favour micro and nano creators over mega and macro, which says creators are being valued for resonance rather than follower counts. Almost half of marketers globally value creators as creative and storytelling partners (47%), and for reach within specific communities rather than broader reach (45%). And as ever, context matters. Consumers are more receptive to creator-brand partnerships in clothing and shoes, grocery and food. Out-of-home entertainment categories, while healthcare, baby products and personal finance are at the bottom of the list.

Creators' role in media strategies:



Commerce: a layer across touchpoints, not a single channel.

Shopping journeys now run via media channels not initially designed for them. Nearly one in three (32%) of consumers now use social media to browse or shop for products, 20% say creators are often their first source for discovering new products, and 17% even say they would trust an AI assistant to shop for them in the future. Treating commerce as a single channel was already a thing of the past with retail media's advent, but now it is becoming a layer across the media landscape. But neither social commerce nor creators are consumers' most preferred advertising channels, and marketers need to stay cautious as they test and learn.



Google and YouTube get their ad experience right

Top ranking media brands among consumers

- 1 Google
- 2 amazon
- 3 YouTube
- 4 Instagram
- 5 NETFLIX

Google leads the global advertising equity ranking among consumers, with their ads being highly preferred and their broad reach. Eight out of ten consumers have exposure to ads on Google, and they feel that these ads are the most relevant and useful among global brands. Amazon, YouTube, Instagram and Netflix all make the top five, after Google.

While Google and the rest are leading among platforms with broad reach, when it comes to pure consumer preference, Twitch, Disney+, and Pinterest are among those that stand out. For campaigns that are more targeted towards certain audiences, consumers’ receptivity and attitudes are the most positive on these platforms. Pinterest achieves this by their particularly relevant and useful ads, Disney+ with fun and entertaining ads, and Twitch with better quality ads.

Marketers’ preferences continue to track their trust. YouTube leads on marketer receptivity, while Instagram, Google, TikTok and Netflix follow, all platforms highly trusted by marketers. Asked what earns that trust, marketers name measurement credibility and transparency first, then brand safety, then consumer receptivity to ads on the platform. The ordering matters: transparency is the price of entry, but it isn’t the only factor they take into account.

In fact, marketer dollars don’t flow to platforms directly in this order. The reason is that beyond trust, there are other deciding factors for investment, such as reach, where other brands appear, and previous investment levels. In 2027, more than half the marketers globally plan to increase their spend on TikTok, followed by YouTube and Instagram. TikTok has been a constant destination of spend increase since its founding, and it now also sits among the more trusted brands for marketers.

Top ranking media brands among marketers

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- 2 Instagram
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What are the implications for your 2027 media strategy?

