

**MEDIA
BOUNTY**

BEYOND THE CLIMATE BUBBLE

**HOW TO GROW THE MARKET
FOR THE PRODUCTS & SERVICES
THE WORLD NEEDS**



HELLO.

If you've read past the cover page, then we'll assume you're fully aware we're facing a catastrophic climate crisis. [Advertising adds an extra 32% to the annual carbon footprint of every person in the UK.](#) Globally, we're not on track to keep global warming within a 1.5°C temperature rise – a critical goal set by the IPCC.

In their latest report, the House of Lords has said that one third of carbon reductions will need to come from consumers adopting low-carbon lifestyles, which is easier said than done. That said, we hope that like us, you believe marketing has the power to accelerate these changes.

But for many apathetic or eco-sceptic consumers (to be clear - not climate deniers), being presented with sustainable choices isn't enough to alter their shopping habits. **With the cost-of-living crisis and a looming global recession, other factors like price, familiarity with the brand, and reliability take priority before environmental or social impact.**

So, instead of focusing on elusive marketing myths like the 'ethical consumer', we set out to discover how to increase preference for sustainable products with consumers who are not usually the main target for sustainable brands.



BUT BEFORE WE DIVE IN...

...let's get the intro out of the way.

We're Media Bounty. By 2026 we want to be the UK's leading independent ethical creative and media agency. We know that's a big statement. But if you don't have a target, then what's the point?

We're a team of climate communication experts, strategic status quo squashers, inquisitive creatives, and media magicians - and we work with brands that want to do their bit for the good of the planet.

When we're not working on strategies, creative campaigns or media plans for clients, we've co-founded the Conscious Advertising Network, popped up at the UN Office of the High Commission for Human Rights, launched ground-breaking research at COP27 and set up ACT Climate Labs - the only project dedicated to improving the effectiveness of climate communications and reducing the impact of misinformation on public sentiment the UK.



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THIS REPORT WAS CREATED TO SUPPORT THE **CHANGE** **WE WANT TO SEE**

- **We want sustainable products to become the norm, and to change current consumption habits to reduce the impact of climate change.**
- **We want sustainable products to steal market share from their polluting competitors, and to make good business more successful.**
- **We want our clients to achieve long-term commercial growth - while staying true to their purpose and values.**

To achieve this, we knew we needed to help brands find new customers.
But who were they? And how can we make sustainability interesting to them?

As with any strategy project, we started exploring our audience – and the journey was fascinating.

SPOTTING THE AUDIENCE OPPORTUNITY

Our starting point was the ground-breaking research '[Britain Talks Climate](#)', from Climate Outreach. They created seven audience segments, which showed that roughly 14% of people in the UK are already very engaged in climate issues, and that 17% are not - and aren't going to be convinced otherwise.

In the middle are five segments who represent 69% of the population. They believe climate change is happening, and when asked, tend to agree that taking action for the environment will benefit them in the long term.

