GATE ONE
A Havas Company

Why are so many retail brands failing to connect with their consumers?

And how our Meaningful Brands™ study can help you in remaining relevant to your most important customers

2025 World Retail Congress

HAVAS MEANINGFUL BRANDS ™

THE INCONVENIENT TRUTH FOR RETAIL

People would ***not*** care if

74%

of retail brands ***disappeared***

The challenge for retailers today

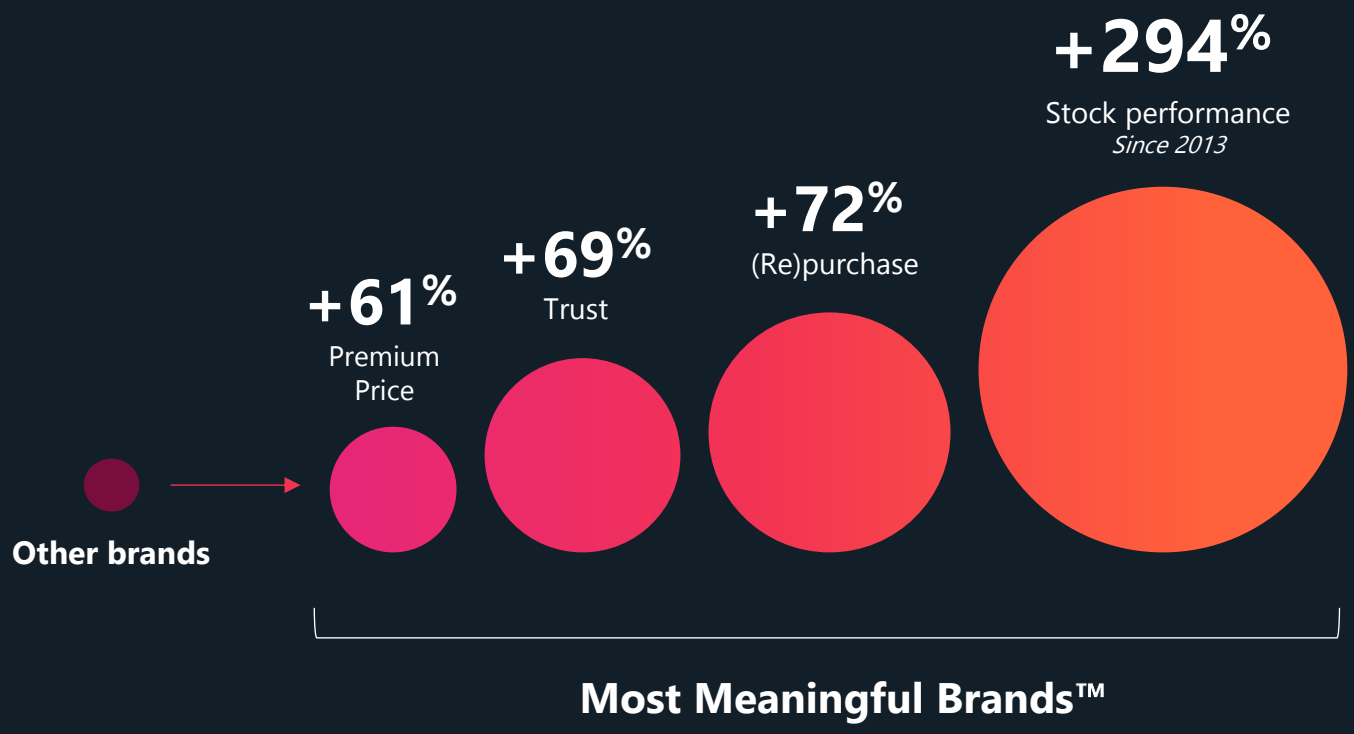
- Consumers have told us that the majority of retail brands **do not** resonate with them today.
- Consumers are **more cynical than ever**, with 70% feeling that the world is going in the wrong direction.
- 28,000 UK retail brands were **on the brink of collapse** at the end of 2024[1].
- Recent history is littered with high street icons that have disappeared, as they **became less relevant** to consumers lives.

But what can you learn from the 26% of brands people do care about?

[1]The Guardian. Number of UK retailers on brink of collapse soars by 25%. December 2024

Some retail brands have unlocked *how to be more meaningful* and they are reaping the benefits

Our study shows that the most Meaningful Brands™ significantly outperform the market.



So what do these brands do differently to become more meaningful?

SO WHAT'S THE KEY TO BEING MORE MEANINGFUL?

