



**HAVAS** Media Network

# MEDIA IMPERATIVES 2026

CONVERGED FOR GROWTH, WIRED FOR TRANSFORMATION



# IMPERATIVES FOR A MOVING WORLD

The media environment of 2026 is not shaped by any single breakthrough or platform. It is shaped by movement. Everything is in motion. Culture moves around us. People shift between identities, moods, and communities, and now technology shifts more seamlessly with us too. Signals connect in ways we barely notice but constantly feel.

We no longer step in and out of digital life. We live in one continuous flow where moments stretch across physical spaces, screens, conversations, and instinctive reactions. The scroll becomes the store. The store becomes entertainment. Conversations become search. Search becomes connection. There is no single place where media happens. It unfolds around us, wherever we go.

For brands, this means the speed of tech change and fluidity of daily life can no longer just be met with the campaign planning and discipline-based approaches we relied on in the past. The old boundaries – channels, funnels, stages – do not hold up anymore. People want technology that supports their lives, not complicates things. They value brands that understand and flex to the moment they are in and feel coherent and trustworthy from one interaction to the next.

**Interviewing Havas experts, our clients and partners about what is critical in the year ahead, we identified the five most universal media imperatives for brands in 2026 that reflect this reality.** These imperatives describe what it takes for brands to stay relevant in a world that never stops moving. They encourage brands to move with people instead of around them, to design experiences that create value as people shift through their day, and to create more growth opportunities by meeting people's changing needs and expectations.

## IMPERATIVE #1:

# THE BLENDED REALITY

**The first imperative is to recognize that people no longer compartmentalize their lives. The separation between physical, digital, and social spaces is dissolving. People move through them as one continuous field and brands must too.**

As shopping, socializing, and entertainment blend, major culture moments like Kpop Demon Hunters, the Q1 launch of Bridgerton Season 4 and the highly anticipated 2026 World Cup will be experienced in multiple ways through niche creators, immersive storytelling and micro tribes across multiple platforms and places.

In 2026, expect hyper realistic gaming experiences for the massive Grand Theft Auto VI launch in the Fall and the merging of fictional worlds as Disney's investment into Epic Games pays off with rumors of a full-scale Disney universe within Fortnite before the year's end. The winning brands here are the ones designing fully connected cultural ecosystems for fans.

We'll see more merging of brand worlds as well, best epitomized in 2026 with Stranger Things and Dungeons & Dragons fueling each others' success. The Netflix Original Stranger Things will go from film to animation in the year ahead and with it support the growth of the previously analog D&D's new virtual table-tops in D&D Beyond.

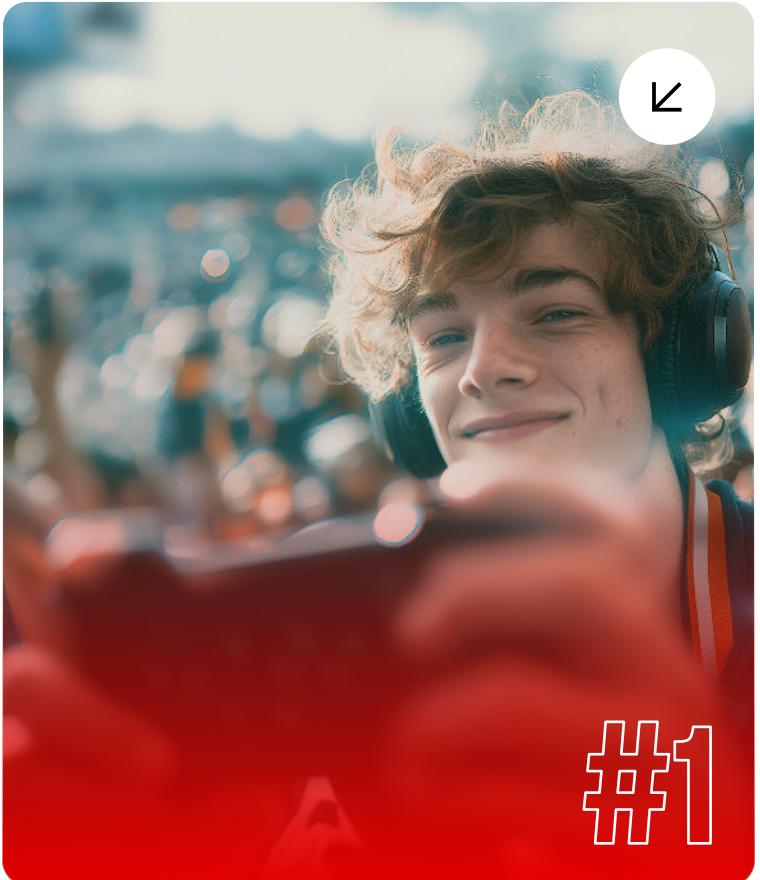
Beyond the biggest media moments, and as social platforms serve up predictable algorithmic feeds, people will seek niche interests in other spaces; local communities, offline activities, gaming, Reddit, Discord and Twitch – through reels 'pebbling' (sharing curated pieces of content to signal care), even building relationships with LLMs. All making more of our passions IRL and virtually.

