



bcw PRIDE

CLIENT GUIDE

LGBTQ+

External Communications & Marketing Considerations

From earned media and social & digital activations to creative integrations and powerful third-party partnerships, each element of your external communications and marketing work should be operationalized in a manner that allows you to reach and engage with the LGBTQ+ community authentically. Active allyship that helps to uplift the LGBTQ+ community requires a consistent, unwavering commitment to these efforts 12 months a year, not just during Pride Month.

While not exhaustive, this guide provides an overview of key considerations that should be top-of-mind as you plan and execute your work. **To discuss how you can implement meaningful engagements into your external communications and marketing, please reach out to the [BCW PRide Team](#).**



Earned Media

Similar to any best-practice media relations approach, building long-lasting, trusted relationships with the editorial teams at LGBTQ+ media publications and those covering related verticals is paramount. That trust also extends to your spokespeople. Companies should always prioritize offering spokespeople who can discuss LGBTQ+ topics with authority — such as those who are part of the LGBTQ+ community, as well as those who can speak to tangible action, commitments and progress — and prepare messaging that is tailored and relevant to the audience.

Journalists will respect an organization that approaches them from a position of positive intent, transparency and willingness to engage, regardless of where that organization is on its journey. From a place of trust, you're able to communicate openly about your work supporting LGBTQ+ equality. While building this trust is a critically important component of your earned media strategy, it's important to remember that journalists are looking for tangible actions, progress and initiatives they can cover. Meaningful work, combined with established trust with journalists, will be key to reaching your priority audience.



Organic Social & Paid Digital Media

Authentic and inclusive representation is something consumers, employees and clients look for when reviewing a company's social media accounts. Are you only posting LGBTQ+ content during June, or year-round? Is it only rainbows and same-sex couples? Are transgender and gender non-conforming people of color clearly represented and woven throughout?

Content that consumers can learn from and identify with is an important consideration when posting content. While it is common for corporations to show their allyship with the LGBTQ+ community by changing their logos on social media to include the rainbow or pride flags, there is more that can be done to show support for the community during Pride Month and, especially, the other 11 months of the year.

Storytelling through paid media (promotional content, partnerships, ad boosts/targeting) is key for driving brand awareness and affinity online. The most successful companies on social media recognize that using paid advertising behind their LGBTQ+-focused social posts amplifies LGBTQ+ voices and increases awareness of the community.



¹WPP's Beyond the Rainbow Report, Nov. 2022

In addition, consistently sharing employee stories and company initiatives on social platforms highlight the work you are doing beyond “just representation” externally—you’re “walking the walk while talking the talk.” Promoting content featuring LGBTQ+ employees and community initiatives show consumers and employees that company programs are genuine and align with a company's values.

Owned Media

Owned media is one of the most important tools for any company or brand as the channels you own (website, newsrooms, newsletters, blogs, social media, apps) are often the first stop for people looking for key information on your company, your products, your services and your values. Companies must consider how they're referencing their support of the LGBTQ+ community, whether that's through acknowledging benchmarks met or and the progress against them, investments, partnerships or legislative advocacy.

To maximize your message's reach and ensure a wide audience sees your support of the LGBTQ+ community, it's vital to amplify owned content through earned and social media, paid content, and partnerships, influencers and sponsorships.

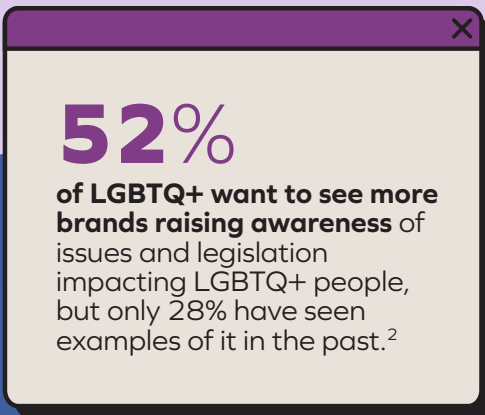


External Corporate Activations

Consumers, employees, investors, policymakers, and media are paying more attention than ever before to how companies are using their time and resources to create a more equal society. A company's brand capital can catalyze impact in the communities in which it serves. Such activity can include:

1. LGBTQ+ Nonprofit Partnerships - Meaningful partnerships with LGBTQ+ nonprofits are often regarded as an important indicator in assessing a company's commitment to LGBTQ+ equality efforts. Partnerships that transcend financial commitments alone and focus on tangible impact aligned with your mission, values and day-to-day operations should always be a company's approach.

2. Corporate Sponsorships - Investing in initiatives that support the LGBTQ+ community signals that you understand that "corporate America" has a stake in social issues and you are putting your brand name behind that effort to drive change



3. Events - Hosting events highlights a company's willingness to create the shared space necessary for people to come together in a formal, or informal, setting to discuss critically important topics of the moment and determine how you can work together to alleviate or solve them.

² WPP's Beyond the Rainbow Report, Nov. 2022

Awards & Rankings

Awards and rankings are not just about titles and bragging rights; they demonstrate how companies are taking meaningful strides to keep pace with issues that are important to society at large. Stakeholders, including job candidates, current and prospective employees, partners and consumers take note of how companies are disclosing information about their workforces, policies and programs.

Earning meaningful recognition generates positive impact on corporate reputation, share price, employee engagement, recruitment and retention, and can help companies and their leadership differentiate themselves from their peers and competitors. Studies even show that a company's strong reputation yields 2.5 times better stock performance compared to the overall market – and awards and rankings certainly play a big role in reputation building.

Conclusion

By taking an integrated and purpose-driven approach to embedding your commitments to LGBTQ+ equality across your organization, you're laying the foundation necessary to engage authentically on these topics. By doing so, you have the ability to establish — and ultimately deepen — your credibility and confidence within the LGBTQ+ community.

