



Evolving Aspirations: Navigating Status

In the first three volumes of the Ipsos and Effie Dynamic Effectiveness series, we've explored the business case for better portrayals of women in marketing, how to bridge the empathy gap and why nostalgia is having more than a moment. In volume 4, we explore aspirations and unpick the transitional trends from the unchanging behaviours.

Ipsos recently released a report called Signs of Success which did a deep dive into what it means to be successful in the UK today. Things have moved on since the 80's when most studies centred around physical status symbols like microwaves and video recorders. In the 1980s, 14% of Britons owned a dishwasher vs. six in 10 of us now. Decades of prosperity later, mass attainment of material goods make markers like these less salient. Aspiration in today's world entail not only acquiring enough wealth to live a secure and stable existence, but also the freedom to enjoy it.

But, what does this shift in how we perceive success mean for marketers and how they communicate?

- In a world of quiet luxury, how do you whisper loud enough to reach your target consumer?
- Have you taken both current and future consumers into account?
- How do you balance out the deep held values on what is aspirational with values specific to the social media world?



Key takeaways

- What we find aspirational today is quality over flaunted wealth, seeing ourselves as the keepers / drivers of our success and a belief that enrichment includes enjoyable experiences.
- We have moved from a view that affluence is associated with perfection, heritage, and hierarchy to a new articulation of affluence defined by action and authenticity.
- TUI and Leo Burnett UK increased emotional connection by 13%, driving passenger volumes up by 30%, by focusing on experiences as a means of enrichment and self-actualisation.
- Vodafone and Oglivy UK challenged perceptions, setting an aspirational goal increasing non-user consideration by 30%.
- DFS and Pablo created £57 million in additional revenue, and increased campaign profit with an ROI of £3.24 by embracing individual autonomy which we aspire to.

Luxury: Whisper don't shout

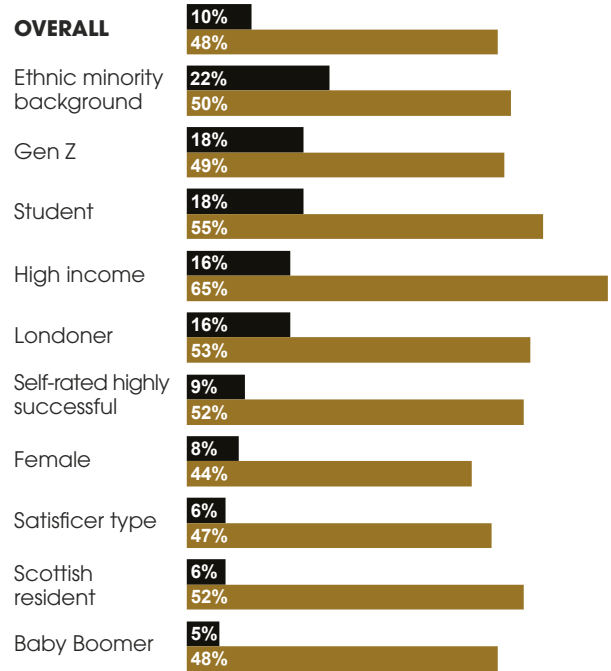
Whilst Britons enjoy the finer things in life, they don't want to flaunt their wealth. Just 10% of Britons say they like to own or do things that display their wealth, while a significant 70% disagree – and a third strongly oppose it.

However, half of Britons (48%) agree that they often spend extra on higher quality products, including two-thirds of those with six-digit household incomes and half of those who consider themselves to have been very successful in life.

To flaunt or not to flaunt

■ I like to do or own things that show I have money

■ I often spend extra on higher quality products, even though it costs me more



Source: Ipsos Knowledge Panel UK. Base: 2,178 Online British adults 18-75, 1st-7th June 2023



OFFLINE VS. ONLINE BELIEFS

The thing that's the same about our online and offline beliefs is a desire for autonomy. The thing that's different is that good treatment of people matters less online vs. being the most important factor for success offline.

