

RED SKY PREDICTIONS 2025



Predictions for
Communicators on the
Cutting Edge

HAVAS Red
Part of the HAVAS PR Network



INTRODUCTION



We now find ourselves at the halfway point of the “Raging ‘20s” — a decade where fury has defined so many of the twists, turns and binds we’ve ultimately found ourselves in. “Rage” was even our agency’s **Word of the Year**, but it’s been on our radar since last year, when we discussed it in prediction No. 5 in our **Red Sky Predictions 2024**.

The polarized conversations and heightened tensions of recent years have now permeated relationship dynamics at work, at home and online, fueled by an increasingly charged political climate and often mirroring deeper societal divides. Beyond politics, polarization has seeped into consumer choices, public health and debates around social issues. With citizens and leaders alike seeking stability and connection, brands are uniquely positioned to help turn the page on divisiveness and lead the way back to civility.

Even as we’re engaged in this age of rage, we can already spy a break in the clouds. We’re getting ready for the **Thirsty ‘30s**, a decade where consumers will wrest back control to decide the who, what, when, where and why of their engagement with

brands, and being human will give marketers a unique selling point. The Thirsty ‘30s will bring a period of sustainable prosperity, conscious consumption and considered connections where consumers will not just be ready for what’s next, they’ll be thirsty for it.

Our annual predictions are made to help communicators navigate these and other discussions with respect and understanding. We believe brands and businesses can play a critical role in fostering a return to civil discourse in the workplace and beyond. By providing clear guidelines and frameworks for managing sensitive topics, organizations have an opportunity to promote healthier and more cohesive communities.

We’d like to thank our clients, friends in academia and the media, as well as our partners for all their inputs, experience and research that helped us shape our Red Sky Predictions 2025.

— **James Wright**
Global CEO, HAVAS Red



01

**FROM PERMACRISIS
TO POLYCRISIS**

O1 FROM PERMACRISIS TO POLYCRISIS

Prediction:

Whereas corporate communicators once had the luxury of keeping their eyes trained on a single crisis at a time, they will now more than ever be called on to juggle multiple complex crises simultaneously and expertly.

The pandemic and Black Lives Matter movement brought crisis to the forefront of company agenda, and these crises endured for years versus weeks or months. Then came the atrocities of the Russia-Ukraine war (now in its 30th month) and the yearlong war in Gaza. Arriving back-to-back, these crises got people talking about companies operating in a permacrisis environment — a seemingly never-ending period of crisis. One thing was clear: Opting out of addressing these events wasn't an option. Then let's consider the CrowdStrike outage this past summer combined with the advent of AI and its disruptive potential, the backlash against DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) and ESG (environmental, social and governance), and the tug-of-war over employees returning to the office post-pandemic.

Now we know it's not enough to be adept at crisis management, it's about having a robust enough infrastructure and the strategic plans to navigate many different crises at the same time and often across different markets. This requires plans to stay on top of



DEI, sustainability, cybersecurity, supply chain resilience and political/regional conflicts, with multiple arms managing certain issues while also understanding the interdependence of the issues.

This is where HAVAS Red's five Ps of purpose come into play. We've identified five elements — Platform, Process, Position, Perspective and Plan — to form a comprehensive framework that enables brands to articulate and sustain their purpose-driven initiatives. By following this step-by-step process, brands can move beyond reactive measures and develop a purpose strategy that is both authentic and impactful.



UNAPOLOGETIC U-TURNS
ON PURPOSE

02 UNAPOLOGETIC U-TURNS ON PURPOSE

Prediction:

Brands will more frequently make unapologetic reversals on purpose commitments, prioritizing consumer relevance over past promises. These pivots will also be seen as acceptable, reflecting a shift toward keeping their purpose journey fluid.

As brands face increased scrutiny over ESG and DEI commitments, they are often caught between public pressure to uphold progressive ideals and the realities of shifting consumer priorities and market demands. Sticking to pre-pandemic pledges isn't always tenable and company purpose, once seen as a steadfast guidepost, will continue to evolve into a more flexible concept that aligns directly with stakeholder expectations.

Volvo, which previously set a target to produce only fully electric cars by 2030, recently abandoned its target, while **Toyota** has delayed production for its first U.S.-made electric vehicle, both attributing their decision to waning consumer demand. After rebranding itself to reflect a focus on the metaverse, **Meta** redirected its resources toward AI in response to the evolving tech landscape. And **McDonald's** paused its transition from plastic straws in several markets due to mixed consumer feedback. These U-turns underscore a growing



willingness among companies to quickly respond to changing market dynamics, consumer preferences and operational realities, prioritizing relevance over rigid adherence to past promises.

