



# WHEN THE PATH TO PURCHASE BECOMES THE PATH TO PURPOSE

## Three new opportunities for brand advertisers

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Today's consumers are spoiled for choice. With new technologies delivering more media on more devices than ever before, their options for content are limitless. Faced with this surplus, consumers are choosing to engage only with content that is personally relevant to them, their purpose and their passions. This new consumer mind-set has implications for their purchasing behavior—consumers shop with the same purpose that they consume content. To understand how to engage them on their "path to purpose," Ogilvy, TNS and Google surveyed recent purchasers of auto vehicles, beauty products and smartphones. The results uncovered three new opportunities for brand advertisers:

- 1. Purpose = Purchase.** More than ever, brand purpose is critical to break through the clutter and drive purchases.
- 2. Power of Influence > Power of Time.** Counterintuitive as it may be, our research shows very little correlation between media usage and media influence. We need to focus on influence over usage.
- 3. Experience > Exposure.** Brands that provide consumers with deep experiences of their product—and manage to generate an emotional experience of ownership—win at the point of purchase.

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## It's all about purpose

Brand advertising has traditionally concerned itself with touching the hearts of audiences or tickling their funny bones. Advertising used that emotional—often entertaining—connection to bond consumers to the brands they grew to love, with the courtship carefully scheduled around television seasons, divided by the time of day and dependent on broadcast media consumption.

But today, digital platforms and social networks have changed the relationship between brands and consumers. Consumers have more choice than ever before and are engaged even in creating content. Reaching and engaging these new, active and connected consumers—[Generation C](#), as we have called them before—is a constantly evolving challenge. However, for brands that embrace this challenge, it is also an opportunity to bond with people more strongly than ever.

**What can brand advertisers do to connect with these new consumers?** Google partnered with TNS and Ogilvy to answer this question. Over a span of six months, in two different waves, we surveyed 2,458 recent purchasers of products in three categories—auto vehicles, beauty products and smartphones.

What we found is simple but transformative. It's all about purpose.

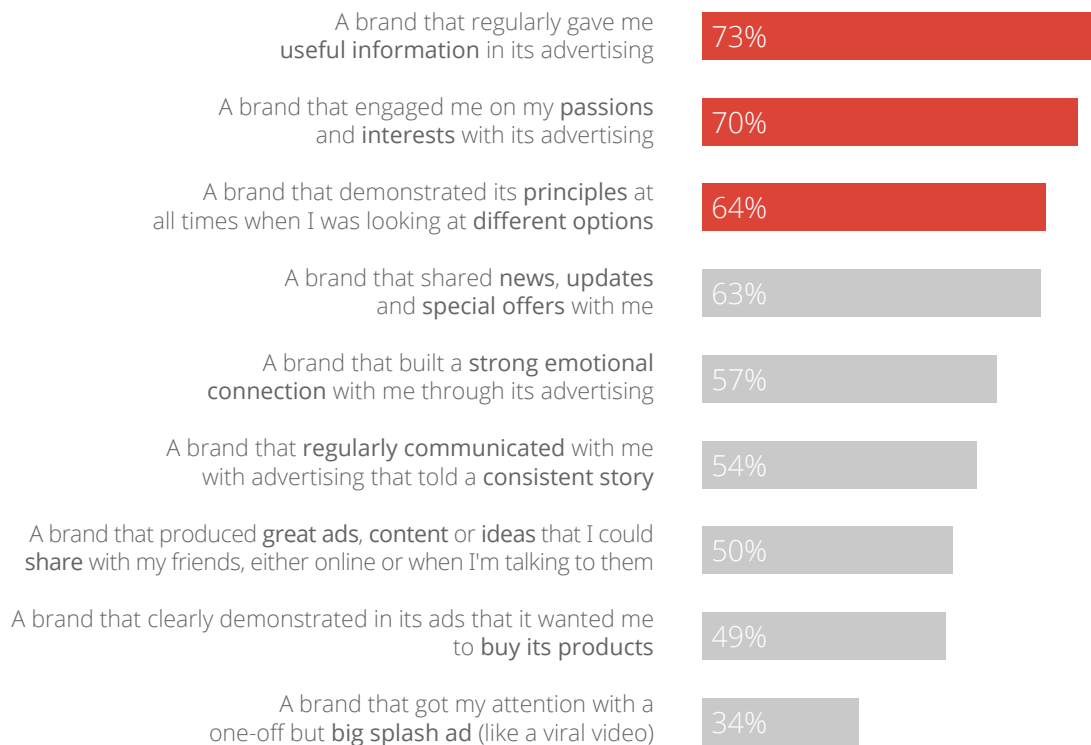
New consumers are looking much more substantially than they have in the past to *media* to match the purpose with which they lead their lives. More than ever, this perspective helps them fulfill their needs, passions and interests. The degree to which purpose even drives their shopping and purchases is eye-opening. Consumers choose the brands that engage them on their passions and interests 42% more often than they do those that simply urge them to buy the product being advertised. **As a result, their path to purchase is actually their path to purpose.**

In our study, we have identified different reasons that consumers go online. Some primarily seek entertainment—viewing feel-good content or looking for a laugh—while others look, first and foremost, to connect. A third and fast-growing motivation for consumers to go online is to seek information on passions and interests. These consumers seek to enrich themselves and explore their interests so they can build and pursue their passions. For brands, these consumers are:

1. **Better customers.** They are 70% more likely to have purchased something online in the past month (versus consumers driven by entertainment or connection).
2. **Word-of-mouth engines.** They are 1.6x more likely to rate a product or service online at least once a week (versus consumers driven by entertainment or connection).