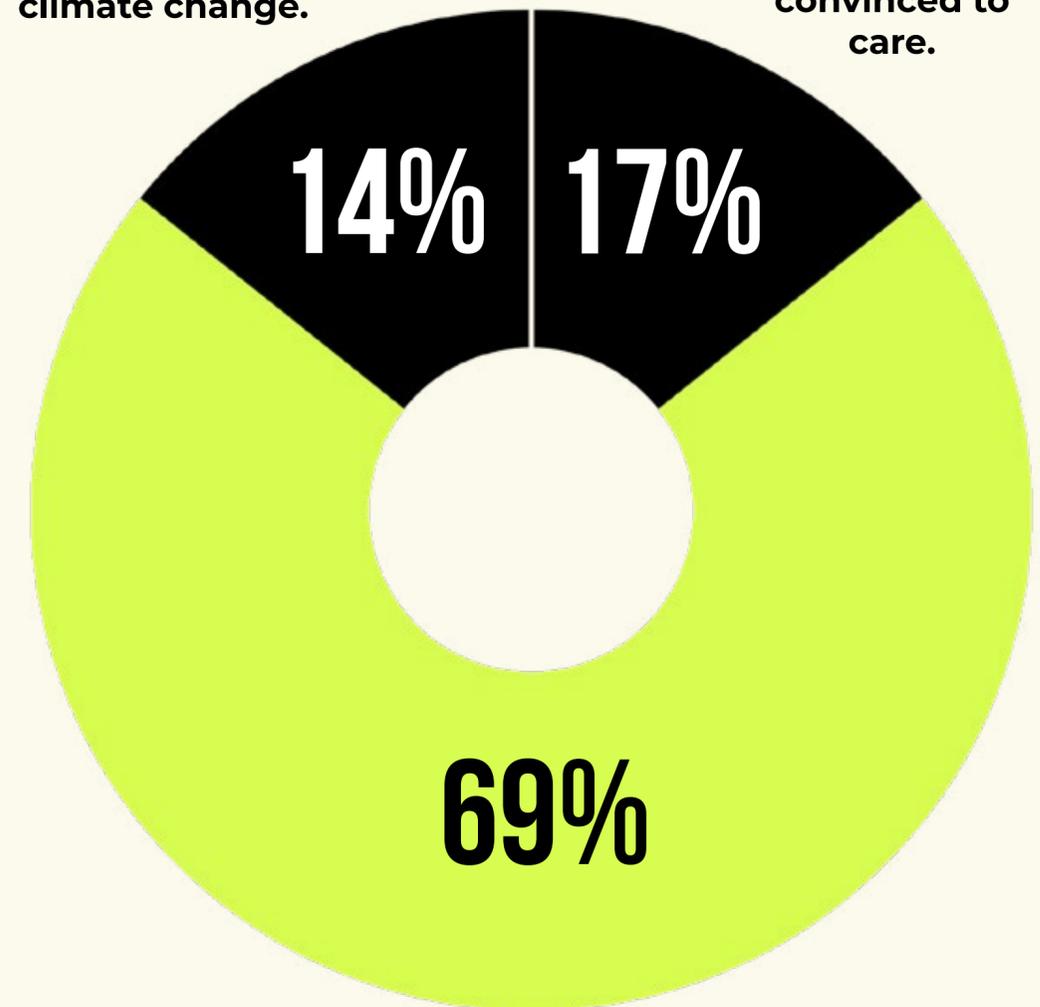
But at the same time, they're not too engaged with the topic. They almost never discuss it, and just don't think it's a priority with everything else that's going on.

However, the underlying support means that reaching them with the right messages could unlock huge opportunities for brands - to both drive demand for their products and services, and contribute to the changes our society needs.

The opportunity was there for us to take it.

Very engaged in
climate change.

Not going to be
convinced to
care.



Believe climate change is happening and tend to agree that taking action for the environment will benefit them in the long term. But at the same time, not too engaged with the topic, almost never discuss it and don't think it is a priority.

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL AND IMPACT

We started by mapping the sustainability brand space in the UK.

We analysed a bunch of creative campaigns and spotted several category norms: they were mostly targeting millennial / Gen Z middle class consumers - often white, progressive and urban. They also featured activist language ('heroes', 'warrior') and codes or symbols (megaphones, placards).

Sustainable brands were focused on selling to the engaged 14% - the low-hanging fruit - who might already use a reusable mug, buy chemical-free cleaning products, or want to own an electric car. Whilst these strategies can be effective, they also only target a very specific consumer.

Commercial growth lies in selling to everyone else too. Those who aren't usually the target audience for sustainable products - including older people, those with a working-class background, those who identify as an ethnic minority, or those who live outside the UK's big cities.

Reaching the 69% is the key for us to grow sustainable brands. All we have to do is get to know this audience to make our advertising more effective.



69% REACHING THIS AUDIENCE IS KEY TO
GROWTH FOR SUSTAINABLE BRANDS

WE SET OUT TO FIND THEM

We teamed up with our friends at Bricolage, a cultural insights agency, to run a 3-month qualitative research project to investigate this 69% dubbed **'Persuadables'**.

