

WGSN

# Future Consumer 2026

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**WGSN is the  
global  
authority  
on change  
forecasting**

# Macro drivers

The large-scale societal shifts and change-drivers

# Consumer trends

The industry-specific changes and trends

Our methodology

1

# Observe

## STEPIC

Society

Technology

Environment

Politics

Industry

Creativity



WGSN Proprietary Data



WGSN Experts

2

# Synthesise

Aesthetic Connection



Analytics and Data Modelling



Critical Debate

3

# Forecast

Consumer Insight



Lifestyles



Product Design

4

# Focus

Trading

5

# Re-Evaluate

Continuous Monitoring



2026



The year  
of redirection

# 2026 consumer sentiments

## Moral Injury



Moral Injury results from taking part in behaviours that go against your morals.

## Rational Optimism Yearning



Rational Optimism evaluates pessimism in a more sensible and balanced way.



Yearning is the most prominent feeling after a loss.

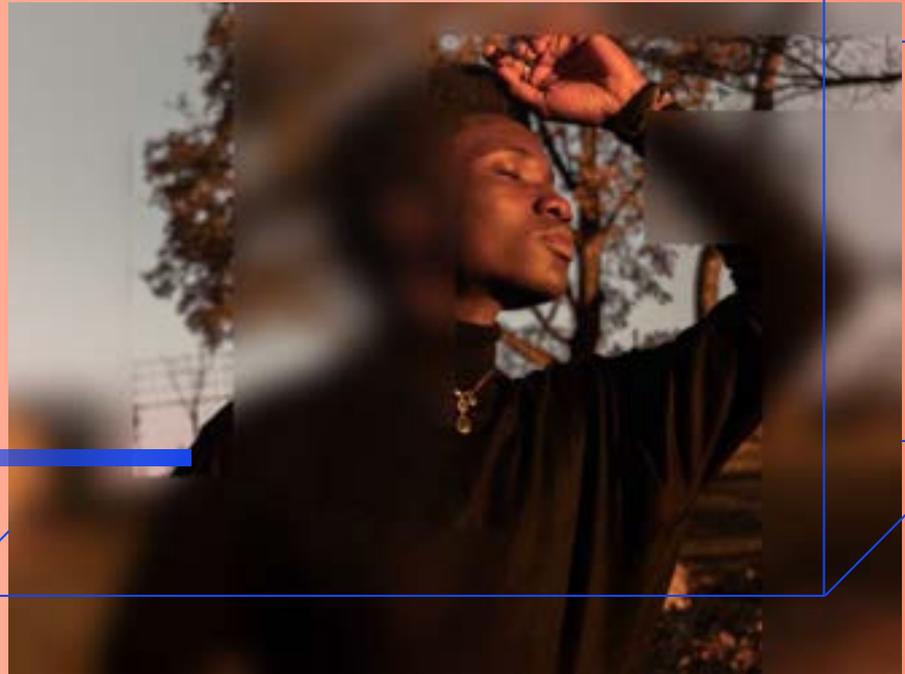
## Glimmers



Glimmers are micro-moments of joy, contentment or surprise.

