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Global trends for CMOs 2027
Brand must lead the way

Signals for CMOs and senior marketers

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Welcome to our global trends for CMOs 2027

This year we are keeping it simple: **three trends**, backed by **Kantar intelligence**, interlinked by one thing, **the importance of your brand and knowing what it stands for.**

It’s one thing to produce trends that are growing rapidly from a small base. What we identify here are those trends that aren’t going away.

These trends are evidence-led, but each one earns its place through a combination of shifts in consumer behaviour, pressure on marketers to act, and the implications for different categories.

Jane Ostler
Global Thought Leadership
Kantar

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The choice environment is being rewritten, but as ever, brand must lead the way

This year, we focus on three 2027 trends which reinforce each other: AI filtering discovery, value pressure changing trade-offs, and communities making brands culturally legible.

1. The ‘two minds’ problem

Consumers increasingly use AI assistants and agents to search, compare, shortlist and delegate decisions. Brands must be meaningful and different in the machine mind, as well as the human mind.

2. Solving for smarter value

Affordability pressure is not just discount seeking. Consumers are decoding prices, rationing attention and protecting small rewards that feel worth it. Brands can use their pricing power to support consumer needs.

3. Closer to creators and culture

People are moving towards trusted creators, culture and rituals that signal identity, participation and belonging. Brands need to participate, and measure, credibly.

CMO implications:

Build and maintain a brand strategy that is machine-visible, value-credible and culturally participatory, with brand as the foundation, not three separate activation plans.

Sources: Kantar Marketing Trends 2026; Kantar Global AI Sentiment Study 2026; Consumer Sentiment Barometer 2026; Kantar Creator Game Plan 2026; Cultural OS 2026.

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Trend 1

The ‘two minds’ problem



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AI is closer to the consumer: a brand’s Meaningful Difference must be encoded for two audiences: human mind and the machine mind.

75%

net percentage of marketers who plan to increase spend on ads/ visibility in AI answers in 2027

82%

of people globally use an AI assistant

37%

would trust an AI agent to select consumer goods in a basket

2027 watchout for CMOs

Visibility alone is not enough; AI answers need coordination of brand growth strategy across content, product data, search, retail media and experiences.

Sources: Kantar’s Media Reactions 2026, Kantar Global AI Sentiment Study, 2026, N=12,485