We wanted to know Persuadables' thoughts about climate change, but most importantly, we were keen to understand how we could talk to them about sustainable products and services in a way which chimed with their lives and culture.

We travelled to Birmingham, Yorkshire, and Newcastle, and spent three weeks getting to know our Persuadables. We used an approach that combined "outside-in" (looking in and around the world of these audiences) and "inside-out" (looking out on the world from the perspective of these audiences).

BRITISH BLACK & SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITIES IN BIRMINGHAM

- Aged 20-65
- Mix of (non-white) ethnic backgrounds - Pakistani, Indian, Black/Afro-Caribbean
- Mix of socio-economic groups

URBAN 'SOMEWHERE'S' IN THE NORTH-EAST

- Aged 40-65
- Have strong links to their local areas, which is a big part of their identities
- Mix of socio-economic grades
- Predominantly white

RURAL DWELLERS IN YORKSHIRE

- Aged 40-75
- Born in/from the local area, rural or semi rural
- Mix of socio-economic groups
- White mixed background

AND WE TALKED TO EXPERTS FOR CULTURAL INSIGHT ON THESE COMMUNITIES

Our experts were chosen for their unique perspectives and community knowledge: from working class environmentalism, to documenting the mining heritage of the North-East, and to studying transnational media consumption of British Pakistani communities. We particularly wanted to understand older men, as our research indicated they were the least likely to support climate action.

The research programme included:

- Audience-focused desk research.
- Expert interviews.
- In-location semiotics and cultural 'safaris'.
- In-depth interviews with Persuadables.
- Online tasks where Persuadables provided feedback on creative stimulus.



URBAN 'SOMEWHERE'S' IN THE NORTH-EAST

63%

of English people feel strongly or fairly strongly that they belong to their neighbourhood.

51%

of the UK define themselves as working class, although this no longer correlates directly with socio-economic factors.

'SOMEWHERE'S' ARE OUR CLASSIC 'CITIZENS OF SOMEWHERE', WITH A STRONG SENSE OF PLACE AND PRIDE IN THAT PLACE. THEY OFTEN COME FROM AREAS PREVIOUSLY FAMOUS FOR HEAVY INDUSTRY, WHICH HAVE LOST EMPLOYMENT OVER THE LAST FEW DECADES.

NOSTALGIA FOR COMMUNITY CAMARADERIE

“Losing big industry has meant there’s not the same passing down of values through work. That camaraderie you would have between your peers would translate to how you acted outside of work. People are a lot more selfish now.”

COMMITMENT TO THE NORM

“Toe the line is a saying we have here, it’s about following the rules and doing your bit as much as possible.”

LOCAL ROOTS

“I’ve been here forever, I remember when they opened the Big Tesco. I want to still enjoy the parks and beaches.”

BIG UP THE WORKERS

“Unions have been demonised for young people, but it’s starting to come back. The RMT are being very outspoken about company profits and ‘strike’ is no longer a bad word.”



BRITISH BLACK & SOUTH ASIAN COMMUNITIES IN BIRMINGHAM

18%

of people in the United Kingdom belong to a black, Asian, mixed or other ethnic group.

£4.5BN

multi-ethnic consumers in the UK have £4.5bn annual disposable income.



DIVERSITY, DIVERSITY, DIVERSITY

“In my friend group you have Indian, Pakistani, Black, three gays, trans, so diverse, so not everyone knows every topic that comes up.”

CONSCIOUS RACIAL NARRATIVES

“There is more freedom of speech here [in the UK], there is a lot more coming out now, racism and stuff.”

COMPLEX IDENTITIES

“Religion and commitment to community is a key element of who we are. We have different ways of identifying every topic that comes up.”

ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT

“I started my own business and it’s going very well. I also help the local council, I am very involved.”

RURAL / SEMI-RURAL DWELLERS IN YORKSHIRE

56.66M

The urban population of the United Kingdom (approx).

10.67M

The rural population of the United Kingdom (approx).

THEY TYPICALLY SPEND MORE THAN THE AVERAGE BRIT ON CATEGORIES LIKE FURNISHING, TRANSPORT & RECREATION.



