

# 5 Trends to shape global marketing strategies from Warc

Released today Warc's [Marketer's Toolkit 2024](#) has identified five key trends that have reached an inflexion point and will shape global marketing strategies in 2024.



Source: © 123rf [123rf](#) Warc's Marketer's Toolkit 2024]] has identified five key trends that will shape global marketing strategies in 2024, one of which is generative AI

Now in its 13th year, the Toolkit explores socio-political polarisation, the potential of generative AI, masculinity in crisis, "sportswashing", and community-based sustainability.

"Marketers globally continue to be concerned about the economic picture with 64% of survey respondents seeing it as the biggest factor in 2024 planning. But a majority (61%) of firms expect improved business performance next year, up 10% from last year. Warc forecasts global adspend to grow 8.2% in 2024, topping \$tn for the first time," says Aditya Kishore, Insight Director, Warc.

"As consumer insights become ever more critical to aid success, The Marketer's Toolkit runs through some of the emerging threats and opportunities marketers will face as they look for sources of growth."

## Top 5 trends

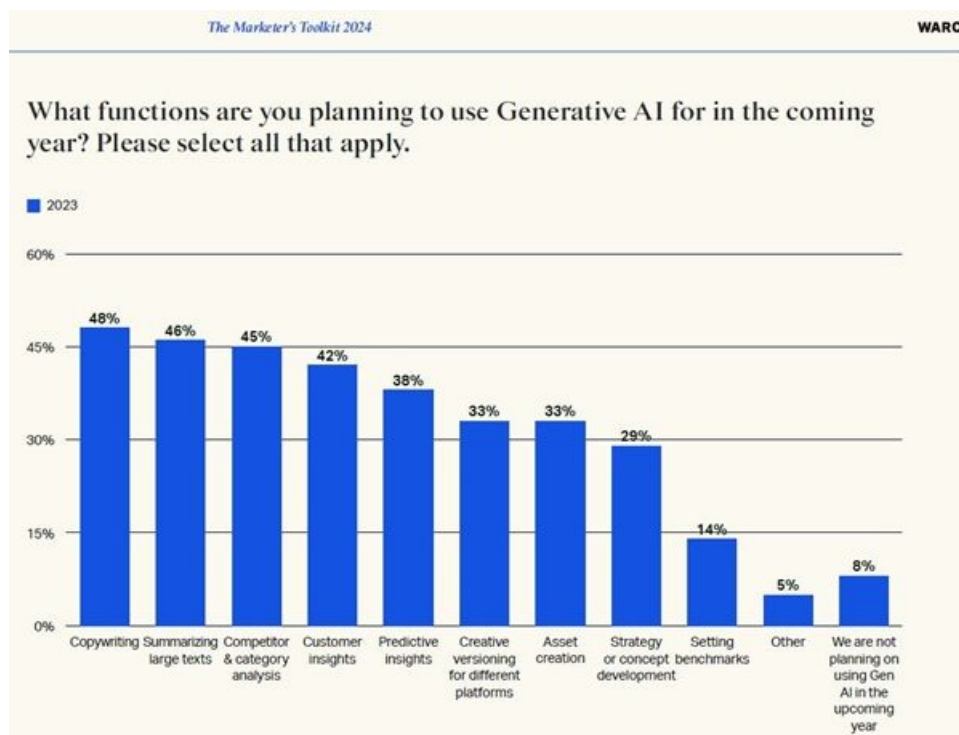
The top five trends outlined in Warcs Marketer's Toolkit 2024 are:

“ Nearly three-quarters (70%) of marketers plan to unlock the potential of AI in their marketing ”

### 1. Unlocking the potential of Gen AI

Generative artificial intelligence (Gen AI) has crossed the threshold from promise to practical deployment, overhauling media strategies and audience targeting. 2024 will see brands look to capitalise on the emergence of accessible Gen AI tools to experiment with creative development.

Nearly three-quarters (70%) of respondents to the Marketer's Toolkit survey plan to unlock the potential of AI in their marketing, 12% of which will look to adopt the technology wherever they can and over half (58%) describe themselves as "cautiously progressive", actively testing and evaluating Gen AI in marketing.



However, such opportunities come with potential risks including brand safety, copyright, sustainability and agency remuneration.

"The question is, how do you build [AI] into a scaled organisational competency? That is the obsession of every single day, every single week for the next 18 months. Because it's a race you have to win," says Jonathan Halvorson, global SVP, consumer experience & digital commerce, Mondelez.

“ 13% of marketers said the best strategy is to “drop all ‘purpose’ driven strategies and political positions ”

## 2. Preparing for the age of polarisation

Political ideologies have become increasingly entrenched in marketing. However, with high-profile brands caught in the polarisation crossfire, there are signs of increased timidity regarding social causes.