# Moral Injury

CONSUMER SENTIMENT 01



## Moral Injury



Luca Nardone

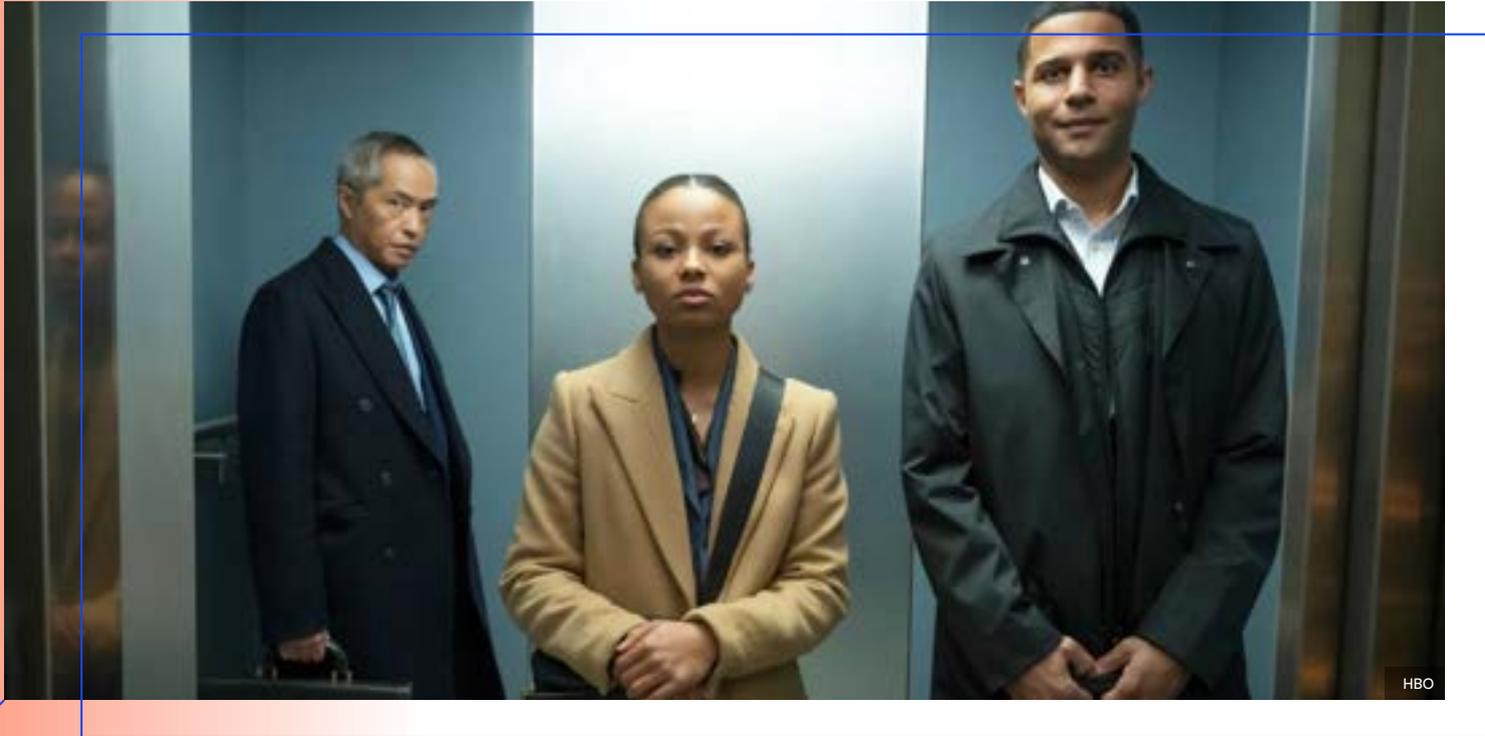
## Moral Injury



Andre Moura

Moral Injury

# Stealth wealth returns



# Rational Optimism

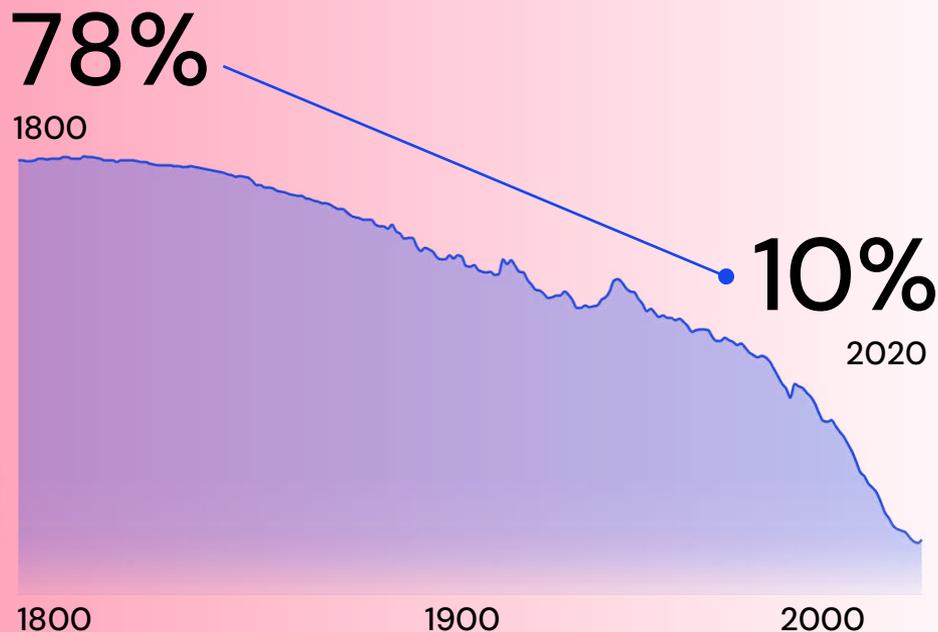
CONSUMER SENTIMENT 02



# Far fewer people in poverty

In the 1800s, more than half the people in the world lived in extreme poverty. Today, those in extreme poverty are a minority.