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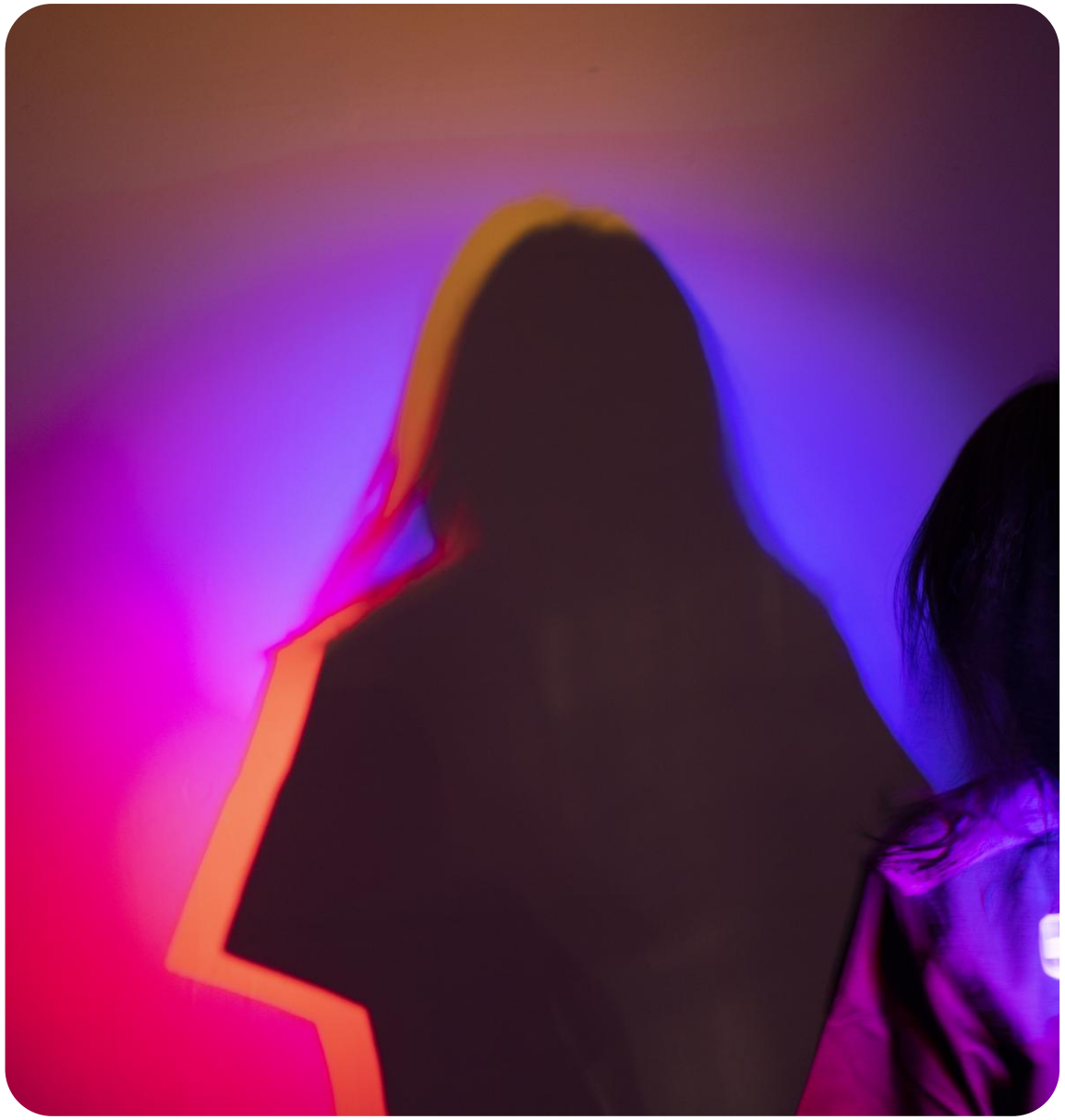

To stand out in the machine mind, brands need to be meaningful and different, just like they do in the human mind. High use of AI assistants among most adults globally means that brands need to focus on more than visibility in AI answers: they need to be mentioned, positively and at volume, to be chosen.

In 2027 CMOs will focus on their brand strategy for both minds: structuring and designing content for AI answers, looking at the impact of agents on their category, and harnessing customer experiences, so that the experience loop feeds AI citations positively.

The practical question is not “what’s my brand visibility?” but to understand where AI mediates choice and what evidence the models need

	AI pressure point	CMO moves
FMCG / Grocery	Recipes, replenishment and shopping-list shortcuts	Codify formats, pack sizes, claims and usage occasions for AI answers
Retail / Ecommerce	Search, reviews and product-card summaries replace site browsing	Synchronise retail content, RMN data, customer experience reviews and availability signals
Beauty / Personal care	Routine recommendation plus emotional permission to try	Make claims machine-readable; keep desire human-felt through creators / visuals
Technology / Durables	Comparison, specs and warranty reassurance; lower comfort with delegation to agents for personal technology	Create structured, trustworthy proof points and service content
Financial services	High need for trust; lower comfort with delegation to agents	Use AI as advisor, not buyer; prioritise transparency, security and reassurance
Travel / Entertainment	Planning, bundling and subscription optimisation	Own itineraries, guides, memberships and entertainment recommendation contexts

Action: audit whether your brand’s Meaningful Difference is visible in the answers, comparisons and shortcuts that AI systems generate.

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Trend 2

Solving for smarter value



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Value has become active, social and strategic: people compare, decode, delay, downgrade — and still protect treats that restore control

57%

cite rising energy costs as one of the biggest issues facing the world

72%

have made/plan to make spending changes due to rising prices / concerning issues

36%

are prepared to go into short-term debt to spend on things they enjoy

2027 watchout for CMOs

Reframe value: it's not 'cheap', but emotionally worth it. Understand how you show up in AI answers. Manage your Pricing Power (your permission) through brand strategy fundamentals.