It's not just cultural moments blending across platforms but also Media blending with retail as all channels become increasingly shoppable. TikTok is already the third largest online beauty care retailer in the US and Amazon Live will continue its roll-out across global markets in 2026. Live shopping that merges entertainment with commerce will scale beyond China. Partners like AnyLive stream a single avatar across multiple platforms in multiple languages, combining human and virtual talent to inform and scale how brands best connect with shoppers.

Physical retail environments will offer brands more of the capabilities they expect from digital media. Carrefour's new DOOH network means brands can tailor messaging based on store traffic and transactional data, and Sephora's increasingly sophisticated Augmented Reality mirrors create a more blended try on experience.

In South Korea daily life runs through Kakao's ecosystem, where messaging, mobility, payments, navigation, and public services connect. People can chat with friends, hail a taxi, pay a bill, or book an appointment all in one platform, and likewise, brands can direct people to stores on KakaoMaps, enable payments with KakaoPay and reward loyalty with KakaoTalk. Digital layers travel with people across places, with identity, utility, and culture intertwined.

This year's CES saw more launches of blended and mixed reality tech. Highlights included Google bringing Gemini's generative technology to TCL televisions, allowing users to ask questions about what they're seeing, search



photos and even create with Nano Banana. Walmart announced ads in its shopping agent Sparky. Off the floor, Google and Spotify announced Universal Commerce Protocol (UCP) to power Agentic Commerce.

This is not simply a shift in behavior. It is a shift in expectations. People expect systems to work together. They expect information to follow them and experiences to feel connected. When those expectations are met, the experience feels intuitive, natural, and emotionally satisfying.

As people move fluidly across platforms, they're seeking content that feels both relevant and real. We're seeing a clear shift toward personalization and deeper engagement. At BBC Studios, we are combining data-driven insights with creative storytelling to meet these expectations and create measurable, meaningful connections between brands and our audience.

**Sam MELLOR**

VP Commercial Marketing and Enterprise Growth, BBC Studios Advertising



**BBC STUDIOS**

VP Commercial Marketing and Enterprise Growth, BBC Studios Advertising

Our vision at Snapchat has always been focused on keeping friends and family connected, and in turn our community is hyper engaged. People are increasingly more conscious of how much time they're spending online so we're focused on celebrating and evolving our products that nurture real relationships and deepen how they meaningfully connect. We will continue to help our community use technology as a creative canvas for expression, enriching communication and connection both online and in the real world.

**Kate BIRD**

Senior Director of EMEA Marketing, Snap inc.



These new codes mean we can't measure channels and tactics in isolation; we need to understand how different levers work together to drive new business outcomes. This can be in tension with the still fragmented measurement ecosystem. Even though the "cookie Armageddon" has been postponed indefinitely, this does not change the underlying reality of a privacy-first world, where walled gardens continue to proliferate.

The analysis of a fully integrated purchase journey is easier with partners who have vertical integration across the entire stack. They will be improving ways to connect brands' 1PD to campaign measurement like Amazon's Marketing Cloud Value Based Bidding predictive modelling engines. But by definition, this measurement still cannot be fully connected with the full consumer view and people's experience of brands in the wider world.

This fragmentation affects both orchestration and measurement. On the orchestration side, brands will need a stronger focus on first-party data and CDPs. On the measurement side, we see a shift toward aggregated approaches, with the revival of Marketing Mix Modelling. Pioneered by Meta's open-source library, Robyn, others are gradually entering this space: Google with Meridian, Adobe with its own MMM capabilities, and Amazon through its MMM offering within Amazon Marketing Cloud. Brand is just as important as sales in these fluid experiences, and we need to account for the blending of the two with evolved measurement techniques like our Havas nested models.



While the proliferation of data and technology provides significant new opportunities, the brand winners will be those whose teams have the capabilities to interpret marketing, creative, and media insights and develop world-class campaigns.