Poverty rate over time

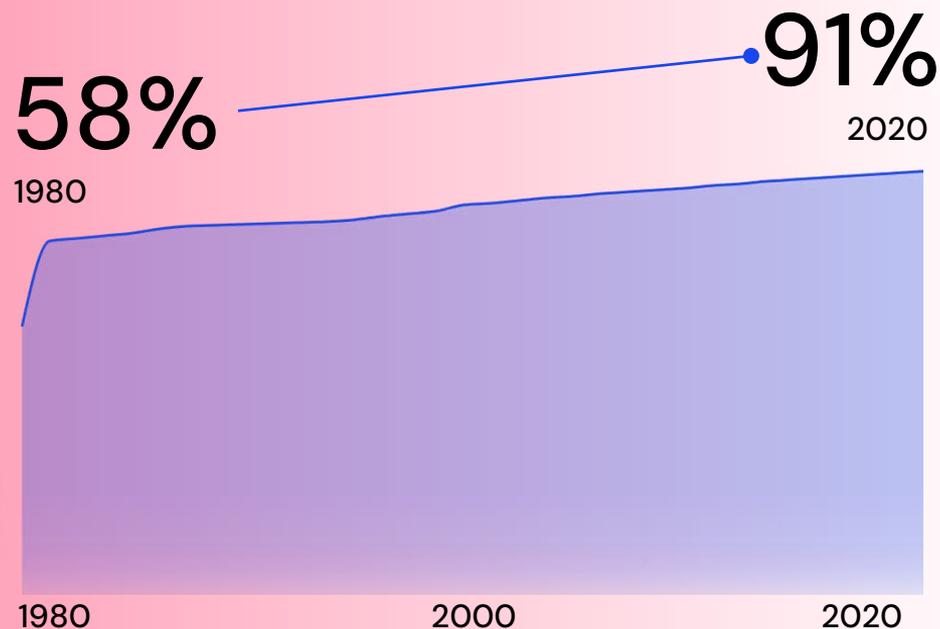


Data: Gapminder and World Bank

# More clean drinking water

Never before have so many people had access to clean drinking water.

Share of people with access to clean water



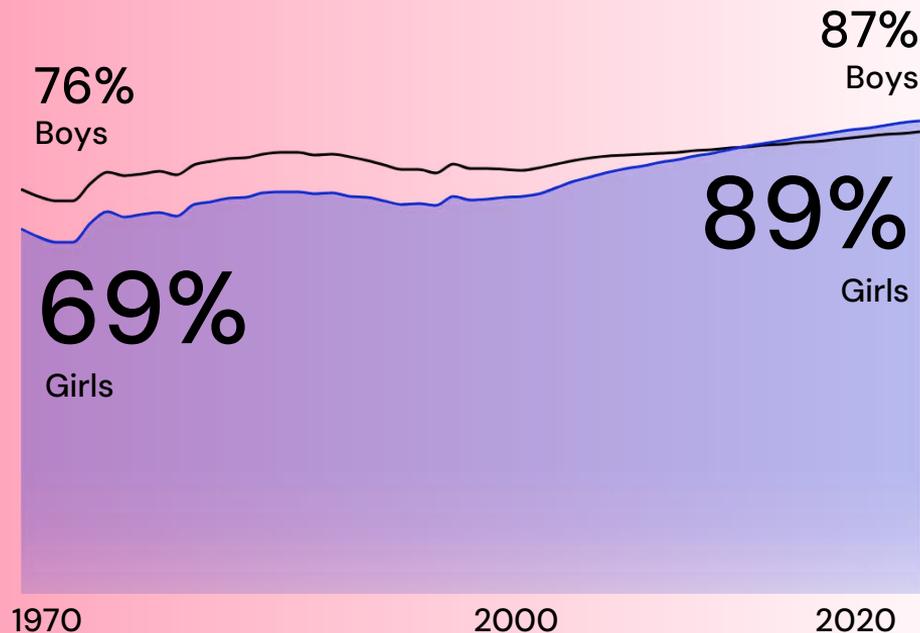
Data: JMP WASH

WGSN

# Girls finishing primary school

Today, roughly the same share of girls go to primary school as boys, and girls complete primary school at a higher rate.