While 76% of Marketer's Toolkit respondents advise standing ground in the face of controversy, 13% pursue the path of least risk saying that the best strategy is to “drop all ‘purpose’ driven strategies and political positions.”

When addressing polarising issues, brands should examine their audience through cultural and demographic lenses,

and scenario-plan against any potential fallout.

Speaking at the recent ANA Masters of Marketing conference, Marc Pritchard, chief brand officer, Procter & Gamble, says they serve diverse consumers.

“That requires precision to serve in ways that are relevant and better for each person, so we can unlock the potential. Inclusion to serve all people and each person matters for market growth.”

“ Almost two out of three marketers (63%) agree that the way they communicate with young men needs to change ”



Agency Scope 2023/2024 SA's top three most admired marketing professionals named  
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### 3. Masculinity in crisis

Around the world, young men are increasingly being marginalised both socially and economically and struggling with their mental health. In their search for a contemporary identity, some are being drawn to toxic role models online.

Almost two out of three marketers (63%) agree that they need to shift their advertising and influencer selection strategies to reflect emerging models of masculinity that offer positive and helpful messages to young men.

While there will be mounting pressure to eliminate stereotypical male depictions in advertising, there will also be those who will attack the brand for being too “woke” if they do so.

During Advertising Week last month, Stephanie Jacoby, SVP/Brand marketing, Diageo, stated that as an alcohol advertiser, they have certainly contributed to this culture.

“ (...but) we are starting to make the change that we need to see. It’s really time now that we open the aperture (...) which broadens how men are depicted beyond, and so replaces a single, undifferentiated idea of masculinity with a multi-faceted view of what this term can encompass.”

“ 61% of marketers concur that it is “very important” for sports organisers and owners to avoid being politically divisive ”

### 4. Sportswashing is a growing concern

In a fragmented media landscape, sports remain a natural passion point for brands to leverage. It delivers mass real-time audiences, yielding a growing competition for media rights, fresh content and sponsorship opportunities.

Critics allege this is resulting in the rise of “sportswashing” whereby entities accused of a poor human rights track record invest in sports to bolster their reputation.

Of Marketer’s Toolkit respondents, 61% concur that it is “very important” for sports organisers and owners to avoid being politically divisive.

Opportunities for marketers include developing new content formats, engaging with growing sports and different communities, and data-driven insights to track performance and fan attitudes.

“There’s a danger with the term “sportswashing”, because it becomes one of those words that’s now thrown around all over the place for when people don’t like something, especially in the world of sport,” says James Williams, investor/advisor, Nobody Studios.

“ Nearly two-fifths (38%) of marketers are investing in local communities ”



10% of CMOs believe their marketing investments position them ahead of the competition

19 Sep 2023



## 5. Sustainability should be locally relevant

While sustainability marketing will become more interconnected to other functions, marketers and agency leaders must double down on changing what they solely control. Investing in local communities was cited by nearly two-fifths of survey respondents (38%), followed by advertising production (26%) and media decarbonisation (21%).

Marketers should pivot to smaller, local and community-based sustainability initiatives to power their green agenda and help their brands build credible consumer trust.

Janet Neo, Chief Sustainability Officer, North Asia & China, L’Oréal, comments that they have adopted a personalised approach.

“At L’Oréal we emphasise a ‘Glocalisation Strategy.’ While the strategy’s framework is global, we consider local specificities when implementing it. We engage with local communities because we believe in respecting local culture and insights. [...] We believe that the local cultural context can help us define the priorities or the key areas we should focus on,” she explains.

## Strategic support to navigate 2024

The Toolkit provides marketers with strategic support for planning and decision-making to help navigate the challenges and benefit from the opportunities in the coming year.

The trend identification for the report is based on Warc’s new proprietary GEISTE methodology (Government, Economy, Industry, Society, Technology, Environment).

It further incorporates a global survey of 1,400+ marketing executives, one-to-one interviews with CMOs, industry commentary, and analysis, data and insights from WARC’s global team of experts.

A complimentary sample of The Marketer’s Toolkit 2024 is available to read [here](#).

The Marketer’s Toolkit 2024 is part of Warc Strategy’s The Evolution of Marketing programme, offering a series of practical reports designed to help marketers address major industry shifts to drive marketing effectiveness in the coming year.

A series of podcasts and a webinar will follow on The Marketer’s Toolkit 2024.

Complementing the Marketer’s Toolkit, other reports from the Evolution of Marketing program include the [GEISTE](#) report, and the upcoming The Voice of the Marketer and The Future of Media.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>