



June 2024



IPA Research Highlights Industry Anxiety on Climate

Advertising employees are disproportionately anxious about climate change and worried about the industry's impact on the environment, according to [new research](#) conducted by Ipsos on behalf of the IPA Media Climate Group.

The findings, which were officially launched as part of Ad Week Europe, suggest there is a strong demand among talent for the advertising industry to accelerate progress towards Net Zero. When asked whether enough was being done to address climate change, more than two-thirds (70%) of employees of IPA agencies said the industry was doing too little – though this dropped to 49% when respondents were asked to describe their own company's environmental policies.

The report also revealed that industry employees are significantly more likely to be worried about rising global temperatures. Asked to describe their feelings towards climate change, 53% of agency employees selected 'anxious' and 37% said 'demoralised' – compared with 37% and 14% for the general public, respectively. Lying behind this contrast is a commonly held belief among industry talent that media is having a negative impact on climate change. Agency employees were four times as likely to argue that advertising is having a negative impact (48%) than a positive one (12%). This sentiment was not shared by the general public, where only 17% believed the industry to be having a detrimental effect.

The IPA Media Climate Group, of which the7stars is a founding member, comprises representatives of 52 media agencies and was set up in 2021 to spotlight the industry's policies around Ad Net Zero and to focus on reducing emissions from media planning, buying, and distribution.

This year, the7stars is accelerating its efforts to make progress towards Net Zero including setting science-based target setting across Scopes 1, 2 and 3. the7stars' Ecostars leadership team – open to everyone across the agency – offers all climate-minded employees, regardless of experience, the opportunity to propose innovative solutions. The ability to influence climate policy however, is not being felt widely across the advertising industry. Just 25% of IPA agency employees said they could influence their company's 'strategies to reduce adverse environmental and social impacts'.

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Speaking [on a panel](#) following the presentation of the research at AdWeek, the7stars' Rob McLaren argued that industry employees at all levels should be offered the chance to influence their company's climate policies, following the example of the Ecostars.

Positively, the advertising industry does not appear to be staring down a crisis of talent recruitment. A majority (53%) of 16-24-year-olds surveyed said they would consider a career in advertising. Yet, as the panel concurred, recruiting individuals who are passionate about the environment will be crucial to tackling the industry's negative sentiment around climate change.

Pauline Robson, Chair of the IPA Media Climate Group, commented, 'What we're seeing is that advertising's impact on climate change is not necessarily a deterrent to recruitment into our industry but could well become a retention issue if we don't address these findings fully.'





How SGE Will Affect SEO and the Search Landscape

Google's integration of Generative AI represents a significant shift in the SEO landscape – and it's one SEOs have been waiting for since the tail end of 2023. Gemini (previously known as Bard) is Google's multimodal large language AI model. It aims to enhance user experience by providing more nuanced, context-aware, and comprehensive answers directly within the search results.

Introducing Search Generative Experience (SGE) is a big change by Google that will reshape SEO practices. The focus will shift towards creating high-quality, contextually rich content and optimising AI-driven algorithms, ensuring that users receive the most accurate and helpful information possible.

Enhancing User Experience

Generative AI in search can provide more detailed and personalised responses to user queries. Traditional search algorithms rely on keyword matching and ranking signals to retrieve relevant web pages. However, Generative AI can understand the context and intent behind a search query, generating responses that are not limited to existing web pages. For instance, instead of merely listing pages about a historical event, the AI can synthesise information from multiple sources to present a coherent summary.

Impact on SEO Practices

SEOs will have to adapt to this change quickly and be able to track ranking changes in new ways. Historically, SEO has focused on optimising content for specific keywords and improving page authority through backlinks. With Generative AI, the emphasis may move towards creating high-quality, authoritative content that comprehensively addresses potential queries. Content relevance and depth will likely become more critical, as the AI will prefer well-rounded articles that cover topics extensively.

SEO writers and content marketers will need to focus more on content that is not just keyword-rich, but also contextually rich. The AI's ability to understand nuanced language means that semantic SEO, which emphasises the meaning and intent behind words, will become increasingly important. Structured data and schema markup will also gain prominence as they help AI understand and categorise content more effectively.

Technical SEO will still play a vital role, but the metrics of success might evolve. Factors such as page load speed, mobile friendliness, and secure connections will remain essential as they contribute to a better user experience. Additionally, since Generative AI will strive to provide direct answers, the visibility of a brand's information in Featured Snippets or Knowledge Panels will be crucial.

Challenges and Considerations

One challenge brands and website owners will face is the potential for reduced organic traffic to websites. If SGE provides comprehensive answers directly in the search results, users might not feel the need to click through to individual web pages. This could impact ad revenue and the overall traffic websites receive. SEO professionals will need to find ways to ensure their content remains enticing and relevant enough to warrant a click.

As Generative AI continues to evolve, staying updated with Google's guidelines and best practices will be essential. SEO will increasingly intertwine with AI, so SEOs will need to understand and leverage these technologies to maintain visibility and relevance in search results.