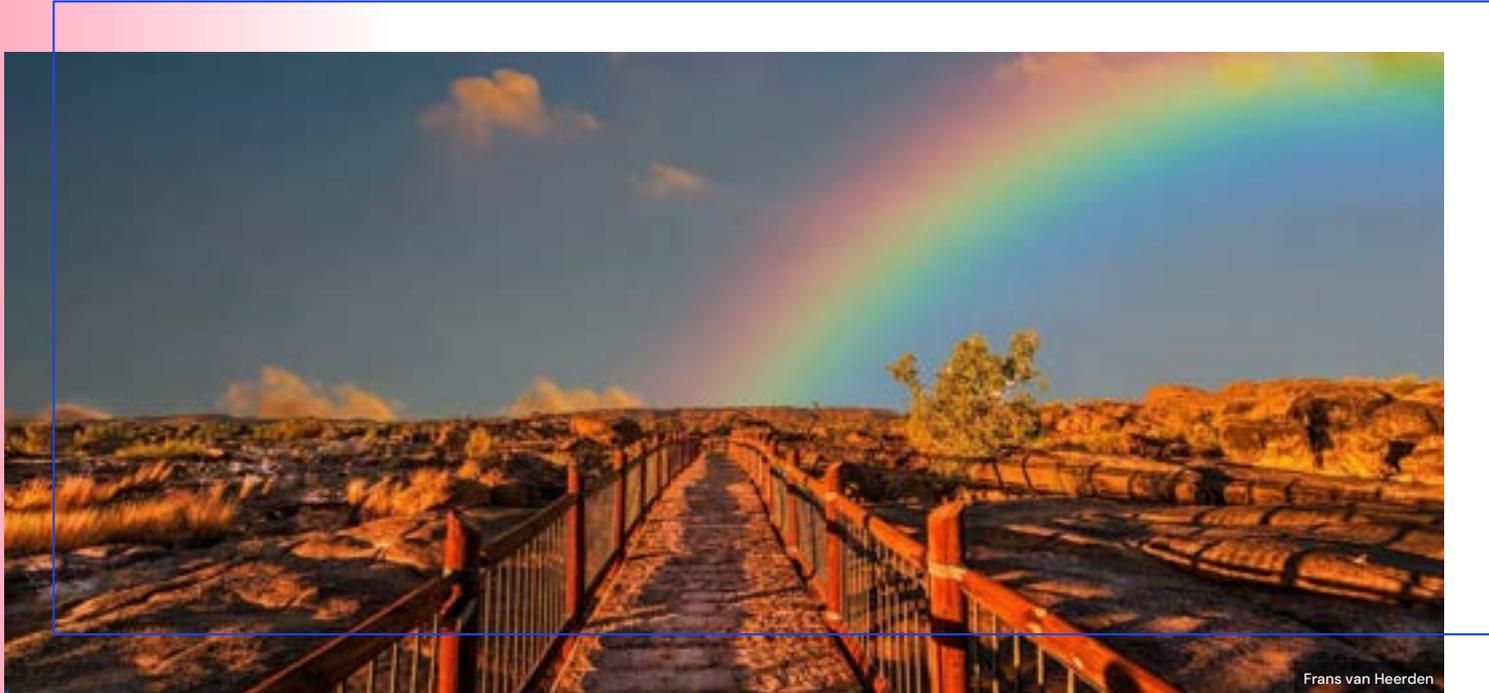
Global primary school completion rate



Data: UNESCO

Rational Optimism

# Combatting unrealistic optimism



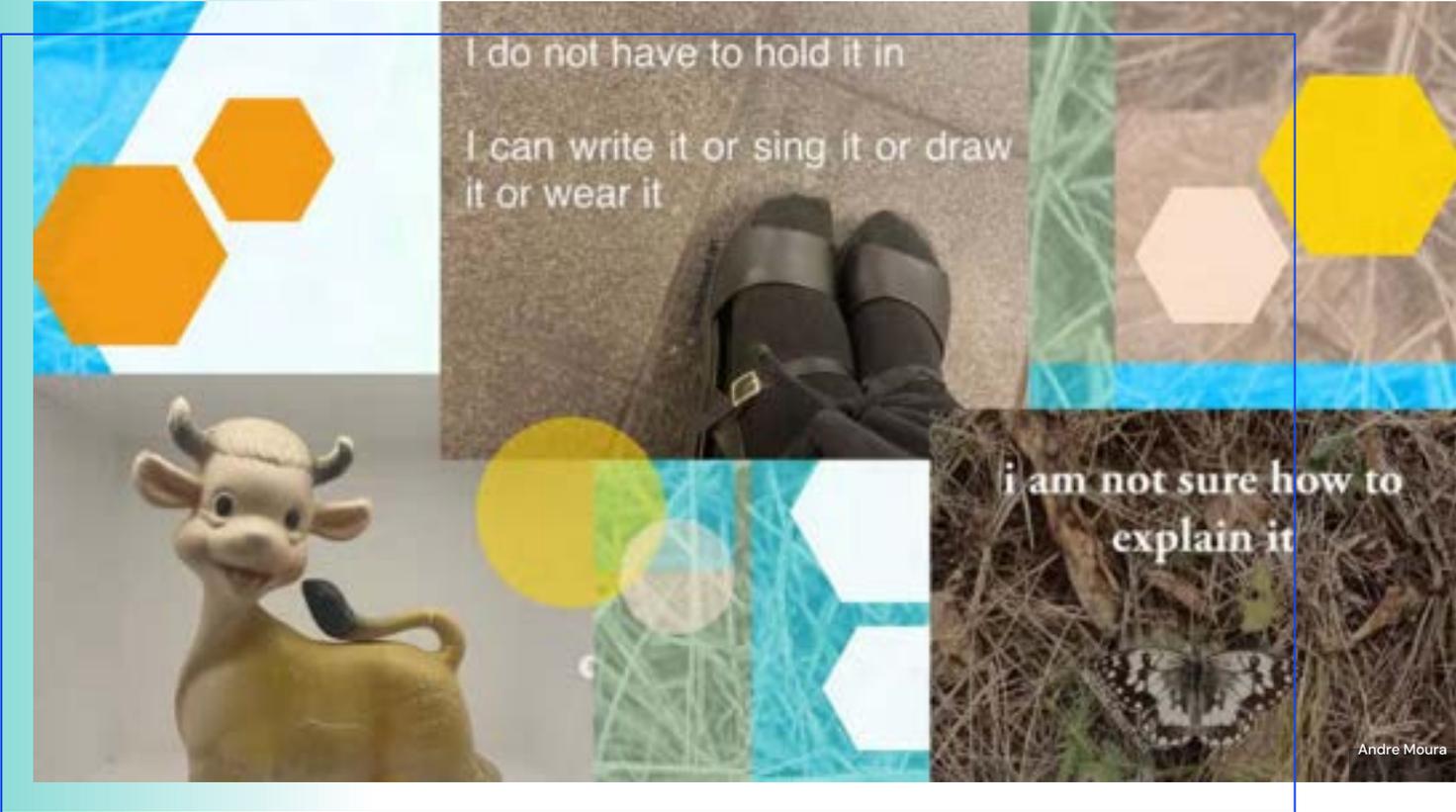
Frans van Heerden

# Yearning

CONSUMER SENTIMENT 03



# Yearning



Yearning — current drivers

# Empathy fatigue



Yearning

# The decline of romantic consumerism



# Glimmers

CONSUMER SENTIMENT 04



Glimmers — current drivers

# The great exhaustion



Nataliya Vaitkevich

Glimmers — current drivers

# The focus on fulfillment



Glimmers - key takeaway

# Dive into the meaning market



Various Associates

# Consumer profiles



Consumer profiles enable you to understand your future customers, and how best to communicate with them and support them.

# Meet your Future Consumers 2026

The Impartialists



The Autonomists



The Gleamers



The Synergists



# The Impartialists

The Autonomists are fighting back against a growing crisis of disinformation with a commitment to truth-seeking and a demand for just the facts.