LOSS OF SERVICES CREATES FEELINGS OF ISOLATION

“You need a car for everything. The bus service is down to nothing, the last one is at 6:15pm. There is only one shop left, and the only pub closed down.”

DISAPPEARING COMMUNITIES

“There used to be coming-togethers with fairs, shows, but now the insurance is too expensive and there’s a lot of empty second homes. It was the ‘old lot’ doing it, and now it is not passed on.”

PRIDE IN PRODUCTION

“For tourists these are beautiful green spaces, but for us, the countryside is a food factory.”

HOUSING CRISIS

“Land is very important here. There is pressure for agricultural land to be used for housing because we need it, and farming is not a profitable activity anymore. But the authorities don’t want to see houses built all over the place.”



**TURNS OUT,
THEY'VE GOT A
LOT IN COMMON.
INCLUDING THE REASONS THEY'RE
HESITANT TO GO GREEN**

THEY'RE ALREADY UNDER PRESSURE

These groups are feeling the same heavy pressures on their quality of life. The cost-of-living crisis is top of mind, with many concerned about making ends meet.

They're also seeing cuts to local services: the NHS is struggling, public transport services are reduced, and many local businesses are having to close their doors for good.

THEY JUST WANT STABILITY

Recent years have been defined by instability. From COVID and Brexit to Liz Truss vs. a Lettuce, it's been a bit of a shitshow. These groups have felt it all.

THEY'VE BEEN CUT OUT THE CLIMATE CONVERSATION

Far too often, conversations around climate are seen as 'too London centric', 'too leftist' and 'too white'. It's created the misconception that anything and everything green is just not for them.

THEY NEED IMPACT THEY CAN SEE

Whilst they struggle to engage with the topic of climate on a global scale, they're fiercely protective of the issues closer to home. Tangible proof that what we're suggesting will benefit people and communities is key.

HOW TO APPEAL TO **PERSUADABLES**

TRANSLATING THESE LEARNINGS INTO ACTION

We've taken what we learned and drawing on our industry experience, translated it into a guide for you to use when planning future campaigns. These are thought-starters and provocations. They're by no means set in stone. However, if you're looking to balance purpose whilst still delivering hard sales metrics, you could do a lot worse than spending 12 minutes reading the following slides.

1.
CONNECT TO LOCAL ISSUES

2.
NORMALISE NEW CHOICES

3.
DITCH THE GREEN TAX

4.
LEAD WITH A STRONG, PERSONAL BENEFIT

5.
FIND YOUR TRUSTED MESSENGERS

6.
CRACK THE CULTURAL CODE

7.
SELL TO MEN TOO

8.
BUY MEDIA WHERE YOUR AUDIENCE CAN SEE IT

9.
FUNNY OR DIE (LITERALLY)

10.
MATCH HOPE WITH A CONCRETE PLAN

CONNECT TO LOCAL ISSUES

Saving the world can be overwhelming, triggering apathy amongst some Persuadables.

Persuadables are deeply connected to their local communities, which translates into their purchasing behaviours - they prefer products with a tangible local impact than a nebulous, global one.

To unlock growth within these audiences, localise messaging and show the benefit to their area.

A point to note: campaigns that include words or phrases from the activism world (such as a 'starting a movement') didn't sit well with Persuadables, so best to leave that to Extinction Rebellion.

WHAT PERSUADABLES SAY

"I CAN'T RELATE TO PROTECTING THE PLANET. BUT IF SOMEONE WAS TO CHOP DOWN THE WILLOW TREE OUTSIDE MY HOME, I WOULD GET UPSET, NOTHING COULD EVER SUBSTITUTE THAT WILLOW."
WOMAN, 40S, BIRMINGHAM

"I NEED TO PUT MYSELF FIRST AND MY FAMILY FIRST."
WOMAN, 50S, NEWCASTLE

MB'S INSPIRATION: CO-OP 'COOKING UP A DIFFERENCE'

If there was ever a supermarket that cared about their community, it would be Co-op, and if there was ever an ad that showed it, it would be their [summer 2022 campaign](#).



