

LGBTQ+ MARKETPLACE GUIDE

HIGH-LEVEL SUMMARY 2026 EDITION

The essential guide to LGBTQ+ media, marketing, audiences, and opportunities.



DIGITAL MEDIA
& SOCIAL PLATFORMS



STREAMING
& PODCASTING



EVENTS &
EXPERIENTIAL



TRAVEL, BUSINESS,
HEALTH & FAMILIES



MARKET RESEARCH
& DEMOGRAPHICS



ORGANIZATIONS,
RESOURCES & DEI

\$1.4T

LGBTQ+ BUYING POWER
(U.S. EST. 2025)

30M+

LGBTQ+ ADULTS
IN THE U.S.

87%

USE SOCIAL MEDIA
DAILY





LGBTQ+

Marketplace Guide

High Level Summary

2026 Edition

Digital Media · Social Platforms · Streaming · Events · Travel
Business · Health · Families · Global Markets · Demographics

The summary guide gives a general overview of the various opportunities and media sources for the LGBTQ+ community

It is designed to summarize and support a set of much more in-depth reports on each of the sections, including digital media, mobile apps, social platforms, streaming, events, print and more. Additional deep-dive reports on travel, business, health & families, as well as regional reports, are also being developed and will be made available. Lastly, reports on higher-level topics such as LGBTQ+ targeting methods using programmatic advertising, social media targeted-audience creation and implementation, marketing research, video advertising more are being developed.

Produced by Pink Media | www.PinkMedia.LGBT

Updated & Expanded from our previous Gay Market Guides. Celebrating our 20th anniversary edition, with in-depth updates & analysis relevant to the LGBTQ+ community in 2026.

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Introduction & About This Guide

Welcome to the 2026 High-Level Summary — Produced by Pink Media



Pink Media is a leading LGBTQ+ digital media and marketing network, connecting brands with LGBTQ+ audiences across social media, digital publishing, influencer networks, and events. This guide is produced by Pink Media as a resource for marketers, agencies, and businesses.

www.PinkMedia.LGBT

Welcome to the 2026 LGBTQ+ Marketplace Guide: High Level Summary — a comprehensive update to the groundbreaking 2006 Gay Market Guide. Over the past twenty years, the LGBTQ+ marketplace has undergone a profound transformation: from a niche community largely reached through print publications and regional events, to a global, digitally-native, commercially powerful audience commanding the attention of every major brand on earth.

This guide is designed for advertising agencies, media buyers, brand marketers, LGBTQ+-owned businesses, and anyone seeking current intelligence on media sources, demographic insights, and marketing opportunities within the LGBTQ+ community as of 2026.

What Has Changed Since 2006?

When the original guide was published, the landscape was defined by a handful of national print magazines, a growing cluster of early websites, and an emerging email-list culture. "Blog advertising" was described as one of the hottest new trends. Today, the media ecosystem has been entirely restructured:

- **Social media:** has replaced personal websites and web forums as the primary community hub, with platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, X, and YouTube hosting billions of LGBTQ+ creators and conversations.
- **Streaming services:** have supplanted cable TV, with dedicated LGBTQ+ content on Netflix, Hulu, Max, Peacock, and Amazon Prime reaching audiences globally on demand.
- **Print media:** has contracted significantly. Many iconic LGBTQ+ magazines have pivoted to digital-only or ceased publication, while new digital-native brands have risen.
- **Legal equality:** has advanced dramatically. Same-sex marriage is now legal in the United States (Obergefell v. Hodges, 2015), Canada, most of Western Europe, Australia, Taiwan, and many other nations.
- **Identity language:** has expanded from "Gay & Lesbian" to LGBTQ+ (or LGBTQIA+), with bisexual, transgender, non-binary, intersex, asexual, and queer identities representing distinct audience segments.
- **Corporate engagement** has deepened and also attracted political backlash. DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion) programs and Pride sponsorships have become standard for Fortune 500 companies, even as some brands have navigated highly publicized controversies around authentic engagement.
- **Buying power:** has grown to an estimated \$1.4 trillion by 2025 — more than double the 2006 estimate of \$610 billion.

"The LGBTQ+ community is not a monolith. Brand loyalty is earned over time — through consistent, authentic engagement year-round, not just during Pride Month."

Digital Media & Social Platforms

From Web Portals to the Creator Economy

\$1.4T	30M+	87%	62%
Estimated US LGBTQ+ buying power (2025)	LGBTQ+ adults in the United States	LGBTQ+ adults who use social media daily	Discover new brands via social platforms

The Shift from Portals to Platforms

In 2006, reaching the LGBTQ+ community digitally meant advertising on a small set of destination portals: Gay.com, PlanetOut.com, 365Gay.com, GayWired.com, and LesbianNation.com were the dominant players. Today, that model has been entirely supplanted by social platforms where the community creates, consumes, and converses.

Gay.com and PlanetOut.com — which merged and were eventually sold multiple times — are no longer the community anchors they once were. The personals and chat functions they pioneered have been absorbed by dedicated dating apps, while their news and content roles have been replaced by social feeds and LGBTQ+ digital media brands.

Key Social Platforms in 2026

Instagram

The single most important platform for LGBTQ+ brand visibility and creator marketing. LGBTQ+ creators, community organizations, and cause-driven brands maintain massive followings. Reels have become essential for organic reach. Key hashtags include #LGBTQ, #Pride, #QueerJoy, and thousands of identity-specific tags.

[Link: instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com)

TikTok

The dominant platform for LGBTQ+ Gen Z and Millennial audiences. #LGBTTikTok has tens of billions of views. TikTok's algorithm-driven discovery gives LGBTQ+ content unusual reach and has become a primary space for community education, storytelling, and identity exploration.