FUTURE CONSUMER 01

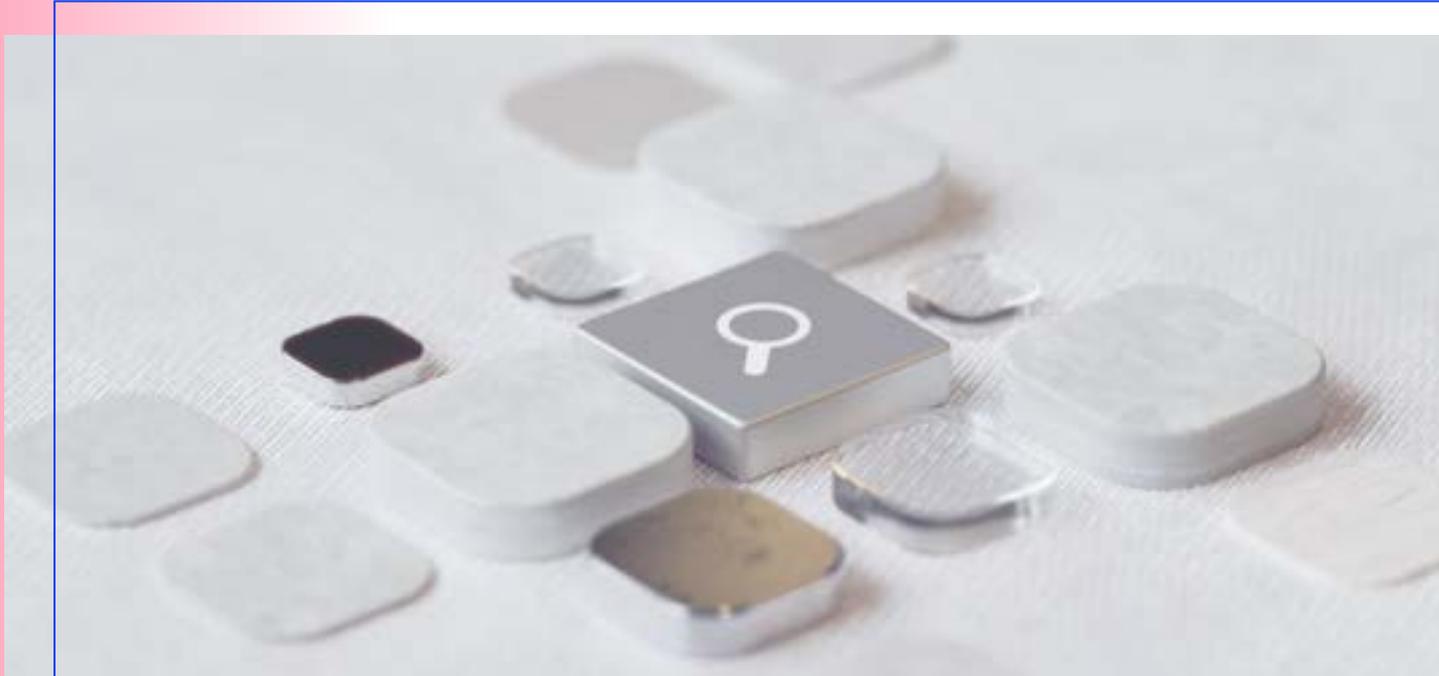


## The Impartialists



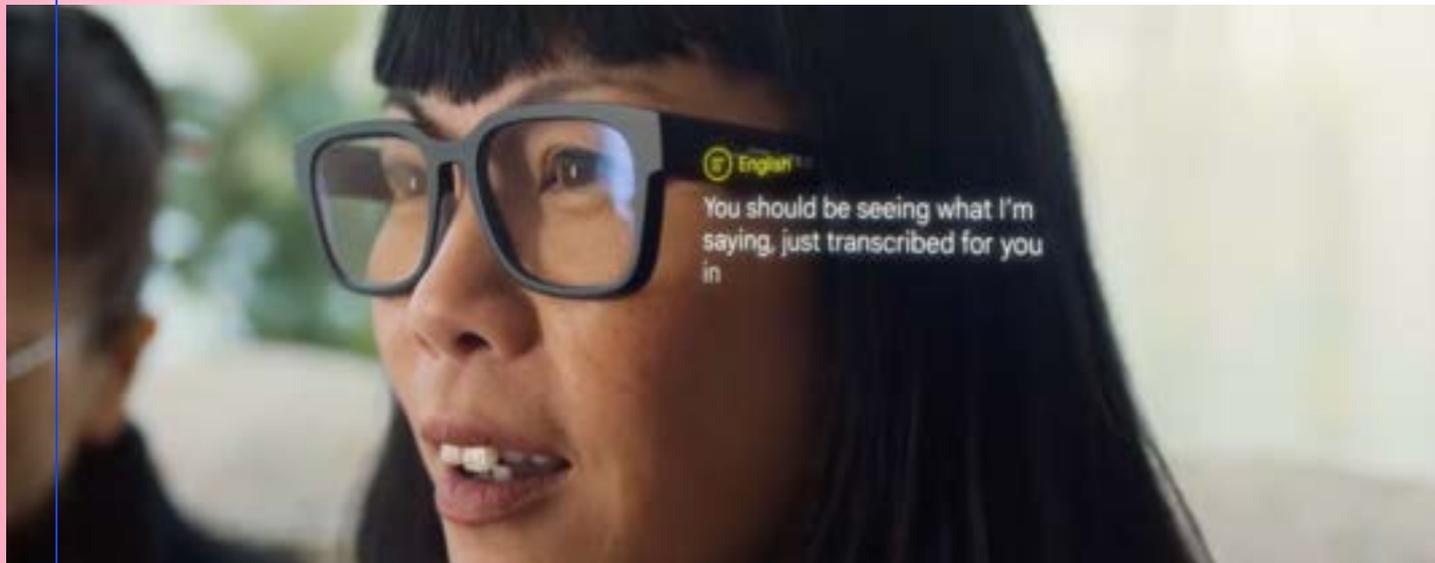
The Impartialists — engagement strategies