NORMALISE NEW CHOICES

There's a tension between making sustainable choices and what Persuadables see as 'normal' behaviours.

Consumers choices are influenced by social norms, which if we dig deep into behavioural psychology can be due to a variety of reasons - including a desire to confirm our deep-rooted beliefs.

We'd recommend spotlighting opportunities that are personal and tangible, to either challenge misconceptions about sustainability or make your brand feel like it seamlessly fits into their everyday lives.

WHAT PERSUADABLES SAY

"IF SOLAR IS GOOD, WHY DOES NO-ONE
I KNOW HAVE IT?"
MAN, 50S, BIRMINGHAM

MB'S INSPIRATION: BURGER KING, 'MEAT?'

Burger King has an ambitious commitment to have a 50% plant-based menu by 2030 - not bad for a mainstream fast-food brand. They're in a unique position to normalise plant-based options quickly and at scale.

Their 'Meat?' Campaign plays on the visual similarities between animal products and plant-based options with striking print and out-of-home (OOH) ads with the tagline: "Sorry for the confusion, meat lovers". They challenge even the most committed meat eater to give plant-based a try.



DITCH THE GREEN TAX

The cost-of-living crisis is making it harder for people to make more sustainable choices. According to [Kantar's Sustainability Index 2022](#), 65% of respondents want to be mindful of the planet but say higher prices prevent them from doing so.

'Green' products are on average 75% - 85% more expensive, creating an avoidable gap between a stated intention to act sustainably and actual behaviours.

Pricing is sabotaging sustainability. Looking at cost across the value chain is critical – from production to wholesale and retail. As with any business, if you can identify ways to reduce mark-ups and avoid traditional price mark-up rules, you'll see greater uptake.

Can you ditch the green tax and prioritise longer-term profit gains over short-term KPIs?

WHAT PERSUADABLES SAY

"WITH THE COST OF LIVING, THERE'S A LOT OF PRESSURE. I THINK WE NEED SOME INCENTIVES, AND SUCCESS STORIES."
MAN, 40, YORKSHIRE

MB'S INSPIRATION: KEARNEY CONSULTING

Check out this [report](#) from Dutch consulting firm Kearney on how revamping accounting logic can create more tolerable pricing.

LEAD WITH A STRONG, PERSONAL BENEFIT

We totally get that you're proud of your brand and want to put shiny ethics front and centre in your marketing, BUT, it might not translate to your bottom line.

Persuadables are more likely to make purchasing decisions based on personal benefit: cost, product familiarity, reliability, convenience or enjoyment, than abstract sustainability benefits.

Put these benefits upfront and lead with great branding to broaden their appeal.

WHAT PERSUADABLES SAY

"I'M NOT GIVING UP MY MEAT... I'M NOT EATING QUORN!" (IN RESPONSE TO TALKING ABOUT 'ENVIRONMENTALISTS' ON TV)
WOMAN, 50S, NEWCASTLE

MB'S INSPIRATION: CRACKD

[Recent scientific research](#) found that if you want more people to eat healthier, sustainable food, you shouldn't focus on it being meat-free, vegan or plant-based. Placing an emphasis on what it isn't makes meat-eaters feel their free will is threatened.

We created a campaign for Crackd, a pea-protein egg substitute, with no mention of 'vegan' anywhere. The campaign focused on taste, recipe inspiration and convenience.

When measured against 182 brand evaluations, our Crackd TV ad achieved the greatest increase in prompted brand awareness, along with a 14.9% uplift in aided advertising recall - 317% higher than the usual benchmark.



FIND TRUSTED MESSENGERS

Persuadables are wary of the sustainability claims from brands, showing that some of the most visible messengers are not connecting well with large parts of the population either.

Persuadables are more likely to be influenced by people similar to them – be that in proximity, gender, age, profession – so spend time researching who are the right ambassadors to reach these communities.