Interactive Shoppable Ads Coming Soon to Amazon Prime

Amazon has announced that they are expanding their advertisement offering with the introduction of new interactive formats on Prime Video. The goal is to ensure that shopping directly from the streaming platform is easier than ever before.

Designed to streamline browsing and shopping during Prime Video ad breaks, shoppable carousel ads let viewers explore and add multiple related products to their carts directly using most remotes. These aren't the only interactive options, though. Prime Video will also feature interactive pause ads and brand trivia ads across TV shows, movies, and even live sports. When viewers hit pause, a translucent ad featuring brand messaging and imagery appears, along with clear 'Add to Cart' and 'Learn More' buttons. Customers can then seamlessly add products to their carts or get more information using their remotes. This step allows Amazon to build on its initial offering of standard pre-roll and mid-roll ads offered in January. This new approach to Prime ads will ensure engagement is high and keep the platform feeling fresh.

Alan Moss, Vice President for Amazon Ads, said, 'We are developing innovative experiences to help brands better engage with customers as we work to transform streaming advertising through our differentiated combination of reach, first-party signals, and ad tech.'

From an advertiser perspective, the new shoppable format will allow brands to increase engagement, continue to perfect their targeting capabilities and, most importantly, reduce barriers to entry when shopping for products. This frictionless shopping experience will eliminate the need to switch devices or remember product names later, leading to more impulse purchases.

Further brand opportunities will occur for advertisers who can tailor their strategy to incorporate this new format. The format will focus on visual appeal, especially due to the ad most likely being watched on the big screen; this makes it more important than ever to use high-quality engaging images. The new format will also allow for multiple products to be displayed, which will be perfect for brands that have a range they want to share rather than one standalone product. Ultimately, this unique opportunity for advertisers creates a more engaging, measurable, and appealing experience for viewers directly on the platform.

Despite being new for Prime, this ad format aligns with similar offerings from traditional broadcasters; however, Amazon occupies a unique position within the market as both a content provider and an e-commerce platform. This link creates the potential for a more streamlined shopping experience because viewers will access their Amazon accounts directly from within the entertainment. This unique feature is not offered with existing ad formats from other broadcasters.

Looking to the future, competitors in the SVOD space are likely to respond with new shoppable ad iterations of their own, leading to greater variation in the advertisement space.





Inclusive Planning for Pride and Beyond

During Pride Month, we'll see many brands showing their support for LGBTQIA+ communities. We're also likely to see much discussion around 'rainbow-washing'; the practice of brands signalling support without actually doing substantive work that helps the community. All of this raises a wider question about how brands can be truly inclusive in both their messaging and media.

It is well-established that truly inclusive work leads to better business results. Yet, as it stands, 39% of global consumers believe that brands are not doing a good job of representing people 'similar to me or my community' (Kantar). There's clearly work to be done. At the7stars, inclusive planning is vital to the work of every team and at each stage of planning and buying.

Inclusive Insight

Upon receiving a brief, we seek to uncover and resolve gaps in knowledge that risk excluding groups in society. This is often where the tension between the binary language used in marketing and the complexity and diversity of the real world can lead to game-changing perspectives.

An example of such tension was highlighted in our whitepaper [The Misdefined Majority](#). Here we challenge the use of archaic socioeconomic grading in targeting definitions and instead champion a multi-layered approach, considering factors such as affordability, attitudes, and values.

At the7stars, we consistently enrich our understanding of audiences with bespoke research. Since becoming a founding partner of Voices4All in 2020, all nationally representative research conducted by the7stars includes ethnicity, disability/impairment, and sexual orientation within quotas. To add further depth, specially trained moderators in our team conduct qualitative research with marginalised and under-represented audiences where appropriate.

Inclusive Activation

When building a plan that puts into action the audience nuances uncovered earlier, it's essential to consider the full breadth of media brands, including those catering to specific audience groups. Such media brands can sometimes unjustly fall foul of brand safety guidelines that deem them 'unsafe' due to size, a lack of understanding of their content, or measurement difficulties. We support inclusive publishers within the mix on a media plan wherever appropriate, recognising the power of advertising to support marginalised voices and spaces.

Equally, when creating content with partners, we ensure the authentic representation of all audiences vital to the brief, both within the content and across the production process.

A More Inclusive Future for Advertising

A proactive approach to inclusion is not only vital to producing the best work for our clients but also for the future of our industry. Diverse teams develop the strongest ideas thanks to their breadth of viewpoints and experiences. To attract a truly representative pool of talent to the industry, everyone should feel that advertising not only reflects them but welcomes them.





What Getir Getting Out Means for Online Delivery

In late April, Getir, one of the early pioneers of the rapid grocery delivery market and still a major player in the category, announced its exit from the UK market.

To anyone visiting a major UK city centre three years ago, such a move would have seemed unthinkable. Getir – alongside its main rival Gorillas, which it acquired in 2022 – was investing heavily in media, with the two brands spending a combined £13m in 2021, according to Nielsen data. Much of this spend went into OOH and online video formats, with creatives promising 15-minute delivery times and eye-watering discounts for new customers.