# Use effective labelling to fight disinformation



The Impartialists — engagement strategies

# Use product clarity to aid sales and sustainable behaviour



# The Autonomists

The Autonomists are charting their own path, making their own rules and challenging outdated societal expectations.

FUTURE CONSUMER 02



## The Autonomists



The Autonomists — engagement strategies

# Build with equity in mind



The Autonomists — engagement strategies

# Develop new systems to challenge authority



# The Gleamers

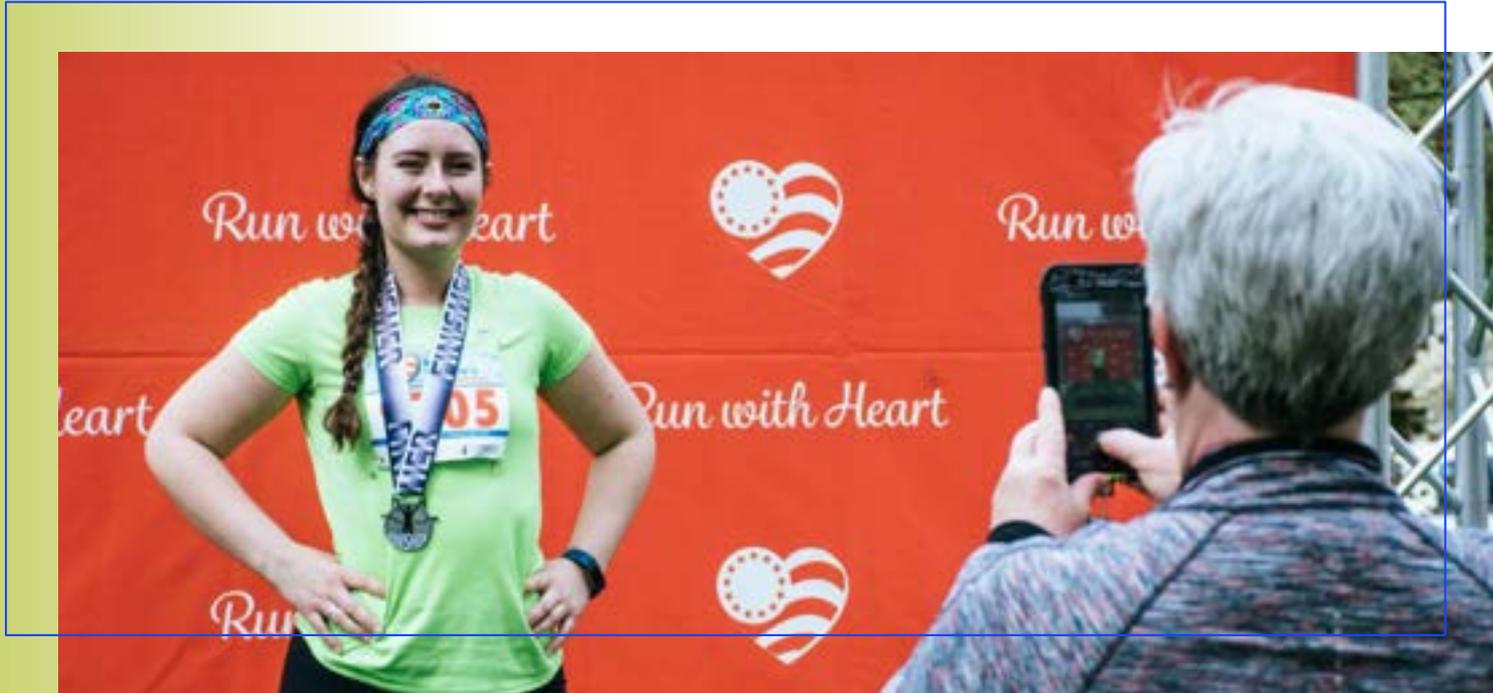
The Gleamers are finding their light in dark times by embracing found families and other-significant-others, and by opting out of corporate optimisation.