### Brett David STEPHENSON

Executive Director, Marketing, Dubai Holding  
Real Estate

DUBAI  
HOLDING



Today, our users demand immediacy and TOTAL connection. This requires us to develop more robust and demanding products that can meet the needs of an always-connected consumer. But offering connectivity alone is no longer enough: the product must be backed by a brand that creates relevance, real value, and an authentic emotional bond. This challenges us to combine technology, purpose, and emotion to truly be present in people's lives. In 2026, we aim for a much more surgical, data-driven media strategy: less dispersion, more intention.

### Fernanda PÉREZ

Head of Brand & Integrated Marketing  
Communications Movistar Mexico

M Movistar



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For brands, the priority is how to show up in customers' new reality of blended worlds. The era of creating and optimizing touchpoints and messages in isolation is over.

This requires 'always on' journey architecture, not channel planning for campaigns. We must always anticipate people's emotional context. Measurement must focus on value generation across the ecosystem over time, not just individual user events like conversion.

### Sandeep GREWAL

EVP Global Strategy, Havas Media Network

## IMPERATIVE #2:

# THE HUMAN ALGORITHM: TECHNOLOGY WITH FEELING

Artificial intelligence has entered a new chapter. After years of experimentation and a massive wave of widespread adoption in 2025, people are now using AI as part of their everyday routines. They expect it to be accurate, helpful, and instinctive.



#2

But something deeper is happening. As people more frequently rely on AI, they increasingly trust technology to help them make decisions and to filter the constant flow of information around them. We can expect more humanized developments from platforms like Spotify, which has led the way on relatable, algorithm-based personal entertainment recommendations with their increasingly AI, sharable playlists and contextually relevant Daylists. Duolingo is broadening its personality-led AI tutoring capabilities with pronunciation feedback on video calls and is playing to people's professional egos by allowing Duo Proficiency Scores to be posted directly on LinkedIn.

With greater human connectivity comes a new expectation: AI should not only deliver answers, but should also understand people's tone, nuance, and emotion – from brand discovery to supporting customers' purchase decisions. And in 2026, voice enabled AI will scale too with brands needing to recognize natural language like India's Reliance Jio using voice-led discovery in all local dialects.

Expect this to bring major transformations in how disciplines like SEO work, where content is increasingly extracted by Generative AI models to serve as sources of truth, already mass market with the likes of Google's AI Overview. Brands must adapt by understanding how to influence these tools for different user typologies. Prompts will no longer be simple queries; they carry contextual and emotional signals. We need to decode intent and optimize influence strategies in new ways.

As AI becomes the primary interface for brand discovery across platforms, brands are no longer competing for search ranking – they are competing for summary with many different AI systems. This is the rise of generative visibility, where emotional intent and brand realities will matter more than keyword optimization. But as leaders in the AI ecosystem still struggle to achieve profitability, and with OpenAI's announcement that they will start testing an ad funded model from Q1 in the USA initially, expect new paid activation channels for brands in 2026, as well as the organic management already required.

Consumers are shifting to conversational, AI-powered discovery, expecting instant answers, fewer clicks, and seamless shopping. Gen Z and Millennials increasingly favor social and voice search, while AI assistants speed up decision-making. Microsoft Advertising data shows Copilot-led journeys drive 53% more purchases within 30 minutes and, when shopping intent is present, are 194% more likely to result in a purchase than those without. To meet these behaviors, Copilot now delivers richer, faster experiences through conversational ads, visual formats, and app connectors.

**Matteo  
GIRARDI**

Regional Director, Global Holdings  
Agencies, Microsoft





In this shift to technology with feeling, 2026 will also see AI in retail move beyond pure utility to become more experiential. Conversational assistants will have greater empathy to create customer journeys that feel personal and intuitive.

We're already seeing this with some AI technologies piloting ad formats within conversational shopping bots; ads in Amazon's Rufus or in ChatGPT's shopping results, Walmart and Target integrating ChatGPT-powered conversational shopping throughout their apps and Zalando using generative AI for personalized fashion recommendations.

People will still expect efficiency and value, but only when the technology delivering it feels human enough to respect their needs. The more we depend on AI, the more we expect it to understand us, and respond with clarity and care.

We are already used to wearables detecting our wellness and medical data, but AI will go further this year into reading our emotions too. OvoMind, the AI technology that enables companies to respond to human emotion inside products, services, and experiences, has just opened pre-orders for DK1 that will connect players emotions to tailor their game play based on their mood. We'll see more AI emotional intelligence also expand across other media moments.

We're witnessing a fundamental shift in consumer behavior on Google Search driven by AI. With our leading Gemini models - we are bringing the conversational power of an AI chatbot to the trust, and real-world information of Google Search. This is why we are seeing more people search than at any time in history. People aren't just searching to find information. They are coming to Search earlier in their journey to figure out what they need. This creates massive opportunity for businesses. Gemini allows us to deeply understand intent - and ensure brands show up not just as an ad, but as the absolute best answer.