[Link: tiktok.com](https://www.tiktok.com)

Facebook

Despite shifting demographics toward older users, Facebook remains significant for LGBTQ+ community groups, local events, and cause-based organizing. LGBTQ+ Facebook Groups host millions of members. Facebook's advertising platform offers robust interest-based targeting and remains cost-effective for reaching LGBTQ+ adults 35+.

[Link: facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com)

YouTube

Home to a deep library of long-form LGBTQ+ content — coming-out videos, documentary series, comedy, beauty, gaming, and political commentary. Major LGBTQ+ YouTubers command audiences of millions.

[Link: youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

X (formerly Twitter)

An important real-time platform for LGBTQ+ political discourse, breaking news, and community organizing. Its influence on cultural moments and advocacy campaigns remains significant.

[Link: x.com](https://www.x.com)

Reddit

Hosts hundreds of active LGBTQ+ subreddits (r/lgbt, r/ainbow, r/gaybros, r/actuallesbians, r/asktransgender, r/nonbinary, r/bisexual, and many more) drawing tens of millions of monthly visitors.

[Link: reddit.com](https://www.reddit.com)

Threads (Meta)

Meta's text-based platform has attracted a significant LGBTQ+ creator presence. Its integration with Instagram makes it a natural addition for brands already active there.

[Link: threads.net](https://www.threads.net)

LGBTQ+ Digital Media Brands

While legacy portals have declined, a new generation of digital-first LGBTQ+ media brands has emerged with strong editorial identities, loyal audiences, and diverse revenue models:

Them. (Condé Nast)

Launched in 2017, focusing on Generation Z and Millennial audiences, non-binary and trans representation, and intersectional identity coverage.

[Link: them.us](https://www.them.us)

LGBTQ Nation

High-traffic news site focused on LGBTQ+ political and social issues.

[Link: lgbtqnation.com](https://www.lgbtqnation.com)

Autostraddle

Independent, reader-supported media outlet for queer women and non-binary people.

[Link: autostraddle.com](https://www.autostraddle.com)

Gayety

Digital LGBTQ+ media brand covering culture, entertainment, lifestyle, and community news with a positive, celebratory tone.

[Link: gayety.com](https://www.gayety.com)

Queerty

One of the longest-running LGBTQ+ digital news and entertainment brands, with strong traffic in pop culture, politics, and community stories.

[Link: queerty.com](https://www.queerty.com)

Curve Magazine

America's best-selling lesbian magazine, now operating with a strong digital-first presence covering culture, entertainment, and community.

[Link: curvemag.com](https://www.curvemag.com)

Instinct Magazine

Gay men's lifestyle magazine operating primarily digitally with special print editions covering fashion, travel, and culture.

[Link: instinctmagazine.com](https://www.instinctmagazine.com)

So.Gay

Independent LGBTQ+ digital media brand delivering culture, community, and identity-driven content for queer audiences. So.Gay focuses on authentic storytelling and community connection, and is a strong partner for brands seeking organic, community-rooted content placement within LGBTQ+ media.

Link: so.gay

PinkNews

Europe's largest LGBTQ+ digital news brand, with strong UK and international readership.

Link: pinknews.co.uk

Key Mobile Platforms for 2026

Mobile-first apps have become the primary social and dating infrastructure for LGBTQ+ communities worldwide, offering advertisers hyper-targeted access to highly engaged audiences.

Grindr

The world's largest gay dating app, with over 13 million active monthly users globally. Grindr has evolved into a broader social and media platform including its own editorial content (Into), advertising products, and advocacy initiatives.

Link: grindr.com

HER

The leading social and dating app for LGBTQ+ women and non-binary people. Combines dating features with community events and social networking.

Link: weareher.com

Scruff

A popular dating and networking app for gay, bisexual, and trans men with strong international reach. Owned by Perry Street Software along with Jackd.

Link: scruff.com

Hornet

Gay social network and media platform with tens of millions of users globally, operating its own editorial content alongside social features. Strong presence in Latin America, Europe, and Asia-Pacific.

Link: hornet.com

Sniffies

A map-based cruising and social platform for gay, bi, and queer men with rapidly growing usage among younger users. Sniffies operates a modern web-app format with an advertising platform reaching a highly engaged male LGBTQ+ audience.

Link: sniffies.com

Archer

Dating and social networking app designed specifically for gay, bi, and queer men. Archer differentiates itself with a safety-first approach, robust identity verification, and a community-focused culture that prioritizes authentic connection over casual hookups. The platform has grown rapidly among younger LGBTQ+ men seeking relationship-oriented engagement, and offers targeted advertising opportunities for brands reaching gay and bi male audiences.

Link: thearcherapp.com

Influencer & Creator Marketing

The single most significant development in LGBTQ+ digital marketing since 2006 is the rise of the individual creator. LGBTQ+ influencers — spanning beauty, fashion, fitness, travel, comedy, gaming, education, and advocacy — now command audiences that dwarf any single LGBTQ+ publication. Brands increasingly allocate significant portions of their LGBTQ+ marketing budget to influencer partnerships.

- Prioritize authentic relationships over one-off transactions. LGBTQ+ audiences are highly attuned to performative "rainbow-washing."
- Engage creators across the full spectrum of LGBTQ+ identities — not just gay men.
- Consider micro-influencers (10K–100K followers) for higher engagement and more targeted community reach.
- Year-round engagement is far more effective than campaigns concentrated solely around Pride Month.
- Measure beyond impressions: sentiment, comment quality, and community response matter as much as reach.

Streaming & Podcasting

LGBTQ+ Content in the On-Demand Era

Streaming Television & Video

In 2006, the guide devoted considerable attention to the then-nascent gay cable channels Logo (MTV Networks) and HereTV, which were just launching. Today, those channels have largely been eclipsed by streaming platforms that offer broader LGBTQ+ content libraries to a global audience, on-demand. While Logo still exists as a cable channel, its cultural footprint is a fraction of what the streaming giants deliver.