Sources: Kantar Consumer Sentiment Barometer, Apr 2026, 20 markets, N=20,878; Kantar Global MONITOR

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Constant volatility and uncertainty means that consumers are acting smart: seeking value and strategies to manage their expenditure. This does not mean denial, though, as people will make exceptions for special treats that make them feel good. Last year's 'treatonomics' has turned into this year's 'smarter value' for brands to activate.

In 2027 CMOs need to define their brand strategy to understand what consumers want, pay attention to their brand's Pricing Power, pricing architecture and how they show up in AI answers.

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Categories need a broader value architecture: price, proof, convenience, emotional reward and risk reduction

	How value is being redefined	CMO moves
FMCG / Grocery	Unit-price transparency, pack architecture, meal solutions, “good enough” tiers	Value cues at shelf + recipes + budget bundles; protect quality signals
Retail / Private label	Promotions, loyalty, second-hand and channel switching	Use retail media and loyalty data to personalise value without over-discounting
Beauty / Personal care	Affordable efficacy, refill, multifunctional claims and small treats	Connect functional ROI with emotional reward; avoid guilt cues
Apparel / Lifestyle	Dupes, resale, repair, capsule wardrobes, social proof	Make smart shopping aspirational: creativity, sustainability and identity
Durables / Technology	Deferral, repair, warranty reassurance, financing	Lower perceived risk; prove durability, total cost and support
Travel, Entertainment / Financial services	Trade-offs on leisure, subscriptions, insurance, credit and trips	Flexible tiers, bundles and moments of joy; explain what is worth paying for

Rule of thumb: compete on “worth it”, not only price. In value pressure, over-discounting can weaken the pricing power brands need most.

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Trend 3

Closer to creators and culture



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As broad feeds fragment, influence shifts toward creators, micro-communities and rituals that people trust and participate in

66%

Net percentage of marketers who plan to increase investment in creator content in 2027

6%

of only creator content succeeds on both platform engagement and brand impact

+78%

Of culturally coded brands are more meaningful than brands that are not

2027 watchout for CMOs

Beware the creator engagement trap, and know which creator strategies to adopt. Understand how to participate credibly in culture as part of your brand strategy, using intelligence to drive business decisions.

