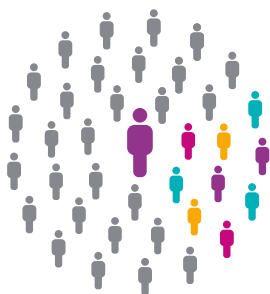
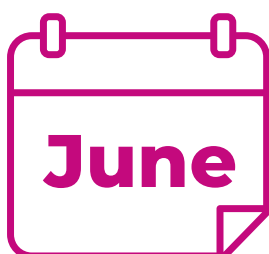
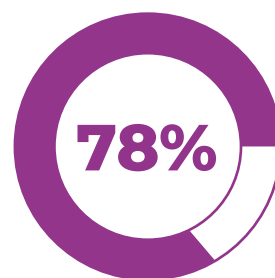


How to meaningfully engage with Pride



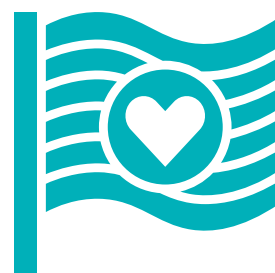
Discrimination due to prejudice based on sexuality or gender is experienced by at least 10% of people. Based on You Gov data, one in five LGBT+ people in the UK have experienced a hate crime or incident because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity in the last 12 months.

Research from Manchester Pride also shows that 78% of LGBT+ adults and their friends and family would switch to brands who are known to be LGBT+ friendly.



So, it's no wonder Pride season, in June, presents a great opportunity for internal and external brand engagement.

2022 celebrates 50 years of Pride in the UK, and after the past two years, which resulted in many cancelled events as well as the closure of safe spaces, the LGBT+ community needs support more than ever.



How can brands meaningfully and authentically get involved? Here are our 10 top tips for how businesses can do just that:

- 1 Internal comms and policies:** Ensure you have a well understood and communicated EDI policy, strategy, and plan in place before you embark on any external communications, that has been well communicated. Brands often find that their fiercest critics are internal employees. If they see any external comms around Pride that don't link to existing internal EDI work this can be seen as inauthentic.
- 2 A protest and celebration:** Remember Pride is a protest as well as a celebration. Be aware of the key challenges that are still faced the LGBT+ community both in the UK and abroad. For example, it is still illegal to LGBT+ in 69 countries and there is also much inequality over IVF treatment.
- 3 An emotional event:** Pride is an emotional brand for many of the LGBT+ community and needs to be treated with understanding and respect. Connect with internal employees and external organisations to understand what Pride means to them. Use these insights to shape any campaigns or activity you run.

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Volunteer run: Most Prides are volunteer run and not for profits. They rely on corporate support to continue. Look at how you can help them, whether this is financially or through your employees volunteering. Pro bono support is also gratefully received.

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Aligned CSR policies: Consider how your CSR policies align with your EDI focus. There are many national and local LGBT+ charities that could do with your support. Many brands now actively include their LGBT+ charity parties in their Pride activities. It's also a two-way relationship, charity partners can help you understand what issues the LGBT+ community face and help you shape your activities and campaigns.

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Support your local Pride: Don't just support the big Prides. Yes, they have great reach and exposure (and your marcomms teams will love this!). However, local prides play a key role in communities where there is often less infrastructure for the LGBT+ community. There are over 140 Prides in the UK, try and support/engage with the ones that are located where your employees live and where you have offices. You can contact UK Pride Organisers Network – UKPON to find out more about Prides across the UK.

7

Regional differences: If you are an international brand, make sure you are taking this into consideration with your planning. Pride plays a very different role in different countries, especially those where it is still illegal to be LGBT+.

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Intersectionality: The LGBT+ community has many facets, and intersectionality matters. It's important to respect this and understand it. Ensure you represent intersectionality in your Pride (and year- round LGBT+) communications.

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Language: Language matters and is constantly changing. You need to keep up-to-date with this and really understand the importance (and challenges) around language. For example, queer resonates well with young audiences, but can be a triggering word to those who are 40 plus. Check out sites that can help with terms. [Acronyms Explained | OutRight Action International](#) (outrightinternational.org)

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Be prepared for criticism: Most brands will say that when they support Pride and the LGBT+ community they see lots of positive messaging on social channels. But be prepared for criticism and challenge. This can come from those who disagree with your stance, and others who think you are 'pink washing'.



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Polly Shute is a consultant with EW Group and was on the Pride in London Board for five years. She has co-founded Out and About LGBTQ, a platform that connects the community through shared experiences and is a volunteer Director of Trans in the City.
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