In 2025 and beyond, brands will continue to balance transparency and adaptability, knowing that consumers value authenticity over consistency. They will make unapologetic choices based on where they can have the greatest impact. Communicators and marketers will need to frame these shifts as strategic adjustments that reaffirm the company's commitment to staying relevant and responsive.



OGB

DIVIDE CANNOT SURVIVE

O3

DIVIDE CANNOT SURVIVE

Prediction:

We should expect to see the best brands trying new and innovative ways to unite societies around common causes, reaching across barricades to pull people together.

One hundred years on from the decadence of the "Roaring '20s", this decade of polarization couldn't be more different. In what we call the "Raging '20s" of today, we've gone from dancing the Charleston to rioting in Charleston after George Floyd's murder. From exuberance and Gatsby, to exasperated and "pangry" (anger around the pandemic) and now, anger over a cost-of-living crisis. Division was rife in 2024 and the need to take sides seems overwhelming.

From politics to ethics, people across the world have become entrenched. Immigration, trans rights, conflict in the Middle East — it seems everybody has a view and they're not up for shifting. Many people, groups and organizations are becoming a-woke-n to the notion that "wokeism" may have gone too far; while it's important we respect and create a world of equity, are we pushing people further right by dismissing their views at times or asking them to accept a new normal beyond their acceptance?

Brands and comms professionals need to ensure they don't go too far and understand that the quiet majority may not call it out but will act with their loyalty and wallet. Brands can't take sides in the same way, nor can they put on blinders. Rather, they can respond to the culture around them with campaigns that unite rather than divide. Remember Coca-Cola wanting to teach the world to sing in 1971? That's what the world needs in 2025.



04

TELLING AI WHO'S BOSS

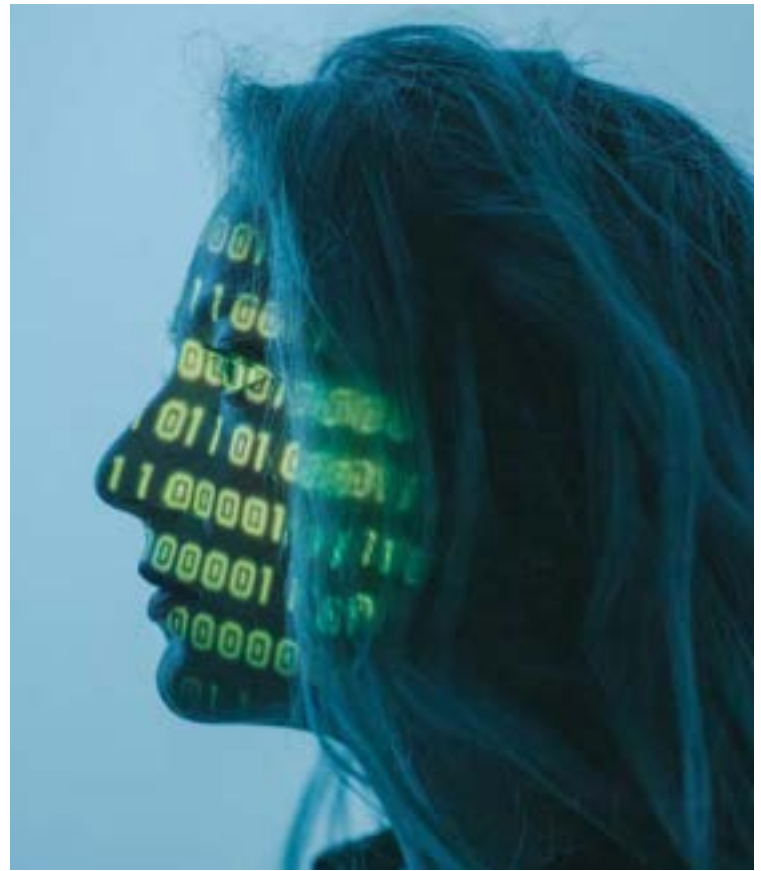
O4 TELLING AI WHO'S BOSS

Prediction:

In an evolving and ambiguous regulatory environment around AI, companies can't wait for government guidance; they will have a social responsibility to craft their own narrative about how they're responsibly using AI.

The accelerated embrace and use of AI has been described as the fastest adoption curve of any technological innovation known to humankind. This has left governments and regulatory bodies across the world grappling to define guardrails to protect against those aspects of AI that bring into question its impact on our world. While the EU has taken the lead by implementing a comprehensive AI regulation framework, the unregulated use of AI elsewhere is creating concerns around bias and discrimination, privacy and data protection, ethical use and misuse, and how AI will determine fair use and equitable access. After a decade of misinformation and deep fakery, consumers are thirsty for greater transparency and control over their data and privacy. This is all giving rise to an increasing call for self-regulation on AI.