In addition, the brand spent heavily price-matching Tesco and sponsoring Tottenham Hotspur's training kits – a deal reportedly leaving the club £5m short. Across London, Getir's purple bikes and rider outfits proliferated, as investment came pouring in for a brand valued, at one stage, at almost £10bn.

How the Rapid Delivery Bubble Burst

Getir launched in Turkey in 2015, but success and rapid expansion took off during the UK's COVID-19 lockdowns. By early 2023, according to research from KPMG, almost one-quarter of the UK population had used a rapid grocery delivery service, rising to 47% of 18-24-year-olds and 41% of Londoners.

Yet, several reasons emerge for Getir's downfall. Firstly, while a sizeable chunk of the population was tempted by new customer promotions, most rapid delivery outlets could not compete with major supermarkets on price. This, coupled with the rebound of retail following the end of lockdown restrictions, meant too few customers hung around past the initial welcome period.

Compounding this, several competitors entered the booming UK market. While further acquisitions eventually left Getir the largest brand standing, the very public interest they cultivated in the rapid delivery category became their downfall. More established players from the supermarket and takeaway sectors, such as Tesco Whoosh and Deliveroo Groceries, could command far greater broad appeal and were able to leverage a halo effect once they entered the market. This hurdle proved too high for Getir to overcome.

What's Next for Online Delivery

Getir's exit from the UK market leaves GoPuff as the last 'true' rapid grocery delivery brand remaining in the UK. In March, GoPuff announced its intention to expand to 24-hour operations in Newcastle and Liverpool, following a 35% increase in late-night orders. Similarly, the brand has seen substantial growth in sales of premium and organic products through its services, a signal that demand may be shifting away from low-cost alternatives as consumer financial sentiment softens (the7stars QT, May 2024).

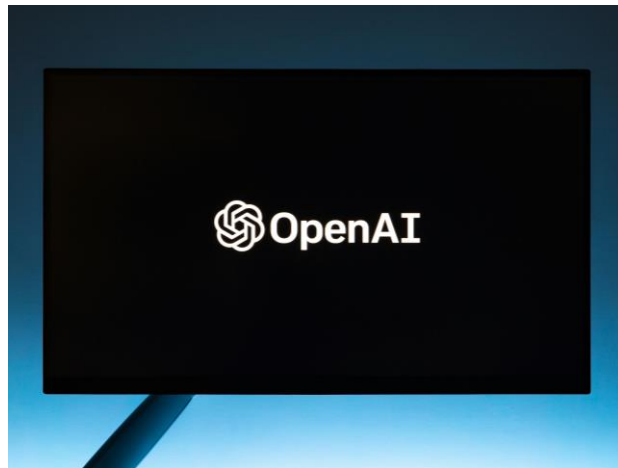
Overall, the mixed fortunes of the rapid delivery sector further demonstrate that many of the shopper trends we observed during the pandemic were transient, as consumers were quick to revert to old habits once normality resumed. GoPuff's expansion shows there is still a place for rapid delivery services, but brands will need to adapt to the needs of their customers.

For established retailers seeking to play in this space, brands can leverage a significant advantage of legacy awareness, but will still need to demonstrate reliable and efficient service to fend off challenger apps. Flexibility and free delivery slots, such as Iceland's Same Day and Next Day services, can help to reassure customers that they do not need to pay a premium for convenience.



This month's mini stories

OpenAI, creators of ChatGPT, have entered a multi-year partnership with News Corp, enabling access to current and archived content from prominent News Corp publications such as *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Times*, and *MarketWatch*. This deal, potentially worth \$250 million over five years, aims to enhance OpenAI's products by integrating high-quality journalism into its AI models. News Corp will also provide journalistic expertise to maintain high standards of journalism within OpenAI's offerings.



Commercial radio has achieved a new record with 39.7 million weekly listeners in the latest quarter, according to Rajar figures. This surpasses the previous high of 39.3 million listeners in Q3 2023. Notably, 75% of commercial stations experienced an increase in reach, contrasting with over half (53%) of BBC stations which saw a decline. Commercial radio's market share grew year-on-year to 54.2%, compared with the BBC's 43.4%. Overall, radio's total weekly UK audience reached a record 49.9 million adults, or 88.6% of the adult population, surpassing the previous record from Q1 2022. The majority of radio listening occurred at home (62%), followed by in vehicles (58%), and at work or other locations (19%).

After nearly 200 years as a daily newspaper, the Evening Standard is transitioning to a weekly print edition later this year. ES Magazine may also see reduced frequency. The focus is now on enhancing the brand's digital presence, marked by the relaunch of its website as The Standard. Former GQ editor Dylan Jones, appointed editor-in-chief in June 2023, has made key strategic appointments, including a new managing editor and head of design, to drive this digital transformation. Despite joining under the condition that the physical paper would not cease, Jones is steering the publication towards a robust online future.