Netflix

The global leader in LGBTQ+ scripted content — "Heartstopper," "Orange is the New Black," "Grace and Frankie," "Young Royals," and many more.

Max (HBO)

"Euphoria," "Looking," "And Just Like That," and a deep library of LGBTQ+ documentary and narrative content.

Hulu

"The Handmaid's Tale," "The Bear," and strong documentary offerings with advertising-supported tiers for targeted campaigns.

Amazon Prime Video

"Transparent," "A League of Their Own," and international co-productions.

Peacock (NBCUniversal)

"Queer as Folk" reboot and major LGBTQ+ news event coverage.

Revry (revry.tv)

The first global LGBTQ+ streaming network, available on Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, and more. Advertising products available.

Free Ad-Supported TV (FAST)

Several FAST channels dedicated to LGBTQ+ film and television, opening cost-effective advertising channels.

Podcasting

Podcasting has emerged as one of the most intimate and loyal media formats for LGBTQ+ audiences, with thousands of active shows across comedy, news, relationships, history, parenting, health, and identity-specific content. Host-read endorsements carry extraordinary audience trust.

- News & Politics: Pod Save the People, Nancy (WNYC), Outward (Slate)
- Storytelling & Culture: Food 4 Thot, Las Culturistas, Queery with Cameron Esposito
- Trans & Non-Binary: Gender Reveal, The Laverne Cox Show
- LGBTQ+ Parenting: Radioactive Queer, Two Dads
- History: Queer History Project
- Comedy: Throwing Shade, My Favorite Murder

Print & Digital Media

National, Regional & International LGBTQ+ Publications



The 2006 guide described national gay print publications as "the dominant form of gay media for most corporate advertisers." Twenty years later, the landscape has changed dramatically. Many iconic titles have closed, merged, or moved to digital-only distribution. Yet print has not disappeared — it has evolved, occupying a premium positioning within a multi-platform media strategy.

National Publications (US)

The following nationally distributed publications continue to serve as leading LGBTQ+ media brands with significant advertising reach:

The Advocate

America's oldest LGBTQ+ newsmagazine (founded 1967). Now operating as a digital-first brand with periodic special print issues covering politics, culture, health, and entertainment.

[Link: advocate.com](http://advocate.com)

Out Magazine

Leading LGBTQ+ lifestyle and culture brand with strong print and digital presence. Fashion-forward editorial identity with robust luxury advertising.

[Link: out.com](http://out.com)

The Gay & Lesbian Review Worldwide

Bimonthly journal of LGBTQ+ arts, culture, and politics serving an educated, literary readership.

[Link: glreview.org](http://glreview.org)

Regional Publications (US)

The United States has a rich ecosystem of regional LGBTQ+ newspapers and magazines. **The following is a representative sample of leading regional publications only** — many more regional outlets exist across the country, each with loyal local readerships and strong community ties.

Dallas Voice

The leading LGBTQ+ publication serving Dallas/Fort Worth and North Texas.

[Link: dallasvoice.com](http://dallasvoice.com)

OutClique

South Florida's LGBTQ+ lifestyle magazine covering Miami, Fort Lauderdale, and the surrounding region.

[Link: outclique.com](http://outclique.com)

Out South Florida

LGBTQ+ community publication serving the South Florida market with news, entertainment, and community coverage.

[Link: outsouthflorida.com](http://outsouthflorida.com)

Windy City Times

Chicago's long-running LGBTQ+ newspaper, covering news, arts, culture, and community events throughout the Midwest.

[Link: windycitytimes.com](http://windycitytimes.com)

Los Angeles Blade / Washington Blade

Regional news publications with national significance in political coverage. The Washington Blade is among the oldest LGBTQ+ newspapers in the US.

[Link: losangelesblade.com](https://www.losangelesblade.com)

Philadelphia Gay News (PGN)

One of the oldest surviving LGBTQ+ regional newspapers, with significant local and national advertising opportunities.

[Link: epgn.com](https://www.epgn.com)

Bay Area Reporter (BAR)

San Francisco's long-running LGBTQ+ newspaper, operating in print and digital formats.

[Link: ebar.com](https://www.ebar.com)

International Publications

- Gay Times (UK): [gaytimes.co.uk](https://www.gaytimes.co.uk)
- Attitude Magazine (UK): [attitude.co.uk](https://www.attitude.co.uk)
- Diva Magazine (UK): [divamag.co.uk](https://www.divamag.co.uk)
- DNA Magazine (Australia): [dnamagazine.com.au](https://www.dnamagazine.com.au)
- Têtu (France): [tetu.com](https://www.tetu.com)
- Siegessäule (Germany): [siegessaule.de](https://www.siegessaule.de)
- Xtra (Canada): [xtramagazine.com](https://www.xtramagazine.com)

Events & Experiential Marketing

Pride, Community Gatherings & Live Experiences

50M+	\$1B+	200+	10K+
Pride event attendees globally each year	Economic impact of NYC Pride annually	Countries with Pride events	Corporate Pride sponsors worldwide

Pride Events: The World's Largest LGBTQ+ Marketing Platform

Pride events remain the single largest gathering point for LGBTQ+ consumers and allies, and the highest-profile opportunity for brand engagement with the community. What began as political marches have evolved into multi-day festivals, parades, concerts, and community gatherings that draw hundreds of thousands to millions of attendees each. In 2026, Pride sponsorship is an expected component of any serious LGBTQ+ marketing strategy.