Waiting for government regulation will be a slow and arduous journey, so corporations need to step up to fill that gap. In 2025, corporations will become more stated in their embrace of AI, and in doing so, will need to focus on self-regulation and clear communication to provide consumers and end users with a sense of assurance. (I.e.,



companies should be able to discuss AI's impact on what they do and how they do it.)

Remaining informed and involved with the shifting sands of AI regulation will be vital, and while challenging, without this active involvement, corporations will be left behind. Brand consistency is key, with CMOs looking beyond off-the-shelf AI solutions and driving greater investment in AI applications that are customized to reflect the brand's expertise, culture and more critically, the nuances and depth of their customer relationships.



05

FEELING IS FIRST

O5 FEELING IS FIRST

Prediction:

The emphasis on authentic, human-centered, emotion-rich storytelling is growing as people become more adept at recognizing and tuning out generic, AI-generated content.

AI and tech may be omnipresent but so is backlash against it.

The time has come to put human emotion back in the center of our communications — and not just the touchy-feely stuff. Widespread raging at broken systems means communities, countries, continents and corporations are confronting urgent issues on every front. Products and services that come with a human touch will be highly desirable among consumers thirsty for real connection. People could pay a premium for in-person experiences, services and interactions — or to enter physical stores instead of online shopping. Products labeled human-made, not just hand-made, will be sought after (as long as they're sustainable).

In a Thirsty '30s world where tech and AI are omnipresent, being human will be a compelling selling point for marketers who can do what the bots can't — connect through emotion. Showing empathy and alignment in values to build emotional connections and loyalty will be as important in the next decade as it is today. By identifying and building emotional connections for long-term loyalty with those who will matter most to your brand in the 2030s now, you will be able to fill their cup when they are thirsty for more in the new decade.





THE ITCH FOR NICHE

06 THE ITCH FOR NICHE

Prediction:

As niche online communities continue to spring up in hyper-personalized corners of the internet, discerning marketers will learn to engage them in conversation there for maximum impact.

When you consider the incredible shrinking newsroom and the overcrowding of mainstream social media, it's easy to see why online audiences have been sent scattering in search of news and entertainment in newer, more niche platforms. More and more, they're finding what they're looking for in these incredibly devoted communities — think: the recipients of an irresistibly clever newsletter or listeners of a beloved podcast. Now that marketers have caught on, they're following their particular audiences to these more obscure places. That's why Kamala Harris recently appeared on the "Call Her Daddy" podcast and Hinge sponsored Emily Sundberg's "Feed Me" newsletter on Substack.

Other brands are even creating their own niche communities via platforms like Facebook groups. (Of note, the majority of Facebook users are a member of **15 or more groups**, and about 100 million group joins are made each day). Grove Collaborative, Instapot and Peloton all operate **active Facebook groups**, which work as part focus group, part post-purchase loyalty strategy.

The onus for brands is to do the research to find their target audiences in these dustier corners of the internet and to create more targeted, niche content to reach and engage them there.





**MUSIC IS THE
NEW SOCIAL MUSE**

07 MUSIC IS THE NEW SOCIAL MUSE

Prediction:

Influencer-led music and sound activation will play an increasingly important role in brand marketing, with the power of sound helping brands to rise above the visual clutter, delivering messages that consumers can feel on a cellular level.

Sonic marketing isn't just having a moment; it has come into an era of its own.

In today's visuals-saturated media landscape, innovative brands are thinking beyond their visual aesthetic and tone of voice by shaping their sonic identity. From mnemonics to brand anthems to trending social sounds and sonic content libraries, sound can be used to enhance brand identity, evoke emotions and overcome creative roadblocks in advertising campaigns. A good example of sonic brand activation is HAVAS' **recent campaign** with haircare brand OGX. This involved crafting a sonic logo and brand anthem with the support of superstar singer Demi Lovato. That catchy brand anthem quickly grew viral social wings and was soon dubbed "song of the summer," on TikTok, IG and by leading news outlets, contributing to a campaign that has now surpassed 1 billion impressions and 24.5 million total engagements — all thanks to one particularly persistent earworm.

In 2025, look and listen for sound to play a much bigger and major role in building awareness, affinity, engagement and virality across brands.





**WELLTAINMENT™
TAKES THE WHEEL**

O8 WELLTAINMENT™ TAKES THE WHEEL

Prediction:

At the intersection of inclusive wellness, culture and entertainment, Welltainment™ demonstrates the potential to improve everything from the health equity gap to pharma brands' reputation for being self-serving only.