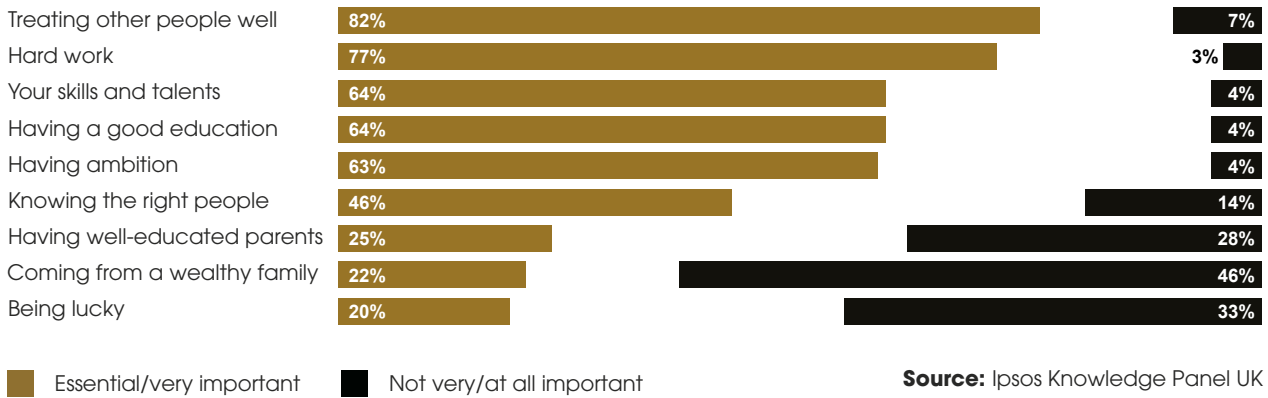
The factors we consider essential to achieving success tend to be internal, such as how we treat others, our ability to

work hard, and innate skills and talents. As a society we tend to believe that our success is defined by our own actions.

The online sentiment around "making it" reinforces this desire for autonomy, with being able to eat and drink what you want, chasing your own future, and financial control all being frequently mentioned.

Overall people take a meritocratic view of what it takes to be successful

For each of these statements, please select how important, if at all, you think it is for getting ahead in life. How important is...?