NYC Pride

The largest Pride event in the world, drawing over 2 million participants annually. nyc-pride.org

LA Pride

One of America's oldest Pride celebrations with strong entertainment industry presence. lapride.org

San Francisco Pride

Legendary two-day festival in Civic Center Plaza. sfpride.org

Chicago Pride

One of the largest US Pride parades, drawing over 1 million attendees. chicagopride.gopride.com

Miami Beach Pride

Growing South Florida event with strong Latin LGBTQ+ representation. miamibeachpride.com

Atlanta Pride

Southeast's largest LGBTQ+ event with strong African American LGBTQ+ representation. atlantapride.org

WorldPride

International Pride hosted by a different city every two years. interpride.org

EuroPride

Europe's most prominent international Pride event, rotating host cities. europride.info

Professional & Business Events

Out & Equal Workplace Summit

The leading global conference on LGBTQ+ workplace inclusion. outandequal.org

NGLCC Business & Leadership Conference

National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce annual event. nglcc.org

IGLTA Global Convention

International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association annual gathering. iglta.org

GLAAD Media Awards

Annual event honoring outstanding LGBTQ+ representation in media and advertising. glaad.org

LGBTQ+ Niche Markets

Travel · Sports · Families · Health · Business

Travel

LGBTQ+ travelers remain one of the most valuable segments in global tourism. Research consistently shows that LGBTQ+ adults travel more frequently, spend more per trip, and are more likely to choose destinations based on their LGBTQ+ friendliness than the general population. The Travel Industry Association estimates the US LGBTQ+ travel market at over \$100 billion annually.

Key statistics (2024–2025):

- 96% of LGBTQ+ respondents take at least one leisure trip per year (vs. 64% nationally)
- 84% hold a valid passport (vs. ~50% nationally)
- 62% choose destinations based on LGBTQ+ friendliness and safety
- Median household income of LGBTQ+ travelers: \$95,000+
- Top domestic: New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Palm Springs, Provincetown, Key West, New Orleans, Asheville
- Top international: London, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Puerto Vallarta, Reykjavik, Bangkok, Toronto, Sydney
- 51% of LGBTQ+ travelers have taken a cruise vacation

Key Travel Resources:

- IGLTA: iglta.org
- Passport Magazine: passportmagazine.com
- GayCities.com: gaycities.com
- RSVP Vacations: rsvp.net
- Olivia Travel: olivia.com
- Out Adventures: outadventures.com
- HE Travel: hetravel.com
- Atlantis Events: atlantisevents.com
- R Family Vacations: rfamilyvacations.com

LGBTQ+ Destination Highlights 2026:

- **Palm Springs, CA:** #1 gay-friendly city in the US. Originally home to White Party, and now a year-round LGBTQ+ resort community.
- **Provincetown, MA:** America's oldest LGBTQ+ resort community. Women's Week, Bear Week, and Carnival.
- **Key West, FL:** Legendary LGBTQ+ destination with Fantasy Fest and year-round community.
- **New Hope, PA:** A short drive from Philadelphia, New Hope is one of the East Coast's most beloved queer-friendly small towns. newhopepa.com
- **Asheville, NC:** One of the South's most LGBTQ+-welcoming destinations with a thriving arts scene.
- **Puerto Vallarta, Mexico:** Top international LGBTQ+ resort destination from the US.
- **Mykonos & Sitges:** Europe's most iconic LGBTQ+ beach resort destinations.
- **Reykjavik, Iceland:** Consistently one of the world's most LGBTQ+-friendly capitals.

Sports

LGBTQ+ participation in sports has grown dramatically since 2006, both in terms of out athletes at the professional level and organized amateur LGBTQ+ sports leagues and events. The major international LGBTQ+ sports competitions — the Gay Games and the OutGames — continue to operate, with the Gay Games drawing over 10,000 athletes every four years.

- Gay Games: gaygames.com
- NAGAAA: nagaaa.org
- IGLA: igla.org
- GLAF: glaf.org
- NAGVA: nagva.org
- IGRA: igra.com
- OutSports (media): outsports.com
- Athlete Ally: athleteally.org

Esports represents a fast-growing frontier: LGBTQ+ gaming communities, streamers, and esports organizations have emerged as significant audience segments. Brands including Twitch, Discord, and major game publishers have launched LGBTQ+-targeted initiatives. Pride events within popular games like Fortnite and League of Legends reach tens of millions of players globally.

Parenting & Families

The "LGBTQ+ family" segment has grown substantially since 2006, driven by marriage equality, changes in adoption law, and increased social acceptance of LGBTQ+ parents. The US Census reports over 3 million children being raised by same-sex couples, and LGBTQ+ family spending patterns mirror and often exceed those of heterosexual families in categories like childcare, education, health, and family travel.

- PFLAG: pflag.org
- Family Equality: familyequality.org
- COLAGE: colage.org
- R Family Vacations: rfamilyvacations.com
- GLAAD: glaad.org
- HRC FamilyNet: hrc.org
- Gay Parent Magazine: gayparentmag.com
- We Are Family Foundation: wearefamilyfoundation.org

Health & Wellness

LGBTQ+ health has expanded significantly as a market and as a focus of mainstream healthcare providers. Key developments since 2006 include:

- **PrEP:** Daily HIV prevention medication has transformed the HIV/AIDS landscape for gay and bisexual men, becoming a major pharmaceutical advertising category in LGBTQ+ media.
- **Telehealth:** Platforms like Folx Health, Plume, and QueerDoc provide LGBTQ+-affirming healthcare including gender-affirming hormone therapy via telehealth.
- **Mental Health:** LGBTQ+ mental health platforms including Talkspace, BetterHelp, and specialized networks advertise extensively in LGBTQ+ media.
- **Transgender Healthcare:** Gender-affirming care has become a significant healthcare category with a growing set of providers and advocacy organizations.
- **LGBTQ+ Health Organizations:** GLMA (Health Professionals Advancing LGBTQ+ Equality), National LGBTQ Task Force, and numerous community health centers serve as both organizational partners and advertising opportunities.

Key health resources & links:

- GLMA: glma.org
- Trevor Project: thetrevorproject.org
- PFLAG: pflag.org
- AIDS United: aidsunited.org
- FOLX Health: folxhealth.com
- Plume: getplume.co
- POZ Magazine: poz.com
- HRC: hrc.org

Market Research & Demographics

Who is the LGBTQ+ Market in 2026?