So what is it? Welltainment™ places the conversation around our wellness directly within our entertainment, and it's co-created with writers, producers, musicians and game programmers. The content is geared toward educating underserved communities most impacted by health inequities and focuses on a crisis area such as hypertension, diabetes, obesity, mental health, pediatric asthma and sexual wellness. Our agency's parent company, HAVAS, introduced (and trademarked) it at [Cannes in 2023](#), heralding it as "a wholly different approach to wellness content that goes beyond failed ad campaigns targeted at underserved communities." Now and in the next year, it is poised to shift the way health and wellness and pharma brands elevate the conversations around their products and demonstrate the value they contribute to public health — not just through the medicines they develop but also how they lead conversations around prevention and early intervention to make more optimal use of scarce healthcare resources. Companies will increasingly complement their traditional role of treating illness by



showcasing themselves as champions of preserving wellness, particularly via social media where above-brand health-positive content does not raise compliance issues. This will widen pharma's audiences to include those not already at elevated risk of disease, and focus on messaging and concrete action to promote active behaviors and habits that promote healthier aging to keep people 'well' for longer.



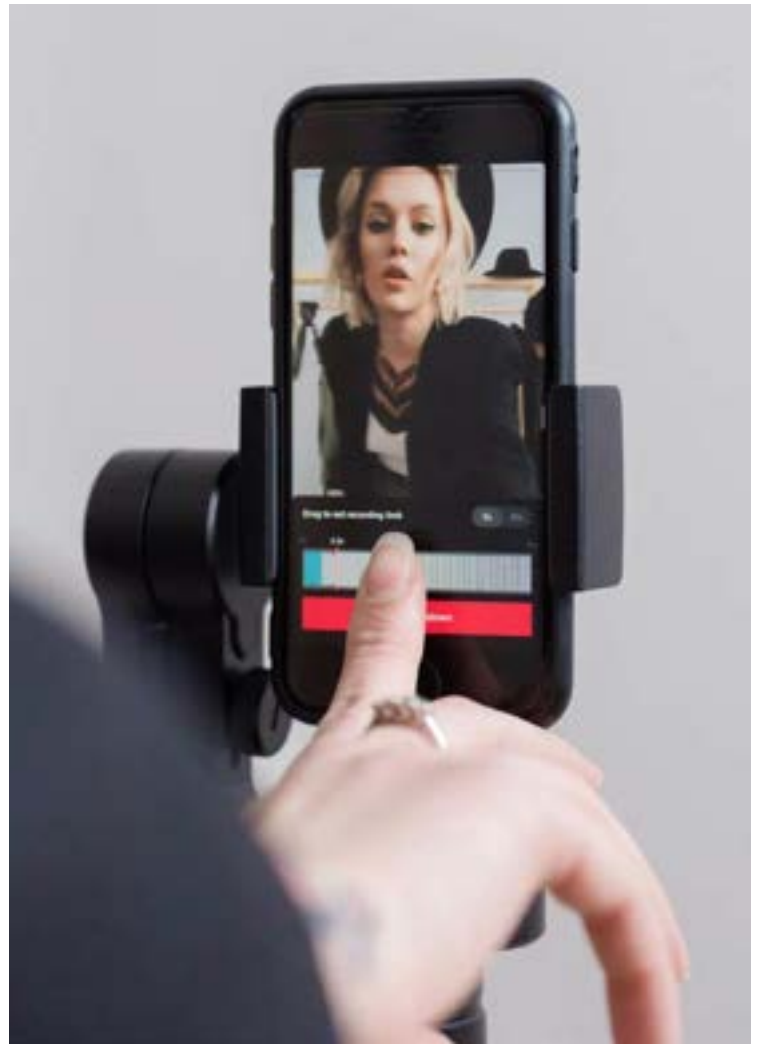
**CULTURAL RELEVANCE IS
CO-CREATION'S
GLOBAL CURRENCY**

09 CULTURAL RELEVANCE IS CO-CREATION'S GLOBAL CURRENCY

Prediction:

The next best brands will approach co-creation with far more cultural context than they have to date, allowing them to appeal more deeply and directly to target audiences.

Most brands are already actively involved in a co-creation project, whether they're creating a product, service, idea or content with the help of customers, employees, celebrities or influencers. When it comes to how brand co-creators break-through in today's communications landscape, ensuring cultural relevance isn't a consideration — **it's THE currency**. But culture is a big word and means different things to different people, categories and communities. In the next year, we'll see the concept of cultural relevance take on clearer swim lanes in social and influencer strategies. To retain a clear line of sight into the undercurrents of key markets and cultures, brands will have to embrace "slow culture" (in campaign planning and as part of always-on insights reporting with social intelligence and global audience insights tools); "social culture" (keeping track of what's trending on a moment-by-moment basis and proactively flagging opportunities to spark or participate in current conversations);



and "sub culture" (going beyond "micro" and "macro" or "beauty" and "travel" to study the micro tribes that make up a social community, learning the language codes and cues that make them unique and influential). In other words, co-creation is evolving from an art to a science in brands' strategic plans.



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UNEXPECTED ideas.

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200 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10016

WWW.HAVASREDGROUP.COM

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