**Paul**  
LIMBREY

Vice President, Global Agency and Partners,  
Google



As AI reshapes how people find and evaluate products, search is becoming more visual, conversational and context-aware. Shoppers increasingly ask specific, attribute-level questions and want platforms that understand taste as well as intent. Our new Pinterest Assistant feature supports this by letting users explore items more deeply through conversational, multimodal queries. At the same time, our continued investment in GenAI systems is strengthening relevance across the platform, improving how we understand preferences and making visual search an even more intuitive path from discovery to decision.

**Soniya**  
MONGA

VP of Global Agency and Accounts,  
Pinterest



## THE HAVAS POV

**In 2026, human tone isn't a nice to have. It's how brands stay meaningful when AI becomes the interface for our brand interactions.**

Gen AI can't stop at personalisation. It needs to understand the moment, respond with care, and still respect boundaries. That's what intimacy looks like at scale. Our role is using what AI learns from real conversations, then applying it with empathy and judgement, not performance.

**Ravi PAU**

Head of AI Operations, Havas

## IMPERATIVE #3:

# TRUST AS THE NEW CURRENCY

**Synthetic content keeps accelerating, and misinformation is everywhere. People are overwhelmed by the sheer volume of altered or unreliable information and are craving trust and connection.**

In all this noise, trust has become one of the defining values of the digital age. People are gravitating toward sources, creators, and communities that feel honest, reliable, and true. They are turning to places where they believe the information reflects reality rather than distortion and that's often not from legacy media brands, especially for the younger generations.

As legislative and regulatory pressure reduce, platforms continue to dominate, but a more transparent bargain between users and big tech is emerging as we swap personal data for relevancy.

Havas' 2025 Meaningful Brands study shows that the most dynamic brands globally score +63% higher on trust. That is a powerful signal for brands. Credibility is no longer earned through scale alone – it comes from connection, transparency and intimacy. This poses challenges and opportunities as saliency of AI increases.

Use of AI by creators and platforms' push of AI content is creating consumer pushback against "AI slop". 32% of US and UK consumers say AI is negatively disrupting the creator economy, up from 18% in 2023\*.

AI disclosure and data misuse are social media users' top concerns about brands, eclipsing concerns on content moderation policies or influencers who don't share consumers values (see chart above).

People trust people, that is the simple truth. LinkedIn has become the breakout platform for creators with content that resonates with professionals. With BrandLink, we've created a win-win-win: members get high-quality content, advertisers gain relevant engagement, and creators gain exposure to new audiences to grow their business.

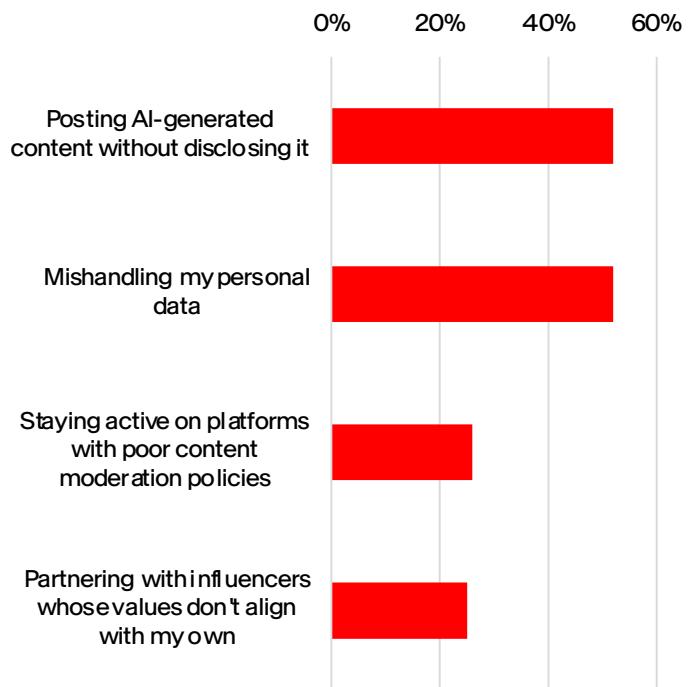


**Abhishek**  
Shrivastava  
VP of Product, LinkedIn.

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\* "Muse Two: The Real Impact of AI on the Creator Economy" conducted by Censuswide, Oct 8, 2025

## CONSUMERS IN AU, UK AND US ON THEIR PRIMARY CONCERN ABOUT BRANDS ON SOCIAL MEDIA\*



\* "The State of Social Media in 2025" conducted by Sprout Social, Sep 2025  
In response to this, expect search and discovery to become:

1. More "multimodal" as Google, OpenAI and others integrate more video and more social answers in responses for better trust and relevancy
2. More personal, as platforms seek to make explicit the bargain with users on more data access in exchange for more relevancy of AI tools (demonstrated by the launch of Google Gemini's 'Personal Intelligence' and Anthropic Claude's just released Cowork for your working week)

AI pressure on publishers, combined with high attention and trust premiums, will encourage innovation in ad formats beyond the platforms and create opportunities for Advertisers to go direct in new ways (Demonstrated by the New York Times new "WatchTab" app functionality and LinkedIn's BrandLink program)

The future of marketing isn't just about campaigns; it's about connection and building strong bonds with consumers. Brands that listen, understand and act with empathy will win. Technology and data are just tools, but real impact comes from creativity, purpose and trust.

**Kimberly**  
HAIRSTON-HICKS  
CMO, Gold Bond, Sanofi

**sanofi**



## New York Times' Watch tab high-trust video channel



## LinkedIn

Connects brands with trusted publishers and creators through in-feed video ads



Social proof through verified reviews, relevant offers, clear benefits, and strong warranties needs to be integrated consistently throughout the customer journey. In 2026, when recommendations are tailored to prompts and media campaigns are running on AI search, relevant ads will become one of the most common sources of traffic.

This shifts how brands should invest. Mass reach still matters, but the focus moves toward quality attention in credible contexts. Trust shapes where brands show up, who they partner with, and how those partnerships are structured. It also shapes how brands handle data: people want to know how their information is used and what they get in return. What started as a legal requirement is now part of the story brands tell.

South Africa illustrates this shift: WhatsApp-based micro-commerce is now thriving because trust is socially generated on the platform. People buy and sell confidently within networks where personal reputation and community verification replaces institutional authority.

Globally, OOH is becoming less about awareness and more about credibility. When people are increasingly skeptical of what they see online, a billboard or poster offers something reassuring: it's harder to fake, and someone had to pay for it to exist in the real world.

For marketers trying to rebuild trust in a world where AI can generate content faster than anyone can verify it, messages that take up physical space can carry outsized weight.

As consumer behavior changes to increasingly expect more personalized, intelligent and intuitive experiences, we're focused on what makes the FT truly distinctive - trusted global journalism, deep analysis and expert voices. While AI is transforming content discovery and personalization, our opportunity lies in what it can't replicate: editorial integrity, human insight and connection.

We're evolving how our audiences find and experience our journalism, bringing our journalists closer to readers through new formats and technologies and using data, tools and capabilities to deliver a customer experience that matches our gold-standard journalism.

**Fiona  
SPOONER**

Managing Director, Consumer Revenue,  
Financial Times



As the cost of living rises and society becomes increasingly polarized, consumers are seeking trusted brands that offer value. Data & Tech are strong enablers to deliver these outcomes – responding to customer queries faster, curating creative for different audiences, and allowing better human stories to be shared in the right context.

**Vivek  
PAREEK**

General Manager, Shell Brand Marketing



We built Personal Intelligence with privacy at the center. Connecting your apps is off by default: you choose to turn it on, decide exactly which apps to connect, and can turn it off anytime. ... because this data already lives at Google securely, you don't have to send sensitive data elsewhere to start personalizing your experience. This is a key differentiator.

**Josh  
WOODWARD**

VP, Google Labs & Google Gemini



**Ben  
DOWNING**  
Global Managing Director, Sustainability  
and Digital, Havas Media Network

As trust becomes even more fragile, transparency and a clear value exchange become a real competitive advantage for brands willing to treat data with care.