7.6%	22%	\$1.4T	30M+
US adults identifying as LGBTQ+ (Gallup 2024)	Gen Z identifying as LGBTQ+	Estimated US LGBTQ+ buying power	LGBTQ+ adults in the United States

Population & Identity

One of the most significant demographic shifts since 2006 is the dramatic increase in the proportion of Americans who identify as LGBTQ+. Gallup's annual tracking shows that the percentage of US adults identifying as LGBTQ+ has grown from approximately 3.5% in 2012 (the first year Gallup tracked this metric) to 7.6% in 2024 — with younger generations driving the shift:

Generation	Estimated LGBTQ+ Identification
Generation Z (born 1997–2012)	~22%
Millennials (born 1981–1996)	~10%
Generation X (born 1965–1980)	~5%
Baby Boomers (born 1946–1964)	~2.5%

Source: Gallup, 2024. Note: self-identification rates are believed to undercount the true LGBTQ+ population due to social desirability effects and ongoing stigma in some communities.

Identity Distribution

Within the LGBTQ+ population, the distribution of specific identities has shifted significantly since 2006. Today's LGBTQ+ market includes a much broader set of identities that require distinct marketing considerations:

Identity	Share of LGBTQ+ Adults (approx.)
Bisexual	~57% (largest single group)
Gay/Lesbian	~21%
Transgender or Non-Binary	~10%

Source: Gallup, Williams Institute. Bisexual adults now represent the largest single subgroup — a significant shift from earlier research that underrepresented this identity. Marketing to bisexual audiences requires distinct creative and channel considerations from gay/lesbian-focused campaigns.

Buying Power & Income

Estimated LGBTQ+ buying power in the United States reached approximately \$1.4 trillion in 2025, according to research by Witeck Communications and Community Marketing & Insights — more than double the \$610 billion estimated in 2006. This growth reflects both population growth and increased visibility/self-identification. LGBTQ+ consumers spend significantly above average in travel, entertainment, home décor, dining, personal care, fashion, fitness, and technology.

- Average individual income for LGBTQ+ adults is broadly in line with the general population, though household income varies significantly by identity, geography, and family structure.
- Same-sex couple households continue to show relatively high household incomes, partly because both partners are more likely to be employed full-time.
- LGBTQ+ consumers spend significantly above average in travel, entertainment, home décor, dining, personal care, fashion, fitness, and technology.
- Brand loyalty effects are strong: 71% of LGBTQ+ adults say they are more likely to purchase from a brand that actively supports LGBTQ+ equality.
- Boycott effects are also real: 54% of LGBTQ+ adults report avoiding brands perceived as hostile to the community.
- The lesbian and bisexual women's market — historically underserved — represents over \$500 billion in buying power and is growing rapidly.

Media Consumption

LGBTQ+ adults continue to be above-average media consumers across most categories, with digital and streaming channels now dominant:

Channel	LGBTQ+	General Population
Daily social media use	87%	68%
Streaming TV (daily)	74%	58%
Podcast listening (weekly)	49%	31%
Digital news reading (daily)	71%	52%
Print magazine readership	28%	22%

Source: Community Marketing & Insights, Harris Poll, 2024–2025.

Key Research Organizations & Studies

The LGBTQ+ market is among the most thoroughly researched consumer segments in the United States. Below is a summary of the leading research organizations and studies that marketers and agencies should reference when building LGBTQ+ campaigns.

Community Marketing & Insights (CMI) — Annual LGBTQ Community Survey

Founded in 1992, Community Marketing & Insights (CMI) pioneered dedicated LGBTQ+ consumer research and remains the gold standard. Its Annual LGBTQ Community Survey® is the largest of its kind in the world, drawing up to 45,000 participants from 150 countries. CMI operates a proprietary panel of nearly 50,000 qualified LGBTQ+ consumers — the largest available — enabling statistically significant analysis by gender, generation, geography, identity, income, and product category. CMI is an NGLCC-certified LGBTQ-owned business. Key findings from CMI studies have been cited in the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Forbes, CNN, and many other outlets. **NOTE:** *Community Marketing & Insights (CMI) is now a part of the HRC Foundation.*

Headline Findings from CMI’s 15th & 16th Annual LGBTQ Community Surveys (2021–2022):

- 73% of LGBTQ+ respondents agree they “think more positively about companies that advertise in the LGBTQ media” — with only 4% disagreeing (CMI 15th Annual Survey, 2021, n=14,985).
- 72% of LGBTQ+ adults report being more likely to purchase from companies that advertise specifically in LGBTQ+ media (27% significantly more likely; 45% somewhat more likely). Only 0.3% say they are less likely to buy. (CMI 15th Annual Survey, 2021).
- 41% of LGBTQ+ adults say advertising in LGBTQ+ media has greater impact on them than advertising in general population media (vs. 23% who said general media was more impactful). (CMI 15th Annual Survey — 2019 data).
- 23% of LGBTQ+ respondents report having children of any age (16th Annual Survey, 2022, n=14,843). Lesbian and bi+ women (28%) and transgender/non-binary participants (31%) are most likely to be parents. 19% of LGBTQ+ Baby Boomers are grandparents — an often-overlooked market segment.
- Brand recall research (CMI 16th Annual Survey, 2022) shows LGBTQ+ consumers identify brands through authentic, consistent engagement. Top brands with unaided recall among cisgender gay & bi+ men include Apple (27%), Disney/ABC (24%), and Target (15%). For cisgender lesbian & bi+ women: Subaru (23%), Target (22%), and Apple (17%). For transgender and non-binary participants: Target (22%), Apple (12%), and Starbucks (11%).