The most Meaningful Brands™ show more empathy and more humanity. We define **meaning** as the balance of people's brand experiences across three benefit areas:

1

FUNCTIONAL VALUE

Rational benefits focused on product functionality, customer service, interactivity, and technology

Most Meaningful Brands™ perform

+23%

better than avg brand

2

PERSONAL VALUE

Messaging and behaviour that connects on an individual basis and serves a specific personal need or want

Most Meaningful Brands™ perform

+36%

better than avg brand

3

COLLECTIVE VALUE

Initiatives, behaviours, and actions that respond to and connect at the social and cultural level

Most Meaningful Brands™ perform

+30%

better than avg brand

What value do we measure in each area?

FUNCTIONAL

- Product/ Services
- Brand/ Products Performance
- Customer Experience
- Value

PERSONAL

- Control
- Expression
- Inspiration
- Identity

COLLECTIVE

- Economy
- Ethics
- Ecology
- Public Health
- Society

RETAILERS ARE NOT CONNECTING WITH CONSUMERS ON A PERSONAL LEVEL

Retailers underdeliver on the personal connection that consumers crave, prioritising delivering collective value instead; this can create a sense of disconnect and cynicism for consumers, with brands investing in delivering social good before they connect on an individual level

What makes a brand meaningful?	Importance to UK consumers	How UK retail brands perform
Product/ Services	#1	#2
Brand/ Products Performance	#2	#4
Customers Experience	#3	#3
Value	#4	#5
Control	#5	#10 ▽
Expression	#6	#12 ▽
Economy	#7	#1
Inspiration	#8	#11 ▽
Identity	#9	#13 ▽
Ethics	#10	#6
Ecology	#11	#8
Public Health	#12	#9
Society	#13	#7

Key Functional | Personal | Collective

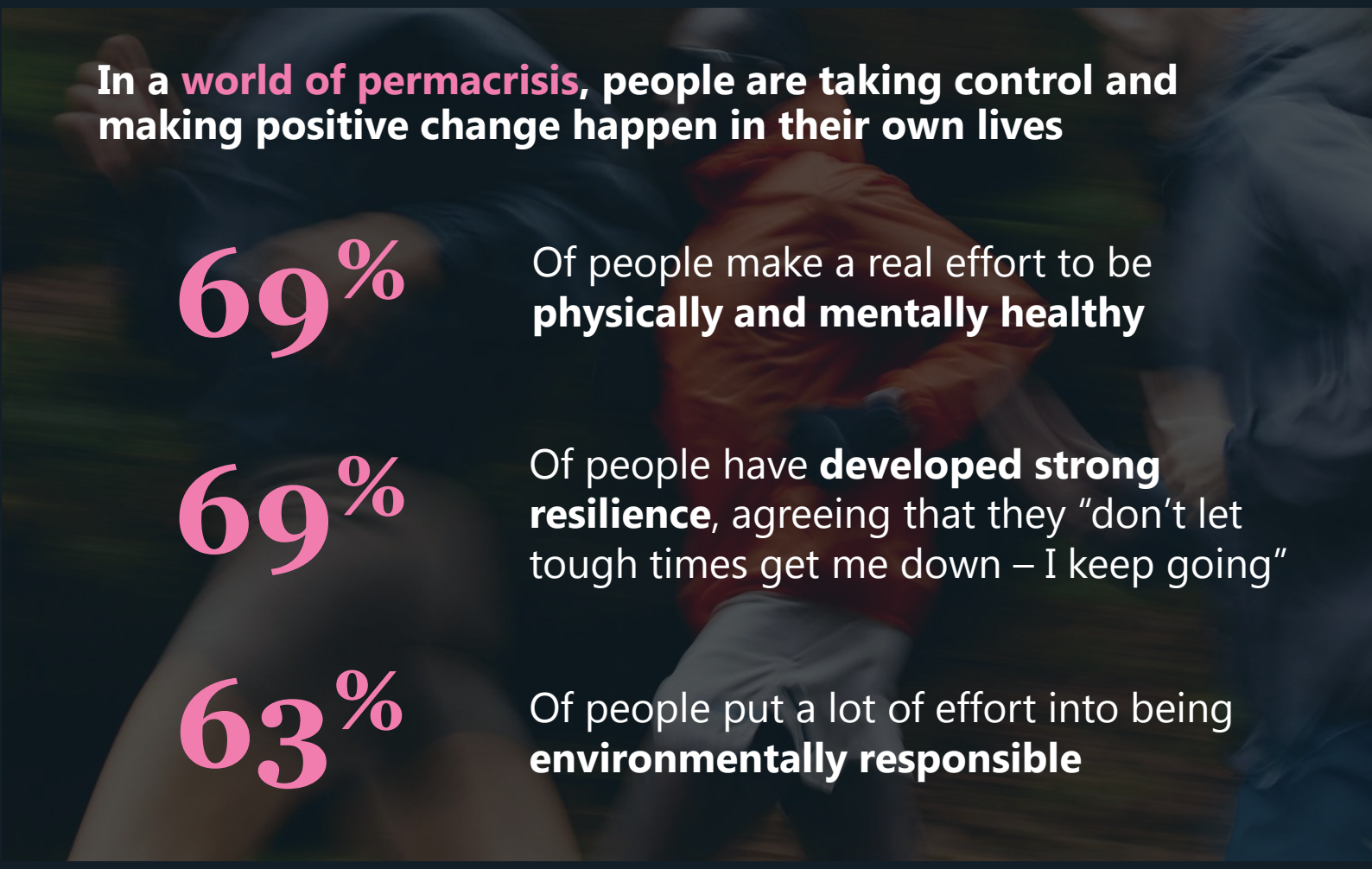
Where is the disconnect?