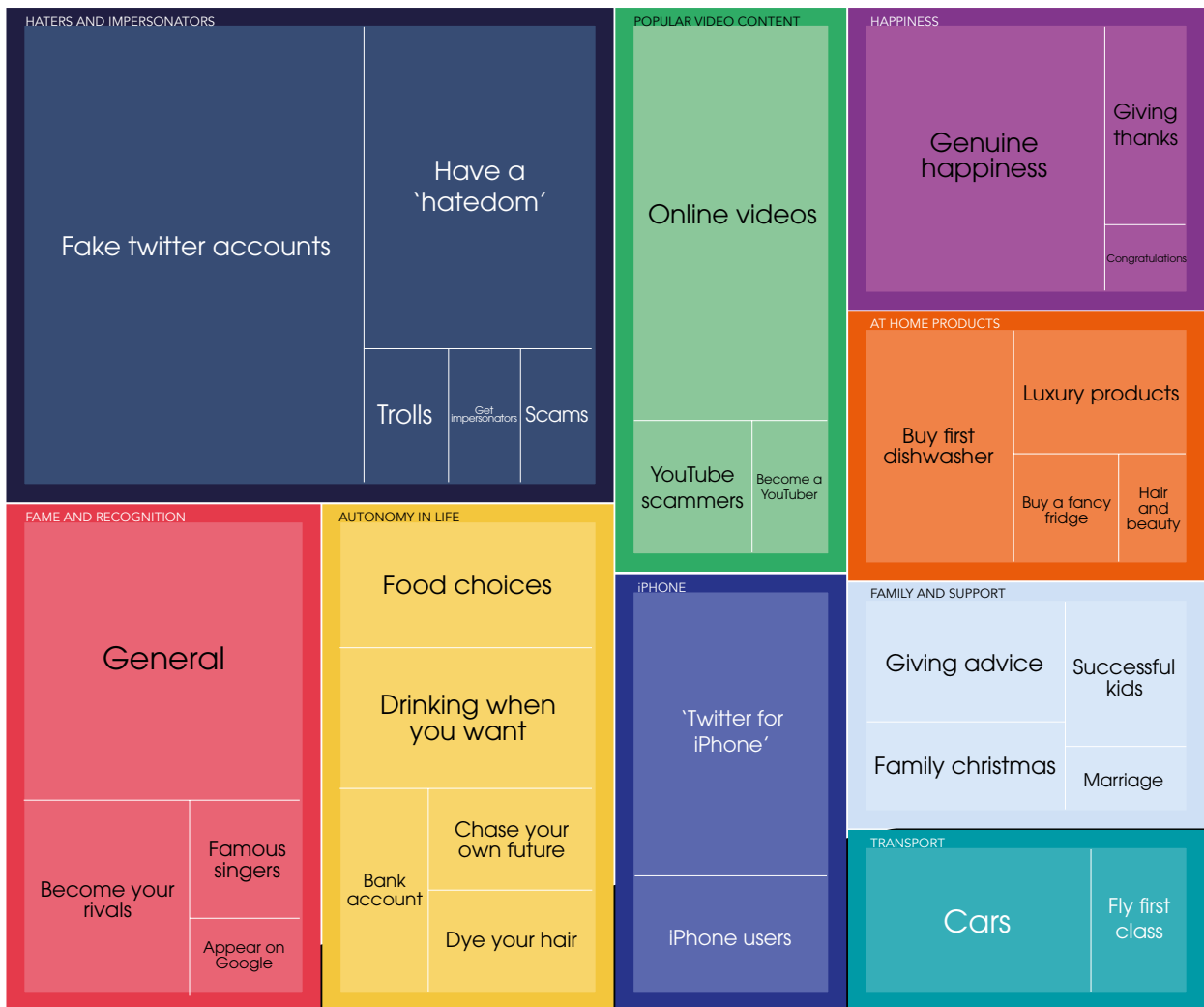


However, interestingly, the largest indicator online for success is having 'haters and impersonators'. Despite the negative experience for the individual, being impersonated online and being a victim of 'hatedom' is often perceived as a badge of honour and a sign of an individuals success.

This connection between online abuse and success may in part be due to resentments around a perceived lack of recognition. Though more than half of Britons (56%) identify as highly successful, only a third (34%) feel they are recognised for their successes.

Online mentions of 'making it' reveal the topics people consider as signs of success

One popular indicator is fake accounts on Twitter, but a detailed view below shows which sub-categories, like online videos or happiness have high volumes.



WHAT A CHANGING VIEW OF LUXURY MEANS FOR MARKETERS

Ipsos analysis suggests a shift in how we perceive affluence. We have moved from a view that affluence is associated with perfection, heritage, and hierarchy to a new articulation of affluence defined by action and authenticity.

Courage, entrepreneurialism, and balance are the new signs of success, so what

new signals might luxury brands, or brands with premium offerings, need to emphasise to create an affluent experience?

Let's look at some ways in which recent Effie winners and finalists were able to understand evolving aspirations and navigate status effectively for their brands.

Cultural shifts toward authenticity social values and responsibility



Perfection, precision
Old, traditional, classic
Abundance, intensity
Rules, standards stability
Individuality, self-interest
Wealth, profit
Hierarchy, elitism

Traditional affluence

Historically grounded, inherited



Authenticity
New, innovative
Balance, self-limitation
Freedom, change, own rules
Social responsibility, sharing
Influence, impact
Network, connections



Future-facing affluence

Born out of entrepreneurial spirit and a certain type of smartness and courage

01

TUI & Leo Burnett UK: Live Happy

Enriching experiences to self-actualisation: TUI faced a tough business challenge post COVID-19, shifting perceptions of the brand to a life-enhancing travel brand in a declining package holiday market. With more and more tools in place for holiday goers to self-book, there was a steady increase in the number of people who said they would never think to book a package holiday (particularly among 18–40-year-olds). The emergence of digital platforms empowered customers to research, compare, and book travel arrangements from the comfort of their sofas, an issue compounded by price focused competitors and aggregators.

To future-proof the business, TUI broadened its model to include more unique, personalised travel experiences. The team at Leo Burnett helped to unify the package holidays and personalised travel offerings under the idea that 'travel is the only money you will spend that makes you richer', a fresh and modern view of the aspirational which spoke to the UK's view of affluence.

The campaign results were exceptional; emotional connection increased by 13%, growing consideration by 3%pts which in turn contributed to passenger volumes rising by 30% at 18% lower costs.



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Leisure travel by its nature is usually conducted infrequently (compared to something like a supermarket shop) so in many ways it has always represented an aspirational mindset; a very real demonstration of the different lives that you can live when you step outside your day to day life. But showing a breadth of experiences isn't somewhere that package holiday companies have historically played due to their limited product offering. This campaign repositioned TUI in a way that showed the diversity of experiences and emotions a TUI holiday can provide but without the hassle of piecing it altogether yourself.



