



## Signals 2024

Empowering brands to create authentic connections, navigating the evolving landscape through the lens of consumers

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**Better decisions, faster.**

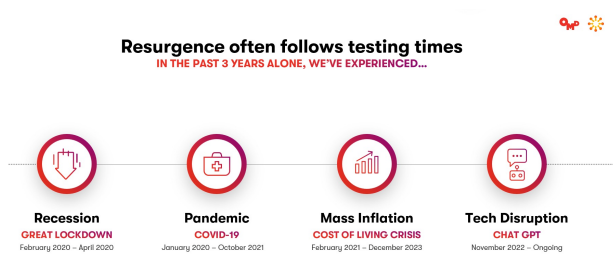


## Empowering brands to create authentic connections, navigating the evolving landscape through the lens of consumers

### Consumer patterns are shifting, with users seeking substance over superficial content

“[Signals](#)” is OMD’s annual trend report that delves into evidence-based consumer insights, shedding light on the perceptual and behavioral shifts crucial for the year ahead.

As we enter 2024, we find ourselves amidst a backdrop of prolonged uncertainty, marked by ongoing conflicts like the Russian-Ukraine and Israel-Gaza wars, along with significant events such as [Indonesia’s new capital city inauguration in August](#).



In the ever-evolving landscape of modern priorities, a significant shift in desires and aspirations is evident among respondents, [with half acknowledging a profound change](#) in their life goals over the past three years.

The consensus is unanimous that today’s social and economic terrain presents greater challenges for the current generation, who are actively opting for non-traditional life paths, such as delaying marriage or [homeownership](#).

This evolution in values is mirrored in consumer expectations, with an increasing emphasis on honesty, [experiences](#), and [ethical practices](#).

As economic pressures mount, consumers are gravitating towards media that provide comfort and familiarity. The appeal of modern shows with [nostalgic and retro elements](#) is on the rise, with 42% enjoying this and 25% tuning to TV to reconnect with happier times.

Tapping into childhood nostalgia, Lego launched a fan-reimagined music video of ‘[Dynamite](#),’ also leveraging the growing popularity in fan communities.

There is no doubt that the demand for personalized content, fan-created experiences, and less intrusive ads is growing.

### Brands are adapting to align with changing consumer values and behaviors

Social media platforms are also feeling the need to align with the change in people’s values and behaviors, as users become increasingly critical of commercialized and intrusive interactions, pushing for more authenticity and individualization.

Snapchat’s “[Less social media. More Snapchat](#)” rebrand seeks to shift the way people perceive the social function of the platform, while [BeReal’s](#) adding celebrities contributed to its 10M loss in users.

The US Congress has gone as far as passing [a bill that would require a change of TikTok ownership](#) due to national security and cultural influence concerns.

[YouTube](#) is integrating AI technology and innovative ad formats, like ‘[Playables](#),’ to enhance the user experience. While [TikTok](#), [Netflix](#), and [Prime Video](#) explore different formats, ads, and AI integrations to offer new personalized experiences.

Despite a growing understanding of and appreciation for AI technologies, questions and concerns still exist.

Many fear potential job displacement and lack trust in brand motivations for using AI. However, there are more human-centric concerns around [the lack of human interaction, data privacy, and cost](#).



To address these concerns, brands must focus on transparency, ethical practices, and user-centric design when incorporating AI into their strategies, as illustrated in [Microsoft's return to the Super Bowl](#) with a 60-second spot focused on empowering everyday use cases and inspiring enhanced human experiences.

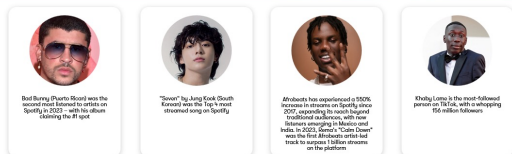
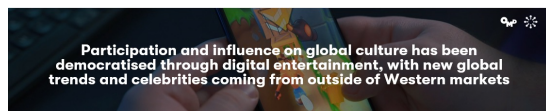
## The cultural landscape has expanded significantly through micro groups

In 2024, there is an interesting tension where people see both a rise in cultural fragmentation and in a global universal culture.

- 49% think culture is becoming more distinct and fragmented
- While 43% also believe the concept of a global universal culture is rapidly emerging.

The cultural landscape has expanded significantly in scope, with trend lifecycles now moving at a faster pace than before. On average, individuals perceive culture as consisting of 4+ elements from music to films, increasing to 5+ elements for those embracing the idea of cultural fragmentation. The [rapid reduction in the Twitter trend lifecycle by over 98%](#) in recent years underscores the dynamic nature of cultural shifts.

Global cultural trends continue to foster the formation of new communities. Moments like [‘Barbenheimer’ thrive on the interplay between various channels and active community engagement](#). However, fewer people are experiencing shared cultural moments on a collective level.



The democratization of participation and influence in global culture, particularly through digital entertainment, has given rise to new trends and celebrities originating outside Western markets.

Artists like [Jung Kook](#) have garnered global attention supporting his lead role in [Calvin Klein’s 2024 Spring campaign](#), while genres like [Afrobeats](#) have seen a surge in popularity across diverse regions.

The accessibility of [AI technologies](#) is poised to further accelerate the creation of tailored, globally resonant content, revolutionizing how international content is consumed.

## Brands can use Signals to enhance their planning and communication strategies

By pinpointing cultural, consumer, economic, and political tensions, we aim to carve out a distinct path in how we plan and communicate for brands, including –

### 1. Taking a Consumer-Centric Approach:

- Brands should be agile and responsive to economic, social, and environmental challenges.
- Prioritize transparency, authenticity, and personalized experiences to resonate with consumers.

### 2. Being Cultural Relevant:

- Acknowledge the tension between cultural fragmentation and the emergence of a global universal culture.
- Consider local market perspectives to ensure relevance across diverse audiences.

### 3. Taking a considered deployment to AI:

- Capitalize on the growing awareness and utilization of AI tools.
- Address consumer concerns by prioritizing transparency and ethical AI practices.

### 4. Creating Content and Engagement:

- Create content that resonates with nostalgia and simple pleasures.
- Optimize social media strategies based on user preferences and fatigue levels.

Whether you seek a quick overview or a deep dive into [consumer Signals for 2024](#), our report caters to all needs.



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