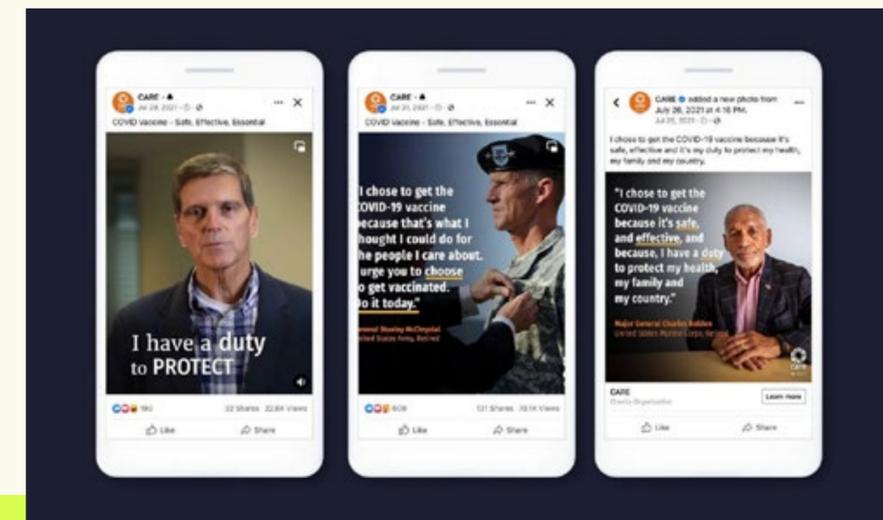
Inclusion should underpin every single brand touchpoint and your marketing approach must be as diverse as the Persuadable audience to achieve real cut through.

WHAT PERSUADABLES SAY

“...WHEN YOU HEAR IT IS JUST A LOT OF, TO BE SLIGHTLY DISPARAGING, KIDS WHO JUST MAKE A LOT OF NOISE AND ARE BEING VERY WEIRD. IT PUTS OFF A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO MIGHT OTHERWISE BE PAYING MORE ATTENTION. UNFORTUNATELY, THEY CAN BE A BIT COUNTER TO THE CAUSE IN SOME WAYS.”
[BRITAIN TALKS CLIMATE](#)

“IT FEELS VERY US VS. THEM; THOSE WHO LIVE AND THOSE WRITING THE NEWS.”
WOMAN, 30S, BIRMINGHAM

MB'S INSPIRATION: CARE USA



Talking climate in the UK can be pretty divisive. But Covid vaccines in the US? Now that's a burning hot topic.

In 2021, CARE USA worked with decorated veterans to talk vaccine safety and effectiveness, duty, and freedom to counter vaccine hesitancy.

The ads delivered consistently above the benchmark, with conversion rates [23% higher than previous campaigns](#).

CRACK THE CULTURAL CODES

When we compared the majority of sustainability communications with the results of our research, we realised that there was a mismatch between our Persudables' experiences and those depicted in the ads.

Currently, when asked about sustainable products, Persudables tend to answer that 'they're not for me'.

Brands need to insert themselves into Persudables' worlds, reflecting their families, neighbourhoods, accents, and ways of living, reflecting important cultural nuances to create interest and relevance for audiences.

WHAT PERSUADABLES SAY

"I'D ALSO BE INTERESTED IN HEARING (FROM A NEIGHBOUR AS TO ME THEY ARE) AN ORDINARY PERSON WITH PROBABLY A GOOD COMMON SENSE ATTITUDE TO CLIMATE CHANGE"
MALE, 30S, BIRMINGHAM

MB'S INSPIRATION: SPORT ENGLAND

This Girl Can addressed the gender gap in sports participation. 13 million women said they would like to participate more in sport and physical activity, but feared being judged. Campaign highlights included flipping derogatory comments into positive ones and challenging traditional gender stereotypes.



SELL TO MEN TOO

The uncomfortable truth is that men are being excluded from our marketing. Campaigns usually contain traditionally female signifiers, for example, using emotive language about 'care' and associations with nature. **The idea that green consumption and masculinity don't go together is a barrier that we have to overcome.**

What can marketers do to help more Persuadable men go green?