## IMPERATIVE #4:

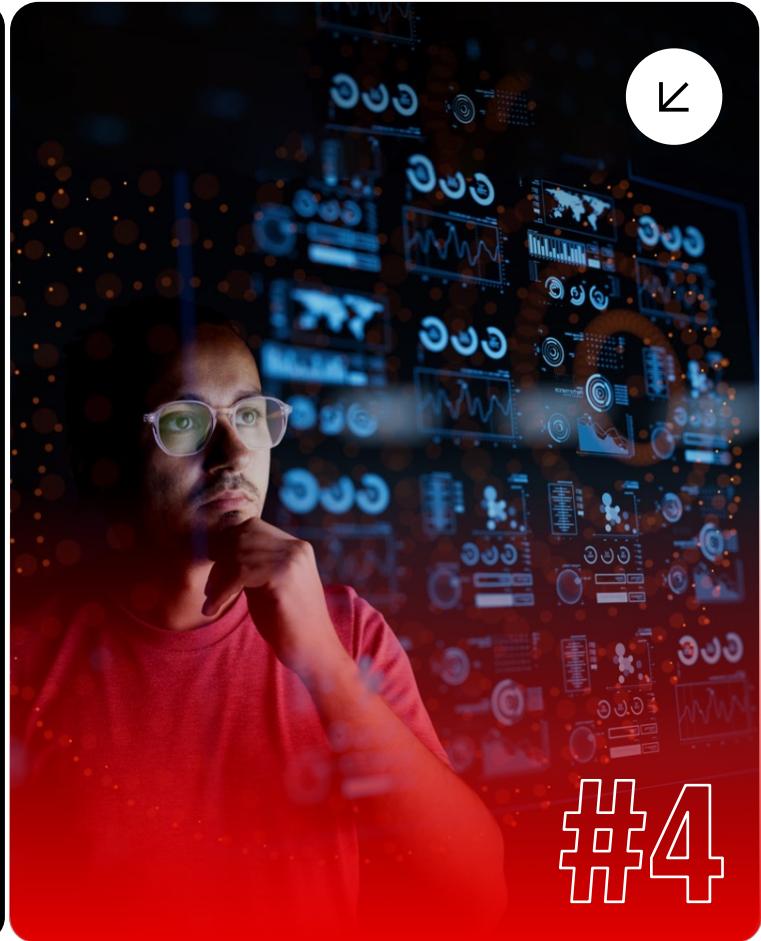
# DECISION VELOCITY: INFLUENCE, IMPULSE, AND CONSTANT COMMERCE

Consumer decision making has fully shifted into an era defined by speed. People no longer travel through a tidy, linear funnel that starts with awareness and ends with purchase.

Discovery, evaluation, and action now happen in the same space, often within the same interaction. The explosion of creator commerce, algorithmically tailored recommendations, and shoppable media has compressed decisions from days or hours into seconds.

China remains the global benchmark for instant commerce, especially through platforms like Taobao Live. A creator can show how a product works, share thoughts, answer questions, and drop limited offers all in one stream. Taobao's parent company, Alibaba, launched their Quark AI Glasses in China at the end of 2025, with a global rollout planned in 2026, combining vision, voice, context, and shopping in a hands-free wearable, making instant commerce better connected across physical and digital retail.

In 2026, the shoppable feeds, one-click to purchase videos and mobile-enabled payments that we've come to expect from major platforms like YouTube's Shoppable CTV Format will expand into media. Netflix, while previously more known as a branding environment, is exploring their creative commerce capabilities with dynamic ads that can respond in real time in their expanding slate of live events. AI providers will also develop their own e-commerce capabilities, as early tests from OpenAI's Instant Checkout – already launched with Etsy and Shopify in the US – will expand rapidly in 2026.



#4

Consumer behavior is rapidly shifting towards discovery and shopping via short-form video and authentic creator voices. To address this, Meta is prioritizing AI-powered recommendations, immersive video formats like Reels, and seamless commerce journeys, including more ways for people to shop directly from a creator's post.

We are also seeing the continued acceleration of consumers using our messaging platforms to communicate with businesses. To meet consumers where they are, we are developing new AI products to automate support, drive sales, and deliver seamless, personalized customer experiences through messaging.

**Nick**  
BAUGHAN  
Director of Global Agencies, Meta

 **Meta**



Interactive formats such as augmented reality try-ons, instant purchase overlays, and dynamic shoppable ads turn impressions into intent and intent into action. Media platforms are increasingly unlocking ways for advertisers to access shopper data from these experiences and provide a more accurate understanding of the business growth potential.

Emotion sits in the center of this. Familiar sounds, iconic imagery, and cultural triggers create powerful shortcuts for decision making because they already feel a sense of connection. Brands that understand how to move people emotionally and functionally simultaneously will perform best in this rapid and condensed landscape.

A recent Tesco Media study has categorically proven that grocery shopping is a huge opportunity for brand discovery, with over 2 out of 3 shoppers finding new brands while they shop, often buying a product they hadn't even heard of before they started shopping. As a result, we are dialing up the opportunities to excite customers across the entire funnel. This includes new video and DOOH products, increasing our use of data science & AI to identify predictive audiences and measure incrementality and omnichannel metrics, and launching automated AI-led creative tools.

**Steve  
EDWARDS**

Head of Agencies, Tesco Media

Tesco Media and  
Insight Platform.  
Powered by dentsu dmp



We're witnessing a fundamental shift in how consumers discover and purchase products, with an increasing preference for authentic, personalized shopping experiences that blend entertainment with commerce. To address this, we're evolving our advertising solutions to better support shoppable content experiences across Amazon's diverse media properties, while expanding our measurement capabilities to help agencies demonstrate both brand and performance impact for their clients.