01 Choose the right media partners for your objectives

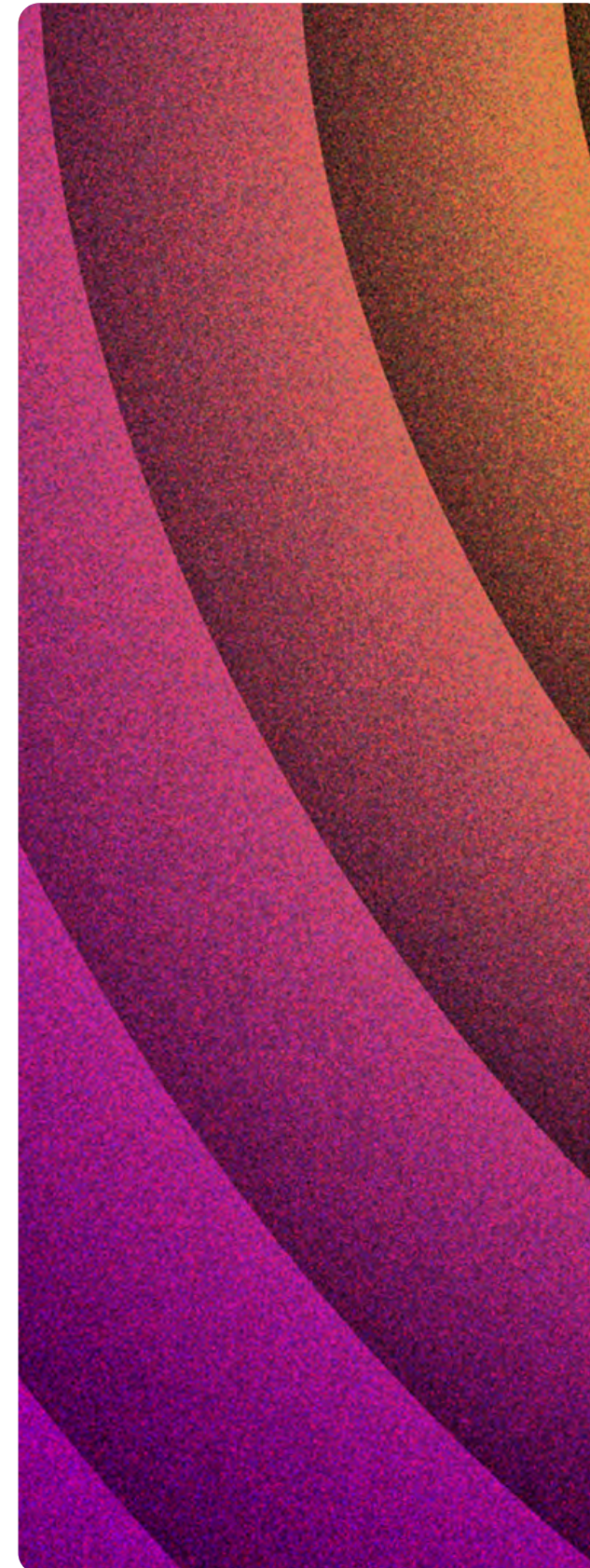
Ad equity rankings are not a shopping list. The task is to assess each platform's strengths and weaknesses and choose partners whose advertising proposition and formats fit your objective. Consumer preference is a fundamental input because it demonstrably changes brand impact, but it works alongside reach and marketer trust.

03 Brief creators clearly and let them work

Creator/influencer marketing is used by 91% of marketers globally – now, a fully integral part of media mixes everywhere. The relationship between brands and creators has matured. Those getting most from creators are briefing outcomes rather than dictating executions like they did in the early days of influencers. They are also choosing partners for resonance within communities rather than broad reach. Work with creators in ways that bring out their intrinsic strengths instead of treating them as a traditional media channel.

02 Help design the AI media experience

Budgets are moving into AI assistants ahead of consumer trust. This is smart planning but it also means there is work to be done for brands, both to educate the public and to educate themselves on how to engage with AI. Brands appearing in AI assistants need to be distinctive enough for machines to surface them and credible enough for people to act on what they find. Test now, and test with your eyes open: the space is still innovating at pace, and brands should be helping to shape how these interactions work rather than waiting to be placed within them.



At Kantar, we believe staying ahead requires a commitment to innovation, adaptability and a deep understanding of consumer behaviour. With comprehensive solutions, robust data and industry-leading thought leadership, we help marketers make informed decisions and build campaigns that work.

TURN SIGNALS INTO INTELLIGENCE



Smarter media planning starts now.

[Get in touch](#) to discuss the implications for your brand. We have detailed reports and data packages at global and market level available to inform your media decisions.

Visit our [website](#) or contact your local Kantar representative for more information.



Kantar is the world's leading marketing data and analytics business. We deliver the intelligence needed to power brand growth.

We provide the signals that help organisations act quickly and confidently. We empower brands to make effective marketing decisions based on predictive evidence. And we help them craft powerful growth strategies rooted in the connection between consumers, brands and enterprise value.

All this is powered by our uniquely robust human and synthetic data, our unrivalled IP, our AI-native platform and the team of global brand experts that bring this all together.



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About Media Reactions

We've been researching media experiences and perceptions for over 20 years. Media Reactions combines consumer and marketer studies for a complete view of the current media landscape and how to navigate it. The 2026 survey spoke to around 800 marketing professionals from advertiser, agency, and media companies around the world.

The consumer survey is based on around 23,000 interviews in 33 markets (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, Germany, France, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, KSA, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, UK, USA, Vietnam.)

Detailed global and country data files and reports are available to buy, including full ad equity rankings and diagnoses for all channels and all media brands.

[Find out more here](#)