You can incorporate some traditionally masculine signals, or de-gender your marketing completely. Reconsider imagery and verbal language, and explore brand partnerships to reach new audiences.

WHAT EXPERTS SAY

"IF WE LOOK AT CAMPAIGNING AND SOCIAL MARKETING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, THE FEMINIZATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY WAS TYPICAL (SINCE) THE EARLY 1990S" ANGELA FRANZ-BALSEN

MB'S INSPIRATION: COLORECTAL CANCER ALLIANCE



Ryan Reynolds and 'It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia' star Rob McElhenney created an ad for the Colorectal Cancer Alliance to raise awareness about colon cancer, especially in men.

The campaign 'Lead from Behind' saw the two actors getting, filming and broadcasting their colonoscopies. "I've been on camera a lot. But this was the first time one was shoved up my a**," said Ryan Reynolds.

BUY MEDIA WHERE YOUR AUDIENCE WILL SEE IT

Unsurprisingly, Persuadables have fragmented media habits, but broadcast channels are as important as ever - especially in the cost of living crisis. Make sure you use broadcast channels and make your media budget work harder to adapt to their diverse media diets to include channels such as VOD, apps, platforms, publishers, influencers and more.

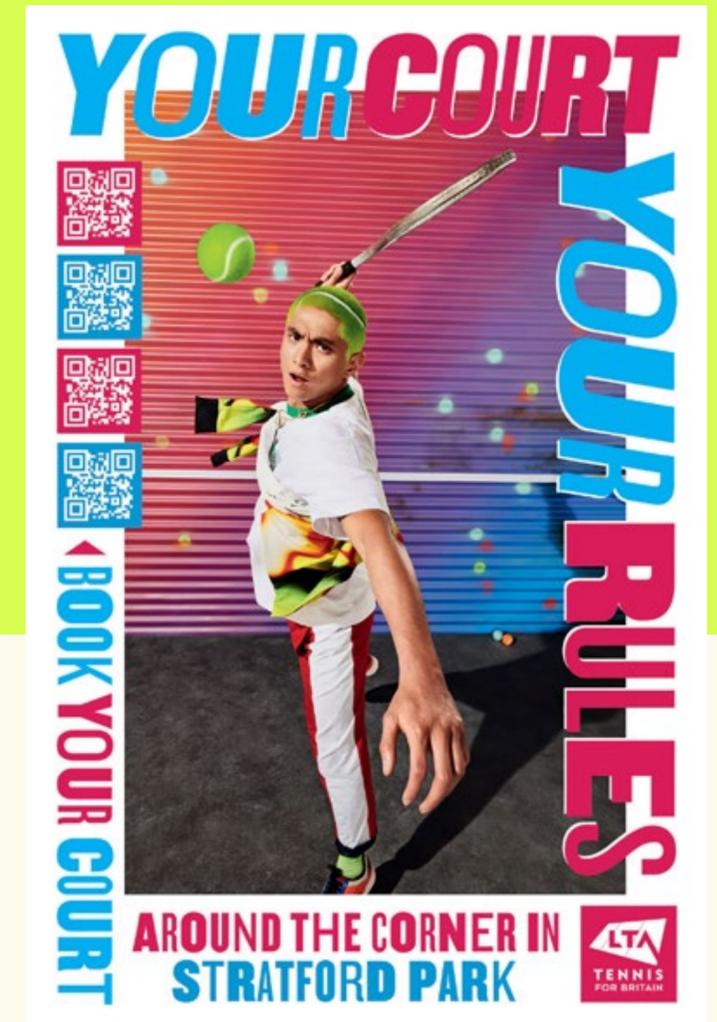
Our research showed that social media is the least trusted channel by Persuadables, so if you're investing in this space, combine it with trusted channels such as out-of-home for maximum effect.