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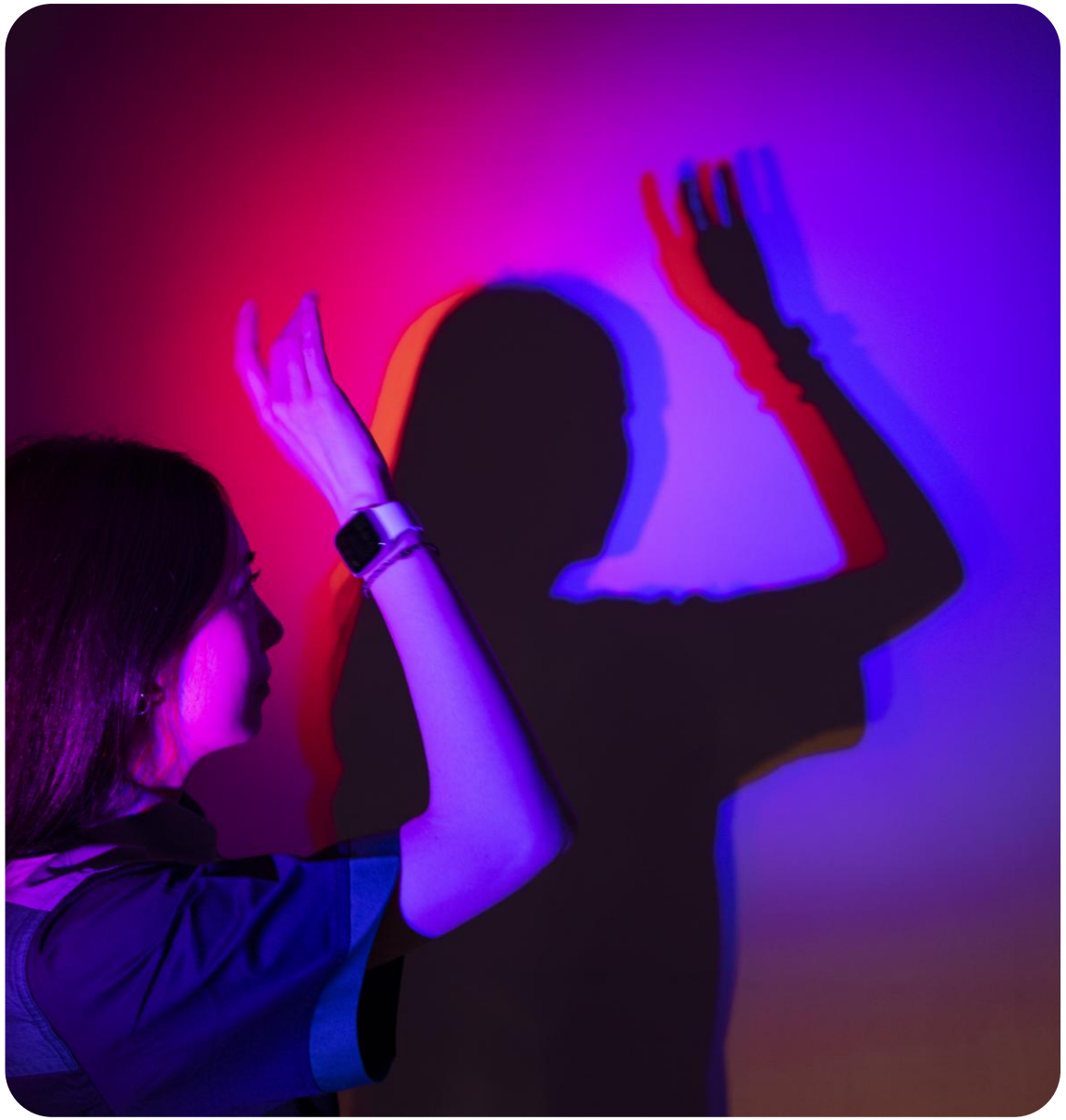
Sources: Kantar's Media Reactions 2026; Kantar Creator Game Plan 2026, Kantar analysis



Brands control much less of the campaign ecosystem than they did before. They need to build and maintain meaning and relevance by delegating activation to creators, cultural partnerships and communities like fandoms.

In 2027 brands will map which creators and cultural partnerships can drive campaignable moments that drive consumer participation. Measurement is not a ‘nice to have’ – we will see a move from lazy platform engagement to brand metrics that can be compared across other communications channels.

Winning means earning participation: contribute to scenes, select creators for fit and build memory, not just moments

	Belonging trigger	CMO moves
Beauty / Personal care	Routines, aesthetics, efficacy demos and identity cues	Co-create rituals with credible creators; keep distinctive brand assets visible
FMCG / Treats / Grocery	Limited editions, recipes, snack rituals, “dupes” and deal communities	Turn products into shareable rituals; create value without killing margin
Entertainment / Gaming / Sport	Fandom worlds, teams, IP, creators and shared moments	Build platforms for participation; respect community codes and lore
Apparel / Lifestyle	Style tribes, thrifting, resale and status through smart finds	Make value and identity visible; use community proof and creator curation
Durables / Technology	Communities around use cases: AI productivity, gaming, home, longevity	Use expert creators to simplify, prove and build confidence
Financial services / Travel / Retail	Trust communities, planning groups, local discovery and peer review	Show up through useful tools and trusted advocates; avoid extractive promotion

Creator rule: give creators freedom of voice, but set clear strategic guardrails: brand role, key takeaways, proof points and success metrics.

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The environment is changing.

The importance of brand isn’t.

Thank you.

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