Areas of **personal value** such as providing customers **Control;** creating a platform for **Self Expression,** igniting personal **Inspiration** and **helping** shape their individual **Identity** are some of the worst performing areas for UK retailers – but they're important to consumers

"Retailers have to make shopping easy; but **they also need to maintain a balance** between automation and human connection"

Suzi Bentley Tanner,
Partner, CX & Marketing Transformation
Gate One

THIS PERSONAL DISCONNECT IS IMPORTANT, AS PEOPLE SEEK MORE CONTROL IN THEIR LIVES



In a world of permacrisis, people are taking control and making positive change happen in their own lives

69% Of people make a real effort to be **physically and mentally healthy**

69% Of people have **developed strong resilience**, agreeing that they "don't let tough times get me down – I keep going"

63% Of people put a lot of effort into being **environmentally responsible**

People increasingly want brands to support them on a personal, individual level, to help them navigate a volatile and uncertain world

Welcome to the New Era of Agency

"Agency is the **sense of control** that you feel in your life. Your sense of agency helps you to be psychologically stable, yet **flexible in the face of conflict or change**"

Mark Sinnock
Global Chief Strategy, Innovation and Data Officer
Havas Creative Network

LEADING RETAILERS CONNECT WITH CONSUMERS ON A DEEPER, PERSONAL LEVEL

Our latest study identifies that what differentiates many leaders is their ability to connect on a personal level with consumers, supporting them in delivering change within their own lives and communities.

Leading UK retail brands

How leading brands outperform on personal benefits

HEALTHY

M&S have established a trusted reputation for quality food products. Their fresh, health- led ranges respond to rising wellness priorities, earning deeper emotional loyalty without relying heavily on low prices.

SELF EXPRESSION

Lego® has constantly positioned itself as a source of self-expression, from creating corporate play kits to inspire creativity, to helping children develop their own sense of identity through a broad range of sets.

CONNECTING

Cadbury's recent "Generosity" campaign has focused on the role that gifting chocolate plays in connecting family & friends, including an award-winning advert that raised awareness for the impact of Alzheimer's.

GATE ONE
A Havas Company

HAVAS MEANINGFUL BRANDS ™

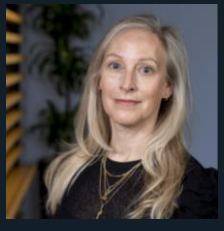
WHERE IS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUR BRAND?

Book a meeting with us to receive a full bespoke report on your brand, covering:

- Greater insights into the global retail market and what makes brands meaningful
- A detailed breakdown of your brand's performance, including:
  - *How your brand performs on functional, personal and collective value*
  - *How you perform on eight KPIs for brand equity*
  - *Benchmarked comparisons to industry averages and industry best*
  - *Key takeaways and how we can help*

HOW TO CONTACT US

SCOTT ELLIS
Partner, Business Transformation,
Head of Retail & Consumer Goods
Gate One
Scott.Ellis@gateoneconsulting.com



SUZI BENTLEY TANNER
Partner, Customer Experience &
Marketing Transformation
Gate One
Suzi.Bentley-Tanner@gateoneconsulting.com

https://gateoneconsulting.com/