WHAT PERSUADABLES SAY

"I'LL PUT THE TV ON THE BACKGROUND WHILE I WORK...I GET MY CONTENT ON WHATSAPP AND FACEBOOK OR INSTAGRAM."
MAN, 32, BIRMINGHAM

MB'S INSPIRATION: LTA'S #YOURCOURTYOURRULES

A grassroots campaign - focusing on inclusivity - to encourage young male and female audiences to play tennis on their terms. It featured fly poster takeovers and geo-targeted digital out-of-home driving people to their local courts. You've got to love that QR codes are cool again.



FUNNY OR DIE (LITERALLY)

**“We haven’t found a solution for climate change yet, but...
...we’re definitely getting warmer.”**

Climate change may be a serious issue, but that doesn’t mean our marketing has to be.

Humour can overcome all the doom and gloom and is a powerful tool in marketing which can differentiate in a competitive or dry product category, reframe an issue, or create strong emotional associations.

Embrace memes, pop culture, and a little tongue-in cheek to bring people with you.

WHAT PERSUADABLES SAY

**“IT’S HARD TO BE POSITIVE ABOUT THE
FUTURE SO I DON’T EXPECT ANYTHING.”
WOMAN, 30, BIRMINGHAM**

MB’S INSPIRATION: GM - NO WAY NORWAY



The master of surreal comedy, Will Ferrell, pits Norway and the US against each other in the race for electric vehicles. Silly, funny, and ultimately unforgettable, this ad leverages national pride and competition to encourage Americans to make their next vehicle an EV. It even inspired responses from companies like [Gran Padano](#) (yes, the cheese) that kept the conversation going.

MATCH HOPE WITH A CONCRETE PLAN

Climate action needs big messages of hope, but when it comes to green claims, we've all got a bit of a trust issue. Many brands have tried to greenwash their way into consumers' good favour with bogus environmental claims or eco-narratives of a hopeful future they're in no way creating.

What and who are we meant to believe?

Persuadables are too cynical for hope or 'buzzwords' alone, so be sure to back up big messages of hope with concrete actions, explained in plain language.

Create closer collabs between marketing, finance, investor relations, and your sustainability and governance teams to achieve ESG-related marketing goals and merge sustainability with your mainstream activities.

When talking to your customers, balance emotional connection and hard evidence that change is happening, everyone's doing it, and people like them are making those changes too. In particular, consider how the change you're asking for can help people in a cost-of-living crisis.

WHAT PERSUADABLES SAY

"IT ALL FEELS LIKE A SALES PITCH, EMPTY WORDS ON A PAGE. I NEED SOMETHING TO BACK IT UP, THEN IT'S COMMON SENSE, AND YOU SPREAD IT LIKE THAT."
MAN, 40S, YORKSHIRE

MB'S INSPIRATION: SKY OCEAN RESCUE



Sky's Ocean Rescue campaign combined great content with business transformation to engage 33.5 million people, and change behaviours across the sporting, corporate and consumer sectors. Sky told visual and compelling stories about the plastic problem and solution, combining it with concrete plans for action for sports teams, schools, ordinary people, and Sky itself. They even created and incentivised the development of new plastic-free products to assist the shift to a single-use plastic free world.

SUMMARY

So called 'ethical consumers' aren't the only ones who will buy your sustainable products and services.

Persuadables want them too - and they deserve the health, performance, and enjoyment that will come with the switch.

It's time to talk to the mainstream. For the brands that do, the reward will be huge - access to the spending power of an additional 47.5 million people in the UK alone, and a huge acceleration in the behaviours we need to see to fix the planet and society.

It's time to rethink, re-engage our marketing brains, and redirect the power of advertising to making the world a better place. Growing the market for sustainable products requires exactly the same thinking as we would apply for other categories. Great marketing will take us to where we need to be.

If you're ready to unlock new growth by engaging these audiences, get in touch - we're here to help.





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Bricolage

[Bricolage](#) is a cultural insights agency based in Dublin with a real focus on generating insights grounded in cultural understanding. They're a blended team of expert researchers, strategists and workshop/ sprint facilitators with proven experience helping brands turn insights into strategy.

Bricolage prioritise human-centred, ethnographic approaches to uncover 'real world' views and complex stories – making them the perfect partners to uncover what the Persuadables think, feel and do – and why.





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