**Sarah  
LOSS**

Director, Global Agency & Global Twitch  
Ads, Amazon Ads

amazon ads



Increasingly aggressive commercial tactics and the rise of strong promotions are making our customers and prospects more opportunistic, and it's the right moment to showcase all our brand's attributes to attract, win over, and retain our customers. Consequently, we face a new challenge: blending corporate and commercial approaches to highlight our uniqueness throughout the media funnel. We are counting on the new potential of modeling tools to help us define the right type of message, the right lever, and the right timing to remain relevant and effective at every stage.

**Aurellen  
PERNOT**

Head of Brand & Advertising, EDF

edf



The shopper path is becoming increasingly dynamic. Consumers are exposed to thousands of sources of information and ads of all kinds, making it very easy for campaigns to get lost in this data-driven world. We must be highly precise in how we select media and always stay at the forefront, especially nowadays, when AI has transformed every business process.

**Carlos  
ACOSTA**

Marketing Director Mexico, Puma

puma



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The imperative for brands to collapse the funnel is clear. Influence and commerce must coexist, and creativity and conversion need to be engineered as one connected experience.

That brands that win will be those that seize retail media's potential as a full-funnel, personalized experience that is cultural, contextual, and conversational.

**Bertrand FRABOULET**

Havas Market Global Managing Director

## IMPERATIVE #5:

# EXPERIENCE AS EQUITY: THE NEW MEASURE OF ATTENTION

Attention is still a valuable currency, but the way people give it is changing. Not every moment of attention carries the same weight.

A quick glance can spark awareness, but richer experiences and sustained attention is what actually stays with people and generates real business value for brands.

Major media moments in 2026 will offer brands new creative toolkit for experiences; from the Winter Olympics, Christopher Nolan's The Odyssey - the most anticipated film on IMDb – to the biggest ever FIFA World Cup in the Summer.

We are seeing new models of attention take shape around the world. In China, artificial intelligence-driven videos shift dynamically based on how someone reacts, creating personal relevance without any extra effort from the viewer. In Europe, the approach is different but equally powerful. Premium publishers and broadcasters are embracing more intentional content environments, limiting clutter, and putting real emphasis on editorial craft. The result is attention that feels more thoughtful, more respectful of the audience, and, ultimately, more meaningful.

Staying agile and ready to engage with what's trending is essential to remain relevant. New generations are increasingly mindful of their consumption habits. Health considerations play a major role in their decision-making, and there is a growing preference for brands that demonstrate genuine care for the environment. The way young people indulge in treats has evolved. Beverages now play an increasingly important role in this trend.

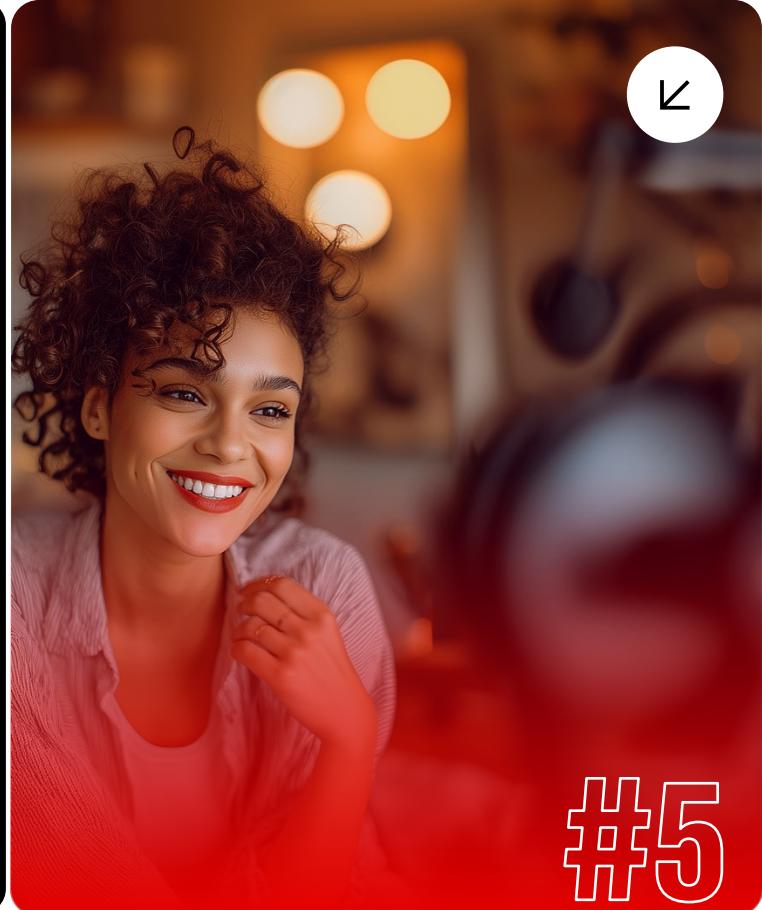
While this presents challenges, it also opens opportunities to expand our offerings, strengthen existing categories, and explore new ones that align with their desire for self-indulgence. Our goal is to strengthen emotional connections with our audience by delivering relevant, engaging, and personalized content across all platforms, ultimately driving increased transactions.