FUTURE CONSUMER 03



The Gleamers — engagement strategies

# Celebrate minorstones



The Gleamers — engagement strategies

# IRL third spaces return



Yinka Ilori

# The Synergists

The Synergists are focused on the transformative power of tech, but they are also rooted in the wonder of the physical world. They are driven by making the internet more useful, equitable and accessible for the betterment of all people and the planet.

FUTURE CONSUMER 04





A growing  
group

5.3bn

internet users in the  
world – nearly 66% of  
the global population

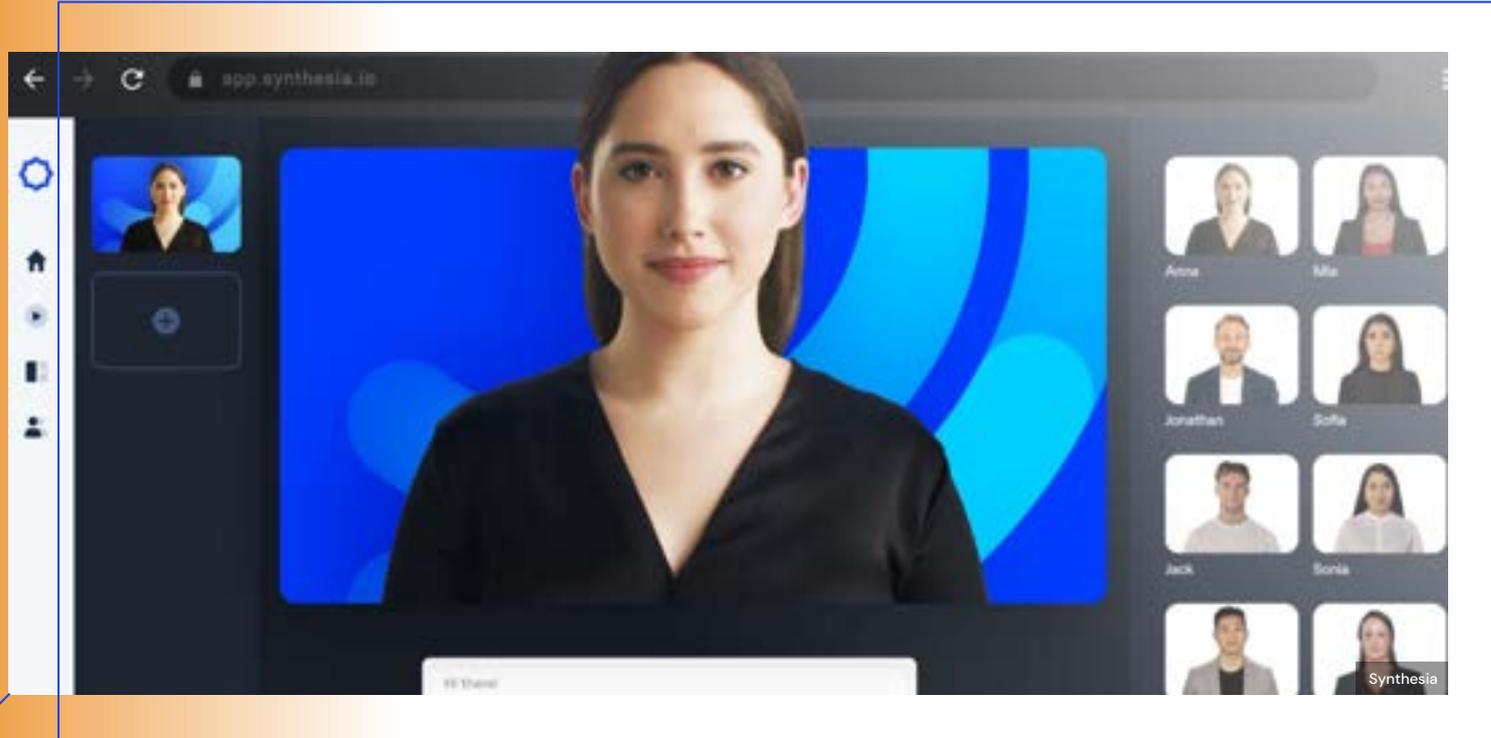
Statista, 2023

## The Synergists



The Synergists — engagement strategies

# Embrace multilingual on demand



# Thought starters

1

How will you leverage AI for positive transformation?

2

How can your brand build happiness into its offer?

3

How will you extend brand activations beyond the screen?

4

How are you enhancing inclusivity for consumers across all life stages, regardless of age?

5

How can your brand provide opportunities for socialising?

6

What is your plan for building equity in 2026?

**WGSN**

# Create tomorrow

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