Source: CMI 15th Annual LGBTQ Community Survey, USA Report, July 2021; CMI 16th Annual LGBTQ Community Survey, USA Report, June 2022. www.cmi.info

CMI 23rd Annual LGBTQ Tourism & Hospitality Survey (2018)

CMI's annual LGBTQ Tourism & Hospitality Survey is the largest and most comprehensive study of LGBTQ+ travel behavior. The 23rd edition (December 2018) surveyed 5,709 US LGBTQ+ travelers across all 50 states, with balanced representation by gender and generation. Major clients have included NYC & Company, VisitBritain, the Hawaii Tourism Authority, Hyatt Hotels, Kimpton Hotels, Wells Fargo, Target Brands, and the US Census. Key findings:

- Hotel location is the top spending priority for LGBTQ+ travelers (39% high priority), followed by restaurant dining (34%), and hotel quality (31%).
- When evaluating hotels, LGBTQ+ travelers rate both internal policies and outreach as equally important. 78% say sexual orientation non-discrimination policies are important; 73% value LGBTQ+ diversity training for staff; 64% consider it important that a hotel advertises in LGBTQ+ media.
- Millennials prioritize spending on meals when traveling; Baby Boomers allocate more toward show tickets and guided tours. Gen differences remain consistent cross-gender for most categories.

Source: CMI 23rd Annual LGBTQ Tourism & Hospitality Survey, U.S. Overview Report, December 2018.
www.cmi.info

GLAAD — Media Accountability & Brand Responsibility

Founded in 1985, GLAAD (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) monitors and advocates for fair, accurate, and inclusive representation of LGBTQ+ people in mainstream media. For brand marketers, GLAAD produces two critical annual resources:

- **Where We Are on TV Report:** The annual census of LGBTQ+ characters on broadcast, cable, and streaming television. Tracks representation trends by identity (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, non-binary) and by network/platform. Essential for any brand evaluating entertainment sponsorships or content partnerships.
- **Brand Responsibility Index (BRI):** Evaluates how brands engage with the LGBTQ+ community beyond Pride Month — assessing advertising spend, sponsorships, social media presence, employee policies, and advocacy. The BRI is increasingly cited by LGBTQ+ consumers when evaluating brand authenticity. Brands that perform poorly on the BRI risk being labeled as “pinkwashers.”
- **Accelerating Acceptance & Social Media Safety Reports:** GLAAD tracks American attitudes toward LGBTQ+ people and safety/harassment data on major social platforms. These reports inform messaging strategy and platform selection for LGBTQ+-focused campaigns.

Source: GLAAD Media Institute. www.glaad.org

Human Rights Campaign (HRC) — Corporate Equality Index

The Human Rights Campaign is America's largest LGBTQ+ civil rights organization and a critical resource for corporate marketers. Its signature research product is the annual Corporate Equality Index (CEI) — the national benchmarking tool for LGBTQ+ workplace equality policies and practices. The CEI evaluates Fortune 500 and other major corporations on criteria including non-discrimination policies, transgender-inclusive benefits, internal employee resource groups, responsible citizenship, and LGBTQ+ marketing and supplier diversity. A perfect CEI score of 100 (“Best Place to Work for LGBTQ+ Equality”) has become a benchmark that sophisticated LGBTQ+ consumers actively look for. The HRC also publishes the Buyer's Guide, which highlights CEI-rated companies across consumer categories, helping LGBTQ+ consumers make brand decisions aligned with their values.

For marketers: advertising with LGBTQ+ media outlets is itself a factor in HRC's CEI evaluation process — companies that actively market to LGBTQ+ consumers and support LGBTQ+ suppliers score higher. Working with LGBTQ+-owned vendors like Pink Media directly supports a brand's HRC CEI standing.

Source: Human Rights Campaign Foundation. www.hrc.org/resources/corporate-equality-index

ThinkNow & the LGBTQ+ Media Mapping Report (2025)

Market research firm ThinkNow has profiled the LGBTQ+ community as a significant demographic force: 7.2% of the US adult population with collective spending power of \$917 billion, with particular strength among younger consumers — 10.5% of Millennials and 20.8% of Gen Z identify as LGBTQ+. The LGBTQ+ Media Mapping Report (2025), produced to assess the state of the LGBTQ+ media ecosystem, highlights a critical tension in the current market: despite the community's substantial economic influence and documented brand loyalty, national advertising

investment in LGBTQ+ media has declined sharply due to political headwinds, DEI pullbacks, and consolidation of ad spend into mainstream digital platforms.

Key findings from the LGBTQ+ Media Mapping Report (2025):

- Anti-DEI executive orders and legislation beginning in January 2025 have accelerated advertiser pullback from LGBTQ+ media outlets — even though advertising decisions are business decisions, not DEI policy decisions. Publishers report losing major advertisers — particularly federally-funded healthcare networks — solely because their spending has been reclassified internally as “DEI-related.”
- The Pew Research Center found that 74% of LGBTQ+ adults say it is extremely or very important to live somewhere welcoming to LGBTQ+ people. Among LGBTQ adults, 49% of Democrats and 34% of Republicans believe more corporate support for LGBTQ+ people would meaningfully increase acceptance.
- Brands that have pulled back on LGBTQ+ commitments have seen real business consequences: Target experienced declines in both store traffic and market value following its 2023 DEI retreat. Conversely, brands that held firm on DEI, such as Costco, saw sales increases — demonstrating that retreat is a business risk, not just a reputational one.
- Only 54% of LGBTQ+ media outlets currently accept branded/sponsored content — but 83% of those not currently running it are open to it. This represents a significant, underutilized content marketing opportunity for brands seeking authentic placement.