#### PAIRWISE RANKING OF BRAND CONNECTION ATTRIBUTES

Importance of brand connections attributes when passions-and-interests-driven consumers are selecting a brand



## Opportunity 1: Purpose = Purchase

It's easy to get caught up in a beautiful story or feel the need to communicate facts, so much so that we forget to focus on our brand essence or purpose. But more than ever, those things are critical to break through the clutter or be share-worthy. **Three in four Generation C consumers share the brand they love.\*** There's tons of content online surrounding your brand and category. Are you moved by all the content surrounding your brand? Does it prompt you to share? Are you connecting with your target consumers on their passions and interests for them to love your brand and spread the word? To see successful examples, we invite you to scour the [YouTube Ads Leaderboard](#). What are the most successful brands on YouTube doing? How does your current advertising differ from the Leaderboard ads?

\*Source: Google/Ipsos YouTube Audience Study, August 2013



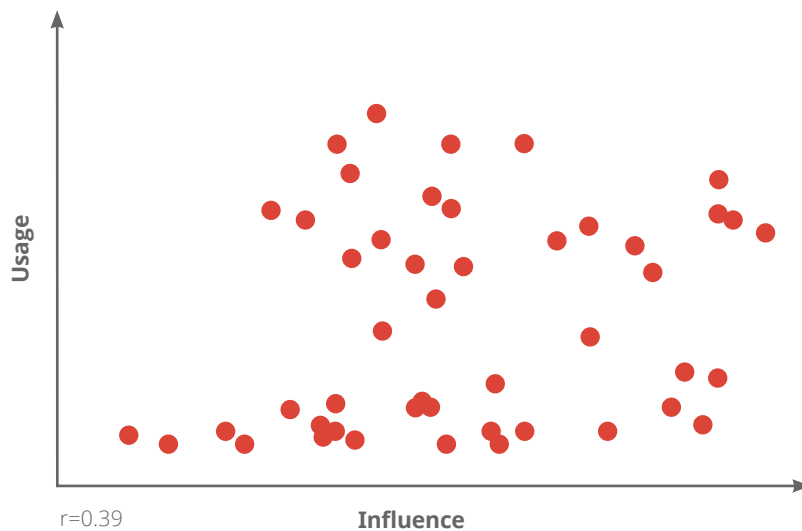
See how [Unilever](#) touched consumers and attained more than 77 million views, 3 million website visits and 200K new subscribers by tapping into what occupies its consumers the most—their future.

## Media influence on the path to purpose

What is the most influential way to reach these new consumers along their path to purpose? As you would expect from their online behavior, these consumers are very engaged with online content. They don't just consume media; they create their own content and curate that of others. They do this in a fragmented media landscape, where no one large platform can claim a majority of consumer influence. TV is still a juggernaut with high usage among certain consumer segments, but greater usage is not equivalent to greater influence. There is, in fact, very little correlation between media usage and media influence.

### USAGE VS. INFLUENCE

There is very little correlation between usage and influence of media touchpoints



So what are the most influential media touchpoints for the new consumer?



# Points of Influence on the Path to Purpose\*



\*Stated influence of media touchpoints for recent purchasers when making a decision to purchase

\*\*Top three roles of YouTube as stated by recent purchasers of auto vehicles, beauty products and smartphones

## Opportunity 2: **Power of Influence > Power of Time**

Consumers use media in a new and complex fashion, but traditional media buying is still largely indexed to usage stats. Today's successful brands are building a media plan based on media touchpoint influence rather than mere usage. Consider how your media plan would look on points of influence.



Check out [Hyatt's](#) way of reaching new consumer segments through a media plan and creative that connected with its audience at the most influential points.

## Online video: purpose made real for consumers' lives

Why does YouTube have such a strong influence on purchases? Because YouTube provides that **emotional experience of ownership**.



### AUTO

**72%** of recent purchasers agree

"YouTube is one of the best places to go online to watch 'in-action' videos of vehicles I am considering buying"



### SMARTPHONES

**62%** of recent purchasers agree

"YouTube helps me learn about products through how-to videos, product reviews or even ads better than any other website"



### BEAUTY

**66%** of recent purchasers agree

"YouTube is one of the best sites to help me visualize how different products fit into my lifestyle"

YouTube helps brands offer experiences that bring people's passions to life. And new consumers not only welcome these experiences from brands, they expect it. **Users 18-34 years old are 4x more interested in watching a video ad on YouTube than in viewing any other platform.\***

\*Source: US Statistics, Google Consumer Surveys, March 2014. Surveyed: YouTube, Hulu, ESPN.com, Facebook, comedycentral.com, Tumblr, Instagram, Vimeo, AOL, MTV.com



However, according to a recent report published by ZEFR\*, brand advertisers are not alone in influencing consumers' purchases on YouTube. In fact, more than 86% of the views for brand-related content on YouTube comes from YouTube creators, seller-intermediaries and users rather than from the brands themselves. Learn more on how to leverage this opportunity by reading [ZEFR's blog post on YouTube's branded content](#).

### Opportunity 3: Experience > Exposure

Many brands are generating stellar consumer engagement on YouTube by tapping into consumers' passions and interests, offering videos that generate an emotional experience of ownership.

#### CASE STUDY MERCEDES



Learn from [Mercedes](#) and its success in creating a unique 14-minute ad that offered consumers an emotional experience with its brand.

## Conclusion

Consumers are hungry to live their passions. The brands that can satisfy that appetite will reap the rewards. To do that, they'll need to keep their focus firmly on their **brand's core and how it relates to their consumers' passions**. We also invite brands to incorporate the influence of platforms when building their media plans, rather than relying on time spent on platforms. Along the way, successful brands will be able to leverage the unique ability of **online video to provide a digital test drive** for the products they are considering. The brands that thrive in the digital world will remember one thing above all—the path to purchase goes through the path to purpose.

\*Source: ZEFR data, 2014