**Jimena  
MARINA**

Marketing Director LA&C, Dairy Queen



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**#5**

Retail Media from major high street chains was a big news story for 2025, and in 2026 more diverse retailers will be leveraging the attention they have with customers to offer advertisers new ways to speak with audiences. The focus will increasingly be on ensuring these are viewed as high quality environments for brands to show up in too. From the global roll out of Uber Eats' advertising network, to innovation in travel media, such as Latam travel agency Despegar's AI-powered sponsored listings, media that demands attention is taking new forms.

Our industry continues to be challenged by the fragmented media landscape and waning attention spans. Capturing the hearts, minds, and focus of viewers can no longer be an aspirational goal. This year, we took a big step forward by launching Netflix Ads Suite, our own ad tech platform. It gives us greater flexibility to innovate and improve our systems quickly to drive the best results for our clients.

We're also focused on developing new, optimized ad products that we can deliver at scale. Right now, we're testing several of these, like interactive overlays and AI-powered creative customization. These products are designed to engage our members and keep them interested in the ads they see on Netflix.

**Valerie  
BISCHAK**

Director, Advertising Sales, Netflix



**At the same time, brands are deepening the experiences they create. Luxury stores are adding restaurants with exclusive dining experiences and rotating pop-up spaces with creative collaborators. Beauty brands are building mini galleries inside their flagships.**

Sportswear brands are opening community studios. Lifestyle brands will develop more sophisticated in-game integrations that are opt-in by design: branded skins, emotes, and even vehicles. And media brands are finding new ways to stay connected to their audiences for longer, like Netflix scaling up their range of video podcasts in 2026 as part of a deal with Spotify Studios including a live broadcast from Golden Globes and existing popular radio shows. All of these innovations are optimized for attention and time spent, not just reach.

As expectations grow, people want every touchpoint to feel connected and intentional. They want interactions that adapt to their mood, their needs, and the moment they are in. This is where adaptive creativity for brands comes in. When content shifts based on context, it increases brand relevance. That sense of being understood builds trust and long-term connection.



Fans come to Spotify for a deeper sense of connection and value. Our evolution into a dynamic, multi-format platform enhances this with experiences like AI Playlists and video podcasts. Building on our foundation of products like Interactive AI DJ, we are putting our efforts into automation, immersive content and creative tools like Gen AI Ads for advertisers. These investments make it easier for advertisers to reach our hyper-engaged users, driving measurable impact while delighting listeners

**Per  
SANDELL**

VP of Product, Spotify



The way people engage with brands has fundamentally changed. Relevance today means showing up in culture, being part of the conversation and creating campaigns that people genuinely want to share. It's about building energy around the brand, showing up in culture, and creating something players want to talk about. In a world where everything moves fast and attention is fragmented, you have to be crystal clear about which moments deserve your energy, which stories to amplify, and who you're truly trying to reach

**Monica  
AUSTIN**

CMO, Blizzard Entertainment



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**Brand experiences must plan for long term brand equity, customer loyalty, and brand fandom. Work with creators on ownership, not just influence.**

Develop experiences that evolve, create shareable memories and new customer behaviors for value that goes far beyond the first moment of attention.

**Gabriela DOMINGUEZ**  
Global Director, Havas Play

# ADAPTING TO A WORLD IN MOTION



The media imperatives of 2026 reveal a world that is blended, adaptive, emotional, and fast. Media is no longer just a planned set of ad placements. It is a living system shaped by emotion, technology, trust, culture, and choice. To thrive in this environment, brands must keep pace with people's changing behavior and be intentional in how they show up.

The thread running through all five imperatives is dynamic adaptability; brand must experiment rapidly to meet customers' fast changing needs whilst staying true to their own values. This turns media from placements into an ongoing exchange between people and the environments around them; a relationship rather than an interruption.

In a world defined by constant motion, the brands that grow are the ones that move with people rather than after them.

**To explore more about how to be dynamically adaptable to the most relevant technology, cultural and media innovations in 2026 for your brand, contact your client lead to set up a workshop.**

**For any other enquiries, please contact:**

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