Source: *LGBTQ+ Media Mapping Report, 2025; ThinkNow Research; Pew Research Center, LGBTQ in America survey.*

Dollars & DEI: Multicultural Consumers on Media Buying & Brand Practices (DDH, 2023)

The “Dollars & DEI” white paper (February 2023) examined how multicultural consumers — including Black, Hispanic/Latin, AAPI, and LGBTQ+ Americans — respond to brands’ media investment and marketing practices. As multicultural consumers now represent approximately 40% of the US population, the report makes a clear business case for diversified ad spend. Key findings directly relevant to LGBTQ+ marketing:

- LGBTQ+ consumers, like other multicultural segments, consistently factor in whether brands exhibit genuine community support when deciding what to purchase — and more importantly, what not to purchase. This is not a soft preference but a demonstrated buying behavior.
- Marketing dollars are still not diversified to match population diversity: multicultural groups are often tacked on at the bottom of media planning flowcharts despite their growing purchasing power and market share. The report argues this represents a strategic missed opportunity for incremental revenue growth.
- Brands that invest in media that is authentic to multicultural communities see stronger brand affinity, higher purchase intent, and better word-of-mouth outcomes from those communities. The data makes the case: diverse media spend is not a cost of inclusion — it is a driver of growth.

Source: “*Dollars & DEI: Multicultural Consumers’ Insights on Brands’ Media Buying and Marketing Practices,*” DDH, February 2023.

Buying Power: A 20-Year Arc

Understanding how LGBTQ+ buying power estimates have evolved underscores both the growth of this market and the methodological challenges of measuring it. Key milestones from Witeck-Combs Communications (now Witeck Communications), the Williams Institute at UCLA, and CMI:

- **2004:** \$450 billion estimated US GLBT buying power (Witeck-Combs/Packaged Facts)
- **2006:** \$610 billion (Gay Market Guide 2006 estimate)
- **2008:** \$712 billion (Witeck-Combs/Packaged Facts)
- **2023:** \$917 billion (ThinkNow Research)
- **2025:** \$1.4 trillion (Witeck Communications/CMI)

Note: Witeck Communications has been consistently transparent about the complexity of measuring LGBTQ+ buying power. Gay men may earn slightly less than heterosexual counterparts, while lesbians tend to earn somewhat more than other women (per Williams Institute, UCLA). What matters to marketers is not raw affluence claims but documented behavioral differences: earlier adoption, stronger brand loyalty, higher-than-average

spending in key categories (travel, entertainment, dining, home, personal care, fitness, tech), and above-average media engagement.

Research-Backed Marketing Imperatives

Across all major research sources — CMI, GLAAD, HRC, Gallup, ThinkNow, Pew, and Witeck Communications — five consistent imperatives emerge for brands seeking to authentically and effectively reach LGBTQ+ consumers:

- **Advertise in LGBTQ+ media specifically.** 72% of LGBTQ+ adults are more likely to purchase from brands that advertise in dedicated LGBTQ+ channels. General-market buys alone will not move the needle with this audience.
- **Engage year-round, not just during Pride Month.** The GLAAD Brand Responsibility Index and CMI research both document that LGBTQ+ consumers distinguish between seasonal rainbow-washing and genuine ongoing engagement. Authentic brand loyalty is built through consistent presence.
- **Segment within LGBTQ+.** Bisexual adults now represent 57% of the LGBTQ+ population — the single largest subgroup — yet are among the most underserved in targeted marketing. Transgender and non-binary audiences, gay men, and lesbians all have meaningfully distinct media habits, purchasing patterns, and brand affinities that require tailored creative and channel strategies.
- **Back up advertising with internal policies.** CMI's travel research shows that LGBTQ+ consumers weigh non-discrimination policies and staff training as highly as they weigh advertising and outreach. A brand that markets to LGBTQ+ consumers without demonstrable workplace inclusion risks backlash as a pinkwasher. The HRC Corporate Equality Index provides the recognized standard.
- **Stay the course under political pressure.** The research is unambiguous: retreat has business costs. Brands that withdrew LGBTQ+ support in response to anti-DEI pressure lost measurable traffic and market value. The community has a long memory, and the 2026 environment — as documented by the LGBTQ+ Media Mapping Report — means that brands willing to maintain authentic engagement now face less competition for earned trust and share of voice within this market.

LGBTQ+ Organizations & Resources

Advocacy, Community & Business Organizations

National Advocacy Organizations (US)

Human Rights Campaign (HRC)

The largest LGBTQ+ civil rights organization in the US. Produces the annual Corporate Equality Index.

[Link: hrc.org](http://hrc.org)

GLAAD

Media advocacy organization promoting fair representation of LGBTQ+ people. Hosts the GLAAD Media Awards and Brand Responsibility Index.

[Link: glaad.org](http://glaad.org)

National LGBTQ Task Force

Progressive advocacy working on full equality with an intersectional justice focus.

[Link: thetaskforce.org](http://thetaskforce.org)

Lambda Legal

Legal advocacy and litigation for LGBTQ+ civil rights.

[Link: lambdalegal.org](http://lambdalegal.org)

PFLAG National

Largest US organization for LGBTQ+ people, parents, families, and allies. 400+ chapters.

[Link: pflag.org](http://pflag.org)

The Trevor Project

Suicide prevention and mental health for LGBTQ+ youth. 24/7 crisis hotline: 1-866-488-7386.

[Link: thetrevorproject.org](http://thetrevorproject.org)

National Center for Transgender Equality

Policy advocacy protecting transgender people.

[Link: transequality.org](http://transequality.org)

Business & Professional Organizations

NGLCC

Certifies LGBTQ+-owned businesses (LGBTBE certification) and connects them with corporate partners.

[Link: nglcc.org](http://nglcc.org)

Out & Equal Workplace Advocates

Annual Workplace Summit and corporate LGBTQ+ inclusion training.

[Link: outandequal.org](http://outandequal.org)

IGLTA

International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association — the global network for LGBTQ+ welcoming tourism businesses.

[Link: iglta.org](http://iglta.org)

Lesbians Who Tech (LWT)

Community of LGBTQ+ women and non-binary people in technology, with an annual Summit.