Toby Horry
Global Marketing Director • TUI

02

Vodafone & Oglivy UK: Keep the UK Connected

Challenge preconceptions and set aspirational goals:

Vodafone had a core marketing challenge to drive non-user consideration, so the brand decided to challenge itself to think differently from the usual hard hitting product messaging, moving away from a focus on material tech towards a focus on the importance of connectivity to the individual. During the pandemic connectivity was critical to individual success and there was a clear problem around inequality of access to solve, with 1.5 million households without access to the internet (including 44% with children). Four out of five Britons were unaware this divide existed.

Vodafone made a commitment to help close the digital divide: providing connection for 100,000 people by 2021 and reaching 1 million by the end of 2022. They needed to show the public that the right to digital connection was a life essential. They launched a multi-channel campaign to drive awareness of the issue, including charity partnerships, digital video, OOH, influencers, PR, radio, events, and carried the theme throughout their campaign of "Give the Gift of Connection".

Vodafone helped connect over one million people and drove a 23% increase in non-user consideration and a 153% increase in perceptions of "Vodafone as a brand that cares about people".



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Digital connection enables people to enjoy the personal freedom and choices that today's society aspires to. However, our research showed that some people in the UK still live in digital poverty, with disconnected communities missing out on important life opportunities. By showing Brits that connection isn't a luxury, it's a life-essential, Vodafone was able to close the digital divide and provide connection for 1 million people.



Maria Koutsoudakis
Brand & Marketing Director • Vodafone

03

DFS & Pablo London: What's your thing

Celebrating individual autonomy and modernising aspiration:

In a declining market, DFS needed to protect the business by unlocking more profitable market share amongst new audiences. Although a low priority in the permacrisis, buying a sofa was a way to stamp identity onto a crazy world. At the same time, DFS lacked the perceived style credentials they wanted and was not seen as 'modern' or 'up to date' and needed to remind people of their range and elevate their style credentials.

Their strategic idea was to give the nation confidence to unlock their individuality at the heart of their home. This was a new customer (not sales) led platform designed to drive greater relevance among valuable new style-focused audiences, helping them to embrace the individual autonomy which we aspire to.

The work has delivered valuable market share growth, £57 million additional revenue, and increased campaign profit with an ROI of £3.24.



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The home has followed wider fashion with individual style (rather than rigidly following trends) the prevailing paradigm. But we found that many Britons didn't feel confidence in their own tastes - especially within the context of an expensive sofa purchase. Our brand platform is all about that; helping people to find and embrace what they like when it comes to furnishing their homes.



Mark Sng
Partner & CSO • Pablo London

In summary

In summary, as our expressions of success evolve, so must marketers' ability to appeal and create offers and communication that feels aspirational. Here are our three pointers to achieving that:

1

Enriching experiences to self-actualisation: As stated earlier on, aspiration in today's world entails not only acquiring enough wealth to live a secure and stable existence, but also the freedom to enjoy it. Focus on experiences and enrichment beyond material status symbols.

2

Challenge preconceptions and set aspirational goals: Ipsos brand work shows how shared values are increasingly important as a measure of brand success. We value autonomy so providing a common goal that is attainable through an individual's or a brand's actions is well regarded as a shared value.

3

Celebrating individual autonomy and modernising aspiration: We don't value household goods as 'status symbols' the way we did four decades ago. To make them aspirational in a modern way, they can be re-defined as a means of expressing individuality and personality.

Get in touch



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Samira is an Ipsos expert on brand and communication work, with 20 years of experience spanning creative and research roles. She leads Ipsos' early-stage campaign development offer, is a thought leader on ad effectiveness, and works with clients to adopt a misfit mindset and make bolder, highly creative campaigns that audiences value.



Rachel Emms

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Rachel has over 25 years' experience working across marketing, communications and market research – in both agency and client-side roles. During that time she's worked with brands and business in most industries in a career that's spanned the Charity and Public Sector as well as the Commercial sector. Her role at Effie allows her to bring her diverse experiences together to champion the progressive practice and practitioners of marketing effectiveness across the industry.

Dynamic Effectiveness: Ipsos & Effie UK

While the bedrock of brand building and human motivations stand firm, we turn our spyglasses onto the shifting sands to uncover current opportunities for marketers. The series combines evidence on society, trends, and advertising effectiveness from Ipsos research with Effie's marketing effectiveness database.