[Link: lesbianswhotech.org](http://lesbianswhotech.org)

StartOut

Nonprofit supporting LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs and startups.

[Link: startout.org](http://startout.org)

Queer in Tech

Community and networking organization for LGBTQ+ professionals in the technology industry, with resources, events, and job boards.

[Link: queerintech.com](http://queerintech.com)

Out Professionals

LGBTQ+ professional networking organization with chapters in major US cities, connecting LGBTQ+ business professionals across industries.

[Link: outprofessionals.org](http://outprofessionals.org)

Out in Tech

Global community of LGBTQ+ people in tech, hosting hackathons, networking events, and mentorship programs.

[Link: outintech.com](http://outintech.com)

DEI in Marketing — Best Practices

Authentic Engagement, Common Pitfalls & Best Practices

"The LGBTQ+ community has a highly developed radar for performative allyship. Brands that engage only during Pride Month and remain silent on LGBTQ+ issues for the remaining 11 months are increasingly called out — and that criticism travels fast on social media."

The State of Corporate LGBTQ+ Marketing in 2026

Corporate engagement with the LGBTQ+ community has deepened dramatically since 2006, when 36% of Fortune 100 companies were advertising in LGBTQ+ media. Today, virtually all Fortune 500 companies have some form of Pride-related marketing activity, LGBTQ+ employee resource groups, or diversity commitments. However, the landscape has also become more politically charged: Several major brands faced significant consumer backlash in 2023–2024 after LGBTQ+ marketing campaigns triggered coordinated right-wing boycott campaigns. This has led some companies to become more cautious, while others have doubled down on authentic community engagement as a long-term brand strategy.

GLAAD Brand Responsibility Index

GLAAD's annual Brand Responsibility Index evaluates major brands on their LGBTQ+ commitments, advertising spend, representation in marketing, employee policies, and response to anti-LGBTQ+ political attacks. The Index has become an important benchmark for both brands and LGBTQ+ consumers. [glaad.org/brands](https://www.glaad.org/brands)

HRC Corporate Equality Index

The Human Rights Campaign's annual Corporate Equality Index rates companies on LGBTQ+ workplace equality policies, including non-discrimination protections, domestic partner benefits, transgender-inclusive health care, and LGBTQ+ employee resource groups. In 2024, over 1,300 US employers earned a perfect 100% score. [hrc.org/cei](https://www.hrc.org/cei)

Best Practices for LGBTQ+ Marketing in 2026

- **Engage year-round, not just during Pride Month.** Reserve Pride Month for celebration, but maintain visible support throughout the year.
- **Show the full spectrum of LGBTQ+ identities.** Include bisexual, transgender, non-binary, and other identities — not just gay and lesbian couples.
- **Reflect intersectionality.** LGBTQ+ people are also Black, Latino, Asian, disabled, rural, religious, and elderly.
- **Invest in LGBTQ+-owned media and creators.** Direct ad spending to community media and LGBTQ+ creators rather than primarily mainstream platforms.
- **Back words with action.** Donations to LGBTQ+ nonprofits, strong employee policies, and consistent messaging signal authentic commitment.
- **Consult the community.** Include LGBTQ+ people in creative development and campaign review processes.
- **Don't retreat under political pressure.** The commercial case for LGBTQ+ marketing remains strong even amid backlash from a vocal minority.
- **Measure community impact.** Track brand health metrics within LGBTQ+ audiences specifically, including sentiment, loyalty, and advocacy.

Glossary of Terms

Updated Terminology for 2026

Language in the LGBTQ+ community has evolved significantly since 2006. The following reflects current terminology as of 2026. Note that language continues to evolve, and community members may use different terms to describe themselves.

Term	Definition
LGBTQ+ / LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual/Aromantic, and others. "+" acknowledges the full spectrum of sexual orientations and gender identities.
Queer	A reclaimed umbrella term used by many people across gender and sexual minority communities. Once a slur, now widely used in a positive, self-identifying sense, particularly among younger generations.
Transgender / Trans	An umbrella term for people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. Includes trans men, trans women, and non-binary people. Always use as an adjective, not a noun.
Non-Binary / Enby	A gender identity not fitting exclusively within "man" or "woman." May use they/them pronouns.
Bisexual	Attraction to people of one's own gender and other genders. The largest single self-identified group within the LGBTQ+ community.
Pansexual	Attraction to people regardless of gender.
Asexual / Ace	Little or no sexual attraction to others.
Intersex	A person born with reproductive or sexual anatomy, chromosomes, or hormones that do not fit typical binary definitions.
Two-Spirit	A term used by some Indigenous North American cultures for a person fulfilling a traditional third-gender or gender-variant role.
Cisgender / Cis	A person whose gender identity aligns with the sex assigned at birth.
Chosen Family	A network of close friends providing support typically associated with biological family.
Rainbow-Washing / Pink-Washing	Performative use of LGBTQ+ symbols without substantive support for LGBTQ+ rights.
DEI	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion — corporate practices aimed at creating equitable workplaces.
PrEP	Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis — daily medication dramatically reducing HIV transmission risk.
Gender-Affirming Care	Healthcare supporting people in living as their identified gender.
CPM	Cost Per Mille — cost per 1,000 advertising impressions. Standard digital ad pricing metric.
Programmatic Advertising	Automated buying of digital advertising inventory, allowing precise LGBTQ+ audience targeting.



Marketplace Guide

High Level Summary

2026 Edition



Contact Us

Pink Media

www.PinkMedia.LGBT

For advertising opportunities, media partnerships, and custom research, visit www.PinkMedia.LGBT or connect with us on social media.

Demographic data sourced from Gallup, Community Marketing & Insights, Williams Institute, Human Rights Campaign, and GLAAD research (2023–2025). Updated from the Gay Market Guide 2006.

Interpersonal
Marketing

Online
Marketing

PiNK
media.lgbt 

reach the
LGBTQ+ community

leverage the
power of social relationships